



## Gender and Equity Responsiveness in the Ministry of Public Service: What were the interventions for FY 2018/19?

### Overview

Uganda adopted the National Gender Policy (NGP) in 1997, and it was revised in 2007. The Policy requires that all ministries develop gender mainstreaming guidelines and specific gender commitments aimed at achieving three objectives. These include:

- i) Minimizing inequalities in terms of participation of men and women at all levels of decision making.
- ii) Achieving women's and men's empowerment to enable them fully engage in their governance.
- iii) Transforming management systems, policies and administrative rules, structures, organizational cultures and accountability mechanisms to achieve equal and effective participation.

Accordingly, the Ministry of Public Service (MoPS) developed Human Resource (HR) Guidelines on gender mainstreaming in the Public Service in 2011. This is a guiding tool to effect gender mainstreaming in ministries, departments and agencies (MDAs), and local governments (LGs), while being spearheaded by human resource managers. However according to HR gender monitoring assessments for FY 2018/19, dissemination, implementation and technical support was minimal in both MDAs and LGs; as a result, gender and equity issues remain a challenge in MoPS.

This briefing brief assesses Gender Responsiveness in the MoPS, focusing on gender commitments for FY 2018/19. It also looks at the challenges and proposes policy recommendations.

### Key Issues

- The MoPS Strategic Plan and HR policies are gender blind e.g. the Public Service Training and Archives policies.
- Poor dissemination and implementation of HR gender mainstreaming guidelines in MDAs and LGs.
- Lack of gender focal point persons to spearhead the gender aspects in MoPS.
- Lack of breastfeeding centres in MDAs and LGs, and flexible working hours for mothers.
- Inadequate funding, resulting in non-development of specific gender work plans, performance targets and indicators.
- Lack of capacity building and technical support in implementation of policies on gender and equity issues, especially in the newly created districts.

### Introduction

The Ministry of Public Service (MoPS) is responsible for providing strategic and managerial leadership on all matters of human resource in Uganda's Public Service at the national and local government levels. This mandate is fulfilled by formulating and implementing enabling laws and policies; and sustaining, managing and overseeing systems, procedures and staffing structures of the entire Public Service.

The Ministry of Public Service and the Public Service Commission (PSC) are responsible for ensuring the mainstreaming of gender and equity considerations in matters of recruitment, induction, remuneration, mentoring, capacity



development, promotion, deployment, performance assessments, human resource planning, and discipline.

At the LG level, the human resource managers under the Chief Administrator Officers' (CAOs) Office, and the District Service Commissions (DSC) in LGs undertake the human resources management responsibilities. The PSC, as well as the MoPS provide technical guidance, and support, monitoring of compliance with policies, laws, and regulatory and practice frameworks.

### Gender and Equity Issues in Public Service

- 1) Limited knowledge among HR Specialists, line managers and District Service Commissions of laws, policies and HR management best practices with a gender and equity perspective. This is evident in all MDAs and LGs, especially in the newly created districts.
- 2) Limited availability of support mechanisms to enable women effectively balance their multiple gender roles and career development. For instance, in most MDAs and LGs, there are no breast feeding centers, and opportunities for flexi-time for breast feeding mothers.
- 3) Lack of gender and equity focused performance management standards to guide the reporting process in MDAs and LGs.
- 4) Limited capacity to analyze disaggregated data where it exists at institutional level and make it available in a timely manner to inform strategic choices. All capacity building initiatives in MoPS and the Civil Service College lack gender disaggregated data.
- 5) Lack of a gender and equity responsive human resource planning framework. The

recently developed National Human Resource Planning and Development Framework has no gender considerations.

- 6) Corruption in the pension payroll management affects the most vulnerable, poor and disadvantaged, majority of whom are women. The vulnerable are left in destitution when deleted from the payroll, payment of their pension is delayed or when their records are misplaced, especially in LGs. This sometimes necessitates numerous movements and bribes to address the issues.
- 7) Inequitable benefits from the payroll between women and men. The assessment of the decentralized payroll reforms in FY 2018/19, showed that men still dominate most positions in the Public Service (*August 2019 payrolls*). Women make up 37% of the Public Service, whereas the men take up 63% of the positions (Table 1).

