



REPORT ON AFRICA PUBLIC SERVICE DAY  
CELEBRATION

IN LIMPOPO PROVINCE

VENUE: UNIVERSITY OF LIMPOPO: EDUPARK  
CAMPUS

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## **1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT.**

This report intends to give an account of the Africa Public Service Day as it was celebrated in Limpopo Province. The day was celebrated nationally and in SADC member countries with communications through DSTV.

## **2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION.**

The African Day of Administration and Civil service was instituted by the first Pan African Conference of Ministers of Civil Service in June 1994 at Tangier (Morocco). The conference produced the Africa Charter and declared 23<sup>rd</sup> June as African Day of Administration and Civil Service.

The purpose of the day was to:

- Create awareness of the charter to public servants and the general public.
- Reflect on issues affecting the African public services.
- Consider working conditions of the public servants
- Facilitate positive interest by the citizens in the work of the public sector.
- Reward good initiatives
- Promote professionalism.

## **PART ONE.**

### **CELEBRATION OF AFRICA PUBLIC DAY IN LIMPOPO PROVINCE:**

Department of Public Service Administration facilitated the project and involved stakeholders in the preparation and participation of the celebration. The University of Limpopo provided the conference room and the hall including catering facilities. The Office of the Premier invited stakeholders and designed the program for surprise visits for the members of the Executive Council. Two Members of the Executive Council from the Limpopo Legislature, Public Service Commission and the member of the business sector participated in the debates and supported the process.

From participants in the hall, 107 members of the public, students and public servants participated in the debates and questioning time. The MECs visited service points after the debates. These included hospitals and South African Police Services.

### **ISSUES OF THAT CAME OUT OF THE DISCUSSIONS: ON MEDIA**

**Theme: The role of the state in the reconstruction of Africa.**

Issues of concern included the following:

### **Social issues:**

- The condition of the people of Africa with the challenges of poverty, unemployment, impact of HIV/AIDS, unequal distribution of wealth.
- Congratulate public servants for working tirelessly.
- Attaining the liberation of Africa was not enough.
- There is need to enhance the role of the state because in many circumstances some services can only be delivered by the state.
- State should work with social institutions.
- A conference should be held later on service delivery and social issues affecting Africa.
- There is more focus on security than there is on social issues like human rights.
- There are areas where services of government cannot reach. What are we doing to reach out to those areas apart from using MPCCs?
- Taking care of employees' needs really boosts their morale and encourages service delivery.

### **Integrity in service delivery:**

- Leadership and good governance are important to reconstruct Africa in this development stage.
- The state is responsible to promote, uphold and maintain professional ethics within the public service.
- The South African President in his speech on African renaissance included prosperity and peace and highlighted issues like ethics, service delivery, operations and customization – these are issues that could be important to the reconstruction of Africa.
- Capacity to work with communities is still a big challenge.

- Why must the state increase the support of the private sector by reducing its role of service delivery by giving private companies to work on its behalf at exorbitant prices? Is this not stealing from the poor?
- What stops a developmental state to increase its individual capacity to deliver services directly to the population than to use public funds to enrich private motives?
- Why must a developmental state in the process of transformation rely on a sector whose motive is profit - an anti-thesis to the motive of the public sector in enhancing services and reconstruction of society? What are the effects of unethical conduct on service delivery and what role does the state play to counteract the said unethical conduct?

#### **Economic issues:**

- Recognition that African economy relies on commodities such as oil.
- The crisis of development is reflected in the capacity of the state to deliver services and in the deterioration of economic conditions.
- There is need to promote macro-economic growth.

#### **Corruption:**

- Delivery of services is more important than self-enrichment.

#### **Security issues:**

- Conflict common in states like Democratic Republic of Congo, Sudan, should be looked into when discussing issues of service delivery.
- Whilst security is compromised service delivery suffers.
- There is need to increase security and parliamentary oversight on issues like inclusivity, integration, minimise expenditure by defence forces and

design strategies to demobilise and re-skill soldiers. These are the responsibilities of the state and it is also inter-departmental.

