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# **PSC** News

A bi-weekly e-newsletter of the Public Service Commission

# CS Ababu Namwamba commends PSC for role in smooth transition

By Sharon Sang'iewa

he Youth Affairs, Sports and Arts Cabinet Secretary Ababu Namwamba has commended the Public Service Commission (PSC) for ensuring a seamless transition and continuity in the delivery of services.

Speaking during a consultative meeting at the Commission House on 9<sup>th</sup> November 2022, Mr Namwamba acknowledged the critical role the Commission played in keeping the Civil Service together and unifying the country after the heavily contested general elections.

"I am looking forward to a more robust collaboration with the Commission in order to assemble a dynamic team at the ministry that is coherent enough to harness the potential that is inherent in the sector of Sports, Arts, and Youth," he said.

He noted that his Ministry is responsible for a sector that is very critical in addressing the country's development challenges especially youth unemployment.

PSC Chairperson Amb. Anthony Muchiri commended the CS for the immediate steps he has taken in resolving the impasse that has seen Kenya banned by the world football governing body (FIFA) and returning Kenyan football to normalcy.

Amb. Muchiri noted that Kenya has tremendous skills and competencies that need to be harnessed and channeled in the right direction.

Amb. Muchiri disclosed that the Commission receives a high number of job applications and challenged the Ministry to harness creativity by tapping into the potential in the sector of sports and arts to address youth



PSC Chairman Amb. Anthony Muchiri (left) welcomes the Youth Affairs, Sports and Arts CS Ababu Namwamba in his office during a consultative visit

unemployment. He said the Commission will assist the Ministry to come up with a fit-forpurpose organizational structure through which national development agenda can be realized

The CS was accompanied by Human Resource Director, State Department of Culture Mr John Odhiambo, Human Resource Director State Department Youth Affairs Mrs Zipporah Mutahi, among other senior officers.

Also present during the meeting were Commissioner Amb. Salma Ahmed, Commission Secretary Dr Simon Rotich, Director Establishment & Management Consultancy Services Mr Nelson Weru, Legal Director Jacqueline Manani, Recruitment and Selection Director Peter Maina, among other senior officers from the Commission.

# Commission resumes function of administering proficiency examination



Clerical officers tackling proficiency examination in Nairobi

# By Margaret Kung'u

he Public Service
Commission has
resumed administering
proficiency examinations
for clerical officers, since 2014
when the function was delegated
to Kenya School of Government.

From Monday 19<sup>th</sup> to Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2022, 956 candidates in nine centres across the country did the examination, beginning with rehearsal on the first day.

Kenya Education Management Institute (KEMI) in Nairobi was the centre with the highest number of candidates, at 311.

The Kenya School of Government Embu campus followed with 120 candidates and

the Rift Valley Institute of Science and Technology in Nakuru, 101 candidates.

Others were the Eldoret National Polytechnic, 97 candidates; the Kisumu National Polytechnic, 85; Kenya Coast National Polytechnic, 75; the Sigalagala National Polytechnic in Kakamega, 68; the North Eastern National Polytechnic in Garissa, 57; and the Nyeri National Polytechnic, 42 candidates.

The subjects examined included Communication Skills; Governance and Civil Service Regulations; Business calculations; Public Relations, Organization and Functions of Government; Office Practice; Accounts; Supply Services; Human Resource Services;

and Records Management.

The Commission had notified candidates to register for the examination through their various accounting and authorized officers in a letter dated 13<sup>th</sup> May 2022.

The same information was availed on the Commission's website and through a media advertisement that run on Tuesday 21st June 2022.

Once the marking of the answer scripts is concluded, the candidates will be notified of their results through a communique to authorized officers, the Kenya Gazette and the Commission's website.

# PSC action plan on enhancement of PWDs rated the best

### By Habel Shiloli

n action plan by Public Service Commission to ensure Persons with Disability (PWDs) are fully integrated in the public service was rated best amongst presentations made during a training programme organized by the Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA).

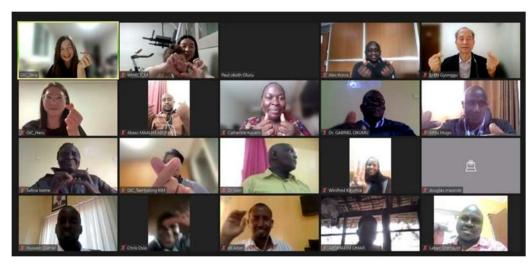
The Commission's presentation emerged top,

beating three other teams during the virtual training on Human Rights Education Program for Sustainable and Inclusive Community.