**Table 1: Public Service Payroll as at 31<sup>st</sup> /8/2019**

PAYROLL CATEGORY	FEMALE	MALE
Agricultural Extension Workers	565	2,432
Central Ministry Employees	8,589	10,395
Centralized Tertiary Employees	267	648
Chairpersons District Service Commission	19	86
Decentralized Tertiary Employees	1,321	3,174
District Political Leaders	294	1,986
Government Agencies	1,121	2,011
Justices and Judges	29	34
Local Government Payroll	6,927	15,097
Primary Health Care Workers (PHC)	20,417	16,889
Primary School Employees	56,219	78,824
Public Universities	2,539	4,314
Secondary School Employees	7,649	19,350

Town Councils (Unconditional)	1,062	2,214
Uganda Police Force	8,582	34,228
Uganda Prisons Force	2,766	6,873
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>118,366</b>	<b>198,555</b>

*Source: MoPS Payroll Monitoring Unit, September, 2019*

Attention has not been paid to the gender and equity gaps in terms of representation and participation in decision making by women in the public service. Women are concentrated in the lower levels of the service.

### Gender and Equity Interventions for FY 2018/19

For FY 2018/19, the gender and equity budget for MoPS, was Ug shs 0.378 billion, which was all released and Ug shs 0.195 billion (52%) spent as at 30<sup>th</sup> June 2019.

The following interventions were carried out:

- 1) An office block at the MoPS Headquarters was constructed and the civil works were at 65%. The block includes facilities for persons with disabilities.
- 2) A Gender and Equity Committee was established and it was constituted by 5 females, and 5 males, including a person with disability.
- 3) An HR Gender Mainstreaming Handbook was developed to guide the implementation of gender concerns by the human resource managers in MDAs and LGs.
- 4) A one stop center was set up to cater for the marginalized groups (sick, elderly, and the vulnerable groups) whose HR cases had not been attended to especially in LGs.



**The One-stop Centre at the Ministry of Public Service in Kampala**

### Conclusion

There was some responsiveness to gender and equity issues by the MoPS during the FY2018/19. The Ministry instituted a Gender and Equity Committee and formulated an HR Gender Mainstreaming Handbook. These are building blocks to capacity building that is critical in the sector.

However, there is still limited knowledge among HR Specialists and line managers about relevant gender policies, lack of support mechanisms to enable women balance gender roles, and a non-gender and equity responsive human resource planning framework. The continued lack of interventions to address these critical issues will lead to persistent gender inequalities in the service.

### Policy Recommendations

- 1) The MoPS and Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development (MFPED) should sensitize HR Specialists, line managers and District Service Commissions about gender and equity responsive HRM practices.
- 2) The MoPS and MFPED should institute measures to allow women and men to balance their professional and personal life.



For instance, the Public Service Standing Orders should make it mandatory for all public offices to provide child care centres. On its part, the MFPED should mobilize the requisite funds.

- 3) The MoPS and MDAs should undertake institutional gender and equity audits to inform the design of the Performance Management Initiatives.
- 4) The MoPS and Ministry of Local Government (MoLG), should support the implementation of the Gender and Equity Capacity Building Plan developed by MFPED. The plan should inform choice of trainees for strengthening gender and equity responsive programme based planning and budgeting.
- 5) The MoPS and National Planning Authority should facilitate an inclusive process for the development of the Human Resource Planning Framework. The Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development should play a key role in this. There should be an action plan to implement the framework to address capacity gaps and reduce the inequalities.
- 6) The MoPS, MoLG, and MFPED should conduct capacity building for public officers involved in pension payroll management and set performance standards.
- 7) The MoPS and MoLG in consultation with MDAs and LGs should disseminate the HR handbook to all MDAs and LGs for proper guidance and implementation of the gender HR aspects.

## References

1. Integrated Financial Management System data for FY 2018/19
2. FY 2018/19; Performance Reports for Projects and Programmes under Development and Recurrent Budgets for MoPS
3. FY2018/19; Ministerial Policy Statements for MoPS
4. Gender and Equity Compact for the Ministry of Public Service and Public Service Commission-FY 2016/2017-2019/2020

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