



Inside this issue:

Communication Audit	2
PSC Chairman meets with task force on Information and Communication	3
PSC to have a new look website	4
Compliance and Quality Assurance Committee members meet staff of the Directorate	5
Legislations on Accountability at the Workplace	6
PSC to recruit Probation Officers	7
Farewell dinner for former Secretary/ CEO	7
Dealing with 'The Plateaus'	8
Bereavement	8
PICTORIAL: Forum for MDA Heads of HRM at KSG on 21st March 2019	9
PSC in Pictures	10

PSC Commissioners meet heads of Human Resource Management and Development in MDAs

By Juma Gabriel

The Commission held a one day

consultative meeting with Heads of Human Resource Management and Development in Ministries and State Departments, and their deputies on Thursday 21st March 2019 at the Kenya School of Government – Nairobi Campus.

The one day meeting was attended by 79 participants. It sought to take stock of successes and challenges in the delivery of the Commission’s mandate; provide participants with an opportunity to interact with the new Commissioners; share experiences on best practices and emerging issues in human resource management; and chart the way forward regarding human resource management challenges.

In his opening remarks the Commission Chairman,



PSC Chairman Mr Stephen Kirogo addressing participants during the consultative meeting with HRM & D heads in MDAs at KSG

Mr. Stephen Kirogo noted that the service had not performed to the expected standards in various areas as confirmed by increased complaints from service seekers.

Notable areas included discipline and pension matters and ethical conduct of public officers. He emphasized that the Commission was keen to restore the culture of performance management through effective supervision of staff and consistent and timely appraisal process.

Mr. Kirogo stressed that the Commission’s rallying call for improved

performance was “Reform, Perform and Transform” and singled out the HR directors and their deputies as key drivers of the transformation agenda.

He termed them as the front office for the Commission and the nerve centre of service delivery, urging them to remain professional and humane while discharging their duties in accordance with the laid down regulations, policies and guidelines.

The Chairman was optimistic that close partnership with the Heads of Human

Commissioners meet heads of Human Resource Management and Development

From page 1

Resource will help the Commission realize a productive and highly performing public service.

“Transforming the public service would be realized through a change of mindset, leveraging on ICT, indoctrinating the service on public service ethos and ensuring common standards and norms” said Kirogo.

He reiterated that to serve in the public service was a privilege and the first priority for any public officer was to provide quality service to the citizen. He therefore called on public officers to stop the culture of lamentation and giving excuses but instead move from their comfort zones, embrace attitudinal change and serve with humility.

Some of the main issues that emerged from the workshop included, the need to provide a platform for officers to continuously learn the ethos of public service; ensure that public service is fit for purpose; and the need to re-engineer performance management in order to instill a culture of performance and productivity and develop a national performance management framework.

Further, there was need to develop innovative modules for training and skills development and link training

to the country’s development goals; need to introduce competency based training that is geared towards improved performance and productivity; and need to review and improve the character of the public service to make it credible, trustworthy and responsive to the needs of Kenyans.

Other issues that emerged were the need to develop a career management system that is based on performance; need for officers to be proactive, analytical and self-motivated to deliver quality services; need to put citizens at the centre of public service delivery; and the need to upgrade GHRIS bandwidth to make it efficient and effective.

In his closing remarks the chairman thanked the participants for attending and actively engaging during the workshop. He called for close collaboration with Heads of HRM and urged them to ensure a moral and ethical public service.

He assured the participants that the Commission will: forge a close working relationship with them as key agents of the Commission, and develop a performance monitoring framework that will lay emphasis on performance and productivity.

Communication Audit

By Pauline Muriuki

PSC is undertaking a communication audit among staff to establish the adequacies, gaps and opportunities of information generation and sharing between internal and external stakeholders.

In a memo addressed to all directors and staff, the Acting Chief Executive Officer emphasized the importance of the audit, urging staff to give honest opinions that will help prioritize initiatives for the Commission’s Communication Strategy.

