



**REFLECTIONS ON THE ADJUDICATION PROCESS**  
**2016 ALL-AFRICA PUBLIC SECTOR INNOVATION AWARDS (AAPSIA)**  
**“THE PUBLIC SECTOR INNOVATING FOR THE AFRICA WE WANT”**

***STEVEN H ISAACK, REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA***  
***CHAIRPERSON***  
***2016 AAPSIA ADJUDICATION PANEL***

**AWARDS CEREMONY**  
**2<sup>ND</sup> ORDINARY SESSION OF SPECIALIZED TECHNICAL COMMITTEE NO. 8**  
**AFRICAN UNION COMMISSION**  
**ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA**  
**09 DECEMBER 2016**

## **SALUTATIONS!**

**Distinguished Chairperson of the Bureau of the African Union Commission Specialized Technical Committee No. 8 (on Public Service, Local Government, Urban Development and Decentralization)**

**H. E. Dr. Aisha Laraba Abdullahi, Commissioner for Political Affairs, African Union Commission**

**Ministers & Deputy Ministers**

**Heads of Public/Civil Service & Permanent Secretaries**

**Members of the Diplomatic Corpse**

**Distinguished Guests**

**Esteemed 2016 AAPSIA Finalists**

**Ladies and Gentlemen!**

The All-Africa Public Sector Innovation Awards (AAPSIA) is one of the flagship thematic areas of the erstwhile Pan-African Conference of Ministers of Public/Civil Service and the current STC No. 8. It was conceptualized during the 4<sup>th</sup> Pan-African Conference of Ministers of Public/Civil Service that took place in Stellenbosch, South Africa in 2003, under the auspices of the African Union. The project was officially launched in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia during the 5th Pan-African Conference of Ministers of Public/Civil Service in December 2005 (Champion = SA; co-Champions = Egypt, Ghana). First ceremony was successfully held in 2008 during the 6<sup>th</sup> Pan-African Conference of Ministers in Midrand, South Africa. The Second Awards ceremony was held in Nairobi, Kenya on 13 May 2011. The Third Awards ceremony was held in 2013 in Congo-Brazzaville where yours truly had the distinct honour of being the Master of Ceremony.

**Compatriots!**

The **context** for **public sector innovation** - Despite all the progressive policies, legislations, implementation plans, capacity building & intervention programmes in all jurisdictions across the continent - **major service delivery challenges persist**. Refined citizenry demand and expect, prompt, improved and **personalized** public services. The **“one-size-fits-all” approach** that was

the foundation of the establishment of the public services is outdated. Our **societies across the continent have become highly diverse, classly and technology savvy**. All of these factors continue to place extraordinary demands on our ability to be responsive. Issues of **funding and capacity** are equally pressing. **Innovation** is a critical vehicle for **transforming the public service** – thus a strong need for innovative strategies and approaches to policy development and implementation.

Through AAPSIA we **define public sector innovation** – as the creation and implementation of new service delivery solutions (systems, processes, methodologies, models, products, services and methods) resulting in significant improvements in outcomes, efficiency, effectiveness & quality. Including **finding extraordinary/radical ways** of enhancing access to public services in all sectors (education, health, and so on). Importantly graduation **from idea to proven, implemented product/solution** – many ideas not implementable.

**Rationale** – the AAPSIA is the first Africa-wide awards programme that celebrates innovation in the public sector. The programme recognizes and rewards the achievements of public servants and their partners from the private and not-for-profit sectors who have successfully developed **innovative solutions to service delivery and governance challenges**. The aim is to **cultivate an enabling environment** within the public sectors for the **development, and nurturing of innovative ideas and implementation of innovative initiatives**. **‘Beyond ideas to successful implementation with evidence’**. **Criteria for entry – give direction in terms of the requirements - importantly service delivery, impact and sustainability.**

**Fellow Africanists!**

**Benefits for the continent** - countless individuals and institutions in African governments have developed creative solutions that have altered the lives of their citizens – these are often **not known or shared**.

- Our Awards programme facilitates the **identification and recognition of those extraordinary achievements** for learning and replication purposes. It unearths

innovations for replication and thus prevents us from **re-inventing the wheel, duplicating initiatives & wasting** resources.

