



NATIONAL PUBLIC SECTOR REFORM POLICY STATEMENT

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NATIONAL PUBLIC SECTOR REFORM POLICY STATEMENT

Introduction

1. The Government of Liberia recognizes that in order to attain sustainable development democratic governance must develop certain capabilities for the efficient and effective delivery by public sector institutions of public goods and services; as well as participatory decision-making by representative bodies. Accountable, effective and efficient public sector institutions are at the core of what is considered good governance and are essential for the achievement of sustainable development and the goals and objectives of the Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS) and the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals (MDG).
2. The Government of Liberia also acknowledges that poor governance has been the critical underlying cause of Liberia's violent conflicts, which dates back to the founding of the Republic of Liberia. The last conflict of 1989 to 2003 was the culmination of the past conflicts confirming the virtual collapse of the Liberian State and the destruction of national and civil institutions. At the heart of good governance is the issue of power: how it is shared, how decisions are made and how a government responds to issues of public concerns in the political, economic and administrative management of a country's resources.
3. Consequent to this realization, the Comprehensive Peace Agreement signed in Accra in 2003 established the Governance Reform Commission, now the Governance Commission, a Contract and Monopolies Commission now the Public Procurement and Concessions Commission; called for the reconstitution of the National Elections Commission, the establishment of an Independent Human Rights Commission, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and other bodies that are meant to address a range of governance ailments and other challenges in the Liberian system of governance. Other commissions, such as Anti-Corruption Commission and Land Commission have been established and the General Auditing Commission strengthened toward the same purpose.
4. This policy statement on public sector reform acknowledges that governance reform is the context of public sector reform; as Liberia's past experience amply demonstrates and confirms, all previous attempts to reform public sector institutions outside a comprehensive governance framework proved non-sustainable. However, for purposes of management and presentation, this statement is confined to public sector reform, acknowledging it as a critically important component of governance reform. It focuses on a framework and agenda for public sector reform covering the long-term vision in the context of national goals, objectives and strategies. Central to this policy is reflection on the lessons of past initiatives; it builds on current initiatives but calls for contextualizing public sector reform as a necessary tool to improving public service delivery and ensuring accountability, transparency, fairness and justice, attributes that are indispensable to social and political stability and development. This policy statement is offered as one of the instruments that, together with other reform instruments, can ensure a coordinated approach to national

reform efforts; thus ultimately improving the quality of service delivery and the quality of life of the people.

Elements of Governance Reform

5. Governance reform will take into consideration the following:
 - a) Developing a framework which will lead to, in a participatory manner, a holistic, comprehensive governance reform in Liberia, to address in particular the challenges of the unwholesome political culture of patronage, corruption, impunity, exclusiveness, and a highly centralized governance structure;
 - b) Designing and institutionalizing constitutional/legal regimes that consist of a uniform legal system, an independent and competent Judiciary, and a Legislature that is democratically elected, representative, competent and co-equal and coordinated with the Executive branch of Government; and in so doing to recommit to the founding ideals of Liberia and to avoid further experiences of political violence and conflicts;
 - c) Rationalizing public institutions' mandates, functions and organization structures; aligning these with authorities and responsibilities; and creating a transparent, accountable policy process that prioritizes national goals;
 - d) Proposing measures to create a competent, efficient and effective bureaucracy comprising a merit-based civil service conducive to critical analysis, and therefore generating data indispensable to policy formulation and analysis, sustainable capacity development and continuous improvement in the performance of Government;
 - e) Ensuring the creation of a participatory and inclusive process of public sector reform that would be able to assist capacity development to sustain the reform outcomes of the reform agenda; building capacity in the public sector, promoting the development of national entrepreneurs, empowering civil society and community based organizations, especially women's, youth's and physically challenged groups, to stimulate Liberia's development; and
 - f) Creating a stable and enabling environment (legal, institutional, political and economic) which will allow especially Liberian-owned businesses – small, medium and large enterprises – to thrive at the national and local levels and forging a public-private partnership for improvement of public goods and service delivery, as well as promoting efficient and effective governance and sustainable development.
6. Thus, governance reform encompasses the compelling need for developing a shared national vision and identity, public service including civil service reform, decentralization of political and administrative structures of Government, security sector reform, legal and

judicial reform, legislative reform, constitutional reform, civil society empowerment, and the promotion of public-private partnership. These goals shall be pursued within the context of enduring commitment to sub-regional and continental integration.

