



PUBLIC SECTOR REFORM UNIT (PSRU)
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PRESS RELEASE

PSRU, ENCISS, Civil Society Deliberate On Strengthen The System And Processes Of The Ministry Of Lands, Country Planning And The Environment

Freetown, 18 June, 2009—The Public Sector Reform Unit in collaboration with ENCISS engaged Civil Society on Wednesday 18 June on ways of strengthen the systems and processes of the Ministry of Lands, Country Planning and the Environment for efficient and effective service delivery to the nation.

The PSRU is working on the Management and Functional Review of the Ministry of Lands, Country Planning and the Environment and required the views of the public on the mode of operation of the Ministry for comprehensive and holistic report.

The Governance Advisor of ENCISS, Jemila Kpakra-Massalay, who facilitated the meeting, called on participants for their honest and realistic views of the Ministry of Lands so as to enable the PSRU capture all shades of opinion while reforming the Ministry.

Ola Williams of PSRU while addressing the meeting noted that Management and Functional Reviews of 14 Ministries have been completed since the reform started in 2002 after the civil conflict.

Presently he explained, the PSRU is conducting Management and Functional Reviews of the remaining five Ministries, of which the Ministry of Lands, Housing and Country Planning is among. “We are undertaking these reforms to ensure that the systems and structures in the Ministries are consistent with modern trend.” “The essence of government Ministries is to serve the people and therefore should be structured in a way so that its activities and programmes will benefit the general populace,” he concluded.

Numerous factors were identified as being responsible for the unfair land distribution and poor planning the country. Among the notable problems are the obsolete and complex laws that have clouded land tenure system in the country. It was recommended that the laws governing land tenureship in the country should be harmonised and reviewed for proper land management in the country.

They noted that since land issue has become very sensitive especially after the war, land distribution should be proportionately distributed devoid of political interference to the satisfaction of every Sierra Leonean.

It was also agreed that there should be a land court to judiciously handle all land matters especially in the western area since the issue of land has security implication especially with the increasing number of land grabbers in the country.

Since it was identified that the capacity of the Ministry is limited to effectively handle land matters in the country, they called for land management and surveying to be incorporated in the University curricular so that trained personnel will be at the disposal of the Ministry.

On the issue of the Freetown City Council having a supervisory role on land management in the Western Area, the meeting agreed that the Council has too much on its plate already and that they lack the capacity to effectively manage land issues in the municipality. “Let the Ministry of Lands be strengthened to properly supervise land management and the city council be responsible for the beautification,” they observe.