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FIFTH LOCAL GOVERNMENT SERVICE COUNCIL INAUGURATED

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EDITORIAL:**THE INCORPORATION OF INTELLIGENT INFORMATION MANAGEMENT (IIM) IN THE OPERATIONS OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT SERVICE**

The Information Super highway has expanded the frontiers in terms of the way organizations undertake their core businesses to enhance efficiency. The above has brought the introduction of Intelligent Information Management (IIM) to the forefront. To this end, this paper associates itself with the **“Benefits of Incorporating Intelligent Information Management (IIM) in Public Administration”** by the Local Government Service.

The Service has joined the Information Technology bandwagon for many and varied reasons especially in its quest to create a world class decentralized and client oriented Service. To create such a World Class Service will definitely require technology, innovation and also the ability to think outside the box. The Service comprises the Office of the Head of the Local Government Service (OHLGS), Sixteen (16) Regional Coordinating Councils (RCCs) and Two Hundred and Sixty-one (261) Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies (MMDAs). The membership definitely will require a mechanism that could help the Service to **manage its huge data**. Such huge data are at times unstructured and could only be organized for use in a more sophisticated manner or the use of technology.

The technological stride made by the Service feeds into the national digitalization programme introduced since 2017. The purpose is to

revolutionize how government businesses are undertaken or conducted to ensure efficiency, effectiveness, convenience and also the enhancement of productivity.

Few examples of such innovations are the Service’s Human Resource Information Management System (HRMIS) which manages staff data from entry to exit. Furthermore, Records Management System has been put in place to also ensure storage and retrieval of data as and when required or in a timely and cost-effective manner. This is being done with help of the Japanese International Co-operation Agency (JICA). Again, the Service has the Social Welfare Information Management System (SWIMS) which is being used by the Social Welfare and Community Development Officers for case management among others.

Though the Information Super Highway has lots of benefits as already mentioned above. However, it also has the other side of data theft especially confidential ones. In other words, Cybercrimes are on the ascendency hence, the establishment of the Cybercrime Agency to mitigate such occurrences.

Though there is no foolproof system but conscious efforts should be made to keep data secured as much as possible.

THE END OF YEAR STATEMENT BY ING. DR. NANA ATO ARTHUR, THE HEAD OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT SERVICE

Once again, it is my greatest pleasure and responsibility to reach you at the beginning of the year 2022. My aim is to appreciate your dedication towards the Service as members of staff. I sincerely acknowledge that we could not have come this far without your unflinching dedication to work notwithstanding the COVID-19 pandemic we experienced both nationally and globally. The pandemic basically changed the way we worked by the introduction of shift system and telework (working from home) to mitigate the situation. In all these I can confidentially say it has been well with us or our souls owing to your resilience. My prayer is that, the year 2022 should be exceptionally welcoming and should have in store for us all lots of good things.

Having said the above, kindly allow me to recapitulate what took place in the Service in 2021 as follows:

Recruitment

The Local Government Service (LGS) received financial clearance from the Ministry of Finance (MoF) in September 2021 to replace a total of One Thousand Three and Eighty (1,380) exited employees. This has been done successfully in terms of the recruitment and posting to all the Regional Co-ordinating Councils (RCCS) and Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies (MMDAs) to arguments the staff strength.

Electronic Clocking System

An administrative instruction was issued to all levels of the Service to install Electronic Clocking systems to monitor punctuality to and from work. The purpose is to ensure an effective time management and also shore up productivity. This is to logically support our collective efforts to deliver high-quality service(s) to our valued citizens who

come to us. Again, this is in lining with our vision of creating "A World Class Decentralized and Client Oriented Service." To this end, I am aware that some of the Assemblies have complied whilst others are yet to. I will strongly urge all the non-compliant Assemblies to do so as a matter of urgency. Again, the shift system should now be the thing of the past.

Review of the Districts Performance Assessment Tool (DPAT) Investigative Report

The District Performance Assessment Tool (DPAT) has been put in place to evaluate the performance of MMDAs on an annual basis.

The Tool operates on carrot and stick principles where performing Assemblies are rewarded with additional financial resources and the non-performing ones are also sanctioned.

However, it is lamentable to note that some of the Assemblies failed to meet the pass mark. This therefore, warranted the Head of Service to task the RCCs where such Assemblies are located to look into the reason(s) accounting for this state of affairs and report their findings to him for consultation and further action.

Implementation of Performance Contract (PC) and Related Sanctions

Performance Contracts (PCs) and Appraisals are another assessment tool. This is based on a set of agreed indicators for the assessment by the Service staff since 2015. The assessment is in accordance with the Council's mandate as captured in [Section 54(f) and (g) of the Local Governance Act (Act 936)]. PC is predicated on increasing the overall productivity of employees within the Service. The Performance Contracts are signed at various levels within the Service as follows: Firstly, the Contract is annually signed between Honourable Regional

Ministers and Regional Coordinating Directors.