7. Improving governance requires effective assumption of roles by all stakeholders - government, civil society and the private sector. The delivery of improved and expanded public goods and services in our post-war country has heightened the need for public sector management reform. The public service shall lead the reform process in participatory manner so as to convert national vision and needs into policies, goals, objectives, and programs, and these into actions effectively implemented that will yield the expected results for the country and its people.

The Context of Public Sector Reform

8. This public sector reform policy paper is prepared against a background of many challenges:
 - a) Liberia is emerging from a post-conflict period with a shattered economy, the virtual collapse of infrastructure and basic services in health, education, agriculture and security. Estimated unemployment stands at a staggering rate of more than 80%. Agriculture production, and particularly the production of rice, had declined significantly. About 64% of the population is believed to live below the poverty line of 1 USD per day;
 - b) The public sector, particularly the civil service, traditionally politicized, was extremely hard hit - leading to a large exodus of its best brains, professional and technical, to foreign parts and to the non-governmental sector, while other professionals were killed during the war; under factional governments, a complete disregard of the rules and regulations of the public service enhanced the virtual collapse of the public institutions;
 - c) Thus, two of the three branches of government, the Legislature and the Judiciary had deteriorated so much in power that they appear as subsidiaries of the executive branch, with the centralization of decision making by the executive at its highest level;
 - d) There was complete erosion of the values of transparency, accountability, and quality performance of the public service. These and other values were largely ignored and "everybody was doing his/her own thing". The performances of public servants were less monitored or their achievements evaluated; impunity was enhanced and seldom was disciplinary actions contemplated or imposed.
 - e) A major goal of government is to improve the low level of institutional, infrastructural and technical capacities within the public service. This is revealed by a recent review of the mandates, missions, functional relevance and the efficacy of the structures of

public institutions in relation to the core functions of government, the severe shortage of critical human resources at all levels of operation, the inadequacy of basic information technology infrastructure and systems, coupled with the poor physical working conditions, including the absence of reliable national electrical power and water supplies and telecommunication services;

- f) There is also the broader environment within which the public institutions function; it is characterized by indiscipline, low level of integrity, and low social capital. Some public servants have used this state of affairs as justification for engaging in corrupt practices; and
 - g) Related to the above is the poor condition of service in terms of remuneration, public appreciation for professionalism and other benefits, resulting in low morale and poor performance.
9. The government is committed to address these and other challenges which have undermined the confidence and trust of the public in the government and its ability to deliver the necessary public goods and services in a participatory and fair manner. A number of reform initiatives, as will be noted ahead, are being undertaken to deal with these challenges.

The Guiding Principles of Reform

10. The guiding principles of governance and public sector reform shall be:
- a) Openness – unequivocal recognition of the right of citizens to access information (in simple English and in the ethnic languages) about the operating processes and activities of the three branches of Government, particularly on the operation of the public institutions that provide goods and services to the public;
 - b) Professionalism – development of a competent and committed workforce that is well-resourced and result-oriented;
 - c) Fairness and Inclusiveness – equalizing access to opportunities for all and fairness in the provision of services regardless of ethnic background, religious affiliation, socio-economic group, gender, color, race and political affiliation.
 - d) Justice - every citizen and resident in the rural areas, urban and peri-urban centers to be accorded equal treatment before a uniform legal system; improvement of the rule of law;
 - e) Accountability and transparency – in the discharge of public functions individually and collectively, especially for decisions and actions taken and their outcomes;

- f) Efficiency and effectiveness – provision of expanded range of improved goods and services that are affordable, particularly to the poor and physically challenged;
- g) Continuity of leadership commitment to reforms – succeeding political leadership should continue to maintain a high level of commitment to carry on the public sector reforms initiated by preceding leadership; and
- h) Sustainability of reforms – continuous development of the capacities of human resources and public institutions and national commitment and support to the reform efforts.