The action plan titled "Enhancement of Persons with Disabilities' Representation in the Public Service" competed against other action plans presented by the Department of Civil Registration; Ministry of Public Service, Gender and Affirmative Action; and the Ministry of Education.

Participating officers from the Ministry of Interior and National Administration and the County Government of Mandera were distributed among the other teams.

The five-year action plan was premised on the fact that over the the representation years, Persons with Disabilities in the public service had remained way below the constitutional threshold, having stagnated at 1.2% since 2010. The representation had however only risen marginally to 1.4% by June 2022 against the constitutional threshold of 5% as presented by PSC's Values and Principles Compliance Evaluation reports.



Participants during the online training organized by KOICA

Considering that the Commission, under Article 10(2) (c) is required to promote human rights and protection of the vulnerable and marginalized groups, the plan is within the Commission's mandate and if implemented, will help improve the representation of PWDs in the public service.

The first two years of the action plan are earmarked for awareness creation and capacity building and the final three years are for implementation and monitoring inclusion of PWDs in various public institutions under the Commission's jurisdiction.

PSC's team in the 10-day intensive training that lasted from 24<sup>th</sup> October to 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2022 included Dr. Juma Gabriel, Selina Iseme, Alex Koros and Isaac Mugo.

Among lessons that the team learnt during the training was that with determination, good leadership and meaningful participation of the people, it is possible to transform a country within a short time.

This was demonstrated by

the shared experience of Gwanju, South Korea's sixth-largest city, which hosted the training. On 18th May 1980, there was a bloody uprising in Gwanju. Many young people were killed in the uprising but today, South Korea is way ahead of many countries in terms of development. It currently exports electronics worldwide. Gwanju is one of the world human rights cities, meaning everything done is subjected to human rights measures.

The staff who participated said the training is relevant to the Commission's mandate of promoting values and which in turn would lead to adoption of a human rights-based approach in service delivery.

Persons from reputable institutions on human rights issues, including Gwanju International Centre (GIC)., South Korea (the hosts), The Lund University, Sweden and officers from the Kenya National Human Rights Commission facilitated the training.

# Commission recommends Principal Secretary nominees to the President



Former nominated Member of Parliament Hon. David Ole Sankok speaks to journalists outside Commission House after being interviewed

## By Pauline Muriuki

he Public Service
Commission concluded
a grueling process of
recruitment of Principal
Secretaries that resulted in the
nomination of 51 persons by
President William Ruto.

The nominees will be vetted

by Parliament from 14<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> November, 2022 before formal appointment by the President.

The 51 nominees, including 11 women, were shortlisted from a list of 585 candidates who were interviewed at the Commission House from 12<sup>th</sup> to 22<sup>nd</sup> October, 2022.

The Commission shortlisted 585 applicants out of the 9,154 that applied for the positions whose application deadline had been extended from 20<sup>th</sup> to 27<sup>th</sup> September, 2022 to address issues of inclusivity and equal opportunity.

The advertisement of the shortlisted candidates was published in the print media on Friday 7<sup>th</sup> October, 2022. Daily Nation and MyGov pullout on Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> October, 2022 and on the Commission website.

The Commission had invited members of the public to send their views on the suitability of the shortlisted candidates to head state departments in the public service by email to psinterviews2022@publicservice.go.ke before the date of the interview as part of public participation in the recruitment process.

Interviews were conducted by five different panels over a two-week period.

# Commission in the process of filling CAS positions

## By Sharon Sang'iewa

he process of recruiting nominees for the post of the Chief Administrative Secretary (CAS) is on course, following the closure of the advertisement on 27th October 2022.

The vacancies were declared following the establishment of the Office of the Chief Administrative Secretary under Article 132(4) (a) of the Constitution as read with Section 30 of the Public Service Commission Act, 2017,

The advertisement was published in the Daily Nation and Standard newspapers on 13<sup>th</sup> October, 2022, and on the digital platforms of various media outlets. The Commission will shortlist applicants for interviews before recommending successful candidates to the President for appointment.

