



GOVERNMENT OF SIERRA LEONE

**PUBLIC SECTOR REFORM UNIT
(PSRU)**

**MANAGEMENT AND FUNCTIONAL REVIEW OF THE MINISTRY OF
INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS**



FINAL REPORT

AUGUST, 2021

CID	Criminal Investigation Department
CIU	Central Cyber Security Unit
GoSL	Government of Sierra Leone
GPD	Government Printing Department
H.E.	His Excellency
HR	Human Resources
HRMO	Human Resource Management Office
ICT	Information Communication and Technology
IPAS	Individual Performance Appraisal System
MDAs	Ministries, Department and Agencies
MIC	Ministry of Information and Communication
MDIC	Management and Development International Company
MFR	Management and Functional Review
NATCOME	National Telecommunication Commission
ONS	Office of National Security
PANA	Pan-African News Agency
PSRU	Public Sector Reform Unit
SALPOST	Sierra Leone Postal Services
SLBC	Sierra Leone Broadcasting Corporation
SLBS	Sierra Leone Broadcasting Service
SLENA	Sierra Leone News Agency
WIPSEL	Women in Sierra Leone Media

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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report presents the findings and recommendations from the Management and Functional Review conducted by PSRU with technical backstopping from the Human Resource Management Office (HRMO). The need for this MFR was expressed by the Ministry of Information and Communications (MIC) in a bid to rationalize its oversight and supervisory functions; and examine its structures and administrative processes and procedures. This MFR process is critical to the Ministry's efforts to transform itself into an entity that performs at optimal capacity and delivers high-quality services to the citizens of Sierra Leone.

In line with the set goals and objectives of the MFR, the Review Team examined the institutional efficiency and effectiveness of MIC, assessed its mandate/vision/mission and proffered recommendations that will strengthen its Management and Functional capabilities and realign its operations, structure and functions within the context of the National Medium Term Development Framework. Given the fact that there is strong leadership commitment and political will for ICT to be a critical catalyst for the nation's development and for the transformation of the Ministry that is the primordial policy driving and implementing agency, the need for the MFR process is crucially important.

The MFR commenced with a preliminary consultative meeting held with the leadership and staff in the senior and Middle Management levels of the Ministry to discuss the overall management and functional issues of the Ministry and agree on the scope, methodology and timelines for the conduct of the MFR were discussed and agreed.

The review team realized from the outset that the Ministry enjoyed political will to implement cluster 8 sub component 8.9 dubbed "Communications for Development" of the National Medium Term Framework (2018-2023), that is specific to Information and Communications. This is reinforced by the fact that several transformative policies including the National Innovation Digitalisation Strategy are either being reviewed/validated or awaiting Cabinet approval. The review underlines critical efforts the Ministry is making to revolutionize/modernize Sierra Leone's ICT sector and ensure its operations and functions are aligned with contemporary trends. The review further noted the Ministry's determination to enhance its productivity, recalibrate its systems and processes and

reposition itself to ably handle its broad mandate, operationalize its responsibility carved out in the NMTDF.

1.1. Summary of Preliminary Findings

1.1.1. Structural and Operational System of the Ministry

The Review Team considers the following as most mentionable: 1. incomplete implementation of the existing Organizational Structure 2. Prolonged vacancies for critical positions 3. Increased levels of staff demotivation and dissatisfaction 4. General weaknesses in the Ministry's systems, processes and procedures and 5. High attrition rates.

Recommendations

The review team recommends the establishment of new directorates and units that will enhance its output and operationalize its policy directives. The review team further recommends: 1. the recruitment of competent staff 2. The clarification of roles, functions and reporting lines 3. Inter-departmental coordination and collaboration and 4. Strengthening of the Ministry's Policy, Planning and Monitoring and Evaluation functions.

Information and Communication Directorates: The review revealed that both Directors of Communications and Information acting as the Professional Heads of the Ministry are serving in acting capacities for prolong periods. The review further noted the disparities and distortions in remuneration and incentives evident by the fact that the ICT Directorate was comparatively better remunerated, which has left the Communications Directorate staff feeling undervalued and demotivated.

• Recommendations

We **recommend** that the Ministry solicits the expertise of HRMO and PSC to either recruit substantive Directors or regularize the positions of those in acting capacities. The review team further **recommends** the **creation of the position of Chief Director of Information, Communications and Technology that will be the overall** Professional Head of the Ministry and the chief technical adviser to the Minister. **We recommend that** the recruitment process for all existing vacancies and impending vacancies be fair, transparent, consistent with the Equal Opportunity Employment model.

- **We also recommend the establishment of the Directorate of Policy, Planning and Research:**

which will focus on research, developing and monitoring the implementation of the Ministry's strategic plan, evidence-based policy formulation, partnership building and strengthening processes. The directorate will collaborate with other directorates in the areas of policy/planning/research, strategic and operational planning, monitoring and evaluation.

1.1.2 Human Resource Management

The review team examined the HR functions of the Ministry, focusing on: recruitment and selection, training and career development and performance management.

The key issues identified were: 1. high staff turnover 2. lack of an effective succession planning mechanism resulting to high attrition rates 3. issues with career growth pathways 4. demotivation related to stagnation and 5. staff capacity gaps.

Recommendations

We **recommend** that the Ministry puts in place mechanisms to address its core HR challenges. In particular, the Ministry should: 1. Develop an effective succession plan 2. Develop a clear career growth path and 3. Invest in institutional and staff capacity strengthening.

1.1.3 Staff Recruitment and Selection

The review revealed that the Ministry is struggling with a relatively high attrition rate evident by its weak staff strength. The review further notes critical capacity gaps due to the lack of an effective recruitment and selection mechanism.

Recommendations

We **recommend** that the Ministry expedites recruitment processes for existing positions employing the Equal Opportunity Employment (EOE) model which impliedly levels the playing field for both internal and external candidates. We also **recommend** that the Ministry invests in staff development and ensures mandatory and career enhancement/enrichment trainings are available to staff on a periodic, predictable and fair basis. **We further recommend that** the Ministry in collaboration with Public Service Commission (PSC) and HRMO utilize the EOE model when recruiting for positions across cadre.

1.1.4 Training and Career Development

The review revealed that opportunities for professional development including external trainings are unstructured, misaligned and irregular. The review also revealed that the Ministry lacks an annual staff development plan from which an effective annual staff training needs assessment (TNA) mechanism could be derived.

Recommendations

We recommend that the Ministry makes the requisite critical investments in staff training across cadre. **We also recommend that** the Ministry transitions from engaging in ad-hoc, misaligned and irregular trainings, to having a structured staff development plan preceded by a training needs assessment.

1.1.5 Performance Management System

The review noted the concerns of the Ministry's staff regarding the Individual Performance Appraisal System (IPAS) system which they claimed to be subjective. The review further notes the inadequate training on the IPAS. The review also notes that the IPAS does not inform promotion as it is intended.

Recommendations

The review team recommends that the Ministry puts mechanisms in place that will restore confidence in the IPAS. **The team further recommends** training of staff across cadre on the IPAS to restore confidence and increase its usability. **The Review team also recommends** the development of an effective and fit-for-purpose staff performance management system that scientifically determines staff productivity and accordingly rewards high performers.

1.2.6. Records Management System

The review revealed that the Ministry's Records Management function is weak, evident by the fact that its archiving and retrieval/access mechanisms are fragmented and unsophisticated. The review team noted that the different Directorates and Units manage their respective records and data in silos, in the absence of a Central Information Management System. The review however revealed the existence of backup systems which the team hastens to caution are not the industry gold standard.

Recommendations

We recommend that the Ministry recruits a qualified **Records Management Officer** to strengthen the Ministry's records management function and spearhead the centralization of its information Management system. **We further** recommend that the Ministry builds the capacity of its staff across cadre in records management and digitization.

1.1.7. Information Communications Technology (ICT)

The Team noted that the Ministry is optimizing the use of its internet facility being the pioneer of fibre optic system. The review revealed that the Ministry being the institution of Government with the mandate and expertise to manage the country's ICT system, expectedly has a centralized ICT infrastructure with competent ICT Officers managing same. The review however, noted that though the Ministry has a reliable internet connectivity which contributes to information sharing, it lacks modernized ICT equipment that will optimize its ICT capability.

Recommendations

We recommend that the Ministry makes the requisite investments in modernizing its ICT capability, including the procurement of cutting-edge technology and a transition to contemporary ICT infrastructure and systems.

1.1.8. Logistics and Equipment

The review noted that the Ministry continues to grapple with logistics and equipment constraints with adverse impact on staff and institutional productivity. In particular, the review revealed gross inadequate office equipment, tools and furniture.

Recommendations

We recommend that the Ministry ensures logistics and equipment is prioritized in its annual budgetary and procurement plans to ensure the provision of the requisite logistics and equipment required by staff to perform at optimal capacity.

1.1.9. Office Accommodation

The review also revealed that the Ministry is grappling with accommodation challenges evident by the fact that staff are working in overcrowded spaces that are not congenial, and hinder productivity optimization.

Recommendations

We recommend that the Ministry makes the requisite investments that will address its accommodation challenges, including ensuring that staff are working in a spacious and congenial work environment both at Headquarters and in the regions.

1.1.10. Internal and External Communications

One of the principal functions and mandates of the Ministry is to ensure the effective and timely flow of information between the Government, the public and development partners.

It is against this backdrop that the following were assessed and accompanying findings noted:

1.1.11. Internal Communication

The review revealed that the Ministry's internal communication system is weak, thereby affecting team building and inter-directorate collaboration and coordination.

Recommendations

The review team **recommends** that the Ministry develops an effective internal communication mechanism that will foster inter-directorate partnership and collaboration and enhance team building. **We further recommend that** the Ministry: 1. ensure regular Change Management meetings, and 2. Ensure that information/action points/directives from same are cascaded.

1.1.12. External communication (Stakeholder)

The review revealed that though the Ministry's external communication strategy has been a critical mechanism for strengthening partnership and collaboration between the Ministry and its diverse stakeholders, notable gaps persist.

Recommendations

The team recommends that Ministry recalibrates its external communication strategy and conducts regular outreach activities across the country. **We also recommend that** the Ministry revives Sierra Leone News Agency (SLENA) which is one of its constituent agencies to further enhance its communications outreach functions. **Consistent with this recommendation, we recommend** the revitalization of SLENA and insulate its staff from being subsumed by the Ministry.

2.0 INTRODUCTION

The Public Sector Reform Unit (PSRU) provides leadership, co-ordination and strategic guidance in the design, implementation and monitoring of Public Sector Reform initiatives. Its Mission is to facilitate the creation of a lean, performance-oriented, highly motivated, modern and efficient Public Service that delivers high quality services to the people of Sierra Leone in a timely and cost-effective manner.

PSRU undertakes Management and Functional Reviews (MFRs) as an entry point to identify capacity, systems and process challenges affecting the performance of MDAs. The key objective of the MFRs is to ensure that systems and organizational structures are aligned with the National Development agenda. An inventory of the MFRs PSRU has undertaken MFRs for MDAs since its inception can be found at www.psrugov.sl.

Consistent with its mandate, PSRU undertakes Management and Functional Reviews (MFRs), which are the equivalent of institutional MRI Scans to examine the management and functional capabilities of Ministries Departments and Agencies (MDAs) to effectively deliver on their mandates. Accordingly, the MIC requested the conduct of a MFR to assess whether it has the management, functional and operational capabilities to deliver communications and ICT-related public services in an efficient and timely manner and whether it has the wherewithal to perform at optimal capacity.

The MFR process includes an inception meeting during which PSRU and assessed institution, in this instance, MIC will agree on the scope, methodology, timelines and focal person(s) for the exercise.

2.1 Aim, Objectives, Scope and Methodology

Aim

To assess the Ministry's institutional fitness and wherewithal to deliver on its mandate and where gaps are identified, proffer recommendations to plug them.

Objectives

- To review the responsibilities as well as the management functions of the Ministry.
- To review the Ministry's administrative procedures, processes and facilities to determine efficiency and effectiveness of the Ministry in delivering on its Mandate.

- To examine the organizational structure for adequate and coherent reporting
- To examine the human resource capacity with a mind-set on staff competences and productivity.
- To identify gaps and challenges within the management and operational function of Ministry to be able to effectively handle their human resource issues.

Scope

- The MFR process targets the entire spectrum of the MIC's management and functional capabilities including examining whether its organizational structure and functions are structurally aligned with the National Medium Term Development Framework (NMTDF). The scope extends to both HQ and the regions as applicable.