The Long-Term Vision

11. Realizing that public sector reform is among strategies to reform and improve governance, determination of the long term vision of the public sector reform will be participatory, based on consultations with all stakeholders: *The government envisages a public service that is open, lean and affordable, merit-oriented, participatory and inclusive, efficient and effective and capable of providing high quality services to the public transparently and accountably. It will be a public sector that is inspired by strong ethics, professionalism and governed by the rule of law.*

Goals and Objectives

12. As noted in the *Poverty Reduction Strategy*, the broad goal of public service reform “is to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of public institutions, to ensure their affordability and sustainability overtime, to improve the quality and enlarge the quantity of services delivered to citizens and develop capacity to carry out core government functions”. These core functions are policy and strategic planning, coordination of program interventions, monitoring and evaluation of sector programs results and impact as well as ensuring accountability.
13. Major objectives of the public sector reform are to:
- a) Validate the role and core functions of government at both the central and lower levels;
 - b) Build institutional capacity for policy formulation, analysis and implementation toward providing high quality policy advice to government; ensure coordination and monitoring and evaluation of public sector management;
 - c) Strengthen the human resources development and management capacities of the public sector;
 - d) Broaden power sharing among stakeholders and their wholesome participation in public decision-making;

- e) Provide access to high quality service at affordable cost;
- f) Promote ethical values and standards which will lead to a merit-based system and ensure transparency and accountability and create a corruption free public service; and
- g) Support actions that strengthen the administration of justice and capacity of the Legislature to perform its oversight and other duties and functions.

Strategies

14. Towards the achievement these objectives, Government shall consider the following strategies:

- a) That all stakeholders - government, the CSOs, the citizenry, the private enterprise sector and development partners fully understand and support the reform objectives;
- b) That attention shall be given to the prioritization, proper planning, sequencing and timely implementation of the reform activities and ensure that they are harmonized and coordinated with the reform goal and objectives;
- c) That Government shall create sustainable incentive or reward scheme that will give special recognition to ministries, agencies, municipalities, districts and counties that embrace these reforms and effectively implement them;
- d) That public policies of Government provide access to those who do not have access to public services, such as rural women, the very large non-literate population, the elderly, infirmed, physically challenged and other disadvantaged groups of society and establish a people-friendly environment;
- e) That Government shall ensure that all public sector and donor funded activities are in line with and supportive of Government's reform priorities;
- f) That Government shall strengthen anti-corruption institutions and enforce anti-corruption laws;
- g) That Government shall promote a holistic, participatory public-private sector partnership; and
- h) That the media be effectively used to inform and educate the public on the reforms, challenges and results achieved.

Public Sector Reform Initiatives

15. The following constitute the initiatives constituting public sector reforms which are aimed at contributing to the achievement of the objectives of PRS and Millennium Development Goals (MDGs):

- Restructuring of public institutions and Civil Service Reform Strategy
- Decentralization;
- National Security Sector Reform;
- Legal and Judicial Reform;
- Legislative reform;
- National Integrity System;
- Land Reform; and
- Capacity Building.

a) **Restructuring of public institutions and civil service reform:** The exercise of restructuring will involve the review of the mandates and functions of each ministry/department/agency) and commission, the identification of functional overlaps across the M/D/As, assessment of their organization structures and functions in keeping with general administrative and organizational principles; and a review of the operations of state-owned enterprises (SOEs); identification of criteria of efficiency and effectiveness of institutional performance, accountability, transparency, consistency in nomenclatures and the core functions of government which entails focusing more on policy making, regulating, facilitating and coordination of programs, and monitoring and evaluation of public policies, decisions and programs. To date nineteen (19) ministries, three (3) central management agencies, and eleven (11) autonomous agencies have been reviewed and the process of validation of these assessments has also begun.