The survey forms part of PSC’s strategy to improve service delivery to clients based on their felt needs.

Through the findings, the Commission will establish the real situation regarding information generation and its communication both internally and externally, with opportunity to stratify and provide tailor-made solutions.

A detailed questionnaire which every staff member has been asked to fill seeks to assess levels of information generated by various sources and the appropriate utilization of existing channels of communication;

The survey will evaluate the quality of information communicated from and/or to the various sources; appraise the quality of communication relationships, specifically the extent of inter-stakeholder and inter-unit

Continued on page 4

PSC Chairman meets with task force on Information and Communication

By Habel Shiloli

Public Service Commission Chairman, Mr. Stephen Kirogo on Tuesday 2nd April 2019 gave views on how Government should improve its Information and Communication function.

In a three-hour session with the Task force for Improvement of Government Information and Communications at the Public Service Commission main boardroom, the Chairman pointed out gaps in structure and positioning of the government communication function that needed to be addressed urgently.

He said the communication function is critical for government and must be “at the centre of government” in order to package government effectively.

“Government Communication function cannot be at the periphery and be expected to succeed,” said Kirogo.

He stressed that persons fit for the communication job must be appropriately deployed so as to effectively deliver, adding that the ability and capacity of those communicating must be considered.

The Chairman said that it is important for government to invest in the best, in terms of training, equipment and competence.

At the same time, he noted that while it is important for government to understand the usefulness of good communication, citizens also



PSC chairman Mr Stephen Kirogo giving his remarks during the meeting with Information and Communication task force

need to be properly educated on how to decipher information.

The Chairman said the Public Service Commission, in line with its mandate, will continue to support government Ministries, Departments and Agencies in improving the human resource function, to improve government image and service delivery.

He was flanked by Ag. Secretary/CEO Mr. Simon Rotich and Directors Cindy Songole, Joan Machayo and Simon Wachinga.

Taskforce Chairman Mr. David Makali thanked PSC Chairman for accepting their invitation at short notice, and the valuable inputs he had given the task force. He promised to schedule another meeting with the Chairman before finalizing their report.

Mr. Makali was accompanied by task force team members Browne Kutswa, Mbugua Njoroge, Noella Mutanda, Prof. Murej Mak'Ochieng, Paul Udoto, Abraham Mulwo, Gwaro Ogaro and Ruth Musembi.

The team, which is currently collecting views from Kenyans was constituted by the Cabinet Secretary for Information, Communication and Technology Mr. Joe Mucheru in January 2018 through Gazette Notice No. 354.

It is tasked to look into all forms of Government communications, including systems, in a period of 90 days, with a view of aligning them with emerging public sector dynamics and expectations.

PSC to have a new-look website

By Badi Khamis

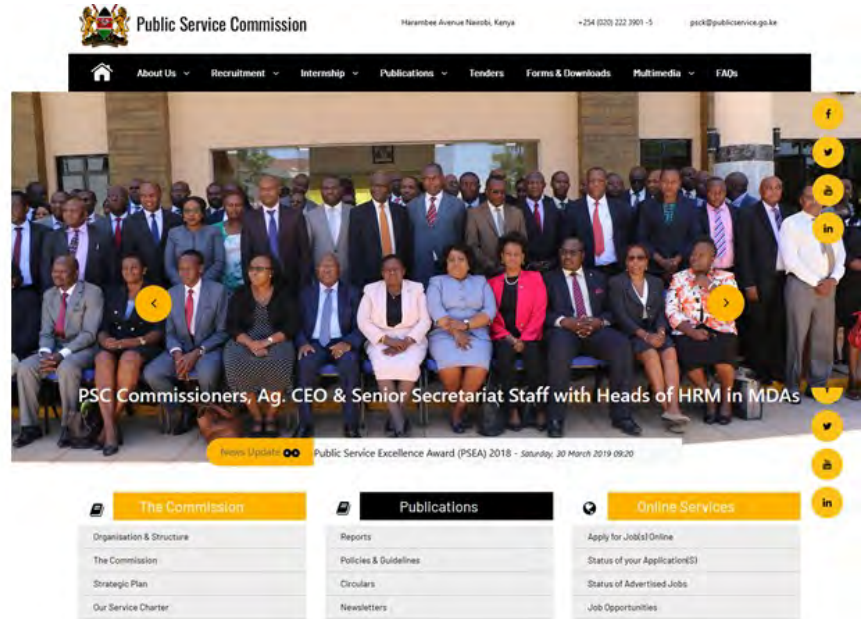
An upgrade of the Public Service Commission Website to make it more interactive and a one stop portal for all its stakeholders is almost finalized.