2.1.1. Methodology

The review commenced with an inception meeting, which was chaired by the Minister and attended by the Permanent Secretary and Directors of the various divisions on the 23rd March, 2019. The aim of the inception meeting was to discuss and agree on the methodology that will be employed. Consistent with practice, the mixed methods will be utilized which includes structured and semi-structured interviews: Focus Group Discussions (FDGs), Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) and desk reviews.

2.2 SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS

2.2.1 Issues and Concerns

The Government of Sierra Leone recognizes Information, Communications and Technology as key drivers of socio-economic transformation and development, which is why, the ICT Sector is regarded as one of the critical engines for growth and development. As tangible evidence of the political will this sector enjoys in this present dispensation, H.E. the President, Dr. Julius Maada Bio established the Directorate of Science, Technology, and Innovation (DSTI) in the Office of the President. This is based on the strong conviction that the future of the global economy is digital, and that technology, innovation and e-governance are the channel through which Sierra Leone will expedite its socio-economic development.

Cognizant of its catalytic effect on national development, government has expectedly prioritized ICT in its national development paradigm and is making the critical investments and legislative and policy reforms required to endear Private Sector investment in the sector. Further reaffirming

GoSL's commitment to ICT, President Bio on 21 August, 2019 during the launch of National Digital Identity Platform stated "it provides us with a proactive medium through which our public institutions can verify identities with certainty thus significantly curbing corruption and graft on government payrolls, benefits, and social safety net programme payments". Government's commitment to ICT sector was reinforced during several dialogue sessions held by the Minister of Information and Communications, including the Wednesday 14th August, 2019 session which focused on building the country's Cyber Security architecture, competence and legislative framework, which is hoped will culminate in the enactment of a Cyber-Security legislation.

On the Occasion of the State Opening of the Second Session of the Fifth Parliament of the Second Republic of Sierra Leone, on Thursday, 2nd May, 2019, H.E. the President re-affirmed his commitment to improving Information, Communication and Technology in Sierra Leone, stating "the growth and development of an electronic transaction Sub-Sector (e-Commerce) requires a stable and predictable legal and regulatory framework that should ensure trusted online and secure transactions". He furthered that "the Ministry has developed a National Electronic and Transaction Bill which he added was at the publication stage (Gazette) and will be submitted to Parliament for enactment" which another tangible proof of the significant mileage that the government has covered in restructuring, revolutionizing and repositioning the country's ICT sector and capability. Still touting this Bill, the President noted that once enacted, it will enhance admissibility of electronic document/evidence in legal proceedings thereby promoting e-Commerce and improving the country's rating in the World Bank Doing Business Reform and financial transactions rankings.

Through the provision of strategic oversight/supervision and facilitation of critical policy and legislative reforms, the sector has markedly improved and expanded evident by the fact that the government, banking, transportation and agribusiness sectors are now incrementally dependent on ICT. An environmental scanning and deep dive analysis of nation's ICT transformation revealed that:

- The nation's fibre optic cables have been deployed, operationalized and enhancing mobile penetration across the country in extraordinary ways.
- The ICT sector has been modernized across the spectrum from infrastructure to connectivity.
- The information and communications sector's transformation is holistic and systemic and that the sector is experiencing watershed reforms which includes the nomenclature change

it benefitted from in 2007, when the Ministry's name was changed from the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting to the Ministry of Information and Communications in 2007. This, according to sector experts, has put the Ministry on a positive growth trajectory and positioned it /shift the communication paradigm to include ICT.

- The penetration rates have been generally low whilst prevailing market prices have been uncomfortably high and in certain contexts prohibitive with accompanying adverse consequences on “de-monopolization” and market expansion efforts.
- The media landscape has been over fragmented, being that news sources have become ubiquitous (social media) and hard to navigate with the advent of fake news, misinformation, hacking and a myriad of cyber-related issues and crimes.
- That even though sector-wide challenges persist, there are several bright spots including the fact that the sector has remained resilient and is playing critical roles in the nation's development including in ensuring that: 1. the nation's development becomes ICT-driven 2. the ICT Sector is recalibrated, revolutionized and repositioned to serve as a critical catalyst for development through e-governance, e-commerce/e-economy cyber-security, digitization and e-learning.

2.2.2 Key Stakeholders of the ICT Sector

There is general consensus between the Ministry's political and technical leadership that ICT is critical to the development of a vibrant/competitive industrial and services sector. They also believe in the truism that to optimize investments in ICT, there should be accompanying effective policies and robust regulatory frameworks that will enhance coordination and collaboration between and amongst the diverse sectoral stakeholders. Consequently, the Ministry has scaled up its technical oversight and monitoring and supervision functions of relevant stakeholders and constituent agencies to mitigate duplication of resources and efforts on the one hand, and ensure roles are delineated and clarification on the other. As part of its transformation and modernization efforts, the Ministry has created several new policies and regulations including the recently launched National Innovation Digitalisation Strategy by H.E. the President on Friday, 1st-November, 2019. This launch, is another critical milestone to nation's long journey to digital transformation and takes the government steps closer to achieving its goals of e-governance, e-commerce, e-education and cyber-security.

MIC works with diverse stakeholders investing in ICT both at the governmental and private sector levels. Like others, the MIC has strategic and supervisory oversight responsibility over a range of constituent agencies as indicated below:

1. Independent Media Commission (IMC)
2. Right to Access Information Commission (RAIC)
3. The National Telecommunications Commission (NATCOM)
4. Sierra Leone Postal Service (SALPOST)
5. Sierra Leone News Agency (SLENA)
6. Sierra Leone Telecommunications (SIERRATEL)
7. Government Printing Department (GPD)
8. The Sierra Leone Broadcasting Corporation (SLBC)

The mandate and functions of each of these highlighted agencies are synopsized below.

2.2.3 The Independent Media Commission (IMC)

The Media in Sierra Leone is regulated by the Independent Media Commission (IMC) which was established by the IMC Act No. 12 of 2000 being an Act to establish an autonomous body for the regulation of mass media institutions and for other matters connected therewith.¹

Its members are appointed by the President “acting on the advice of SLAJ and subject to the approval of parliament”; according to the Independent Media Commission (Amendment) Act of 2006. The IMC provides an alternative to pressing charges under the Public Order Act 1965; aggrieved parties can register complaints with the commission, which grants them a hearing. If the IMC agrees that a complaint of libel, defamation, or falsehood is valid, it can request that the offending media outlet publish a retraction and an apology, or it can levy a fine on the outlet. The IMC can also summon editors at its own discretion.

2.2.4 Right to Access Information Commission (RAIC)

The Right to Access Information Commission (RAIC) was established in 2014 following the enactment of the Right to Access Information Commission law by Parliament of the Republic of Sierra Leone on 29th October, 2013. Its Statutory Mandate includes promoting access to information held by or under the control of public authorities, whilst also obliging the private sector

¹ The Independent Media Commission Act No. 12 of 2000.

to disclose information to the general public if that information is required for the protection or enforcement of any right. The Commission is also mandated to promote proactive disclosure of information and enforce measures to promote openness by forging partnerships with all stakeholders including Government institutions, national, and international partners. The Commission as a result has established a multi-stakeholder council to facilitate and monitor compliance of all public institutions to disclose information in a proactive manner.

The Commission is an independent institution, subjected to the directions or control of no person or authority in the performance of its operational and administrative functions as stipulated in the Act. The Commission has the powers of the High Court to administer Oaths, undertake investigations of appropriate matters, and enter any premises in the conduct of investigations, order the release of information and impose fines, imprisonment or both. It also has the powers to monitor and report on the compliance by authorities and make recommendations for reform, both to the general public, cooperate with or undertake training activities for public authorities on the right to Access Information Act 2013.

2.2.5 The National Telecommunications Commission (NATCOM)

The Commission was established by an Act of Parliament in 2006, as amended in 2009. The Commission comprises a Chairman and six others who are appointed by His Excellency the President, subject to the approval of Parliament. It was established to “license and regulate the activities of telecommunications operators so as to promote efficiency and fair competition, and the expansion of investment in the telecommunications sector; the protection of the users or consumers of telecommunications networks and services and the progressive development of the telecommunications industry and technology in Sierra Leone”. Under this arrangement, the Commission also currently collects revenue through its licenses. In other words, its main function of the Commission is to license and regulate the activities of telecommunications operators so as to promote efficiency, fair competition, expansion of investment in the sector, development of the sector and the protection of users of telecommunications networks and services. The Ministry makes ICT policies which should be applied by all, including the Commission.

Section 10 of the above Act also guarantees the independence of the Commission from any interference from Government and it clarifies the relationship between the Commission and the Ministry responsible for Communications (section 11). The Ministry’s role is focused on policy

formulation for this sector and creating an enabling environment for the industry to thrive. Although the Commissioners are appointed by the President, this does not affect its independence. Commissioners are approved by Parliament and the administrative and management arrangements are guaranteed through a three-year tenure of office for Commissioners and other senior management staff. At present, there is no national communications policy to reflect the Government's position on communications and provide guidance to the Commission.

2.2.6 Sierra Leone Postal Service (SALPOST)

The history of the Sierra Leone Postal Service started as far back as 1841 and the first General Post Office at Gloucester Street today known as SALPOST in Freetown was established in 1853. It is now a limited liability company since the 1st July, 1990 under the Companies Act CAP 249 of the Laws of Sierra Leone to carry out, as a profit-making body, the exchange of letters, packets and parcels in the country and the rest of the world. The Government holds 100% of the share capital.

The service is intended to be self-sufficient, with profit returned to Government, but this has not been the case for many years. The destruction of much of the postal infrastructure in the war deprived a large part of the populace of access to postal services. Coupled with the low level of literacy (15%) and the growth of electronic means of communication, the competitiveness of SALPOST has been severely undermined. However, SALPOST has potential to re-establish its services.

2.2.7 Sierra Leone News Agency (SLENA)

SLENA is a semi-autonomous agency established by a legislative instrument in March 1987 with the mandate to increase access to information with the use of modern communications device and techniques. The institution, from inception, was determined to develop free and pluralistic media, aimed at promoting democracy and the development of the News Agency across Africa.

SLENA used to function as a news wire service by gathering and selling information to deserving organizations, including international organizations such as the Associated Press (AP), United Press International Agency (UPIA), France Press (FP) and Reuters. SLENA also supplied news to the Pan African News Agency (PANA) to enable the latter to disseminate news and information aimed at correcting what was then perceived as biases, imbalances and distortions prevalent in the Western Media against Africa.

SLENA's professional Head is recruited by the Public Service Commission and its semi-autonomy/independence is guaranteed by its establishing legislation and functional relationship with the Ministry. Although the agency receives financial support from and shares information with the Ministry, it does not have to account to the Ministry for any of its publications. The Managing Director is indeed a Civil Servant but has complete responsibility for the running of the agency like any other press house. This is designed to ensure that unlike the GIS which gathers and disseminates government information, SLENA gathers and disseminates information on all sectors of life providing an unbiased and politically neutral perception of things in Sierra Leone. Its news items are supposed to be bought by International News Agencies, foreign missions and Non-Governmental Organizations but this rarely happens.

2.2.8 SIERRATEL

This institution is 100% owned by Government. The institution has entered into a Management Contract with Management and Development International Company (MDIC). The objectives of the Management Contract are to improve the internal management systems and controls of SIERRATEL; improve the efficiency, productivity, customs service delivery, capacity building and overall financial and operational performance and ensure that systems and processes are developed and put in place. The contract is for a duration of three years. The Ministry should study the management contract in detail and liaise with the National Commission for Privatization to ensure that the benchmarks are met.

2.2.9 Government Printing Department (GPD)

It was established on May 15, 1980 as part of the implementation of the Interpretation Act 1971. The GPD is an integral part of the Ministry. It was established in the colonial era and is responsible for all Government printing including White Papers, Bills, Acts and Regulations, other legal documents, Gazettes, government accounting documents, documents that require security in the printing process, government publicity and educational documents, including exercise books.

The Department has sole responsibility to implement government policies regarding printing, stationery supplies, gazette of publications and regulation, classified and accountable documents for the effective operations of all ministries and departments. GPD is responsible for the provision and maintenance of an effective method of information dissemination and ensuring that printed materials on government policies are made accessible to every citizen through the print media. The

Department is an independent institution, subjected to the directions or control of no person or authority in the performance of its operational and administrative functions as stated in the Interpretation Act, 1971. It also undertakes Commercial Printing for Parastatals and the General Public and the revenue generated is collected by the National Revenue Authority.