Secondly, Metropolitan, Municipal and District Chief Executives (MMDCs) and their District Coordinating Directors (MMDCDs). Thirdly, the Head of Service signs with the Chief Director and all the Directors of the various Directorates at the OHLGS.

As previously noted, PC has a reward system, hence the best performed RCCs and ten (10) MMDAs were given various Awards on September 29, 2021 at Special Awards Ceremony held at the AH Hotel, East Legon-Accra. However, the non-performing Assemblies could suffer any of the under listed sanctions after they have been give the opportunity to explain their reasons for the non-performance:

- Termination (if on contract)
- Reduction in rank/position
- Reprimand
- Deferment of increment
- Suspension among others.

I will encourage all the Assemblies to avert a situation which will trigger the above sanctions.

Creation of Staff Continuous Professional Development Programme (PDP)

Per our scheme of service all staff of the various classes are required to undergo a professional development programme. The purpose is to improve their professional standing. In respect of the above, plans are far advanced to revisit the PDDP concept after its initial implementation. To this end, the Office is collaborating with the Institute of Local Government Studies (ILGS) for its rejuvenation as previously noted for the benefit of all staff. Tentatively, the PDP prospectus would be released in January 2022, to usher in its immediate implementation. However, permit me to suggest that the Service and Institute should work assiduously to get reliable sources of funding so that a level playing field could be created for all. The reason is that we don't want any staff to be disadvantaged because of funding. Such a scenario

would naturally defeat the purpose of PDP.

Decentralization of the Death and Birth Records Office

To further deepen the decentralization process has necessitated the Births and Deaths Registry to be decentralized at the RCC and MMDA levels. This is in accordance with the Local Governance Act 2016 (Act 936). For this reason, all the employees of the Births and Deaths Registry should be transferred from the Civil Service to the Local Government Service by the end of March, 2022. As Head kindly, permit me to use this platform to welcome them to our lovely family.

A Caretaker Chairman of the Inter-ministerial Coordinating Council on Decentralization

The Minister of Local Government Decentralization and Rural Development gave me an additional responsibility as the caretaker Chairman of the **Inter-ministerial Coordinating Council on Decentralization (IMMCD)**. This extra responsibility came about as a result of the retirement of the then Executive Secretary, Ing. Salifu Mahama. I will act until a substantive Executive Secretary is appointed.

Conclusion

As I wrap up, kindly, allow me to state emphatically that we should all put behind us any resentment, hostility, complacency, acrimony and any other organizational vices that might have hindered our progress in our collective move of "securing effective and efficient management and administration of decentralized local government services" in 2022 and beyond.

On the note, permit me to extend my best wishes to you all for a wonderful 2022.

Long Live the staff of the Local Government Service!

Long Live Mother Ghana!

Thank You.

FIFTH LOCAL GOVERNMENT SERVICE COUNCIL INAUGURATED



The Senior Presidential Advisor, Mr. Yaw Osafo-Mafo inaugurated the newly constituted Governing Council of the Local Government Service (LGSC) at a swearing-in and inaugural ceremony. The ceremony took place at the cConference room of the Senior Presidential Advisor at the President Annex in Accra on Monday, 4th of October, 2021.

The fifth LGS Council is chaired by Dr. David Wellington Essaw with the following members: Ing. Dr Nana Ato Arthur, Head of the Local Government Service (LGS); Madam Marian Kpakpah, representative of the Ministry of Local Government, Decentralisation and Rural Development (MLGD&RD); Dr. Kodjo Mensah-Abrampah, Director-General of the National

Development Commission (NDPC); Catherine Appiah Pinkrah, representative of the Ministry of Education (MoE); Hon. Irene Naa Torshie Lartey, Administrator of the District Assemblies Common Fund (DACF); Hon. Bismark Nkum, representative of National Association of Local Authorities of Ghana (NALAG); Mr. Samuel Donkor, representative of the Local Government Workers; Dr. Nicholas Awortwi, Director of the Institute of Local Government Studies (ILGS) and Nene Sakite II, representative of the National House of Chiefs.

The rest are Hon. Gladys Tetteh and Mr. Derry Martin Bang-Bie, representatives of Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), Dr. Esther Ofei-Aboagye; and Rev. Mrs. Sanatu Nantogma, all nominees

of the President.

The Council Members swore the oaths of office, allegiance and secrecy to serve the country in the Office of the Local Government Service Council, to uphold, protect and defend the Constitution as by law established and to bear true faith by upholding the sovereignty and dignity of Ghana.

Mr. Osafo-Mafo on behalf of the President congratulated the Chairman and Members of the Council on their appointment and wished them a successful tenure. He explained that the Chairman and Members of the Council were carefully selected from diverse professional backgrounds with each having considerable knowledge, expertise and experience on issues relevant to local governance.