The Chief Administrative Secretaries will serve on contract as determined by the appointing Authority.

Thé duties of the Chief

Administrative Secretary will include; providing liaison with the National Assembly and Senate; providing liaison with County Governments on matters of concurrent mandate; providing inter-ministerial/sectoral coordination; and executing any other duties and responsibilities specifically assigned to the office by the Cabinet Secretary in furtherance of the interest of the Ministry.

# You are drivers of the public service transformation: CJ Koome

By Badi Khamis

he pioneer cohort of the Public Service Emerging Leaders Fellowship Programme (PSLFP) is the core driver of the public service transformative agenda.

Chief Justice Martha Koome said this at the Methodist Resort and Conference Centre, Nairobi, on 29<sup>th</sup> September 2022 during the fourth segment of PSLF training.

She commended the Public Service Commission (PSC) and Emerging Leaders Foundation (ELF) for teaming up to roll out the programme solely for young officers that will nurture and transform them to become agents of change in their designated MDAs.

"I urge you to combine technical performance with ethical conduct in your service delivery as public servants," she said.

Speaking in one of the training sessions, Amb. Francis Muthaura informed the young public servants that public service is a dynamic system that creates the development rhythm of any country.

"Anyone in the Public Service should realize this and shape the future of this nation, to accelerate development your commitment is paramount," he asserted.

Public Service Commission's Deputy Director of Compliance and Quality Assurance Mr. Wesley Kipng'etich urged the fellows to be guided by ethical codes that govern professionalism and ensures their interest is not to serve themselves but their organizations.

"You are required to maintain the public confidence and the



Chief Justice Martha Koome speaking to the pioneer cohort of PSLFP fellows on 29<sup>th</sup> September 2022 at the Methodist Resort and Conference Centre, Nairobi

integrity of the office you hold," he informed.

PSLFP was jointly launched by PSC and Emerging Public Leaders - Global (EPL) and Emerging Leaders Foundation - Africa (ELF) in November 2021.

The aim of the programme is to nurture new high-potential recruits to the government into future leaders of Kenya's public service with a focus on their development in citizen-centricity, competent and ethical public sector leadership.

The training of the fifty

fellows was divided into five segments, hitherto four segments have been completed and the fellows will now undergo the final segment of training before they graduate.

"I urge you to
combine technical
performance with ethical
conduct in your
service delivery as
public servants."
- CJ Martha Koome

# PSC releases the 2021/2022 Annual Report



Commissioners Dr Reuben Chirchir, Dr Mary Mwiandi (2nd and 3rd right) and secretariat members peruse the draft Annual Report during a working retreat.

### By Habel Shiloli

he Public Service
Commission is reviewing
its structure to establish
the right operational units
that will best drive its mandate.

In the Annual Report for 2021/2022 financial year, the Commission expresses commitment to adjust operations based on experience, to fast-track the achievement of Commission's goal of having a citizen-centric public service.

While presenting the report, the Chairperson Amb. Anthony Muchiri notes that the report comes at the middle of the implementation of the Commission's strategic plan 2019-2024, when the Commission is reviewing its performance in the first half of the plan.

The Chairperson states that among the milestones achieved during the year were the launching of the one-year leadership-training programme for 51 young public

servants under the Public Service Leadership Fellowship (PSELF) programme.

Other milestones include establishing and revising organizational structures for Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) to make them more responsive to the Kenyan citizenry; and initiating the development of a policy on career management in the public service to inject flexibility in all aspects of career management in the public service.

The report further states that the Commission projects to scale the scope of its mandate in adherence to rulings by the Employment and Labour Relations Court that require the Commission to exercise its mandate in full.

In cognizance of perennial financial and human resource constraints, the report states that the Commission will develop a

futuristic strategy to mobilize resource both publicly and privately.

The report in its introduction provides the essence of the 'Annual Report' itself, the mandate of the Commission and its strategic focus.

In the subsequent chapters, it provides performance expectations for the year being reported on; gives insight on how the Commission carried out its mandate; provides metrics of enabling factors that anchor the Commission's capacity to deliver on its functions; reviews how the Commission spent its financial resources; and gives an outline of lessons learnt, challenges faced and the recommendations made going forward.

The annual report is published and submitted to the President and Parliament by 30<sup>th</sup> of September, in accordance with Article 254(1) of the Constitution and Section 90 of the Public Service Commission Act, 2017.