The upgrade started late last year spearheaded by Mr. Daniel Maina, PSC ICT Officer, and the Kenya Web Company.

Once the work is complete, the website will be more user friendly to stakeholders seeking for information about the Commission.

“It is now five years since the current website was made accessible to the public. There is need to make it more interactive and responsive to the changing environment, and audience needs,” said Maina.

He noted that the new-look website will optimize the search engine, not only making it easy for users to search but



A screen shot of the new-look PSC website

also enhance its visibility to attract more visitors.

During a three days' work retreat with the website developer at Naivasha Burch's Resort, the Deputy Director Communication Mr. Browne Kutswa said the new platform will prioritize what PSC clients want see at a glance.

“Clients will not be required to browse through

numerous pages to access the information they want,” he said.

Part of the information currently accessible on the PSC website is, organizational information, online job applications, status of applications, and PSC News, manuals, policies and handbooks.

Communication Audit

Continued from page 2

linkages; estimate the effectiveness of formal communication networks prescribed by organizational set up; and determine the potential bottlenecks and possible gatekeeping of information.

The 10-point likert scale questionnaire will capture the quality and timeliness of PSC's communication; the quality of PSC's chosen channels of

communication; the quality of PSC's current content and content development; and the quality of PSC's current communication systems.

The respondents – all staff – are encouraged to provide suggestions on areas they think can be implemented, eliminated or sustained, as well as priorities or additions they feel the Commission should focus on.

They are requested to

download, fill and upload the questionnaires, or fill the soft copies and send to the Communication unit for analysis.

It is envisaged that the feedback obtained from the survey will be aligned with the Commission's Strategic Plan to develop a Communication Strategy that will be more customized to the Commission's mandate.

Compliance and Quality Assurance Committee members meet staff of the Directorate

By C&QA unit

Commissioners Dr. Reuben Chirchir and Dr. Joyce K. Nyabuti held a meeting with staff of the Compliance and Quality Assurance directorate on 25th March 2019 at Bruce House.

The inaugural meeting for the Compliance and Quality Assurance (C&QA) committee deliberated on the draft Terms of Reference for the committee and overview of the mandate and functions of the directorate.

In his introductory remarks, the Committee Chairman Commissioner Chirchir urged staff to be diligent, self-motivated and resilient in work performance. He observed that the directorate was the backbone of the Commission as it plays an oversight role of monitoring all the Commission's functions in ministries, departments and agencies.

He stressed that values and principles played a critical role in the transformation agenda of the public service and reminded staff of the Commission's rallying call to "Reform, Perform and Transform."

Commissioner Nyabuti who is a member of the committee called for commitment and dedication from staff. She indicated that



Commissioner DR. Reuben Chirchir addressing C&QA staff at the PSC offices in Bruce House

she was happy to be a member of the Committee, having previously worked as a Human Resource Auditor. She reiterated that there was need for the directorate to explore new areas regarding compliance evaluation and monitoring, and management of the wealth declaration forms.

The Staff were appraised on the legislative and policy framework that guided the directorate in undertaking the various functions.