2.2.10 The Sierra Leone Broadcasting Corporation (SLBC)

The SLBC was established by Act. No. 8 of 2009 to be a Public Broadcaster that will open its doors to all Sierra Leoneans irrespective of tribe, religion, political affiliation and the like. It is also charged with the responsibility of disseminating the aspirations, achievements and challenges of Government.

3.0 BACKGROUND TO THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS

The Ministry is one of the oldest Ministries of the Government of Sierra Leone dating back to the colonial period. It was established to gather and disseminate information on Government activities and programmes. In 2007, the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting was renamed “The Ministry of Information and Communications” in a bid to widen its scope and activities to include ICT. Following this development, the Ministry was re-branded, its scope widened and activities regenerated to include Information, Communications and Technology. With the emergence of ICT as the engine of growth in modern day economy, the Ministry has grown in scope and importance.

The Ministry is the primary stakeholder of ICT related policies and is tasked with overseeing the development, review and implementation of the Government’s information and communications agenda. The Ministry has mandated the preparation of ICT Policy document and is responsible for its regular review and update.

As Government business and the need for increased service delivery grew, the capacity of the Ministry to effectively perform the expanded functions became questionable. New institutions and management structures had to be developed, resulting in the hiving-off of some of the functions originally performed by the Ministry. Despite this shift, the Ministry still maintains an outdated structure that does not reflect its current operational functions, and therefore considerably impedes its efficiency. We recognize this shift in function and the existing structure, and have accordingly recommended an organogram reflecting the mandate of the current Ministry of Information and Communications.

Associated with the structural incongruity is the problem of lack of human resource capacity in the Ministry. This has been compounded by the recent addition of new units to the existing Ministry. Implicitly, effective management and development of the human resource capital remains one of the major challenges faced by the Ministry. It lacks a comprehensive structural organogram, personnel deployment plan, and training plan.

3.1 Mission Statement

“To provide the people of Sierra Leone with reliable and timely public information; promote the development of information and communications infrastructure; and ensure the availability of accessible, efficient, reliable and affordable ICT services with the purpose of enhancing the quality

of life of the people of Sierra Leone and contribute to the socio-economic development of the country.

3.2 Vision Statement

- To transform Sierra Leone into a competitive and prosperous country, through the development, expansion and innovative use of information and communications technologies.

3.3 Statutory Framework

The Ministry draws its mandate from Section 56 of the Constitution (referring to the Assignment of Responsibilities to Ministers and the President) and by the Gazette 2002. There is separate legislation for Sierra Leone Broadcasting Service (SLBS) now the Sierra Broadcasting Corporation (SLBC), the National Telecommunications Commission (NATCOM), Sierra Leone Postal Service Ltd (SALPOST) and Sierra Leone Telecommunications Company Ltd (SIERRATEL) all of which are in the portfolio of the Ministry.

3.3.1 Mandate

The mandate of the ministry is to:

- Provide policy guidance and strategic direction on all matters concerning the media, access to public information, broadcasting, telecommunication, postal service and information communication technology.
- Facilitate universal, ubiquitous and cost-effective access to information and communications infrastructure and services throughout the country.
- Promote the utilization of ICT in all spheres of life to optimize the accelerated socio-economic growth and development through dissemination of public information and provision of innovative information and communication technologies.
- Formulate and implement policies of information and communications technology
- provide press and information services to Government ministries and Departments, locally and externally.

3.4 The Overarching Structure of the Ministry

The two main professional directorates of the Ministry are the Directorate of Information and the Directorate of Communications, each headed by a Director.

The Directorate of Information is responsible for all mass media and public education activities, while the Directorate of Communications is responsible for ICT related activities. The Ministry also has the Administrative wing headed by the Permanent Secretary, who is the vote controller and Chief Adviser to the Minister on all matters relating to policy development and implementation, strategic planning and administration. He liaises with, and relies on, Heads of the other Directorates for as-needed technical backstopping.

The main functions of the Ministry are:

- To ensure, through the office of the Government spokesperson, that all institutions of Government work collaboratively to achieve coherent and effective communications with the public
- To prepare and produce publicity and information materials and disseminate public information locally and internationally.
- To print legal, security and accounting documents as well as educational and general publicity materials for government and semi-government institutions;
- To speak on behalf of the Government
- Develop appropriate policies and strategies that enhance provision of innovative information and communication technology.
- Spearhead the development of appropriate regulatory frameworks that facilitate the promotion and development of the information and communication technology (electronic media, broadcasting, postal services and IT) sector.
- Champion and promote ICT literacy and utilization in the country in order to enhance regional and international competitiveness.
- Promote and coordinate national ICT research and development.
- Develop supportive and enable infrastructure to ensure equitable access to ICTs by all citizens including disadvantaged groups and rural communities.
- Create a conducive environment for investment in the areas of ICTs through public private partnerships.
- Represent the Government of Sierra Leone on all matters relating to the ICT sector.

3.4.1 Office of the Government Spokesperson

One of the functions of the Minister is the role of Government Spokesperson. He is assisted by a professional Assistant Government Spokesperson, two press officers and an administrative assistant. The Office assists the Minister in coordinating the information flow from the public to the government and vice versa. They prepare daily briefings for the President and organize press conferences on specific issues of concern to the Government and the general public. The Office liaises with GIS and SLENA and is currently the Webmaster for the State House website. It is also developing the Government website for all ministries.

3.4.2 Structure of the Ministry

The political head of the Ministry is the Minister who is supported by a Deputy Minister. The Permanent Secretary is the administrative head and principal adviser to the Minister. The Administrative wing is comprised of a Deputy Secretary, a Senior Assistant Secretary, two Assistant Secretaries, a Procurement Officer, an Accountant, a Staff Superintendent, Graded Clerks and two Messengers.

The Professional Heads are the Directors of Communications and Information.

3.4.3 The Communications Directorate

The Communications Directorate has a Director of Communications; two Deputy Directors, one for policy and the other for e-Governance; seven Chief Technology Officers; 16 ICT Managers, fifteen Senior ICT Officers, Nine ICT Officers, twenty-four Assistant ICT Officers, twenty-three IT Technicians Level 1 and fourteen I. T Technicians, Level II. However, a good number of ICT officials have been posted to other MDAs.

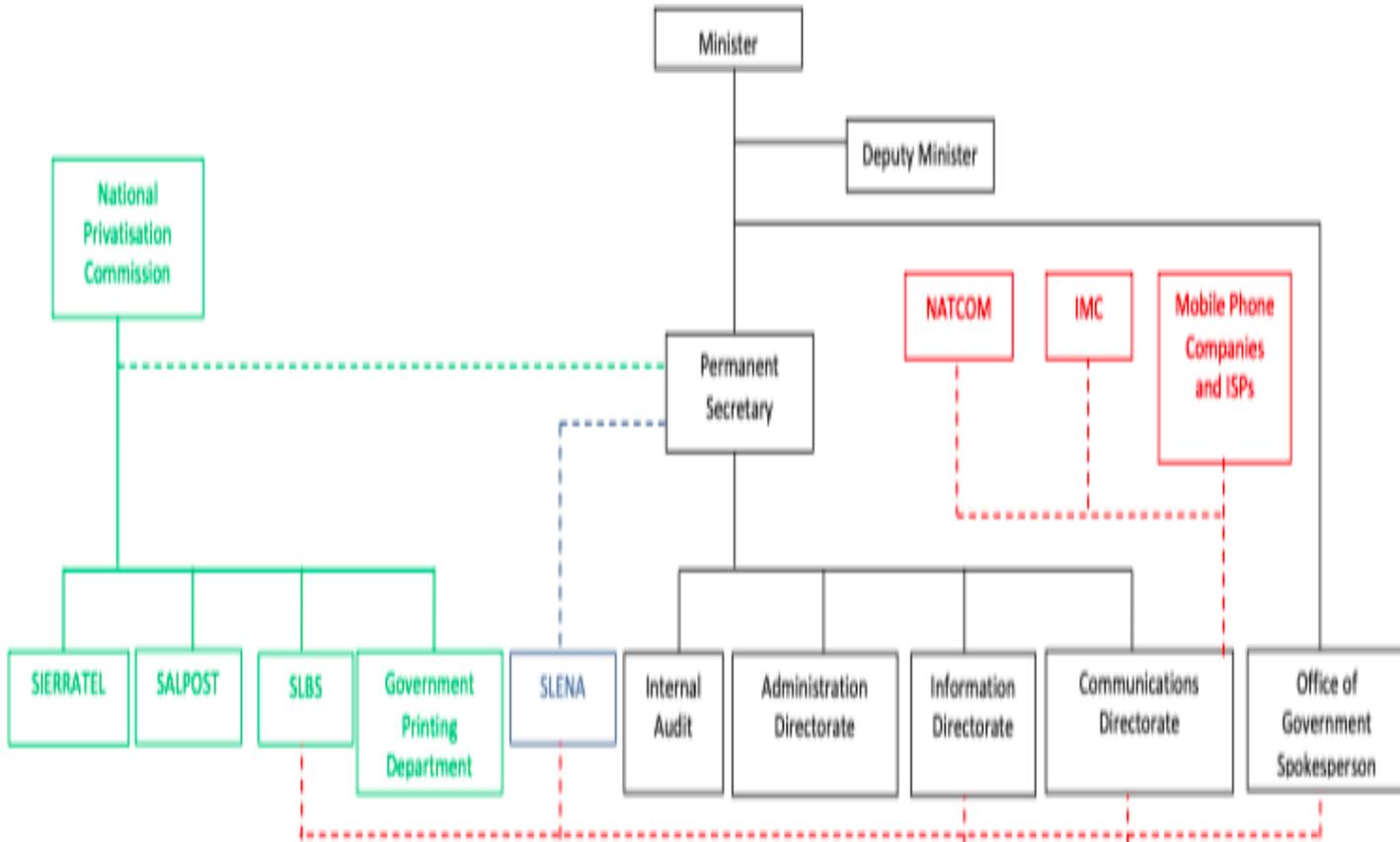
The Communications Directorate develops and manages Government's website. It liaises with NATCOM and IMC on matters of Communications strategy and policy development in order to ensure that the views of the Regulators and those responsible for implementation are heard. It also liaises with the mobile phone companies and internet service providers. There is an ICT Council chaired by His Excellency the President. The work of the Council is facilitated by the Director of Communications. In the past, it was hard to attract and retain ICT experts in the Civil Service, but with the salaries being enhanced, the Ministry is attracting, but more importantly retaining staff at the ICT Cadre. This is mentionable, considering the fact that critical projects such as the: West African Regional Communications Integrated Project, WARCIP; ECOWAS Regional Backbone

Infrastructure, e-Governance, ECOWAN Sierra Leone; National Optical Backbone are under the Ministry's remit.

3.4.4 The Information Directorate

The Information Directorate is responsible for the dissemination of Government Policies, aspirations, achievements, challenges and future plans to the citizenry, done primarily through the media. It holds weekly Press Conferences on Thursdays which provides the platform for effective engagement, constructive dialogue and interfacing with the Press and other critical stakeholders.