# The PSC fraternity mourns a colleague



PSC Chairman Amb. Anthony Muchiri addressing PSC staff during the memorial service of the late Florence Sesse

## By Badi Khamis

or the third time since the beginning of the year 2022, the Public Service Commission fraternity was once again plunged into mourning a departed colleague.

The staff congregated on 25<sup>th</sup> October 2022 for a memorial service in honor of a colleague, Ms. Florence Sesse who passed away on 15th October 2022.

Speaking during the memorial service held at the Commission House, the PSC Chairperson Amb. Anthony Muchiri noted that it was a difficult moment for the Secretariat, mourning a colleague whose death was untimely.

"The Secretariat is an important cog in the wheel that runs this Commission to realize its mandate," reiterated the Chairman.

He called on staff to appreciate the late Florence for having served at the Commission diligently for 18 years.

The CEO Dr. Simon Rotich observed that the late Florence rose steadily through the ranks from the time she was employed to the time of her demise.

He commended the Commission' committee established to work with the family of the deceased for

being meticulous in carrying out their assignment.

The sermon was delivered by a PSC Deputy Director Mr. Isaac Shaasha, who encouraged staff to do 'good' that the society can remember them for when they pass on.

Those present included PSC's Deputy Commission Secretary Mr. Remmy Mulati and members of the PSC secretariat staff among others.

The late Florence was a Senior Records Management Officer at PSC at the time of her demise.

She was laid to rest on 29<sup>th</sup> October 2022.

# Public service reforms discussed at a Kampala conference

By Juma Gabriel, PhD, MKIM

enya's public service was regarded as the most efficient in the sub-Saharan Africa immediately after independence. However, after the 1970s, performance started recording a decline.

This formed the gist of a paper I presented at the third International Conference on Governance and Service Delivery in Developing Economies under the sub-theme of Public Sector Transformation organized by the Uganda Institute of Management in Kampala from 25-27th October 2022.

The paper, titled "Efficacy of Public Sector Reforms in Kenya: A trend analysis 1965-2022", urges that a transformative breed of leadership that consistently promotes efficiency, honesty and productivity, while fiercely standing against illegitimate political forces is critical.

The guiding theme for the conference whose attendance was both online and physical was "Sustainable Service Delivery: Partnerships and Innovations." It brought together over 200 public service practitioners, academicians and other scholars (delegates) from 13 countries like Ireland, Malawi, Tanzania, Botswana, Switzerland, Cameron, Ghana, South Africa, Nigeria, Kenya, Germany, Burundi and India.

The paper drew from an analysis of 90 articles, which included GOK reports and publications, research papers, doctorate and master's thesis, publications from international bodies, journal papers and the past values and principles compliance evaluation reports.

It examined the impact of the various reform programmes and their effect in the country's economic development, by categorizing the reform process into five phases.

The Public Service Reforms in Kenya started immediately after independence, with the first phase spanning between 1965 and 1979.



Dr. Gabriel Juma

During this phase, Government established various Commissions, taskforces and committees to come up with tangible recommendations to improve productivity and efficiency in the public service. Most of the recommendations guided the leadership chapter & Article 232 of the constitution.

Amongst the many Commissions established, the Ndegwa Commission of 1971 undertook a comprehensive review of all aspects of the public service. It recommended that the government allow public officers to own property and run businesses.

The Commission also advocated for the establishment of a code of ethics and the office of the Ombudsman to investigate cases of abuse of office by public servants.

The code of conduct and ethic was introduced in 2003 when Kenya became a signatory to the United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC), while the Commission for Administrative Justice (CAJ) was established as one of the Chapter 15 Commission in the Constitution.

The emergence of the concept of good governance at the end of 1980s coupled with a declining economy in

the late 1980s resulted in the government's inability to sustain a large public sector, leading to introduction of a number of public sector reforms during the second phase, from 1980 to 1998. The Civil Service Reform Programme was launched in 1993 in order to enhance public efficiency service The programme productivity. focused on downsizing the civil service through the Voluntary Early Retirement Scheme (VERS) based on the belief that a lean civil service was more effective in delivering public services.

The reforms sought to create an enabling environment for investment, enhance private sector growth and facilitate equitable distribution of wealth.