After lengthy deliberations, members agreed that there was need to use more resources towards promotion of values and principles as it touched on the preventive aspects, and to operationalize and disseminate the various manuals used by the directorate. They were informed that this being a wealth declaration year, it was anticipated that the declaration will be done online once the

wealth declaration module of the Enterprise Resource Planning was finalized.

The members agreed that the scope of the committee's mandate was wide, spanning about 400 Ministries, Departments and Agencies across the public service. The refined TORs will be tabled before the Commission Board for adoption.

In his concluding remarks the Committee Chair called for teamwork amongst staff. He indicated that commissioners were ready to work closely with the staff to ensure the Commission's aspirations for the public service were met.

The meeting was attended by all the staff members of the Directorate.

Legislations on Accountability at the Workplace

By Gabriel Juma

This article builds on the previous one, which examined personal responsibility at the work place. The article concluded that responsibility goes hand in hand with accountability.

Alan Lowton and Aidan Rose in their book titled *Organization and Management in the Public Sector*, published in 1994 defines accountability as the process where a person or group of people are required to present an account of their activities and the way in which they have or have not discharged their duties.

According to Dr. Idah Pswarayi-Riddihough, the World Bank Country Director for Sri Lanka and the Maldives, accountability goes beyond the mere responsibility of delivery of a task or service. It also means answerability, if a service is not delivered in a timely and efficient manner such that it becomes a burden. It is the citizens' right but also their duty to demand it.

Article 10(2) of Constitution 2010 provides for the National Values and Principles of Governance while Article 232 provides for the Values and Principles of Public Service. The Commission is mandated to promote these values and principles throughout the public service, Article 234(2) (c).

Article 10(2)(c) singles out good governance, integrity, transparency and accountability as part of the National Values and Principles of Governance

while Article 232(1)(e) advocates for Accountability for Administrative Acts as part of the Values and Principles of Public service that officers should uphold.

These are further amplified in various legislations such as the Leadership and Integrity Act, (LIA) 2012, Public Service Values and Principles Act, 2015 and the Public Service Code of Conduct and Ethics, 2016. (Legal Notice No. 54).

Section 9 of Leadership and Integrity Act, 2012 and the Public Officer Code of Conduct, 2016 provides that a public officer shall be responsible for the reasonably foreseeable consequences of any acts or omissions arising from the performance of his or her duty.

Similarly, Section 9 of the Public Service Values and Principles Act 2015, provides that every public officer shall be accountable for his or her administrative acts.

In addition, Section 7 of the Act provides that public service shall be provided promptly, effectively, impartially & equitably. According to this section, provision of public services is not prompt when there is unreasonable delay.

"Unreasonable delay" is amplified to include instances when an officer fails to provide a public service within the period provided for in the Service Charter. The charter spells out the types of services to be provided and the timelines.

Further, according to the

Act, provision of public service is ineffective if there is unreasonable loss and increased complaints against a public officer or public institution.

The legislations therefore guide the conduct of public officers while discharging their duties. Accordingly, public officers should, among others conduct public affairs efficiently and honestly, perform their duties in a transparent and accountable manner.

Further, they should keep accurate records and documents relating to the functions of the office, provide accurate information during provision of services and be impartial in-service delivery.

They should also report truthfully on all matters of the institutions, not be absent from duty without official permission, and not engage in private business during official working hours. They should not misuse public resources or falsify records.

Thus, public officials should be accountable on four things which include stewardship of public funds to ensure value for money; compliance with the law, government policies and activities and upholding proper conduct; performance against objectives and smart targets; and delivery of acceptable levels of service to the public.

The next article will review institutional accountability.

PSC to recruit Probation Officers

By Badi Khamis

The Public Service Commission has invited applications for 1,000 Probation Officers in the Ministry of Interior and Coordination of National Government.

Applications for the vacancies that were advertised in MyGov pull-out newspaper on 2nd April 2019 and the PSC website should be submitted to the Public Service Commission on or before 23rd April 2019.

