



**PUBLIC SECTOR REFORM UNIT (PSRU)**  
***OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT***

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**PRESS RELEASE**

**PSRU CONCLUDES WEEK-LONG SENSITISATION FORUM IN THE  
SOUTH EASTERN REGIONS**

*Freetown 22 April 2014:* The Public Sector Reform Unit in collaboration with the Cabinet Secretariat, the Human Resources Management Office (HRMO), the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development (MoFED), the Office of Chief of Staff and the Public Service Commission (PSC), has concluded a week-long sensitization forum in the Southern and Eastern Provinces, informing Government employees and the general public on progress in the public sector reforms and the Pay and Performance Project.

The Forum was held from the 24<sup>th</sup> March to 1<sup>st</sup> April 2014 and took place at Town Hall meetings and radio discussions in Kenema, Kailahun, Kono, Moyamba, Bonthé and Pujehun Districts. The meetings were Chaired by HRMO and were well-attended by a variety of participants including Local Council employees, Provincial Secretaries, District Officers, Police and Teachers. Each meeting dedicated time to Question and Answer sessions which were robust and captured matters of concern to Public servants.

At the inaugural Forum held in Kenema City on 24<sup>th</sup> March, the Resident Minister, Southern Region, Mr Muctaru Conteh, in his Keynote Address, said the reforms currently taking place in the Civil Service are welcome news as they will help to enhance productivity.

According to the Resident Minister, the transformation of the then-Governance Secretariat to the Public Sector Reform Unit (PSRU) by President Ernest Koroma in 2008, has brought about several reforms particularly in the Civil Service. Management and Functional Reviews have been carried out in all MDAs resulting in the establishment of reform structures including new cadres for Records management, Procurement, ICT, Monitoring and Evaluation and the establishment of Policy and Planning Units, all of which promote transparency and accountability in the operations of Government. These new structures to a large extent have helped to improve efficiency and effectiveness in service delivery across MDAs.

He said President Koroma has demonstrated his astuteness in his leadership by signing Performance Contract with his Ministers for them to give account of their stewardship.

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Performance Contracting has now been cascaded to top Civil Servants and local councils in order for them to account for their performance against agreed benchmarks.

The Minister said that there is now sanity in the recruitment of Civil Servants, a process hitherto lacking credibility. Now, however, modalities have been put in place by the Public Service Commission to ensure a credible, transparent and merit-based recruitment process. In addition, Government has demonstrated its commitment to the reform process by increasing the Minimum Wage for Civil Servants and the security sector so as to ensure that employees give their best in the discharge of their duties.

Giving an update on Public Sector Reform, the Director of PSRU, Ms Sidratu Koroma, said the objective of the reform is to ensure efficient, accountable, and professional public service for improved service delivery.

Ms Koroma said that the need for a Public Sector Reform Programme was precipitated by a lack of co-ordination in reform initiatives amongst both Government and Development Partners, low capacity in the Public and Civil service, uncompetitive rewards and ineffective Performance Management. She said since the launch of the Programme, there have been several achievements ranging from GoSL ownership and leadership of the reform process, improvements in collaboration and partnership, harmonisation, standardisation and a more systematic approach to addressing the challenges across the public service as well as the development and entrenchment of structures, systems and processes within the Civil and Public Service. She did however acknowledge that there was much more to do in terms of collaboration, co-ordination and implementation of reforms and encouraged all the participants not to see this as “just another workshop” but to recognise that they are actually the most important part of the reform process as they are the implementers, whose feedback is key and who are in a position to inform their colleagues about the reforms.

Commissioner Alex Konteh, of the Public Service Commission informed the Forum that PSC had restructured itself to meet the daunting challenges of ensuring transparent and merit-based recruitment process. He said the PSC has recruited hundreds of qualified and competent Sierra Leoneans into the Civil Service through a fair and credible process.

He encouraged qualified Sierra Leoneans to come forward and apply for positions for which they have the requisite qualifications without fear as jobs in the Civil Service are meant for qualified Sierra Leoneans regardless of their region or ethnicity - “As long as you are qualify for a job that has been advertised, have no fear in applying. You don’t need to know anyone in PSC or have political connections.”

Representing HRMO, the Director of Performance Management, Mr. David Banya, said they have signed Performance Contracts with senior staff in (12) twelve MDAs and they are planning to cascade that to the remaining Ministries.

Mr Cyrus Luseni, Budget Officer in the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development, gave a breakdown of the Budget, informing participants that Wages took over 40% of the budget and that Pay Reform is dependant on several factors including the state of the economy, revenue generation, Rightsizing the Civil Service. He said that the increase in the Minimum Wage for Civil Servants, Teachers and the security sector was as a result of savings MoFED made in the Budget by instituting strict financial policies.

Ms Sonia Umu Karim, M&E Specialist PSRU, gave an update on the Pay and Performance Project giving detailed breakdown of the progress made on Pay Reform, Performance Management and Recruitment and Selection since they started implementation in 2012.

Mr Wahab Shaw of the Office of Chief of Staff spoke of the importance of Performance Contracting noting that Ministers and Senior Civil Servants are obliged to sign a Performance Contract in order to give account of their stewardship. He described the process as transparent and fair which will enhance good governance, efficient and effective service delivery.

Mr Siaka Wusha-Conteh, Communications Specialist in the PSRU, explained the strategies being used to improve information dissemination to the stakeholders, and strengthen collaboration and coordination amongst reform agencies. He stated that the Forum was one such activity being used by the PSRU to increase participation by public servants and the general public, as well as to improve accountability and transparency in the reform programme.

The Director of Training and Career Development, HRMO, Mr. Emmanuel Komba, who served as Chairman throughout, called for the co-operation of Civil Servants in order for the reform to succeed, noting that reform is an ongoing process and not a product.

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