The programme also targeted staff rationalization and management of the wage bill by developing and implementing a new Integrated Personnel and Payroll Database (IPPD) system; effecting a ban on recruitments except in critical and essential services; enhancement of salaries and allowances for civil servants and security forces, and undertaking comprehensive job evaluation exercise.

However, the reform programme had limited impact on the overall improvement of performance in the civil service.

the year 2000, the government implemented compulsory retrenchment programme that saw a further reduction of civil servants. The retrenchment targeted cadres in overmanned areas, non-core functions functions and identified for abolition or privatization under the State Corporations Privatization

Continued on page 9

# Public service reforms discussed at a Kampala conference

From page 8

Programme.

Although the staff rationalization initiatives introduced between 1993 and 2000 led to reduction in the size of the civil service there was no commensurate decrease in the wage bill. For example, the wage bill rose from 8.5% of GDP in 2001/02 to 9.2% in 2002/03 and 9.7% in 2003/04 (GOK, 2005). This increase led to reduction in Operations and Maintenance (O&M) expenditures resulting in deterioration of the quality of public services rendered, decline in productivity and increased poverty levels.

The staff reduction and cost containment initiatives put in place did not realize the desired impact. The World Bank rated the overall performance of both CSRPI and CSRPII as unsatisfactory.

The fourth Phase that began from 2003 to 2008 was guided by the change of regime in 2002 and the subsequent launch of the Economic Recovery Strategy for Wealth and Employment Creation (ERS) in 2003/2004.

This marked a watershed for ushering in the next generation of the (GOK, 2003). reforms government pledged to strengthen institutions of governance; improve administration that characterized by wastefulness and inefficiency; instill attitudinal change in the public service, including rapid and sustained economic growth; and reduce high incidences of poverty through wealth and employment creation.

The reforms introduced during this period aimed at reinvigorating management and performance attracting and retaining skilled personnel to achieve a pay structure and size of the civil service consistent with both macro-economic objectives and a sustainable wage bill.

Government introduced Results Based Management (RBM) as a strategy for changing the culture and modus operandi of the public sector. RBM aimed at institutionalizing values, upholding good governance practices and promoting a culture of continuous improvement.

The building blocks for institutionalizing and mainstreaming RBM included strategic planning, performance contracting, annual work plans and implementation of service delivery charters (OPM/PSTD, 2010).

Institutionalization of RMB in the public service aimed at improving the performance in all ministries, departments and agencies through a performance-based accountability system that focused on outcomes of projects and programmes. In a bid to improve productivity, the government introduced Performance Contracting (PC).

Between 2005 and 2012 performance contracting played a significant role in enhancing performance in the public service and influencing employees' behavior towards expected pattern.

Phase five of the reforms, (2008 to 2022), was guided by the Kenya Vision 2030 and the Constitution of Kenya 2010. The reforms during this phase emphasized on the transformation of the public sector to be people-centered and result oriented.

Transparency, accountability, participation and the rule of law constituted an integral part of the reform agenda.

The enactment of the Constitution of Kenya signaled a transformation of Kenya's with the governance structure creation of a two-tier system of \_ National government Government and forty-seven (47) County Governments. Whereas devolution of public services remains the greatest governance innovation, findings of a study by Kimathi in a paper titled "Challenges of the devolved health sector in Kenya: teething problems or systemic contradictions? Africa Development, and published in 2017, argued that devolution was to blame for the deteriorating service delivery and corruption in the County governments.

The adoption of an integrated service delivery model led to the introduction of the Huduma Kenya programme, a flagship project - under the Kenya Vision 2030. The programme, which was premised on a whole-of-government approach, aimed at transforming the public service to be professional, peoplecentred, efficient, transparent and accountable in order to meet global standards.

However, as at June 30<sup>th</sup> 2021 only 8% of public institutions offered their services through the platform (Republic of Kenya, 2021).

The use of technology has been credited for speedy delivery of promotion and services transparency and accountability. However, in Kenya the e-platform is the least used (1%) mode of access to services by citizens despite it being rated as the most efficient mode of service delivery, with the number of public institutions offering services through the e-citizen platform standing at 7% as at 30<sup>th</sup> lune 2021.