CURRENT ORGANOGRAM



KEY:

Under the direct control of the Ministry ———

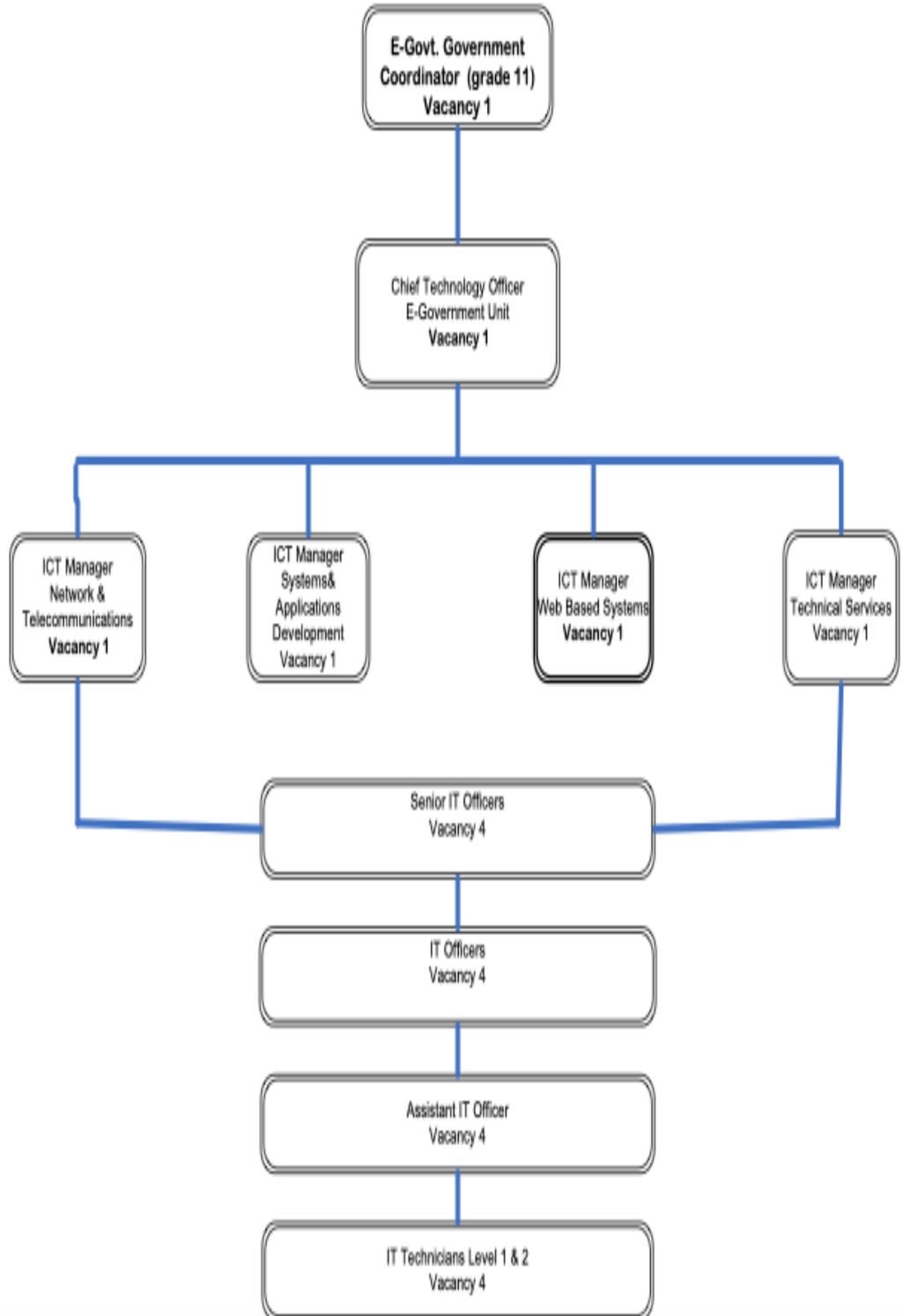
Semi autonomous. Supervisory control by Ministry ———

Liaison arrangements ———

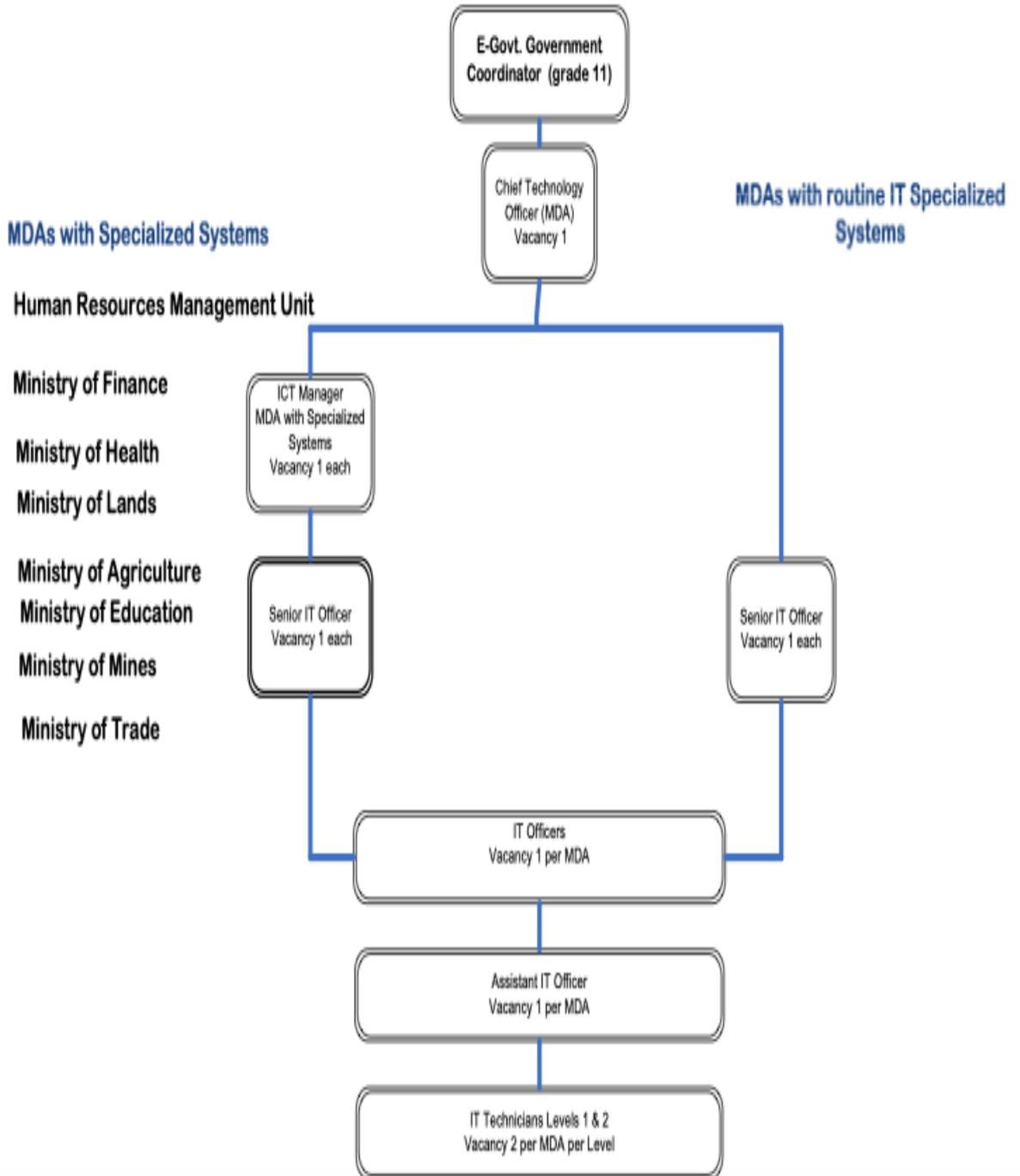
Under the management of the Privatisation Commission, Ministry retains some responsibility ———

Functions	Functions	Functions	Functions
Internal audit	Human resources; Finance; Procurement; Clerical and other support	Information gathering and dissemination Introducing electronic methods; Management and training of IOs; Liaising with Office of Government Spokesperson	Planning of communications strategy; Evaluating policy; Management of Govt websites; Development of e-Governance; (NCS Project will be integrated into this Directorate)

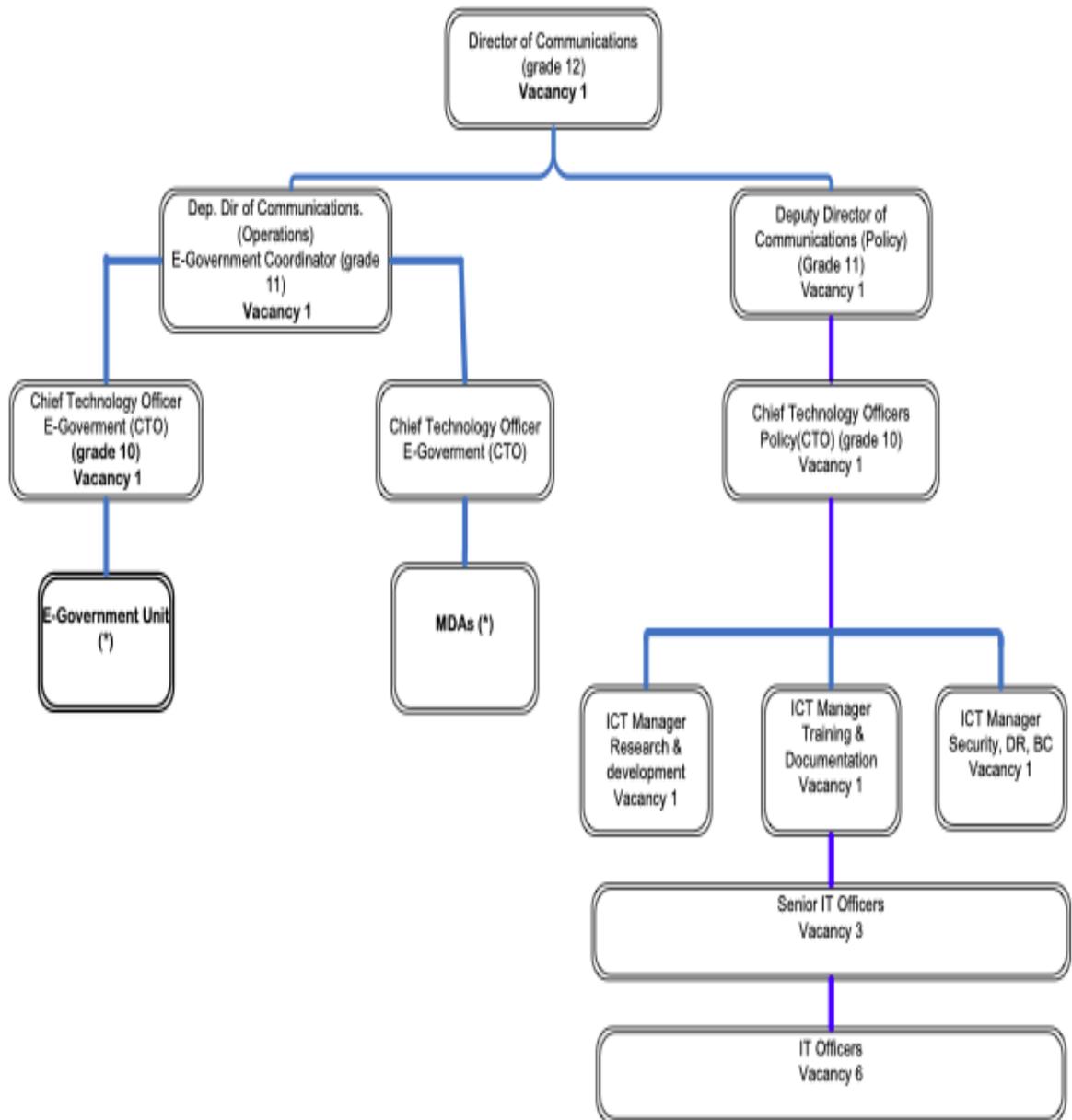
**MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS
ORGANOGRAM OF THE E-GOVERNMENT UNIT**



**MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS
ORGANOGRAM OF THE E-GOVERNMENT UNIT**

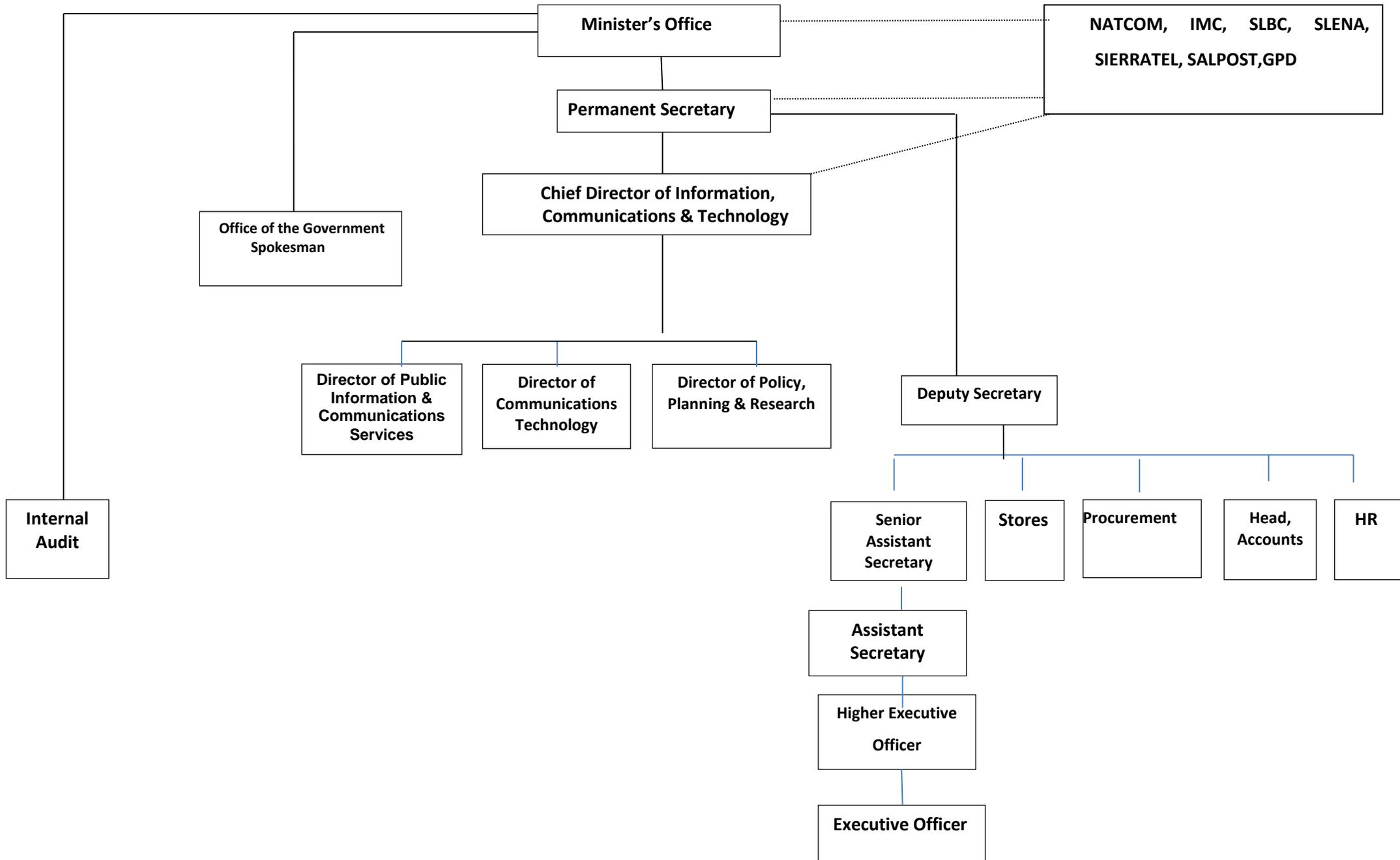


**MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS
ORGANOGRAM OF THE DIRECTORATE OF COMMUNICATIONS**

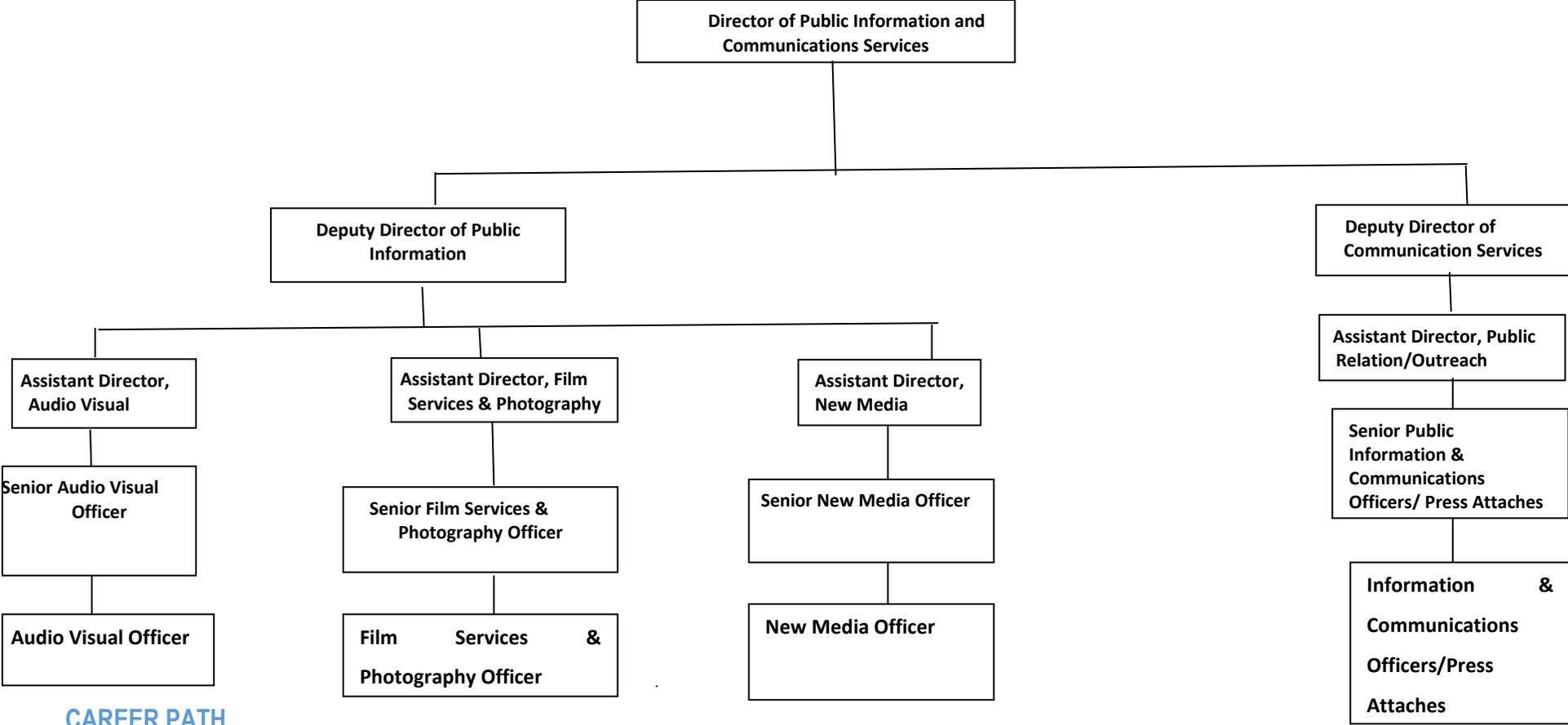


(*) see separate organoram for each MDA and e-Govt Unit

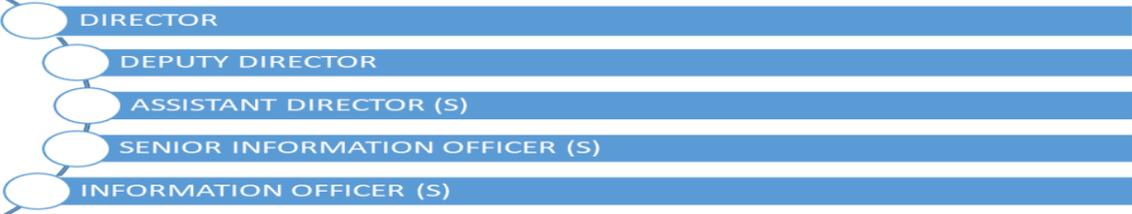
PROPOSED ORGANOGRAM OF THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS



PROPOSED ORGANOGRAM FOR THE DIRECTORATE OF PUBLIC INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION SERVICES



CAREER PATH



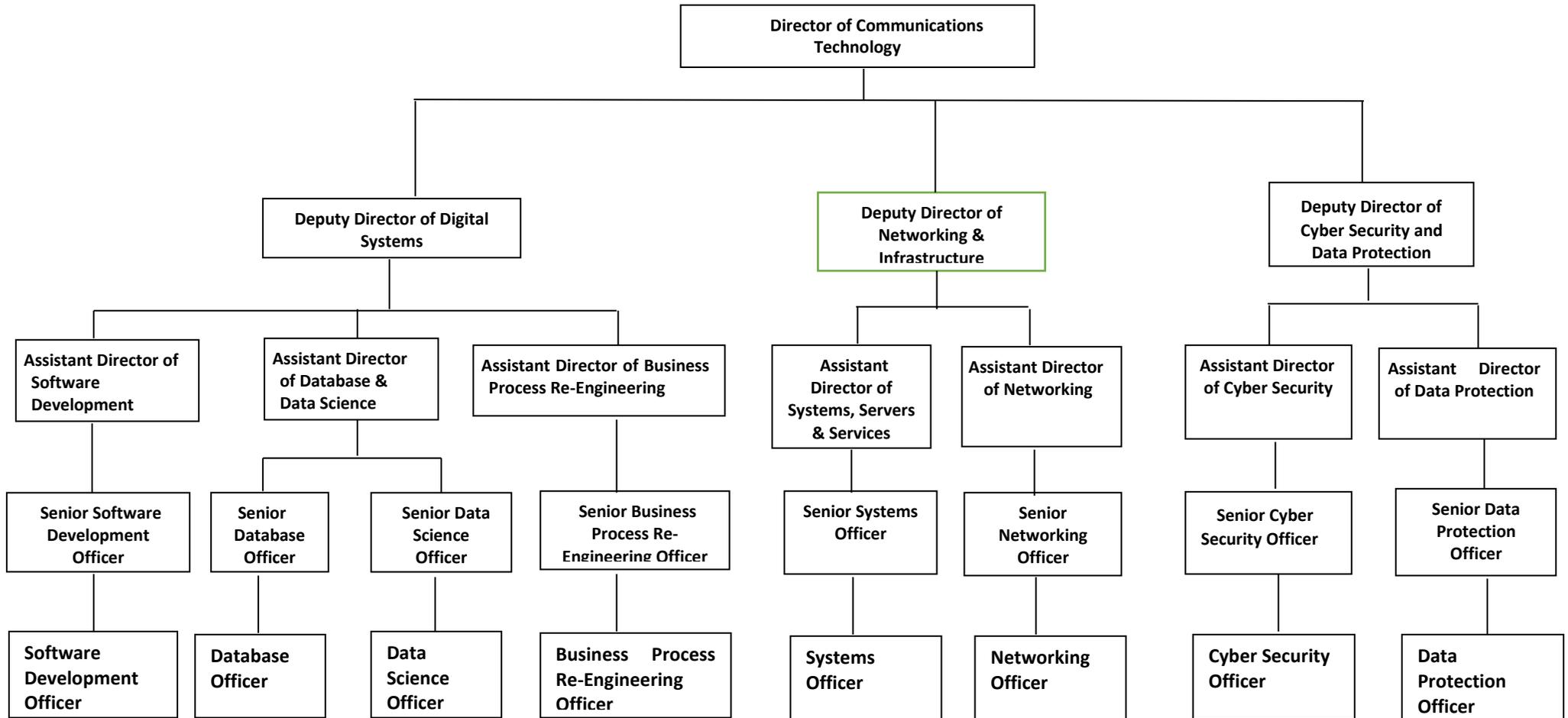
The Directorate of Public Information and Communication Services

This Directorate is tasked with spearheading the dissemination of information to the people through print and electronic media. In this era of information technology having free flow of information, the Directorate has a challenging role to play. Audio-visual, pictorial and press coverage of all activities of the President, and Ministers both at home and abroad.

Functions

- The formulation of sectoral policies and legal and legislative frameworks
- Coordination of Publicity activities of the different Ministries/Departments/Agencies and Sierra Leone Missions abroad.
- Strengthen partnership and collaboration with the media.
- Preparation and release of communiques, press notes, handouts, etc.
- Spearhead the Interpretation and dissemination of policies and activities of the Government through the media
- Serve as the Ministry's adviser on media relations.
- Serve as the mechanism through which government is apprised of public opinion of its policies and programmes.
- Provide policy guide on the Administration of Press and Publication Law.
- Provide policy guide on the Administration of Radio and Television and all other matters relating to broadcasting through SLBC radio & Television.
- Provide policy regarding government advertisement and press releases.
- Facilitate public education and outreach on government activities at community level.
- Preparation of Foreign Media Accreditations.
- Serve as focal point for censoring and screening of Films.
- Analysis and interpretation of public opinion as reflected in the national media.
- Administration of Cinematograph Act
- Sanctioning of Cinematograph films for exhibition
- Liaise with International Organizations on media related treaties and agreements.

PROPOSED ORGANOGRAM FOR THE DIRECTORATE OF COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY



CAREER PATH



Digital Systems

Software Development Unit

This unit is tasked with designing and developing appropriate and modern software solutions to enhance Government service delivery. This is in line with Government efforts to harness current and emerging technologies in responding to the needs for improvement, optimization, modernization, and simplification of public sector activities, operations, and processes to ensure accelerated national development.

Functions

- Lead the design and development of software solutions
- Develop modern and user-friendly interfaces for government digital products
- Ensure conformity to design and security standards
- Maintain software systems throughout their lifespan
- Testing and release software versions
- Ensure high availability of government digital products
- Train users on how to use systems developed
- Review feedback from end-users to improve software quality

Networking and Infrastructure Unit

Networking and Infrastructure form the base for Information and Communication Technologies and services to thrive. Infrastructure includes the Hardware, Networks and Services required for other systems, services and applications to be deployed and accessed by the end users.