A situational review of the operations of fifteen (15) state-owned enterprises has also been carried out. Preliminary findings reveal that some of these enterprises are moribund and a burden on the public treasury; while others could be profit-making if properly managed with integrity. It is expected that recommendations emanating from the updated study will provide policy options relative to the following: (i) market prospects, (ii) profit potential, (iii) potential for private sector success in the execution of the object (mandate), (iv) relevance of public sector provision, (v) potential for public-private partnership, and (vi) the possibility of a new business model more efficient and effective in achieving their objects (mandates).

Within the framework of the public sector reform, Government has launched a **Civil Service Reform Strategy (CSRS)** to transform the operation of the civil service. The key components of the civil service reform strategy include:

- Restructuring and Rightsizing;

- Pay Reform and Pension Reform;
- Service Delivery;
- Human Resources Management;
- Developing Leadership; and
- Gender Equity in the Civil Service

The Civil Service Reform Strategy will further advance the broad public sector reform policy goals and objectives of rebuilding the public service and making it leaner, affordable, responsive, efficient, effective and performance-oriented and providing quality service to the public. In the process of developing the Public Sector Reform Strategic Framework, the Governance Commission will collaborate very closely with the Civil Service Agency in undertaking the exercise. While the reform programs are being implemented, the Governance Commission will undertake the monitoring and evaluation of the performance of government ministries and agencies.

- b) **Decentralization:** The key issue involves transcending over centralized governance and broadening the processes of decision-making and implementation in a manner that allows for participation of citizens in institutions of governance at sub-national levels. Also critical is the decentralization of the delivery of certain public goods and services. Three critical aspects of decentralization are: political decentralization, administrative decentralization and fiscal decentralization. Political decentralization relates to the devolution of political power to elected officials; administrative decentralization involves vesting managers of departments and divisions of sub-national levels of government with administrative decision-making and implementation authorities; and fiscal or financial decentralization entails the transfer of authority, resources and responsibilities to sub-national level officials for the financing of Government services. The ultimate objective is to establish and maintain shared authority. In pursuit of this objective, the Governance Commission has prepared a national policy paper on decentralization for Government's consideration, focusing on the devolution of political power, administrative and fiscal authorities and responsibilities to the counties.
- c) **National Security Sector Reform:** According to the Poverty Reduction Strategy, Government reaffirms its commitment to the main goal for the security sector reform: "to create a secure and peaceful environment, both domestically and in the sub-region, that is conducive for sustainable, inclusive, and equitable growth and development." The Government also accepts the fact that a secure national environment is vital for peoples' livelihood and the achievement of poverty reduction and the Millennium Development Goals. Thus, the provision of security goes beyond the traditional concept of security which focuses mainly on the readiness of the military to be used for the protection of the presidency and suppression of its own people or against any foreign threat. Government shall be concerned with total security- that is, with the protection of life and property linked to the socio-economic development of the country and improvement in the quality of life of the people. The policy agenda for security sector reform will address the following areas: a) the stability and security of the state and the well-being of the people and their human rights; b) security as a public policy and

governance issue and hence the need for participation of the people in developing such policy; and c) give greater priority to human security as opposed to the previous practice of regime and military security. Addressing these challenges will require developing a clear institutional framework for the provision of security and the development of policy that integrates security and development needs, strengthening the governance of security institutions, and “building capable and professional security forces that are accountable to civil authorities” as articulated in the PRS. In this respect, Government has approved a “National Security Policy Statement” and a “National Security Strategy” document, to guide the security sector reform process.