- We are putting **Africa on the global map by** showcasing new tools for public administration that are constantly emerging from within the continent. Through AAPSIA the continent is **acknowledged as the generator of home-grown processes and practices to improve public service delivery. I would hasten to add that we need to be wary of and avoid off-the-shelf, untested “for contexts” solutions.**
- Through AAPSIA we endeavor to graduate from being mere “**consumers** of best practices” to be amongst “**creators**” and thus contributors to the growing body of global knowledge on governance and public administration.
- Promotes **regional integration** - builds relationships and new partnerships that will result in new initiatives and collaborations amongst countries and across regions (**as we strive to pursue our respective national visions**).
- **At Country level** - profiling your country before you are profiled at a cost (packaging is done on your behalf).
- Our **principals get to know about your achievements** for the first time (away from offices) – first-time acknowledgement.

### **Honourable Ministers / Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen!**

Please allow me to extend, on behalf of the adjudication panel and on my own behalf, our sincere gratitude to the South African Government, specifically, the Honourable Minister for Public Service and Administration, Adv. Ngoako A. Ramatlhodi (Dr) for his commitment and unwavering support to the AAPSIA programme and the work of one of his flagship Agencies, the Centre for Public Service Innovation (CPSI). I would equally like to acknowledge the CPSI under the able leadership of Ms. Thuli Radebe and her capable team for the sterling leadership and administration of the AAPSIA under often trying and difficult circumstances over the last couple of years. You have not only raised the bar, but set a positive example that is worth emulating.

Well done! Africa is blessed and proud to have cadres of your ilk and caliber amongst its rank and file.

At this juncture I would like to briefly enlighten you about the adjudication process. The Adjudicators were appointed from each sub-region (excluding AUC STC No. 8 Secretariat, the AAPSIA Champion and co-Champions). Adjudicators were expected to adhere to the established Code of Conduct which included an in-depth appraisal of the adjudication methodology. Adjudicators convened over three intense days here in Addis Ababa to evaluate entries, select finalists and determine category winners and the overall winner.

### **Distinguished Finalists!**

AAPSIA focuses on the following three distinct categories:

1. **Innovative Service Delivery Improvements** - This category recognises projects, which improve service delivery to citizens or improve internal efficiency within the public sector.
2. **Innovative Partnerships in Service Delivery** - This category recognises creative partnerships that enhance cooperation between government and other social partners for the purposes of service delivery.
3. **Innovation in Systems and Processes of Governance** - This category applauds accountability, transparency and ethics in public service innovation.

A total of 54 entries in the afore-mentioned categories were received from various countries.

### **Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen!**

The adjudicators selected were nominated based on their expertise and broad experience in governance and public administration. The nomination of adjudicators was informed by a need to broaden participation of member states in the AAPSIA thematic area. It is for this reason the AUC recommended that the Chairperson of the Bureau, the Champion and Co-Champions,

and/or experts from their respective countries should not be represented on the panel of adjudicators.

The adjudicators represented four (4) of the five (5) geographical regions of Africa and were:

Mr. Steven H. Isaack, Namibia (Chairperson of the Panel)

Dr. Viviane O. Biwole, Cameroon

Mr. Samuel Mulindwa, Rwanda

Mr. Kwame Adorbor, Ghana

**Kindly join me in a round of applause to our adjudicators for the voluntary service rendered over three intense workdays in Addis Ababa.**

As adjudicators we remained fair and confidential throughout the process to safeguard the integrity of the process. We did not rate submissions from our countries of origin.

**To the short-listed entries, we commend your hard work and urge you not to be too anxious about your ranking. You have managed to come this far and become part of an esteemed group of innovative projects and services in Africa worth replicating, domesticating and popularizing!!**

The panel of adjudicators extends its sincere gratitude to the African Union Commission; our respective Governments; The South African Government, the STC No. 8 and its Secretariat; the Co-Champions, and everyone who worked to make the adjudication process and this awards ceremony possible!

**In closing I would like to assert that we are looking at our joint future as a continent with great hope and conviction. We must remain masters of our destiny and the writers of our own narrative. Public sector innovation can and should be the building block of these ventures. We salute all the finalists and the winners of the respective categories and would like to encourage**

**you to become habitual innovators.** I thank you all for your attention! Have a blissful evening and safe journey back home!

**Long live Africa!**