Prospective applicants must have a Bachelor's degree in Social Work, Sociology, Criminology, Guidance and Counselling, Social Psychology or any other relevant and equivalent qualification from a university recognized in Kenya.

The successful candidates, once recruited, will be tasked with interviewing accused persons for bail reports; conducting and presenting social

inquiry reports on probation and community service offenders as required by the Courts; making pre-trial and post-trial social enquiry reports for the Courts on referred offenders; conducting and submitting social enquiry reports to Correctional Institutions and Discharge Boards; and keeping updated records of the offenders under supervision.

Other posts advertised were for Counsellors, Pensions officers and Assistants, Economists/ Statisticians, Agriculture Officers, Veterinary Officer, Lecturers, Music Officers, Assistant Engineers, Hydrologists, Water Research Officers, Transboundary Water Resources Officers, Land registrars, Land Surveyors,

Petroleum Auditors, Petroleum Environmental Auditors, Petroleum Technologists, HRM & D Officers, HRM & D Assistants, State Counsels, Regional Productive and Services Integration Officers, Regional Economic Integration Officers, Regional Liaison Integration Officers, Regional Social Integration Officers, Regional Political Integration Officers, Foreign Service Cadets, Adult Education instructors and Schools Auditors.

Candidates can apply online through the PSC website

www.publicservice.go.ke or by completing one PSC 2 application form which may be downloaded from Commission's website.

Farewell dinner for former Secretary/CEO

The former Secretary/CEO of Public Service Commission Dr. Alice Otwala was treated to a farewell dinner at the Hotel Intercontinental, Nairobi on 3rd April 2019. The dinner was organized by the PSC management.

Among those invited to the dinner were Dr. Otwala's immediate family members,

PSC Commissioners, Directors and a limited number of representatives from the Secretariat staff.

Dr. Otwala resigned from the Public Service Commission in March 2019 following her appointment as a Commissioner of the National Police Service Commission. She had served at the PSC for close to a decade, beginning as a

Deputy Commission Secretary before earning a promotion on 3rd October 2012 to become the Secretary/CEO.

She was the first Secretary/CEO to leave a running contract midstream at the Commission for a higher appointment through competitive recruitment.

Dealing with ‘The Plateaus’

By Kenneth Muchira and
Griffins Omondi

In the first few weeks of a weight losing program, everything works out perfectly. The clothes are getting looser, the scale is dropping and encouraging comments are streaming in from people around you, confirmation that your efforts are paying off.

Several months later, you experience an unpleasant situation. The weight seems to have suddenly stopped dropping. You are doing everything that you have been doing since you started your program but to your chagrin, progress has stalled.

These are the moments that as a trainer, I dread dealing with the most from my clients. In the field of fitness, this phenomenon where positive progress ceases and our hard work seems to go unrewarded is referred to as ‘the plateau’. In worse scenarios, other people experience regression in their results. It is at this point that most people give up, thinking they are failures.

However, hitting ‘the plateau’ as I keep telling my clients, is perfectly normal. We all go through these dips when trying to accomplish things that are important to us in life. What we need to understand is that linear progress is not indefinite. What if you weighed 150 kgs and you have been losing 5kgs every month, wouldn't you soon disappear from the face of earth if this trend continued indefinitely? When you weigh more, there is more of you to lose and



Mr Griffins Omondi (L) and Mr Kenneth Muchira

that is why noticeable results are easy to come by. As your body gets smaller, your metabolism goes down because there is less of you that your body needs to maintain.

You cannot really avoid experiencing plateaus, but there are tips you can use to crawl yourself out of these dips. Our bodies are naturally lazy and are always yearning for efficiency. That is why a few weeks after doing construction work, a skinny man builds up muscles: this is the body adapting to make it easier to do the same work. The same applies to exercise. Therefore, like we said in the previous article you need to go around this by varying the kind of exercises that you do. Increasing the intensity of your workout is another certain way of seeing you through a ‘plateau’ but this requires dedication and a strong will of mind.