- d) **Legal and Judicial Reform:** The key issues revolve around the equality of access to justice, the nature and compatibility of “extant jurisprudences” (customary vs. statutory) and judicial practices, judicial freedom from political and external interferences which are critical to maintaining the integrity of the judicial system, the nature of appointment of judges, case management and capacity of the judicial system. Government has taken two major steps by preparing a draft Act to establish a Law Reform Commission and establishing a Judicial Training Institute for the improvement of the performance of judges and other judicial personnel. Other initiatives have been planned to improve the legal and judicial sector.
- e) **Legislative Reform:** Government is fully aware that the role of the Legislature is critical to improving the performance of the public sector to provide quality service to the public and consequently enhance the quality of life. As with the Executive branch of Government, the Legislature has also recognized the need to undertake reform initiatives designed to strengthen its capacity in order to “effectively represent the people, make good laws, exercise oversight over the executive, and perform other functions that are essential to democracy and good government.” In this connection, the Legislature has embarked upon a number of initiatives, with assistance from development partners, to build up its capacity. A major initiative is the development of “**The Liberia Legislative Strategic Development Plan – 2008 - 2012**” for reform of the Legislature.
- f) **National Integrity System:** Underpinning the public sector reform and ensuring its integrity and effectiveness is the need to develop a strong national integrity system (NIS) which covers the actions and behaviors of public servants and politicians in the Executive, Legislature and the Judiciary. Our checkered history has revealed the endemic nature of corruption in the public service. Corruption not only undermines the Government’s legitimacy and erodes public trust and support; it also negatively affects the capacity of the public sector to provide goods and services to the poor and needy. In line with this policy framework, Government has instituted certain measures to enhance national integrity. These include the establishment of the Public Procurement and Concessions Commission and strengthening the General Auditing Commission, the enactment into law of the Anti-Corruption Commission Act, the appointment of the Commissioners, and a draft Code of Conduct Act (before the Legislature) for Public Servants to govern their behaviors and actions. Government has also taken important

steps to press for the enactment of the “Freedom of Information Act”, the “Public Broadcasting Act” and “The Draft Corruption Offenses Act” which have been sent to the Legislature for enactment into law. These Acts will enhance public access to information and the role of the media and their ability to influence public decision-making, as well as the fight against corruption. A further development is the establishment of the Liberian Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (LEITI), including the forestry sector, to ensure that all payments to, and revenues received by the Government, including all royalty and tax payments, by extractive industries are transparent and fully reported publicly. The Governance Commission has begun a sensitization of the public on the negative consequences of corruption and is working to strengthen the role of civil society groups, including the media, in the campaign against corruption. The Government is committed to ensuring the enforcement of these measures and promoting transparency and accountability in the public service.

- g) **Land Reform:** Government recognizes the critical need for land reform and the inextricable link between land, peace and stability and the reduction of poverty. Land serves as the main source of livelihood for more than 70% of the population, especially the rural poor. Given the contentious nature of land issues in post-conflict Liberia and potential for conflict renewal if unattended, Government, as a matter of priority, is committed, as stated in the PRS, “to the development of a comprehensive national land tenure and land use system that will provide equitable access to land and security of tenure so as to facilitate inclusive and sustainable growth and development, and ensure peace and stability and to provide sustainable management of the environment.”

The PRS outlines the following four strategic objectives of the land and environmental policy of Government which are to be achieved within the next three years: 1) to establish the Land Commission and enable it to address its mandate, 2) to promote equitable and productive access and security of tenure to the nation’s land, both public and private, especially for the poor, women, and other marginalized groups, and to promote the rule of law with respect to landholding and dealings in land, 3) to promote effective land administration and management and 4) to promote investment in and development of the nation’s land resources.

In line with these objectives, the Government has established the Land Commission with the primary goal of developing such a system and with the mandate of proposing, advocating and coordinating reforms of land policy, laws and programs.