He said the appointment of the Council comes at a time when Government is making frantic efforts to consolidate the tenets of decentralisation and local governance which are both indispensable for effective public administration and improved service delivery. He said the

Council is obliged to secure and deepen decentralisation through provision of the needed direction for the effective operation of the Service.

He charged the Council to work as a team to augment the capacity of the RCCs & MMDAs to initiate, formulate plans and execute same through programmes, policies and strategies for effective resource mobilisation; promotion and support for productive activity and the delivery of infrastructure for socio-economic development.

The Chairman, Dr. David Wellington Essaw, expressed gratitude of the Council to His Excellency the President of the Republic of Ghana for the opportunity and confidence reposed in them to provide leadership for the Service. He assured that the Council would within its tenure work with unity of purpose to develop policy guidelines to handle matters relating to recruitment, training, promotion, discipline, arbitration and petition within the Service as provided for in the Local Governance Act, 2016 (Act 936). He was optimistic that members would bring their experiences and expertise to bear to build on

the good works of their predecessors while ensuring they work closely with all stakeholders to champion the good governance agenda.

In closing the ceremony, the Senior Presidential Advisor bemoaned the issue of low domestic resource mobilization especially in the areas of property rates and other property related taxes. Mr. Osafo-Mafo said a recent World Bank report suggests that property rates and other land-based taxes contribute an estimated 0.03% to Ghana's GDP which is lower compared to that of the Gambia (0.5%), Mauritius (1%) and South Africa (1.5%). He challenged the Council to rise to the occasion and build on previous efforts made to improve domestic revenue mobilisation from property rates.

He said in other for the country

to ensure a sustainable regime of voluntary tax and property rate compliance, there ought to be correlation between taxes paid and improvement in the socio-economic well-being of the tax and rate payers. "The interest should not just be on revamping generation of revenue from property rates and taxes, but we must also be interested in what the revenue is being used for". He urged the Council to collaborate with other agencies to improve the accounting functions and efficiencies of District Assemblies especially in revenue management.

Present at the inauguration were a Deputy Minister for Local Government, Decentralisation and Rural Development, Hon. O. B. Amoah; the Chief Director of the OHLGS, Mr. James Oppong-Mensah and other senior officers of the Service.



HEAD OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT SERVICE ATTENDS GUAN DISTRICT ASSEMBLY INAUGURAL CEREMONY



Oti Region – October 8, 2021: The Head of the Local Government Service, Ing. Dr. Nana Ato Arthur attended the inauguration of the Guan District at Lipke-Mate in the Oti Region.

The Head of Service in his address noted that a Coordinating Director and thirty-four (34) Local Government Service staff have been posted to the Assembly. He said the staff, which includes heads of departments and units are to ensure the functionality of the Assembly in the shortest possible time pending the nomination of a District Chief Executive by the President and the subsequent

approval of same by the Assembly Members in the weeks ahead.

He urged the staff to uphold and abide by the values, principles and Code of Conduct of the Service. He advised the staff to learn and appreciate the culture of the people in the jurisdiction

of the Assembly in order to foster good working relationships with community members. Again, he called on staff to be open minded and eschew partisanship in the performance of their duties.

The Minister for Local Government, Decentralization and Rural Development, Mr. Dan Botwe in his inaugural address said the creation of the Guan District Assembly is a new beginning for the people of the area. He said MLGD&RD will support the new Assembly until it is able to function on its own. The Minister on behalf of the President presented two vehicles – a Toyota Hilux and a Nissan HardBody to the Assembly. This was in addition to office



equipment including, computers and accessories, televisions, printers, scanners, wireless routers, refrigerator, projector among others to facilitate the conduct of work.

The Regional Minister for the Oti Region, Hon. Joseph Makubu, praised the President, the Minister for Local Government, Parliament, the Electoral Commission and the traditional leaders among others for the respective roles they played that led to the establishment of the Assembly. He also commended the Joint Consultative Committee for a mandate well delivered.

The Paramount Chief of the Likpe Traditional Area, Nana Soglo Alloh IV and Dr. Obed Asamoah, a former Minister of Foreign Affairs and Justice and Attorney General were present at the ceremony. Both were optimistic that the Assembly will contribute to address the felt needs of local residents which is crucial for local and national development. Again, they commended all whose tireless efforts made the establishment of the Guan District a reality.



The Assembly Member for the Lolobi Kulasi Electoral Area, Mr. Kenneth Bright Norviewu, was duly elected as the Presiding Member for Assembly as part of the inaugural ceremony.

The people of the Santrokofi, Akpafu, Likpe and Lolobi (SALL) traditional areas have been without an administrative district after the Oti Region was

carved out from the Volta Region since 2019. The Guan District was created following a Legislative Instrument laid in Parliament by the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development in 2019. The Assembly consists of 13 Electoral Areas and this bring the total number of MMDAs in the country to Two hundred and sixty-one (261).