Public Sector Reform remains a necessary and ongoing objective for many developing countries, Kenya included. However, the public sector is still bedeviled by issues of ghost workers, high wage bill and the silo mentality, where each public agency feels obliged to protect ʻits turf resulting unfavourable conditions for shared information and efficient service delivery.

The writer is a Deputy Director in Compliance & Quality Assurance Department and can be reached on gjuma@publicservice.go.ke

# Public institutions should enhance access to information for PWDs

# By Maureen Kogi

ichard Nixon, the 37<sup>th</sup> President of the United States once said, "When information which properly belongs to the public is systematically withheld by those in power, the people soon become ignorant of their own affairs, distrustful of those who manage them, and - eventually - incapable of determining their own destinies."

Under the Bill of Rights in Chapter Four of the Constitution 2010, Article 35 covers "Access to information." The Article is given life by the "Access to Information Act, 2016."

Part II, Section 4 of the Act provides that every citizen has the right of access to information held by (a) the State; and (b) another person and where that information is required for the exercise or protection of any right or fundamental freedom.

Article 54 (c), (d) and (e) of the Constitution, which also falls under Bill of Rights outlines the right of persons with disability to access information. Similarly, the Public Service Commission in exercise of its constitutional mandate to promote values and principles of public service includes access to information by the visually impaired in its evaluation parameters.

According to the Commission's 2018/2019, 2019/2020 and 2020/2021 values reports, 47.3%, 61% and 62.6% of the institutions respectively, had transcribed documents into braille.

The documents that were transcribed included institutional service delivery charters, IEC



Maureen Kogi

materials, examination scripts, organizational mandates, legislation, and policies.

In 2017/2018 Values report, the Commission (PSC) recommended the provision of a customized software for use by visually impaired persons such as Job Access With Speech (JAWS) and voice-over websites.

It also recommended that jobs advertised be in a format accessible to PWDs including using Government channels, print, large print, braille, television, radio, internet and the sharing of these advertisements with the National Council for Persons with Disability.

In the subsequent years, public institutions have steadily registered improvement but it is still very marginal.

Meanwhile, a recent random sample of 30 public institutions' Websites by the Commission revealed that only one was fully customized for persons with visual impairment, 13 were partially customized and the rest were not. This is an indication

that more effort is required to ensure public institutions provide full access to information for the visually impaired.

In February this year, the Communications Authority of Kenya (CA) in collaboration with and Kenya National Library Services (KNLS) installed software in computers in 56 branches of Kenya National Libraries across the country to assist readers with visual impairment.

This is a best practice worth of replicating across government institutions.

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"When information which properly belongs to the public is systematically withheld by those in power, the people soon become ignorant of their own affairs, distrustful of those who manage them, and - eventually incapable of determining their own destinies"

- Richard Nixon, 37th President of the USA

# PICTORIAL: PSLFP 4th segment training at the Methodist Resort and Conference Centre, Nairobi



Chief Justice Martha Koome (right) and Commissioner Mary Mwiandi embrace, as PSC Chairperson Amb. Anthony Muchiri (far right) and Commissioner Dr. Reuben Chirchir look on



(L-R) PSC Chairman Amb. Anthony Muchiri, Chief Justice Martha Koome and Commissioner Mary Mwiandi



Former Head of Public Service Amb Francis Muthaura addressing fellows



Fellows following proceedings



Deputy Director Compliance and Quality Assurance, Mr. Wesley Kipng'etich facilitates one of the training sessions



Director Compliance and Quality Assurance Mr. Simon Wachinga facilitates one of the training sessions

# **PSC IN PICTURES**



CS for Youth Affairs, Sports and Arts, Ababu Namwamba signing the visitor's book during the courtesy visit to the Commission. Looking on is PSC Chairman Amb. Anthony Muchiri



CS Youth Affairs, Sports and Arts Mr Ababu Namwamba speaking during a consultative meeting at the Commission House



CEO Dr Simon Rotich addressing PSC Staff during the memorial service for the late Florence Sesse



PSC Choir performing during the memorial service of the late Florence Sesse



Mr Ben Owich (Chief Accountant) gives a tribute during the memorial service for the late Florence Sesse



PSC staff during the memorial service of the late Florence Sesse

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#### **Vision**

A Citizen-centric public service

#### Mission

To reform and transform the public service for efficient service delivery

#### **Core Values**

- Citizen Focus
- Professionalism
- Innovation
- Team-work

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