Other times we hit plateaus not because of our training programs, but because of our eating habits. Remember we mentioned that the bigger you are the higher your metabolism is and the more calories your body needs, as you lose weight the opposite is true. You might have hit a plateau simply because you've reached an equilibrium of calories consumed to calories burned. Which means that you need to adjust your calorie intake to continue losing weight.

Good luck in dealing with your ‘plateau’ issues but remember to check out for the coming article on gym etiquette.

Kenneth Muchira & Griffins Omondi are fitness consultants at the Public Service Commission gymnasium.

Bereavement

Ms. Pauline Muriuki, Public Communication Officer in the Directorate of Corporate Services lost her beloved brother Mr. Valentine Blaise Tieng' (Harnett) on 20th March 2019. He was 28 years at the time of his demise. The late Valentine was laid to rest in Konjra village, Anyiko sub-location, East Gem location, Yala Division, Siaya County on 30th March 2019. The entire PSC fraternity condoles with Ms. Muriuki's family and may the soul of her departed brother rest in eternal peace.

PICTORIAL: FORUM FOR MDA HEADS OF HRM AT KSG ON 21ST MARCH 2019



The PSC Chairperson, Commissioners, Ag CEO pose for a photo with Heads of HR in MDAs



The Secretary HRM State Department for Public Service Ms Mary Maungu giving her remarks



PSC Chairman Mr Stephen Kirogo sharing some tips with Director Legal Services Ms Jacqueline Manani



L-R: Vice Chairperson Ms Charity Kisotu, Commissioners Mary Mwiandi and Reuben Chirchir sharing a light moment



The Director HRMD State Department of Interior Mr Benson Giuthua (right) talking with Comm Andrew Muriuki, Deputy Commission Secretary Ms Jane Chege and



Comm Joan Otieno addressing participants

PSC IN PICTURES



Ag CEO Mr Simon Rotich receiving handing over report from outgoing CEO Dr Alice Otwala. Looking on is the Chairman Mr Stephen Kirogo



Mr Kirogo sharing some tips with Dr Otwala and Mr Rotich shortly after the handing over ceremony



Mr Rotich (right) handing over a token of staff contributions to the Assistant Director Research and Policy Analysis Mr Daniel Oliech following the demise of his beloved son. Looking on is the Director Administration Mr Gerald Kuhaka



The Deputy Director Communication Mr Browne Kutswa talking to Mr Abraham Mulwo (R) and Mr Murej Mak'Onyango (L), fellow members of the Taskforce for improvement of Government Information and Communication after the meeting in the PSC boardroom. Seated is Ms Noella Mutanda, also a member of the Taskforce.

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Vision

To be the lead service commission in the provision, management and development of competent human resource in the Public Service.

Mission

To transform the public service to become professional, efficient and effective for the realization of national development goals.

Core Values

- Integrity
- Professionalism
- Equity and Diversity
- Team Spirit
- Transparency and Accountability
- Creativity and Continual Improvement

Public Service Commission departments

- Recruitment and Selection
- Human Resource Management & Development
- Establishment and Management Consultancy Services
- Board Management Services
- Compliance and Quality Assurance
- Finance and Planning
- Corporate Services
- Legal Services

Commissioners

Stephen Kirogo, CBS	-	Chairperson
Ms Charity Kisotu	-	Vice Chairperson
Dr Joyce Nyabuti	-	Commissioner
Dr Mary Mwiandi	-	Commissioner
Dr Reuben Chirchir	-	Commissioner
Amb. Patrick Wamoto, EBS	-	Commissioner
Amb. Salma Ahmed	-	Commissioner
Mr Andrew Muriuki	-	Commissioner
Ms Joan Otieno	-	Commissioner

Secretary/Chief Executive (Ag)

Simon K. Rotich, EBS