RCCS & MMDAS WITH OUTSTANDING PERFORMANCE IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE LGS 2020 PERFORMANCE CONTRACT HONOURED



The Office of the Head of the Local Government Service (OHLGS) has honoured three (3) Regional Coordinating Councils (RCCs) and ten (10) Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies (MMDAs) with special packages, citations and plaques for their outstanding performance in the 2020 Local Government Service (LGS) Performance Contract assessment. These RCCs and MMDAs excelled among Sixteen (16) RCCs and Two Hundred and Sixty (260) MMDAs that participated in the 2020 contract assessment.

The Ceremony was attended by the Chief of Staff, Hon. Akosua Frema Osei-Opare as the Special Guest of Honour in addition to

other dignitaries among whom were Hon. Kodwo Agyenim-Boateng, Member of the Council of State; Deputy Minister for Local Government, Decentralisation and Rural Development, Hon. Collins Ntim; Chairperson of the Public Services Commission, Dr. Janet Ampadu Fofie; Chairman of the Local Government Service

Council, Dr. David Wellington Essaw; and the Regional Minister and Dean of Regional Ministers, Hon. Dr. Archibald Yao Letsa among others.

The Volta Regional Co-ordinating Council was first in the RCC category and for their prize, they received 3 computers, 2 printers, 1 scanner and 2 motorbikes. Savannah Region was second





and received 2 computers, 2 printers, 1 scanner and a motorbike. Bono East Region was third and for their prize, they received 2 computers, 1 scanner and a motorbike.

In the MMDA category, Nkoranza North District Assembly was adjudged the overall best MMDA and was presented with 2 motorbikes, 3 computers, 1 scanner and a printer. The Ga West Municipal Assembly was the first runner-up and received 2 computers, a scanner and a printer; and Afigya Kwabre North District Assembly was third. The 4th to 10th positions went to Tema West Municipal Assembly, Kwahu West Municipal Assembly, La Dadekotopon Municipal Assembly, Birim Central Municipal Assembly, Ablekuma West Municipal Assembly and Twifo Atimokwa District Assembly and Kassena Nankana West District Assembly respectively.

All the RCCs and MMDAs were assessed on seven (7) Key Performance Areas (KPA) consistent with their respective mandates as expressed in their planned activities. The KPAs included but not limited to General Administration; Human Resource Management; Financial Management and Reporting; Infrastructure; Social Service; Economic Development and Environment and

Sanitation. The assessment of the 2020 performance contract implementation across the 16 RCCs and 260 MMDAs was funded by the Government of Ghana with support from United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) and The United States Agency for International Development (USAID). Additionally, UNICEF provided motorbikes to 10 MMDAs that performed well in the Area of Social Services.

Also present at the event were District Chief Executives and their Co-ordinating Directors; representatives of the Civil Service, Inter-Ministerial Coordinating Committee on Decentralisation (IMCCoD), Civil and Local Government Staff Association, Ghana (CLOGSAG) and UNICEF and Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA).

The Performance Contract is part of a Performance Management System (PMS) instituted by the LGS in 2015 to improve performance, enhance productivity, develop competencies, increase job satisfaction and achieve the full potential of all staff in the Service in line with the Local Governance Act, 2016 (Act 936).

PHOTO GALLERY: RCCS & MMDAS WITH IMPLEMENTATION OF THE LGS 2020 P



OUTSTANDING PERFORMANCE IN THE PERFORMANCE CONTRACT HONoured



HEAD OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT SERVICE ATTENDS MAIDEN ORIENTATION PROGRAMME FOR NEWLY APPOINTED MMDCEs



The Head of the Local Government Service, Ing. Dr. Nana Ato Arthur attended the maiden orientation programme for newly appointed Metropolitan, Municipal, and District Chief Executives (MMDCEs) in Accra. The programme which took place on October 26, 2021 was under the theme “**Effective Leadership for Local Economic Transformation and improved Service Delivery in Ghana: The Role of MMDCEs**”. The event was also attended by Members of the Council of State, Regional Ministers, Members of Parliament, Heads and Chief Directors of various institutions.

The programme was organized under the auspices of the

Ministry of Local Government, Decentralisation and Rural Development (MLGD&RD) in partnership with the Office of the President, Office of Head of Local Government Service (OHLGS), the Inter-ministerial Coordinating Committee on Decentralisation (IMCCoD), Institute of Local Government Studies (ILGS) and the Office of the Administrator of the District Assemblies Common Fund (DACF).

Participants were equipped with understanding of the legal and institutional arrangements for effective local governance; leadership, managerial and administrative skills necessary for effective job performance; and personal conduct. The

programme afforded participants the opportunity to build networks and mutually share experiences for personal and professional support.

Opening the programme, the President of the Republic, H.E. Nana Addo Danquah Akufo-Addo who was the Special Guest of Honour lauded the participatory nature of Ghana’s decentralisation and local governance programme to deliver improved service delivery. He urged the MMDCEs to collaborate and work effectively with key stakeholders within their localities. They are to deliberate on issues of common interest which according to him is critical to curb unnecessary conflicts.