Functions

- Collaborate with the Infrastructure Company to ensure effective and efficient Internet Services across government (MDAS)
- Design, implement and support networks (WAN, MAN) required for e-services to be deployed across government
- Ensure adequate infrastructure required for hosting government services (Datacenter Services)
- Ensure adequate security mechanisms to protect government data and infrastructure
- Provide efficient support mechanisms to minimize downtime and optimize service provision
- Support MDA Infrastructure in terms of design and policies for smooth integration with national infrastructure.
- Support national infrastructure projects by ensuring maximum benefit for Government.
- Create process documentation/workflows and self-service guidance for IT Services
- Collect and document business requirements for project and process improvement/automation efforts
- Facilitate process workflow modelling in order to collaborate on process improvements, automation capabilities and clearly defined end-to-end use cases
- Review information and trends to ensure that the output of processes achieve the desired results and that services conformed to agreed service levels
- Conduct assessments against the process activities to highlight areas of improvement or concerns
- Identify issues and risks
- Identify inconsistencies and problems for the attention of management

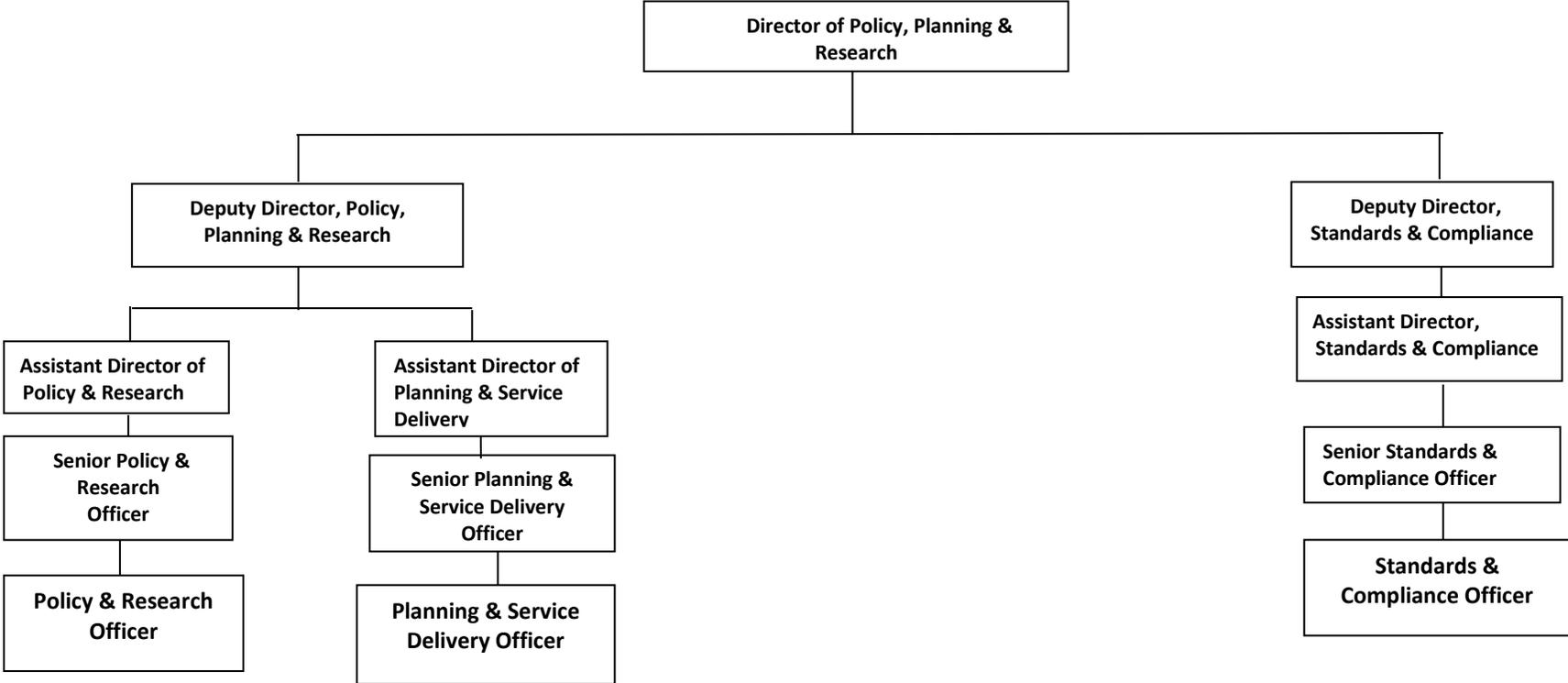
Cyber Security and Data Protection Unit

This unit will be responsible for the development, implementation, administration, analysis and reporting in relation to database and data science activities/projects for the Government of Sierra Leone.

Key Functions:

- Development of System Requirement Specifications for database and data science projects.
- Development of User Requirement Specifications
- Development of databases (RDBMS and Big Data)
- Administration of Databases and Big Data infrastructures
- Implementation of Integration Services
- Development of Analysis Services
- Development of Reporting Services
- Work with software team to develop database driven applications
- Collaborate with Cyber Security constituents on Cyber Security related matters

PROPOSED ORGANOGRAM FOR THE DIRECTORATE OF POLICY, PLANNING AND RESEARCH



CAREER PATH



Directorate of Policy, Planning and Research

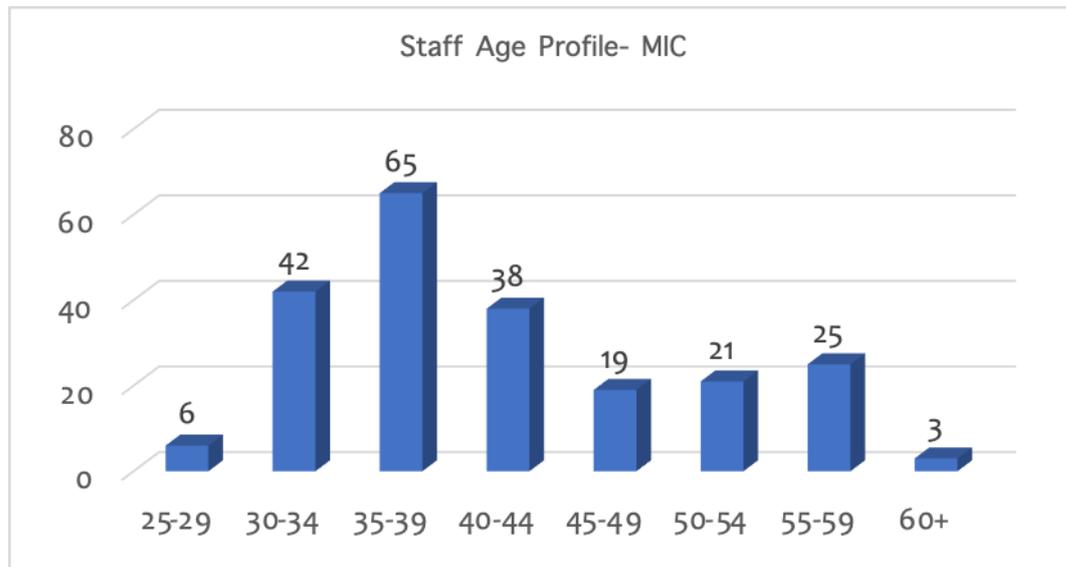
We are making a case for the establishment of the **Directorate of Policy, Planning and Research** as a matter of urgency, to focus on research, devising and driving the strategic plans, foster evident-based policy development process, and also helping to design strategies for the Ministry in close collaboration with other directors and sectoral players. The Policy, Planning and Research Directorate will be feeding other directorates with evident based information to help design strategies and devised implementation plan. Under the supervision of the Director of Policy, Research and Planning, there will be Standards and Compliance unit.

Key functions of the division are:

- Review and update the National ICT Policy, National Information Policy and an accompanying Strategic Plans:
- Create the necessary policy framework to accommodate for the convergence of the Information Technology and Communication sectors.
- Conduct periodic environmental scanning of the ICT sector which will inform wide ranging sectoral decisions.
- Promote universal access to basic ICT services and ensure that tariffs are competitive.
- Responsible for the implementation of the laws and develop or update regulations in relation to the law as and when necessary
- Work closely with NATCOM in regulating the industry
- Set frameworks and standards for the development of software applications for government.
- Establish operational policies and other relevant standards pertaining to ICT for Government
- Provide for integration of all Electronic Government applications and databases through the use of established software and database standards
- Enforce standards and procedures pertaining to the administration and management of software and other related systems throughout Government.
- Provide policy, programmes and project advice
- Utilize information available for the general development of the Ministry
- Coordinate and supervise monitoring and evaluation of the Ministry's projects and programmes
- Organize studies on sectoral issues
- Collate and analyze data relating to the Ministry
- Design policies for the effective dissemination of information
- Develop policies to provide access to electronic public information and services

3.5 STAFF AGE AND PROFILE

Figure:1



Source: staff list of MIC, 2019—name axis

Fig. 1 above depicts the age ranges and demographical data of staff as per staff list provided. The analysis reveal that the ages of staff range from twenty- five years to over sixty, implying there are those within the retirement age bracket of sixty.

In summary:

- Three (3) staff members (1.4%) fall within sixty or over age bracket
- Twenty-five 25 (11.4 %) fall within the age range 55-59 years implying they are to hit the retirement age of 60.
- Twenty-one (21) staff members (9.6 %) fall within the age bracket 50-54
- Nineteen (19) staff members (8.7%) fall within the age range 45-49
- Thirty-eight (38) staff members (17.4%) fall within the age range 40-44 years totaling
- Sixty-five (65) staff members (29.7%) fall within the age range 35-39 years
- Forty-two (42) staff members (19.1%) fall within the age range 30-34 years
- Six (6) staff members (2.7%) fall within the age range 25-29 years

These statistics reveal the need for an effective succession plan to mitigate retirement-related attrition rates.

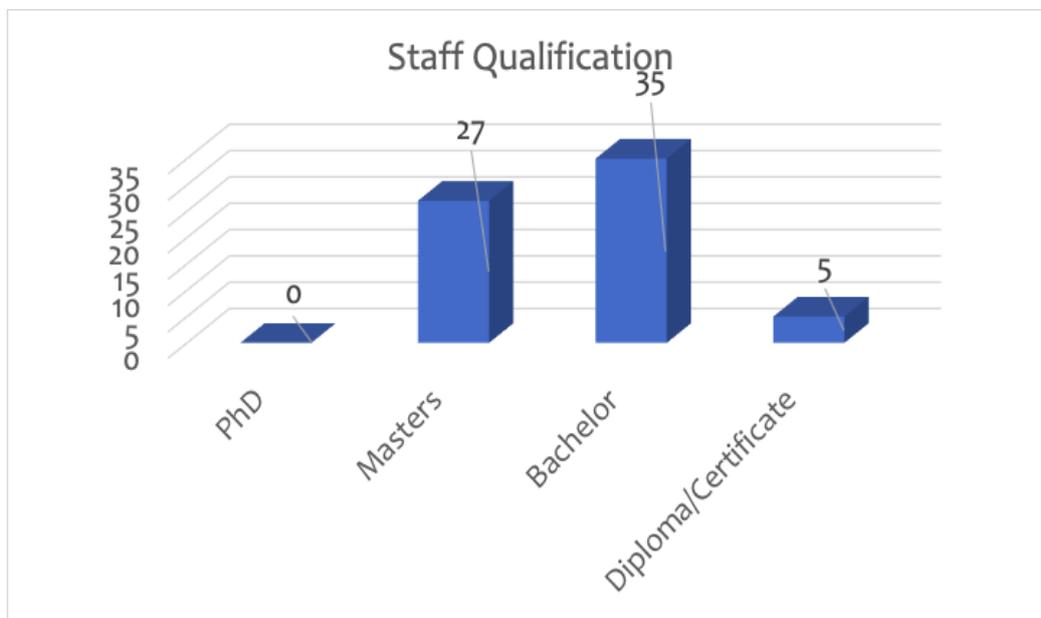
Recommendations

We **recommend** that the management develops a fit-for-purpose succession plan that will strategically position the Ministry to mitigate challenges the impending retirements may pose.

3.5.1 STAFF QUALIFICATIONS

Sixty - seven (67) staff members indicated their qualifications on the current staff list submitted to the Review Team. The data provided by the Ministry of Information and Communications is shown in figure 2 below and provides the categories of qualification:

Figure 2: Staff Qualification



Source: staff list of MIC, 2019

In summary:

- Twenty-seven (27) staff members possess postgraduate degrees/masters out of the sixty-seven staff that indicated their qualifications totaling about 40.3 %.
- Thirty - five (35) staff members possess bachelor's degrees totaling about 52.2%.
- Five (5) staff members hold Diploma or certificate in different fields of study totaling about 7.5%

The available data represents information provided by the Ministry to the review team.