- h) **Capacity building:** Government is keenly aware that its ability to implement the necessary reforms to sustainably spur economic growth and improve the quality of life of the people will depend on the capacity of the public and private sectors. The low level of capacity presents critical hindrance in public service delivery. Highly trained professionals and technically skilled personnel are in very short supply and this poses a big challenge to Government. The working environment lacks many critical requirements. The situation has become more challenging as a result of the inability of

the public service to attract qualified candidates due to the poor remuneration and poor working conditions. Thus, while the Civil Service Reform Strategy will deal with the challenge of human resources development and utilization in the civil service, there is a need for a Comprehensive Public Sector Capacity Development Program to address the other challenges. In this connection, Government is formulating a comprehensive “10-Year Capacity Development Strategy and Action Plan” under the leadership of the Ministry of Planning and Economic Affairs, with the support of Government development partners, to “guide and mobilize existing and new capacity building initiatives to develop the country’s capacity to achieve the nation’s short and long term development goals.”

The Government is also undertaking a number of temporary capacity building initiatives with the assistance of our development partners. Some of these initiatives include: the Senior Executive Service (SES) Program, being managed by the CSA; Transfer of Knowledge Through Expatriate Nationals (TOKTEN), by Ministry of Planning and Economic Affairs and UNDP; Financial Management Training Program, by Ministry of Finance, LIPA, and University of Liberia; Liberia Civil Service Capacity Building Project (CISCAB) by CSA and the UK Department for International Development (DFID). The Civil Service Capacity Building Project is aimed at improving the capacities of the Civil Service Agency and the Liberia Institute of Public Administration. These interventions were initiated during the emergency phase of rebuilding the public sector. The Government will build on these initiatives and shall provide the appropriate mechanism for the coordination and synchronization within a comprehensive public sector reform.

Closely related to the issue of capacity building is the nature of the educational system and its ability to produce the necessary skills, training, knowledge and experience needed for national development. This is critical for the long-term capacity building of the nation’s human resources. The education system was also seriously affected by the conflict and is now facing serious challenges, including the lack of adequately qualified and trained teachers, poor facilities, instructional materials and largely irrelevant curriculum. Thus, there is a call for a revamp of the educational system and a review and implementation of the national educational policy with the development of science and technology as a major area of study in our schools and colleges; and to make the general curriculum relevant to the needs of Liberia. Government is also taking steps to address this challenge.

Expected Outcomes of the Public Sector Reform Initiatives

16. The expected outcomes of the public sector reform over time are presented in alignment with the areas of intervention:

Restructuring of Public Institutions and Civil Service Reform

- a) A clear understanding of and commitment to Government’s vision on public sector reform;

- b) An appreciation of the new role and core government functions for which ministries and agencies are responsible;
- c) Appropriate organization structures for ministries and agencies;
- d) Internalized and articulated vision and mission statements with clear mandates;
- e) Participatory planning, budgeting and management processes in ministries and agencies are result-oriented;
- f) Highly motivated and committed public servants;
- g) Gender equity in the public service;
- h) Better delivery of public goods and services; and
- i) Positive impact of good governance on the quality of the life of the citizenry;

Decentralization

- a) The Government's commitment to enhance public participation;
- b) Provision of adequate information to the local people;
- c) Decentralized political power, authority and responsibilities to local administrative and political structures;
- d) Greater local participation in the affairs of Government, especially by the vast majority of rural population, women, youth, the elderly and physically challenged groups;
- e) Effective response by local authorities to the concerns of the people; and
- f) Better delivery of goods and services

National Security Sector Reform

- a) Considerable improvement in the security of the nation and the absence of the threat of civil conflict;
- b) Protection of life and property and reduction in the level of crime;
- c) Peace and stability and enhanced development activities;
- d) Strengthened civil oversight of security systems; and
- e) Greater regional cooperation on security matters;

Legal and Judicial Reform

- a) Fairness and integrity in the effective administration of justice, particularly for the poor;
- b) Respect for and effective application of the rule of law;
- c) Speedy adjudication of court cases; and
- d) Enhanced confidence in the judicial system

Legislative Reform

- a) Better representation of the people;
- b) Making good laws;
- c) Effective exercise of oversight responsibility; and
- d) Enhancement of democratic form of government.