Other speakers that addressed the Opening Ceremony included the Minister for Local Government, Decentralization- Hon. Dan Kwaku Botwe; the Regional Minister for the Greater Accra Region, Hon. Henry Quartey and the Volta Regional Minister Hon. Dr. Archibald Letsa.

The opening ceremony was chaired by Nana Otu Siriboe II, the Chairman of the Council of State and moderated by the Minister for Information, Hon. Kojo Opong Nkrumah. The presentations were interspersed with plenary sessions during which the questions and concerns of participants were addressed.

The orientation programme will be implemented in three phases and this will include a general orientation for all appointed MMDCEs; orientation for only first-time appointed MMDCEs; and a nationwide zonal refresher course for all MMDCEs at designated training centres across the country.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT SERVICE A REFLECTION OF GOOD MANAGEMENT PRINCIPLES

Every organization has a mandate to fulfil. To this end, the Local Government Service (LGS) has the mandate "to secure effective administration and management of local government in the country". Hence, the clarion call for the adherence of good management practices both internally and externally. Internal management practices are what go on within the organization itself in terms of capacity building, adherence to the organizational culture, critical look of what goes on within the external environment and its impact on the organization among others. This write-up will dwell more on some principles of management as means of LGS fulfilling its mandate.

Division of Work

First and foremost, there should be a clear division of work, which should fall under the hierarchical framework of the Service. In other words, the framework is based on the span of control and

clear lines of communications within the Twenty-eight (28) professional classes. The issue of hierarchy also brings into view the principles of authority and responsibility or where administrative order is located. This is very important because without order(s) and obedience the administrative machinery would grind to a halt. In other words, the above is grounded in what is called the exercise of administrative power based on law. Administrative power apart from enhancing the execution of Governmental policies also ensures when reward and sanction/discipline should apply.

Unity in Command

Secondly, there should be some sense of unity in command in terms of where orders are emanating from. Usually, orders should come from a person mandated by law to give such administrative orders or instructions. For instance, in LGS the Head of Service has the overall responsibility for the day to day running of the Service. For this

reason, he has administrative power to give instructions or orders through the Chief Director to all Heads of Directorates at OHLGS, the Regional Coordinating Directors (RCDs), District Coordinating Directors (DCDs) and Heads of Departments (HoDs) for the action required to be executed. Similarly, at the Regional Coordinating Council (RCC) level, the Regional Ministers give instruction through the Regional Chief Directors to the leadership of Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies (MMDAs) under them. Finally, the Chief Executives also give instructions through District Coordinating Director to the departmental and Unit heads. The chain of command should always be respected and under no circumstances should it be circumvented, or a parallel or unofficial administrative system created just for the convenience of few.

Lack Ambiguities

Thirdly, there should not be any ambiguities in terms of the instructions or orders. The targeted person or group of persons directed to carry out such administrative orders or instructions as previously mentioned should receive it clearly. The above helps to prevent a situation of "dual allegiance" of staff as much as possible. So that a staff does not get confused as to who he/she should obey i.e. is it the immediate boss or who? Lastly, clarity of orders or instructions promotes unity in direction or affirmative of purpose.

Creation of Incentive

Fourthly, the creation of the needed incentive(s) especially financial is a vital ingredient for staff to give up their best. Such financial benefit should be fair or commensurate to the work done by the

staff or in labour parlance workers would always like to be paid the premium price of their labour. Although, the issue of poor remuneration has engaged the attention of staff for some time now. Hence negotiation with Governments for better conditions of service has been ongoing now and then.

Security of Tenure

Lastly, a good management principle is security of tenure. This principle should be embedded in the conditions of service of staff. Generally, every staff has a security of tenure by this one can work until his or her sixtieth birthday as enshrine in the 1992 Constitution of Ghana. The positive aspect of the principle of security of tenure is that it affords staff to plan, enhances loyalty, it reduces the tendencies of good staff leaving the job pre-maturely. Security of tenure at the long run will help the Service to have an army of good and experienced staff with invaluable institutional memory. The converse of the above is also true.

Conclusion

To conclude, the success of every organization may depend on how the leadership would adhere to the principles of good management practices which some of them have been mentioned above. To put it differently, non-adherence of such principles could lead to the non-performance of staff, which may negatively impart on the organization's output.

HEAD OF SERVICE PARTICIPATES IN THE ORIENTATION PROGRAMME FOR FIRST-TIME APPOINTED MMDCEs



The Head of the Local Government Service, Ing. Dr Nana Ato Arthur was among dignitaries who participated in the two-day orientation programme organised for first-time appointed Metropolitan, Municipal and District Chief Executives (MMDCEs). The programme was held on Thursday, 28th October, 2021 at the Institute of Local Government Studies in Accra.