4.0 SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS, ANALYSIS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 Cyber Security Issues and Concerns

The review team noted that though there is political will to address both policy and legislation relating to cyber security, there is yet very little public attention and awareness on same. The Review further noted the following:

- The general lack of public knowledge about national cyber-security issues including attacks and its implication on national security.
- Low private sector interest or intervention in every spectrum of cybersecurity
- The lack of an effective cybersecurity monitoring and oversight mechanism
- Low awareness of the multiplicity and severity of risks related to data protection and Cyber Security. This is important in view of the ubiquity of the internet and pervasiveness of social media (fake news/misinformation and hacking)

4.1.1 Recommendations

- We **recommend** that the cybersecurity unit is strengthened and remains a permanent outfit within the **Directorate of Communications**. We also recommend the enactment of a legislation and legal framework to enhance the units work. **We recommend** that the Ministry embarks on effective public education, awareness raising and information sharing on Cyber Security and data protection.
- We **recommend** that MIC spearheads and facilitates inter-sectoral dialogue and strategic tripartite engagements between the relevant stakeholders, the Office of the National Security (ONS), and Cyber Security Unit of the Police. As part of the implementation of this recommendation, we also **recommend** the need to strengthen the Cyber Security monitoring mechanism.
- We **recommend** that MIC encourage the Cyber Security Unit of the Sierra Leone Police to strengthen its investigative mechanism. We further recommend that the Ministry strengthens the capacity of sectoral players and security institutions in cyber security.
- We **recommend** that the MIC identifies ICT officers attached to MDAs to provide skills transfer and technical backstopping in the areas of Cyber Security, Data Protection and cybercrimes prevention. Such trainings should also be cascaded to Local Councils as well as District and Chiefdom Security Committees across the country.

5.0 PROMOTING PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP AND SMEs

Despite the well catalogued ICT-related challenges, there is a general consensus that it is a critical catalyst for Sierra Leone's Socio-economic development. This is evident by the fact that the legislative, policy and implementation frameworks for effective ICT service delivery are underway. The review further revealed that as the crucial importance of ICT in national development has been established, so has the need for intervention diversification which should include a triad of models namely: Government, Public-Private-Partnership (PPP) and Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs).

The review however notes that processes to develop the nations ICT infrastructure and diversify its intervention approaches are yet to crystalize.

5.1 Recommendations

- We **recommend** that the Ministry develops a strategy that fosters the PPP and SME models
- We **recommend** that the Ministry encourages and promotes local research, development and production of competitive ICT products and services. We also **recommend** that the Ministry provide incentives to academic institutions to enter into collaborative ICT-related research with foreign universities. Part of this should include the development of a nationwide academic network in ICT Research and Development to facilitate the acquisition, adaptation and dissemination of new developments in ICTs.
- We **recommend** that MIC collaborates with other sectoral players to promote the active participation of SMEs and other Private Sector Financial and stakeholders in the ICT industry. Part of this will be to promote PPP to accelerate the development and implementation of ICT policies as well as the necessary legal and technical standards to support widespread electronic readiness.
- We further **recommend** that the Ministry networks with other stakeholders of the ICT sector to lobby for the reduction of taxes on the importation of ICT equipment and related accessories.

5.2 Oversight function of Constituent Institutions

The New Direction Agenda and its progeny the National Medium Term Development Framework (NMTDF 2018-2023) is the current blueprint for the country's development. This document identifies key institutions, to which it assigns pillars, or contextually speaking clusters for which they are responsible in line with their respective mandates/functions.

The Ministry has strategic oversight and supervisory authority over a number of institutions that are critical to the operationalization of the Medium Term National Development Plan. For the country's

ICT capability to be enhanced and eventually optimized, the Ministry needs to scale up not just its oversight functions, but also its collaboration/partnership and coordination functions.

In particular, the review team notes that the Ministry lacks an effective system to mitigate the duplication of roles and functions within and amongst, not just the constituent agencies, but more importantly critical intra/inter-sectoral players. The team noted the need for the Ministry to be providing complementary support and technical backstopping to ensure all spectrum of ICT, including Cyber-Security are implemented and managed effectively. Amongst several others, the most mentionable are the Ministry of Finance, the Sierra Leone Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC), the Office of the National Security (ONS), and the Cyber Security Unit (CSU) of the Sierra Leone Police Criminal Investigation Department (CID), and mix of development partners.

Recommendation

The review team recommends that the Ministry strengthens its collaboration/coordination and partnership mechanisms with the diverse intra and inter-sectoral players in the ICT space. The team relatedly recommends that the Ministry considers exploring technical backstopping in especially Cyber-security from the private sector and development partners. The team also recommends that the Ministry puts in place mechanisms for resource sharing and pooling throughout the sector. To this end, the Team consequently recommends the establishment of two mechanisms, one strategic and one operational, namely an ***ICT Steering Committee and an ICT Technical Working Group***.

5.3 Structural and Operational System of the Ministry

The review revealed that in order for the Ministry to perform at optimal capacity and deliver effectively on its mandate, its management and functional capabilities must not be weak and its organizational structure must be well aligned with the NMTDF. The review further highlighted the need for the Ministry to engage in systems/processes and procedures reengineering and enhance its technical oversight and supervisory mechanisms. The review revealed the need for the Ministry to shift the paradigm from operating a nomenclature-oriented organogram to one that is functions-oriented. The review also indicated the need to establish new directorates, units, and cadres with a view to enhance decision-making, remove the blurs in reporting lines, strengthen the mechanisms for oversight, supervision, monitoring and evaluation and policy design and implementation.

In particular, the following were noted:

- That two acting Directors have served in acting capacities in excess of the stipulated six months and should either made substantive Directors or their positions advertised².

² The Civil Service Code, Regulations and Rules

- That the Ministry failed to fully implement its existing organizational structure, which adversely impacts the entire spectrum of its smooth operations and functioning, especially its HR area.
- That the Ministry's recruitment and performance evaluation processes could be fairer and more equitable.
- That the Ministry is understaffed and overstretched resulting in its suboptimal performance and low staff morale.
- That the Ministry's internal controls; internal and external communication; inter-departmental collaboration, oversight and supervisory mechanisms are weak.
- That there are functional overlaps between the Ministry and DSTI in the Office of the President.

Recommendations

The team recommends as follows:

- **Directorate system:** We recommend that the present **Directorate system** be maintained but should benefit from the structural reengineering process and its functions aligned with the proposed organogram. **We further recommend that** its management, supervisory, intra and inter-departmental coordination and collaboration functions be strengthened.
- **Chief Director of Information and Communications Technology:** We recommend that the Ministry establishes the position of **Chief Director of Information and Communications Technology** that will be responsible for the supervision of the respective Directorates. He/she will be the professional head of the Ministry and the principal adviser to the Minister on technical matters, whilst the Permanent Secretary continues to be the Administrative Head, principal adviser and Vote Controller of the Ministry. **We further recommend that** the recruitment process employs the Equal Opportunity Employment (EOE) model which will ensure fairness and equity.
- **Directorate of Policy, Planning and Research:** We recommend the establishment of the **Directorate of Policy, Planning and Research** which will focus on research, strategic and operational planning, and policy development and implementation management. We further recommend that this directorate be given the free hand to spearhead and institutionalize evidence-based research and reporting and, strengthen the Ministry's Standards and

Compliance function. **We therefore recommend** the establishment of Standards and Compliance Unit within the Directorate.

- **Information and Communications Directorates:** We **recommend** that the Ministry, in collaboration with the HRMO and PSC put in place mechanisms to either regularize the positions of the Directors in acting capacities that are in excess of 6 months as per the Civil Service Code, or trigger processes that are fair, to recruit substantive Directors for the two Directorates.
- **Cyber Security and Data Protection Unit:** We recommend the recruitment of a seasoned and competent cyber security expert that will spearhead the strengthening of the Ministry's Cyber-Security and Data Protection function and provides effective technical and strategic leadership of same.
- **ICT Networking and Infrastructure:** **We recommend that** the Ministry makes the requisite critical investments in strengthening its ICT networking and infrastructure which is currently under-developed and has limited coverage capacity. **We further recommend that** the Ministry promotes the development and deployment of integrated multi-platform ICT infrastructure to facilitate public access to information and services; in view of its potential to modernize and expand the country's information and communications infrastructure and catalytic effect in enhancing the country's universal access to quality services. We **recommend** that this technical Unit be managed by a highly competent ICT professional who will leverage his/her skills and networks to ensure the nation's ICT networking and infrastructure is modernized, accessible and resilient.
- **Standards and Compliance:** We recommend the establishment of a Standards and Compliance Unit that will serve as the Monitoring and Evaluation outlet of the Ministry. Considering the slew of impending ICT-related policy and regulatory reforms and initiatives, the Team recommends that the Ministry enhances its capability in Standards and Compliance.
- As it relates to mandate/functional confluences between Ministry and DSTI, **We recommend the development of an effective/robust partnership building and strengthening mechanism that** will increase collaboration, skills transfer, joint project implementation and resource pooling and sharing between DSTI and the Ministry as both are critical to operationalizing and popularizing the President's vision of ICT modernization and integration.

5.4.1 Human Resource Management

The review team thoroughly assessed the Ministry's HR functions with particular attention being paid to: recruitment and selection; training and career development; performance management and feedback mechanism.

Recruitment and Selection

- The review revealed instances in which the recruitment and selection processes failed to employ the Equal Opportunity Employment (EOE) model which fosters non-discrimination/equality and fairness with effects on efficiency and staff morale.

Training and Career Development

- The review revealed that the Ministry lacks a structured career development/staff capacity strengthening mechanism evident by the fact that there was no annual staff development or Training Needs Assessment (TNA) plan.

Performance management and feedback system.

- The review revealed that the Ministry's performance management and feedback mechanism is weak and that the IPAS lacks fairness, objectivity and insufficient training.

High Staff Turnover

- The review revealed that the Ministry lacks a staff retention strategy and is consequently grappling with high staff turnover rates due to the following: low wages and salaries, irregular training opportunities, the existence of a weak staff motivation and welfare mechanism, the lack of clear career growth pathways and the lack of a succession plan to tame retirement-related attrition rates.

The review team accordingly proffers the following recommendations:

Recruitment and Selection

- **The review team recommends** the utilization of the EOE model when recruiting for positions across cadre to ensure equity and fairness. **We further recommend that** the Ministry ensures all recruits have the requisite skills and required qualification(s) for positions across cadre.

Training and Career Development

- **The review team recommends that** the Ministry develops a blueprint for staff development/ capacity building which includes Training Needs Assessment Plan.
- **We also recommend** that all senior personnel of the Ministry benefit from leadership and management trainings that will enhance their supervisory, performance management and feedback and coaching and mentoring skills.

Performance management and feedback system.

- The review team recommends that the Ministry engages HRMO which is the government agency in charge of Performance Management of Public and Civil Servants to strategies on ways to improve the performance management mechanism and process.

High Staff Turnover

- The review team recommends that the Ministry develops a fit-for-purpose staff retention strategy and a succession plan that addresses all retirement-related attrition rates. **The team further recommends that** the Ministry develops a clear career growth path.

5.5 Records Management System

The review revealed poor Records Management practices in the Ministry evident by the fact that data storage, transfer, synchronization and retrieval systems are weak. The review in particular noted that all Directorates and Units manage their respective records and data in silos without a centralized information management system. The review however noted the existence of electronic backup systems which are at the moment the only data storage mechanisms utilized amidst legitimate concerns about their efficacy

Recommendations

We **recommend** that the Ministry recruits a qualified **Records Management Officer** to spearhead reforms relating to records management. We also **recommend** that the Ministry creates a Centralized Information Management System (CIMS) and develops an accompanying policy that will transition the Ministry from paper-based to a digitized records management system. **We further recommend that** the Ministry provides the requisite records management training to critical staff and ensures those trainings cascade. **The team further recommends that** records management best practices are operationalized and institutionalized in the Ministry. The review

team also recommends that the Ministry considers upgrading from the traditional electronic backup systems, to more sophisticated systems.

5.5.1 Information Communication Technology (ICT)

The review revealed that the Ministry is expectedly utilizing its internet facility optimally being the pioneer of the fibre optic. This has improved the reliability and consistency of internet access and enhanced electronic communication flow throughout the Ministry. The review also noted that the Ministry being the main institution of Government with mandate and expertise to manage the nation's ICT system, has capitalized on this and acquired a centralized ICT infrastructure with competent ICT Officers that manage the ICT system across MDAs.

