

SECTION 5 MAKING MANAGEMENT MORE EFFECTIVE

5.1 Management development

5.2 Improving management information systems

5.1 Management development

The context for change

A workshop for senior public servants held at the Zimbabwe Institute of Public Administration and Management in November 1993 noted in its report that:

"While the public service has reasonably good training programmes at support staff and lower administration level, there are no meaningful training programmes aimed at advancing the capacity in policy analysis within government, either at theoretical or practical levels."

Subsequently, management development was the theme of a further workshop for senior officials in May 1994. At this workshop, participants broadened the meaning of management development to include "managerial skills analysis, postings, training and other means of acquiring knowledge and skills, including secondment, short-term attachments, orientation programmes, workshops and seminars, which equip existing and future managers with competencies to perform efficiently and effectively."

In 1995, the UNDP sponsored performance management workshops for top managers in fifteen ministries that focused on strategic planning, drafting of mission statements for their respective ministries and development of managerial skills to apply the newly drafted corporate plans.

Implementing change

The Management Development Programme for the Zimbabwe Public Service was published in March 1995. The Programme recognises that:

- management skills have been under-valued historically in the public service;
- the pace of economic, social and technological change requires enhanced managerial flexibility;
- managerial skills cannot be attained solely through formal training.

The Programme includes four components:

- career pathing and succession planning;

- formal education;
- formal and informal training;
- systematically planned work experience.

The Programme will target the top three levels of management in the first instance: permanent secretaries, deputy secretaries, under-secretaries and professional staff of equivalent grades.

The specific focus on career pathing and succession planning will ensure that the best public servants are developed to maximise their potential and to maintain challenging work targets. It will also ensure that there are, in effect, reservoirs of public servants with assured levels of competency with potential for promotion to higher grades.

Supporting material

- (i) Public Service Review Commission of Zimbabwe, May 1989
- (ii) National Workshop Report on Strengthening Development Capacity, November 1993, ZIPAM Darwendale
- (iii) The Management Development Programme for the Zimbabwe Public Service, Directorate of Training, Ministry of Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare, March 1995

5.2 Improving management information systems

The context for change

As with all governments, the public service of Zimbabwe must deliver services in three areas:

- policy formulation;
- executive activities;
- management of resources.

In Zimbabwe, the paper-based information systems supporting each of their activities are gradually being computerised.

Implementing change

The introduction of a Human Resources Information System (HRIS) will permit increased decentralisation of Human Resource functions from the PSC to the ministries and by the ministries to the regions/district administration.

This project is sponsored by the UNDP as part of the public service reform programme.

The government Salary Service Bureau, though limited, already has a computerised system of personnel data. HRIS will be complementary to this and will assist in the delegation of the personnel management functions.

HRIS is intended to provide data for:

- Performance Reward Management, including codification of conditions of service, and job evaluations, pay and grading structures.
- Employer Resourcing, including data for manpower planning, support to recruitment selection, promotion and transfer.
- Manpower Development, including personal data on training and development undertaken and appraised.

Government is also implementing a computerised Management Information System that will track achievements against objectives in all ministries. The system is expected to provide top managers with a "red flag" warning when a pre-determined deviation from results expected is not met.

This project is now at the tender stage and consultants have already been short-listed.