The programme seeks to help the first time MMDCEs transitioning effectively into their new roles and responsibilities. Numbering One

Hundred and Fifty (150), the participants were exposed to the Local Governance System and their expected roles as Chief Executives in the various Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies (MMDAs). They were also equipped with a thorough understanding of the legal and institutional arrangements for effective local governance as well as leadership, managerial and administrative skills necessary for effective performance and personal conduct.

Day 1 of the Orientation programme was facilitated by

seasoned local governance experts and practitioners. Ing. Dr Nana Ato Arthur facilitated the technical session on Managing MMDCEs and Stakeholder Relationships. He enlightened participants on their functions as Chief Executives and their relationship with key stakeholders. This includes the Community, Metropolitan, Municipal and District Co-ordinating Directors (MMDCDs), Members of Parliament, Assembly Members, Regional Ministers and political parties. He entreated MMDCEs to build and maintain cordial

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OHLGS HOLDS ORIENTATION PROGRAMME FOR THE 5TH LOCAL GOVERNMENT SERVICE COUNCIL



Accra – Wednesday November 10, 2021: The Office of the Head of Local Government Service has organized an orientation programme for the 5th Local Government Service Council inaugurated on October 4, 2021. This was to enable Members apprise themselves with some issues considered critical for the performance of their duties especially those who were not part of the previous Council.

Opening the Orientation session, the Council Chairman, Dr. David Wellington Essaw commended the Head of Service and his team for the timely conduct of the orientation and urged members to participate fully.

In a brief remark, the Head of Service expressed the warmest appreciation of the Office of the Head of the Local Government Service (OHLGS) to the

Chairman and Members of the Council for taking time off their busy schedules to participate in the orientation. He indicated that the appointment of the current Council came at a time when Assemblies have come under intense public scrutiny with some calling for a review of their mandates. He said it is therefore important for members to work together as a team to provide the much-needed leadership and direction to ensure the proper and effective performance of the functions of the Service.

The Orientation was delivered both as presentations and plenary sessions. The Chairman of the Public Services Commission, Dr. Janet Ampadu Fofie (Esq) gave an insightful presentation on governance in the public Services of Ghana. She touched on the legal frame work for governing

boards, their responsibilities, roles, board meetings, corporate governance and its importance. She also shed light on public service corporate governance, its principles and challenges.

The Chief Director of the OHLGS, Mr. James Oppong-Mensah on his part provided members with an overview of the Local Government Service. His presentation discussed the historical antecedents to the

establishment of the LGS as well as its management structure. He highlighted the functions of the various levels of the Service (OHLGS, RCCs & MMDAs) and the reporting relationships & channel of communication.

Mr. George Laryea a Policy Analyst of the Inter-Ministerial Co-ordinating Committee on Decentralization (IMCCoD) presented the National Decentralization Policy and

Strategy, 2020-2024 to Members. His presentation highlighted the roles of the various actors towards the achievement of the ideals of the national decentralization programme.

The Council Members expressed delight on the insightful presentations delivered by the respective facilitators at the end of the session.

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Head of Service participates in the Orientation Programme for First-Time Appointed MMDCEs

relationships with all stakeholders and exhibit professionalism in the discharge of their duties. He further disclosed that the Office of the Head of the Local Government Service (OHLGS) was collaborating with the Institute of Local Government Studies (ILGS) to develop tailor-made programmes to build the capacities of MMDCEs in leadership and management skills for improved service delivery at the local level.

Other topics treated were Introduction to Public Administration and Structures of Ghana's Local Governance System; the Local Government Service and Human Resource Management of the MMDAs; Anti-terrorism strategy of Ghana; Managing

MMDCEs, Stakeholder Relationships; Local Economic Development (LED); the Committee System of Assemblies; the Planning and Budgeting functions of MMDAs and the Public Financial Management.

The orientation programme for the first time appointed MMDCEs forms part of the week long nationwide orientation for them.

Present at the programme were the Minister for Local Government, Decentralisation and Rural Development, Hon. Daniel Kwaku Botwe and his three Deputy Ministers and Chief Director.

THE ROLE ENVIRONMENT PLAYS IN SHARPENING ORGANIZATIONS

Introduction

In organizational theory, environment both internal and external refers to firstly, the internal dynamics of the administration of organizations whilst the external environment is also seen as activities that are beyond the parameters of the organization but undisputable have influence on the operations of the organization. For this reason, both the internal and external environments play pivotal role in the management of organizations in terms of outcomes and the fulfillment of public interest. In this regard, the environment could impose constraints on organizations which may compel them to modify their operations in order to ensure their survival. Such competition is more prevalent within the private sector, where profit-making appears to be the primary objective.

An organization is simply defined as an “entity having the composition of group of people with a particular purpose or objective, regarding a business interest or responsible for delivery of governmental services”. However, in the public sector, public organizations take cognizance of what happens within the eternal environment which come in the form of the fulfilment of public interest. If the public is not satisfied with the services provided then it call for adaptation of new strategies for the provision of services in-line with their mandates for the public satisfaction. In short, environmental determinism explains how the structure of organizations reactions or responses, or adapts to the dictates of the environment. Such reactions are of particular interest to organizational theorist.