5.6 Logistics and Equipment

The Review Team observed the lack of essential logistics and equipment for staff to carry out their functions effectively. The review revealed shortage of computers, accessories, office furniture and essentials all of which are critical to the optimization of productivity and performance.

Recommendations

We **recommend** that the Ministry makes the necessary investments in procuring logistics (vehicles and motor bikes) and equipment (computers and accessories) required for staff to efficiently carryout their tasks.

5.7 Accommodation

Generic to Public Sector institutions, the review revealed that the Ministry is grappling with accommodation issues. In particular, the review revealed oovercrowding and a working environment that is not congenial for productivity optimization as the two most critical issues.

Recommendation

In view of the above, we **recommend** that the Ministry improves on it accommodation facilities and put mechanisms in place for adequate office space for staff across the spectrum.

5.8 Internal and External Communication

The principal function and core mandate of the Ministry is to enhance the flow of the communication and interfacing between the Government and public on the one hand, and between the government and sectoral players/stakeholders/development partners on the other. The review

indicated that the Ministry is making strides to engage the Public through its weekly Press Briefings and other tools in its external communication tool kit.

5.8.1 Internal Communication

The review also revealed that though the Ministry is leveraging its enhanced ICT infrastructure and relatively reliable internet connectivity to enhance its internal communication, a cross section of senior management officers highlighted the challenges affecting effective internal communication system and team building. To be specific, the review highlighted the absence of a communications strategy that serves as the blueprint for the Ministry's internal and external communication.

Recommendations

- We **recommend** that the Ministry develops a communication strategy that will serve as the blueprint for its internal and external communications.
- We further **recommend** that the Ministry establishes a platform that will enhance its internal communications flow vertically and horizontally.

5.8.2 External communications (Stakeholders)

- The review revealed that even with the Ministry lacks an effective communication strategy, evidence indicates the Ministry's efforts in strengthening its external communications.
- Amongst others, the review notes:
 - The existence of an effective external communication mechanism that guides its outreach and other cross-cutting information sharing.
 - The existence of a mechanism through which the Ministry engages the public on Government policies and in particular those relating to the country's strides in modernizing its ICT infrastructure
 - The existence of an effective community outreach platform that the Ministry utilizes to effectively communicate government policies.
 - That the Ministry as part of its restructuring process, has dissolved the Attitudinal and Behavioral Secretariat (ABC) which has transformed into a new Outreach Coordination Unit (Strategic Communications Unit) at the Ministry. This Unit, which is tasked exclusively with public education and awareness on Government policies and strategies, has increased citizen's awareness of government policies and programmes, and participation in governance as a whole.

Recommendations:

- We recommend:
 - That the Ministry further strengthens its external communication mechanisms and conducts regular nationwide outreach activities.
 - That MIC leverages some of its constituent institutions with particular reference being made to SLENA, to enhance the Ministry's outreach functions.
 - That consistent with the previous recommendation, the Ministry facilitates the instant relocation of SLENA, a move which will symbolize, if not reinforce its independence.
 - That the Ministry scales up its efforts and interventions in establishing platforms and mechanisms for policy communication. The Ministry should also consider diversifying avenues and avenues for taking the government to the people and vice-versa.
 - That the Outreach Communications Unit (Strategic Communications Unit) should be subsumed and its staff mainstreamed into Information Directorate which is recognized structure of the Civil Service and mandated outlet for the articulation of government policies/programmes/activities.

Summary of Documents Reviewed

The undermentioned authoritative documents were reviewed to better understand the Ministry's Mission, Vision and management and functional capabilities to effectively execute its mandate:

- Strategic Plan
- Annual Work Plan
- Monthly Payroll Details
- Human Resource Plan with Job descriptions and Scheme of Service
- Civil Service Training Policy
- Published materials from websites.
- The Government Technical Transition Report
- Audit Reports
- Any other published and unpublished Official Government documents

ANNEX 1 - LIST OF PEOPLE CONSULTED

1. Mr. Augustine Sahr Sheku – Permanent Secretary
2. Mr. Mohamed M. Jalloh – Ag. Director of Communications
3. Mr. Emmanuel A.B. Turay – Ag. Director of Communications
4. Mr. Mohamed P. Jalloh – Senior HR Officer & focal person
5. Mr. James K. Cobba – Chief Technology Officer, Communications Directorate
6. Mr. Morie Saffa – National Coordinator Cyber Crime
7. Mr. Osman Kanu – Deputy Secretary
8. Mrs Mariatu W. Jalloh – Senior Information Officer
9. Mr. Unisa Dumbuya – Senior Procurement Officer
10. Ms Mariatu Yormah – ICT Manager
11. Mr. Gabriel Ndoenje – Cyber Advisor
12. Mr. Densil Crowther - Chief Technology Officer
13. Mr. sheku Sackoh Turay – Information Officer
14. Mr. Kelli Koroma – ICT Manager
15. Mr. Nyakeh Yormah - Chief Technology Officer E-Governance
16. Mr. Edward K. Yankson – current Permanent Secretary
17. Mr. Bashiru Coomber – current Ag. Deputy Secretary

ANNEX 2 - MANAGEMENT AND FUNCTIONAL REVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE

Senior Management Officers

The purpose of this questionnaire is to determine the nature of the overall strategy and structure of the MDA to enable the MFR team to identify key issues and determine the approach to further research and interview. Please complete questions as thoroughly as possible. A member of the Review Team will be available to answer questions and assist as necessary. Please use additional paper to provide answers if necessary.

NAME OF MDA:.....

NAME OF POST HOLDER:

DEPT/ UNIT:

JOB TITLE:.....

LOCATION:.....

DATE:

TEL (MOB/LAND):

EMAIL.....

Please answer the following questions as comprehensively as possible. If there is insufficient space to answer fully any question, please record your name and relevant additional comments on the last page or on a separate sheet of paper and attach it with you name and number.

SECTION A: MANDATE, MISSION AND VISION

1. How is your mandate helping to address the current and foreseeable challenges with respect to service delivery?

2. To what extent is your mandate in line with the development priorities of the GoSL?

3. What are the issues and concerns that requires urgent attention with respect to your mandate?

SECTION B: FUNCTIONS

4. Please list the main functions of the department, division or unit within the MDA for which you are responsible. (Add additional sheets if necessary).

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____
- d. _____
- e. _____
- f. _____
- g. _____

5. How is the annual work plan developed and monitored? (Please use additional sheets if necessary)

6. Please state any operational problem(s) encountered in carrying out the functions of your department, division or unit within the MDA.

7. How could procedures, processes and systems be improved upon to address these problems and improve performance and service delivery?

SECTION C: COORDINATION AND INTERNAL RELATIONS

8. Which other departments/divisions/units within the MDA you collaborate with in the performance of your functions?

9. What is/are the difficulties (if any) do you experience (including overlaps or duplications of effort).

10. What can be done to improve areas of collaboration with other departments/divisions/agencies/units:

11. Do you/or your department/agency have regional offices? Yes /No
If yes, please indicate?

12. Please explain your recruitment process.

13. What are the general human resource issues or problems your dept/unit is experiencing?
(staff strength, retention, turnover, capacity etc).

14. Do you have grievance reporting Mechanism? If yes/no, please explain.....

Staff Training, Promotion and Career Development

15. What mechanism do you have in place for promotions and career development?

16. Do you have a training and capacity building policy? If yes; please briefly state what the policy says about staff training and capacity development,

17. How do you identify employee training and development needs?

18. Please provide a list of training(s) you or staff within your dept/unit or the institution in the past 3 years

19. How do you appraise the performance of staff?

20. How many people have gone on retirement since the past twelve months? (Aggregate by gender)

21. How many people have been recently promoted in line with your career development plan?

Records Management

22. What system do you have in place for Records' Management?

23. How is this system helping to ensure institutional productivity?

24. What other challenges are you experiencing with respect to Records Management?

25. What do you think should be done to ensure effective Records' Management system contribute to institutional productivity and service delivery?

SECTION F: ICT, AND STAKEHOLDER/CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT

1. Current IT Equipment Capacity in your unit/dept

Essential Equipment		Current Condition				Number Needed
Type	Available	Good	Needs Repair	Obsolete	Not Available	

2. What IT facilities do you need to ensure operational efficiency?

3. Please provide a justification for additional IT facilities?

4. Do you have an effective communication strategy? If yes, please provide...

5. Do you perform oversight function to other Agencies? If yes, explain...

6. Please provide the list of the Agencies under your supervision.....

7. How can communication be improved upon to enhance service delivery?
Internally

a. With other MDAs

b. With your key clients/ primary beneficiaries

c. With the general public?

8. How does the public communicate their interest and/or concerns to your MDA?

9. Please state any challenges in your interaction with any of your stakeholders/partners/clients/general public.

10. How can communication be improved upon to enhance service delivery?

d. Internally

e. With other MDAs

f. With your key clients/ primary beneficiaries

g. With the general public

SECTION G: FINANCE, BUDGETING AND PROCUREMENT

11. Please state any sources of revenue generation by your unit/dept

12. Do you set annual revenue target? Yes/no (if yes, please state).

13. If yes, how much have you been able to generate for the past three (3) years?

14. How do you normally account for the revenue generated?

15. Is your Agency/Commission part of the Annual Budgetary process organized by Ministry of Finance? Yes/no

16. If no, explain the budget formulation process including any challenges your unit/dept have experienced in the past?

17. Explain the processes used for procuring goods, equipment, and services in your unit/dept

SECTION H: ACCOMMODATION AND OFFICE SPACE

18. How spacious is the Office?

19. How many officers to an office?

20. What other general issues and challenges with respect to accommodation do you have?

PLEASE PROVIDE ANY ADDITIONAL INFORMATION THAT COULD HELP THE REVIEW TEAM TO UNDERSTAND YOUR MANAGEMENT AND OPERATIONAL FUNCTIONS

Thank you very much for your cooperation

ANNEX 3 - MANAGEMENT AND FUNCTIONAL REVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE

Junior Management Officers

The purpose of this questionnaire is to determine the nature of the overall strategy and structure of the MDA to enable the MFR team to identify key issues and determine the approach to further research and interview. Please complete questions as thoroughly as possible. A member of the Review Team will be available to answer questions and assist as necessary. Please use additional paper to provide answers if necessary.

NAME OF MDA:.....

NAME OF POST HOLDER:

DEPT/ UNIT:

JOB TITLE:.....

LOCATION:.....

DATE:

TEL (MOB/LAND):

EMAIL.....

Please answer the following questions as comprehensively as possible. If there is insufficient space to answer fully any question, please record your name and relevant additional comments on the last page or on a separate sheet of paper and attach it with you name and number.

SECTION A: FUNCTIONS

1. Please state your job description/job roles and responsibilities.

2. Please state any operational problem(s) you often encounter in carrying out the functions of your department, division or unit within the MDA.

3. How could procedures, processes and systems be improved upon to address these problems and improve performance and service delivery?

SECTION B: COORDINATION AND INTERNAL RELATIONS

4. What is/are the difficulties (if any) do you experience (including overlaps or duplications of effort) with other division or units within the MDA.

5. What can be done to improve areas of collaboration with other departments/divisions/agencies/units:

SECTION C: ORGANISATION/ OPERATIONAL STRUCTURE

6. In terms of supervision, who do you report to?

7. Who report to you? If there is any?

SECTION D: STAFF PROMOTION AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT

8. What are the opportunities offered to you in the past three years?

9. How many trainings have you undergone in the last three years?

10. How were your capacity development needs identified?

11. How was your performance over the year/years appraised?

12. How many years have you spent in your current position?

13. Have you had any promotion since the past five-ten years? If no, please explain...

14. Have you benefited from any grievance reporting mechanism? If yes/no, please explain....

SECTION E: RECORDS MANAGEMENT

15. What system do you have in place for Records' Management?

16. How is this system helping/enhancing your productivity?

17. What other challenges are you experiencing with respect to Records Management?

18. What do you think should be done to ensure effective Records' Management system contribute to institutional productivity and service delivery?

SECTION F: ICT

19. What IT facilities do you need to perform effectively?

20. How effective is your internet connectivity?

SECTION H: ACCOMMODATION AND OFFICE SPACE

21. How spacious is your Office?

22. How many of you to an office?

23. What other general issues and challenges with respect to accommodation do you have?

PLEASE PROVIDE ANY ADDITIONAL INFORMATION THAT COULD HELP THE REVIEW TEAM TO UNDERSTAND YOUR MANAGEMENT AND OPERATIONAL FUNCTIONS

Thank you very much for your cooperation