National Integrity System

- a) Reduction in the level of corruption and other unwholesome practices;
- b) A public service that is accountable, transparent and disciplined; and
- c) Enhanced public trust of Government;

Land Reform

- a) Improved land use coordination and monitoring and evaluation;
- b) Effective resolution of land disputes at the national and local levels;
- c) Improved land management practices;
- d) Improved land records management;
- e) Equitable access to and ownership of land and security of land tenure; and
- f) Creating a conducive climate for investment;

Capacity Building

- a) High level of professional/technical performance necessary for an effective governance system by public servants;
- b) Adequate professional and technical capacity within the public service to advance the pace of reform and the delivery of public goods and services efficiently and effectively;
- c) Enhanced capacity of the Legislature and Judiciary to effectively perform their functions;
- d) Clear understanding of the role of government vis-a-vis the private sector, and an energized commitment to enabling Liberians to improve their ownership of the Liberian economy; and
- e) Sustainability of the public sector reform outcomes

Implementation of the Public Sector Reform

17. Successful implementation of any reform initiative requires heeding to the lessons of the past. Government of Liberia has attempted several public sector reform programs and many of them have not been successful. Consequently, it is important to heed the lessons of the past if we are to transcend past failures.

Lessons from Past Experience

18. The implementation of Public sector reform projects in Liberia has a mixed record. One of the successful projects was the Special Commission on Government Operations (SCOGO) initiative which created and established the following institutions: Bureau of the Budget (BOB), the Ministry of Planning & Economic Affairs (MPEA), the General Services Agency (GSA), and the Liberia Institute of Public Administration (LIPA). These institutions were established in the 1960s to improve and strengthen public service. Additionally, the Civil Service Agency was reformed in the 1970s to improve the management of the public service.

19. Failed experiences in undertaking public sector reform include the efforts in the 1900s when the United States Presidential Commission was appointed to review the governance situation in Liberia. That effort resulted in a failure. Other failed public sector reform initiatives include: (1) the receivership program from 1912-1926 which was initiated and implemented by private creditors to improve revenue collection in order to retire unsustainable external debt, and (2) Operational Executives Program (OPEX) in 1987 which focused on the improvement of financial management.
20. Although a mid-term evaluation of the Governance and Economic Management Assistance Program (GEMAP) has been conducted and the outcome of that evaluation is being used to design an institutional arrangement that will succeed GEMAP, its success is yet to be assessed. Thus, it is important to heed the lessons of the past as Government is working to transition from GEMAP to a successor arrangement that will provide for longer term, government-led reform programs.
21. The common features of the reform initiatives that have failed are as follows:
 - a) Projects to improve public administration designed to build capacity were supply-driven and could therefore not have sustainable impact;
 - b) Improvement in a single agency or sector without addressing other cross-cutting issues, for example, the rule of law and the effective administration of justice, would not likely have the desired impact in the long run;
 - c) Duration of projects were short term and did not receive donor commitment beyond their initial durations;
 - d) The design and implementation of projects did not adequately enlist national leadership and ownership;
 - e) No Liberian Government initiated, owned or championed public sector reform; and
 - f) Projects initiated largely focused on the Executive branch of Government to the neglect of the Judiciary and the Legislature thereby undermining the constitutional requirement of co-equality and coordination among the three branches and the need to ensure efficient and effective service among them in the provision of public goods and services.
22. Drawing from the experience of past reforms, and to some extent the current efforts being made, as well as the experiences of other countries, this policy paper outlines the following critical lessons to guide the formulation and implementation of the agenda for the public sector reform process:

- a) In order to be successful and have long lasting impacts, the implementation of public sector reform should be nested in a larger and more appropriate system of governance reform, guided by a shared national vision and sense of purpose;
- b) The various elements of public sector reform such as civil service reform and the fight against corruption in the public service must not only complement each other, but be coordinated such that they develop synergy among themselves and seek to achieve a common set of goals;
- c) Local and national ownership of public sector reform is indispensable to its effectiveness and success. And, like most other components of governance reform, it must be built upon the experience of a country, and must be considered legitimate by the citizens of that country, if they are to achieve productive outcomes and be sustainable;
- d) It is essential to build national and local capacity to ensure the effectiveness and sustainability of public sector reform. Public sector reform that does not include from its inception a capacity building component is likely to experience a halting process of implementation and an uncertain future; capacity building being achievable only in the long run, commitment to reform must also be long term;
- e) The effective implementation of public sector reform requires a strong political will on the part of the top leadership of the country. That political leadership of the country will have to demonstrate genuine commitment to the reform agenda, through clear pronouncements buttressed by adequate allocation of necessary resources (human and material), and a clear support of processes designed to legitimize the reform; and
- f) The process of public sector reform is not a “technocratic” or “mechanistic” approach. Thus, to be viable and workable, it must take into consideration the political and social environment; for it is a process that involves the “cultural change” of organizations and public servants and will take into consideration motivational factors; it is also a longer process than predictable time and/or a fixed period would demand for completion.

Implementation Framework

23. The development and implementation of a comprehensive Public Sector Reform Strategy (PSRS) requires the participation of all stakeholders: the government, civil society and the private sector; successful reform requires more than consultations, for reform can never be imposed; the institutional arrangement for the reform in terms of the role of the Chief Executive and his/her Cabinet, the Legislators, Members of the Judiciary, the public institutions, public servants and their associations, civil society, the citizenry at large, and other relevant parties must be agreed and accepted as legitimate. Their roles will be spelt out in the PSRS.

24. Government will develop information and communication strategy to promote effective participation of the various stakeholders and engender broad-based commitment and

ownership of the reform process. It shall also make special efforts in bridging the information gap between the policies and the people, as well as in bringing about changes in the knowledge, attitudes and practices of those who are to implement the reform programs and activities.

25. The PSRS will build on the current efforts being initiated by Government and will incorporate the daunting challenge of coordinating and monitoring cross-cutting thematic issues, including the implementation of the Civil Service Reform Strategy (CSRS).

26. The PSRS will address the issue of the coordination of donor support.

27. Of particular importance in the PSRS is the development of an implementation plan, the establishment of priorities and the sequencing of activities. The scope of this policy paper suggests an ambitious program and hence the importance of the need to establish a realistic and coordinated approach in the sequencing of program activities and their interdependence and a time line for the achievement of reform targets by the various initiatives. The experience of other countries shows that an attempt to cover many activities at once without the capacity, the necessary resources and the proper sequencing may be an invitation to failure.

Monitoring and Evaluation

28. The Governance Commission shall establish a central mechanism to coordinate the effective monitoring of programs implementation, and the measurement and evaluation of their results. The primary goal of the monitoring and evaluation (M&E) is to monitor the impact of the public service reform. This will involve first establishing a monitoring system with clear goals, objectives, indicators, and identifiable targets for the indicators in key areas of the reform process (covering the inputs, outputs, outcomes and impacts); and then designing impact evaluations to measure the extent of the achievement goals and understand the changes that will take place over time. The results of the M&E, both quantitative and qualitative, should provide information on what is working and what is not working; and the GC can thus determine what modifications can be made in policies, programs and various interventions. It is important that we draw on the lessons from the M&E process to strengthen the PSR process; this in turn, will be complemented by other evaluation activities.

29. The GC will have the overall responsibility for the implementation and coordination of the M&E activities, working in close collaboration with other institutions as may become necessary. Implementing institutions will be required to develop their internal M&E systems and mechanisms.

30. The M&E process will be characterized by transparency and accountability with the report being public documents, posted on the website of the GC and made accessible to the populace throughout the country. Thus, the process shall involve other stakeholders, especially the Civil Society Organizations and our development partners. These stakeholders shall be encouraged to conduct independent monitoring and evaluations of the achievements of the reforms.

31. Government and its development partners shall ensure that the GC and partnering organizations receive support in terms of capacity development and adequate funding for the execution of their work programs.