External Environment

This write-up will dwell on the external environment. As previously mentioned, the external environment is what goes on outside the

confines of the organization which has either direct or indirect impact on the internal dynamics of the organization. The external environment could influence the strategic direction of the organization if it wants to stay afloat in its operations. In other words, external influence helps the organizations to remain relevant in terms of societal needs particularly the public ones which produce public goods.

Additionally, the value of the environment is seen as a repository of resources including information and material resources among others. Again, the environment has many prongs namely: inter-organizational network, the general environment and international/global environment. Again, for the purpose of this write-up the discussions would be limited to the inter-organizational network and general environment.

Inter-organizational Network

The above is visible in the private organizations, where the organization have well-carved out network in dealings with other organizations within the environment they operate. Such dealings bring on board some benefits like the acquisition of raw materials; obtain capital and knowledge-sharing to mention but a few. Such kind of networking within the private sector enhances their operations leading to profit maximization, which is the ultimate motive of almost all private organization. Furthermore, Inter-organizational network includes how suppliers, customers, competitors and Unions among others are strategically managed to ensure smooth and peaceful work environment. **Public organizations**, also do networking to fulfill their mandate or to satisfy the public interest in terms of the quality service delivery as previously mentioned.

Operations in Stable and Unstable Environments

Most private organizations are said to operating in an unstable environment. Within such environment lots of ad hoc decisions have to be taken to reflect the exigencies of the time. At times, the governance structure may have to be decentralized to permit swift decisions to be taken for the betterment of the organizations' operations. In other words, the decentralization permits each level of the administration to make decision(s) as and when appropriate to facilitate the overall workings of the organization. This helps to reduce or minimize the impact of environmental uncertainties.

On the contrary, public organizations are said to be operating in a stable environment where mechanistic management structure prevails. This structure permits rules and operating procedures to fit into a hierarchical control system. Governmental support could be counted on in most cases.

Inter-organizational Networking vis-à-vis Local Government Service Framework

The Local Government Service framework dovetails into the **Inter-organizational Networking by the creation of good working relationship** with other entities. This working relationship is predicated on the **Inter-service Collaboration and Co-operation** as stipulated in the **Section 81** of the Local Governance Act 2016 (Act 936). The Section has legally permitted a good working relationship among Ministries, Department and Agencies (MDAs). This is part of the Service's response to the external environment in terms of service delivery at the local level in particular. Specifically, the Service is collaborating with Ministries of Gender, Children and Social Protection (MoGCSP), Local Government Decentralization and Rural Development (MLGDRD) Department of Community Development (HQ) among others for

the effective implementation of different programmes and activities.

Prominent among such programmes and activities are firstly, the Inter-sectorial Service Delivery (ISSD) where through networking government departments come together to provide social services. Secondly, the Livelihood Empowerment Against Poverty (LEAP), which is cash transfer to extremely poor families. Thirdly, Social Welfare Information Management System (SWIMS) helps in case management. The System helps in the codification of cases to facilitate storage and retrieval as and when needed. Fourthly, under the inter-organizational networking or ISS the Service Chairs a Committee which is working on a Social Protection Bill. Even though when the Bill is passed it will sit with the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection. The purpose is to give legal backing to most of the Ministry's on-going activities. Fifthly, the Service collaborated with UNICEF and other departments to build the capacities of the staff of the Department of Social Welfare and Community Development (SW&CD). The purpose was to equip them to deliver quality social services at the local level as they are the frontline staff. This compelled UNICEF to assist the Service to revise the existing Training Manuals. This has been successfully carried out and number of such officers has been trained to enhance their capability to function to help vulnerable groups in society.

Conclusion

The above programmes among others are being implemented based on the principle of environmental determinism especially external environmental influence. The external environmental influence has helped to sharpen the strategic direction of the Service with special reference to service delivery with special reference to vulnerable groups such as women and children.

THE CONCEPT OF CIVIL SOCIETY AND ITS ROLE IN A DEMOCRATIC DISPENSATION

The term “civil society” has a long history of transformation from the early to contemporary philosophers. The concept of civil society has about six viewpoints, namely, Value, Collective Noun, comprising a large array of groups advocating for change also known as the Third Sector, Historical Moment, Anti-Hegemony, Space, and Anti-state. However, this write-up would limit itself to the last two viewpoints i.e. civil society as a space for action and as an antidote to the state. The concept of civil society has grown in the 1990s because of globalisation and political change in terms of the collapse of the Soviet Union. This has led to the creation of unipolar world and also the increasing societal inequalities. The United Nations Development Programme UNDP (1993), defines the concept as follows:

Civil society is the sphere in which social movements with diverse and sometimes contradictory social interest become organised. They include church-related groups, trade unions, co-operatives, service organisations as well as academic institutions and others.