- What is the role of the legal framework in the reconstruction of Africa?

### **Capacity and skills training issues:**

- University is also a public institution responsible to provide knowledge and skills to people who will provide these services.
- States need to consider people for additional organisational capacity but also consider people who work in the public service because they are the ones to take the state where it needs to be.
- Develop the capacity of the states to rebuild the public sector and public service.
- On the development agenda, do we as a province have a strong programme to deal with human resource liabilities in the public service? Do we have the correct Human resource Development program? What is happening because the liabilities outnumber assets in the public sector?
- How does the state ensure effective utilization of trained public servants in terms of skills if one may go on training but remains misplaced – e.g. training is done randomly and not in line with the person's responsibilities or training is given and trainees are denied the opportunity to fulfil their role?
- How does the state and academics intend to work together to provide skills needed for proper and efficient service delivery?

### **Integration/ Governance:**

- The role of the state is crucial in reconstruction because of development.
- The state should function as a catalyst for change at all levels, e.g. economy

- The state should also be the regulator of different sectors of society to ensure that public service meets the goals of the state.
- The state should relate to people who participate in institutions of public service, receive complaints from the public and ensure effective service delivery that is improvement of people's lives.
- Unified public service amongst spheres of government is really central in ensuring coordination and facilitation of good governance and service delivery.
- What is the role of the African Union in the stabilisation of Africa and resolution of conflict?
- Why don't the national and provincial spheres of government create or institutionalise participation of stakeholders in order to maximise influence on budgeting?

#### **Public Participation:**

- While dealing with the quality of the state there is a need to also address the type of the citizen we want to serve? Is there a model citizen? Does the citizenry value the public service?
- The role of public participation – if people have bad experiences of the state they will avoid the state's functions.

#### **Despair:**

- In Somalian experience citizens concluded that there was no need for a state as they had no state in Somalia for 10 years. They have however come to realise that there is need for a capable state that will provide for effective services to the public.
- There is need to analyse the philosophy behind aid and development because it has not been proved that there is a causal relationship between the two as there has never been change in Africa since the 1960s. Find

out whether the problem is the aid itself or the capacity of the aid provided to Africa.

- African states have been demonised in relation to development while development is a political problem nationally and internationally.

## **REPONSES/RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE ABOVE CONCERNS: ON MEDIA.**

### **The state:**

- The kind of states that can deliver services need good governance but there should be a definition of what “Good Governance” actually entails.
- Accountability of the state, transparency, participation and high ethical standards should be utilized to address corruption.
- There is a sound legal centre to promote viable economy.

### **Responsibility of the state:**

- The role of the state is: effective governance that will take decisions and take discipline against non-performers, effective management, take high standard of
- The state must determine how the state can reach all spheres of society for service delivery and how the state can create partnership with civil society.
- The state must determine the limitations of the society.
- The state needs to assemble resources for service delivery improvement to enforce and promote good leadership.
- Talk about developmental leadership instead of a developmental state.

- Create centres of excellence as an inspiration for teams to provide a good service.
- States must determine the kind of development aid must bring to the country, otherwise aid organisations determine the development they will provide.

### **Governance:**

- In terms of good governance the role of the state is defined in the context of its own country, regionally and globally. There must be a climate of continued knowledge and skills training programme for the public service. Values of the public services like professional ethos must be instilled.

### **Integrity:**

- The public service should treat people with respect and dignity.
- The state has the challenge of repositioning public service agencies in development and respond to the needs of citizens..
- There is a paradigm shift in the public service, with the implementation of Batho Pele principles in respect of management of society towards good service delivery. There are however challenges of language, diversity and heterogeneous society in service delivery.
- The starting point for public servants is the slogan “we belong, we serve, we care”. Public servants must be available at all times not only 5 days a week.
- People joining the public service must be aware of the needs of the government they serve.
- Public service must be innovative in addressing problems.
- Public servants must form part of the solution and not part of the problem.
- Professional public servants must know politics of our leaders and those of the civil society.