Space for Action

The notion of space for action provides an enabling environment for the marginalised and disenfranchised people to be organised as political groups or protest groups to challenge the status quo or to keep the State in check. In another dimension, civil society implies certain power relations between State and society such that there are limitations on the State excesses. Again, the same relations empower societies to insulate themselves or limiting the State’s excesses as previously mentioned. Some Western writers claim that the concept of civil society originated from the Western experiences, which to them such experiences did not exist in non-western societies. But this is not entirely true because in Ghana both our political and traditional spaces have social groups i.e. trade unions and youth groups (Mmaratie Kuo) that help

to keep them in check. The civil society groups have different orientations as some are delivery organisations/movements, advocacy groups, research organisations, public interest groups, mediators trainers and peace-builders to mention but a few.

In some instants civil society groups are seen as militants fighting for self-determination. In other words, national liberation movements are seen as civil society groups unifying society to fight for liberation or against a “common enemy”. The above was common in the pre-independence era of most colonised countries. However, in the post-independence era of many colonised countries have two kinds of civil society groups i.e. the Independent and State controlled groups. The independent ones usually mobilise citizens around common interest whilst the militant groups in post-independence political administration become youth wings of the ruling political parties.

The Western Hegelian conceptualisation see civil society as a more inclusive concept. To put it differently, it refers to a broad range of autonomous non-state and non-market associations (formal or informal) engaging in activities that promote collective welfare. Furthermore, it is used to mean the realm of voluntary and autonomous associational life comprising groups that are independent of the state and markets. Some of the civil society groups directly serve as substitution for the provision of services hitherto provided the state mostly in the field of social welfare which the state can no longer afford to provide.

Civil Society Groups and International Development/Politics

So in the broader context, civil society includes all varieties of social movements and organisations located outside of the state apparatus or formed independently aimed at articulating collective or societal interests. In this conceptualisation, civil

society creates a stage where social relations are reproduced and articulated to foster harmony and also promote collective welfare. The formidable nature of civil society groups especially in developing countries is attributed to the increased involvement of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in the institutional and managerial aspects of governments under what is termed as Good Governance. This is operationally defined as ‘the conscious management of regime structures with a view to enhancing the legitimacy of the public realm’. It is the sum of the many ways in which individuals and institutions, public and private, manage their common affairs. It is a continuing process through which conflicting or diverse interest may be accommodated and co-operative action may be taken”

According to World Bank and IMF, the underpinning of good governance is competitive elections, which are seen as a precursor for restoring and fostering civil society. In this sense, neo-liberalism places high premium on civil society groups in reference to human rights, rule of law and democratic representation and public service accountability. In Ghana, many civil society organisations are trying to make the government respect and uphold the above principles. This has the propensity to enrich liberal democracy by liberating citizens from the fetters of state regulations and oppression. However, in recent times some civil society groups are trying to become militants in their outlook and try to take laws into their hands. Such a behaviour has no place in post-independence political governance in Ghana. In short, civil society, with its voluntarist ethos and emphasis on extra-state groups and associations, is a primary mover in arriving at democratisation, and is a substitute for state power, particularly in the areas where state activity is being rolled back by the neo-liberal paradigm already noted.

Difference Between Non-governmental Organisations (NGOs) and Civil Society Groups

The term NGO refers to those organisations that are officially established, run by employed staff well

supported and that are often relatively large and well-resourced i.e. World Vision, Plan, Oxfam and Care among others .NGOs have symbiotic relationship with civil society and democratisation. To this end, they are significant bolsterers of civil society groups in terms promotion of social services, development, democracy, good governance among others. From the above roles of both NGOs and Civil society groups one can the two are unidentifiable twins. Civil society groups play different roles at different stages of the democratisation process i.e. democratic transition and consolidation. In the former, civil society is thought to play a major role in mobilising pressure for political change through NGOs, trade unions and student movements to mention but a few. In the latter, civil society helps to consolidate democracy in checking abuses of state power, preventing the resumption of power by authoritarian government and encouraging wider citizen participation and public scrutiny of the state. Furthermore, civil society groups unlike NGOs have been effective as they often small in size hence more innovative, adaptable, cost-effective and locally informed; and their grassroots representation brings legitimacy and community mobilisation to their programmes.

Conclusion

Civil society groups have played and continue to play significant in standing against authoritarian rule, uphold rule of law, and promote democratic and social development among others. They seem to articulate the aspirations of the vulnerable and marginalised groups in society. For this reason they are general classify as grassroots oriented. Unlike NGOs which are now becoming more urbanised and elitist. For this reason, civil society groups are more in tune with the realities at the grassroots as previously noted hence effectiveness in the political space in most countries. Apart from the political space, they are key stakeholders in the provision of social services and development in the rural communities where most vulnerable and marginalised groups reside.



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