## **Participation.**

- Citizens want to become participants in governance. Therefore there must be a way to utilise thinking capability and define the strategy for implementation of capabilities.
- Develop capacity to intervene especially in areas of growth and development.
- Build a relationship with civil society and educate people.
- Performance and ethos, involve society in decision making. Constitution of the Republic of South Africa sets the framework for legal issues of governance.
- Reflection on the involvement of citizens in policy making is fundamental in transforming the state.

## **Training:**

- Academics must have an overview of the role of the state and be sensitive to several structures and needs of the state, a sense of the nature and the scope and the context of transformation.
- Ensure efficiency of service delivery by training public servants to understand their responsibility.
- Academics must also have a good understanding of the impact of public service in relation to the training they provide.
- Intellectual creativity is necessary – the state must exploit the energy available in the youth – there is an opportunity to innovate at that level.

## **Economics:**

- Economic interpretation calls for integration of issues, appreciation of local issues.
- Economic management opens up the public service and capacity building and strategic operational processes must be considered.

**Integration:**

- Politics of the public servant in charge of the policy formulation process must be monitored. Parliament must also be in charge of who really implement policies – they might not be in touch with the anticipations of the ruling party.

**PART TWO.**

**PANEL DISCUSSIONS AT EDUPARK: UNIVERSITY OF LIMPOPO.**

The following were questions that were posed from the floor:

OPENING REMARKS	RESPONSE	RESPONDENT
	<p>We are living in a global world with its challenges. States are struggling to maintain their sovereignty but they are becoming influenced by NGOs.</p> <p>Improving public service by outsourcing is</p>	<p>MEC Chabane</p>

	<p>done sometimes when there are problems. Planning is not done properly. How are public servants with then load of work they have spend most their time in workshops, meetings and conferences? The public service suffers.</p> <p>The is a question of the ability of humans to control. People who are not in the delivery of services provide the service, therefore inefficiency in service delivery.</p> <p>We are overstretching ourselves in consultative processes, taking time that impacts on the implementation and budget.</p> <p>We need a model public servant – if Africa is a developing continent. Can we have revolutionary states based on colonialization and the order of the past rather that have revocal state?</p> <p>The planning process like settlements instead of removing them. How do we then plan to deliver services there? We should avoid a situation where if sometimes it happens, plans change.</p> <p>Public service is a political situation therefore impacting on the plans of</p>	
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	politicians. However, a politician's life lasts for 5 years therefore there is lack of continuity after the life of the politician.	
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### Questions from the floor: Part Two continues

Question	Response	Respondent
How does outsourcing influence job creation when there is such a high level of unemployment?	Outsourcing is not an answer to poor management and inefficiency. Planning about outsourcing must be clear and efficient. What is critical is the issues to outsource. If handled internally something else is discussed.  Politician's role is to consult with communities and stakeholders. Outsourcing is a threat to job creation.	MEC Chabane
What is the partnership between tertiary institutions and the role of the state in capacity building.	Most countries utilise academics to provide capacity. Limpopo university provides training leadership through courses such as masters of Administration. Limpopo university is beginning to implement this with the leadership of the province to avoid them using other universities outside the province.  Internships and leadership could be deployed from university of Limpopo to all departments of the state. Skilled public servants e.g. MECs could come and teach at the university. There is need for synergy between civil society and the public service in terms of HR Strategy.	Prof. Thakathi

	Institutions should also provide project orientation training.	Mr. Magwai
What is the state or province's view on HIV/AIDS pandemic and its impact on reconstruction of Africa?	<p>HIV/AIDS certainly drains the human resources. There is also serious human resource drainage from the Republic of South Africa to countries of the North in addition to HIV/AIDS. Depletion of financial resources in terms of the disease and human resource training provision of facilities and medicine to deal with the diseases instead of other issues of need in the country. Africa cannot accept prescriptions on how to handle the HIV/AIDS problem. That could paralyse this state/continent as we may have to rely on solutions from the North with conditions on how to deal with development in their own countries.</p> <p>It is important to understand the citizens of this country and appreciate policies of this government and therefore we may be able to achieve goals of this government.</p>	MEC Sekoati
How does government improve its capacity to deliver services, especially in rural areas?	<p>The Republic of South Africa is accessible and has the capacity to deliver services everywhere in the country. The problem is the people who must deliver and the manner in which to deliver them. There is need to improve here and there.</p> <p>Society has several needs that government must deliver but the public servants do not prioritise accordingly. For example a bridge instead of a community hall may be a community priority but government may build a hall instead.</p> <p>Another problem is lack of integrated service delivery and coordination with stakeholders and other departments.</p> <p>Bureaucracy causes long time delivery issues from one office to another. The Republic of South Africa has no excuse not to deliver. We need to perfect planning, coordination and prioritisation.</p>	MEC Chabane
There is still the question of "son of	Nepotism and ethical framework is needed and must be managed by managers. There is need	Prof. Franks.

<p>the soil” in the public service. This does not really help us in developing a model civil servant as it does not select a public servant by merit.</p>	<p>to protect whistle blowers or have anonymous ways of reporting such cases. The Public Service Commission also has a role to ensure that employments are done fairly and that succession planning is ensured.</p> <p>We need a dialogue between different frameworks in order to sort out conflicts and challenges. We need to talk about conflicts in order to resolve them so they don't hurt society.</p> <p>There is need to confront the issue of nepotism head-on by implementing policies correctly. Appointments are not made by the people who conduct interviews. This creates the problem in relation to the rules.</p>	<p>MEC Chabane</p>
<p>What are the effects of unethical conduct on service delivery and what role does the state play to counteract the said unethical conduct?</p>	<p>The national anti-corruption summit identified resolutions to corruption. There is a structure in the province with lots of debates around this issue. Public Service Commission in partnership with the public protector, auditor general, etc. are not adequately utilised by both the citizens and the public service. The national anti-corruption satellite unit number is: 0800 701701.</p> <p>Recruitment inline with section 116 section 4 of the Public Service Act of the Republic of South Africa stresses adherence to practitioners regarding recruitment, selection, etc. was distributed. You can file grievances accordingly. Do not confuse Public Service Bargaining council and CCMA with Public Service Commission.</p>	<p>Mr. Magwai</p>
<p>How does the state intend to make public service the employer of choice?</p>	<p>Reference to experiences with the Central Audit Committee for three years in South Africa, there is little corruption here as compared to countries like Tanzania and Nigeria.</p> <p>The public service in South Africa is attractive in terms of remuneration – public servants earn more than professors. There is need to market the public service but only de-market in areas where they are needed. Market the type of people we want, experts in specific areas, like PFMA, Municipal Management Act, etc.</p>	<p>Prof. Kupelo</p>

	<p>Government outsource jobs but public servants cannot relate to the documents produced by service providers.</p> <p>Government must improve the product itself. Most jobs are politically connected; i.e. you do not get a job if you are not politically connected even if you are well skilled and educated.</p> <p>Government must try to depolarise the public service to encourage professional service.</p>	

### **PART THREE.**

#### **SURPRISE VISITS TO SERVICE POINTS BY MEMBERS OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL.**

**Surprise visits were conducted by MECs at the following 18 service points across the Departments during the day :**

- Polokwane Provincial Hospital,
- Rethabile Clinic,
- Seshego Clinic,
- Seshego Police Station,
- Seshego Magistrate Office
- Seshego Hospital,
- Polokwane Municipality,
- Polokwane Magistrate Offices,
- Polokwane Police Station,
- Polokwane Home Affairs Office
- Lebowakgomo Hospital
- Lebowakgomo Police Station
- Blouberg Municipality
- Dendron Clinic
- Helen Franz Hospital
- Aganang Municipality
- Cornelia Agricultural Centre
- Knobel Hospital

**It was found that there are still challenges of service delivery were people still wait for long hours for services and poor conditions of service of service points such as Knobel Hospital**