



# INNOVATIONS FOR SUCCESSFUL SOCIETIES

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Interviewee: Selina Mkony

Interviewer: Andrew Schalkwyk

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SCHALKWYK: I'll begin the interview now. All right. I am here today with Selina Mkony, the Program Coordinator at Public Service Management Office in Tanzania. It is the 18<sup>th</sup> of November 2008 and at Utumishi Building in Dar es Salaam. Before we start the interview, I just want to ask that you have agreed to this interview.

SELINA MKONY: Yes, I have.

SCHALKWYK: OK, thank you very much. So I'd like to begin this conversation by talking about the role you've played in civil service reform. Could you tell me about what you do now and the jobs that have brought you to this position?

MKONY: *Well, I joined the Presidents Office Public Service Management -- by then it was known as Civil Service Department -- in 1994 as an accountant and later on I was assigned the duties of administration of the program, as well. By then it was Civil Service Reform Program. That was more concerned with cost containment, restructuring of the government, reducing the size of the government. Because earlier on, coming in from a socialist society, the government used to do almost everything, therefore it became a huge burden to the government, and therefore they needed to streamline and focus more on the critical role of governments, which is policy, development and management, formulation and management, and the rule of law, etcetera, and really offering the services that could be offered by other non-state actors including private sector. That program lasted from 1994 to 1998, when a new program was developed which was more focused on performance management, institution performance management systems, as well as making the public service efficient. The program that was designed in '98 was launched by His Excellency President William Benjamin Mkapa in 2000 and it was to last for 12 years. This program was three-phased, with the first phase of five years. The first phase known as PSRPI was more concerned with developing tools to manage the public service so that it performs efficiently and effectively. The second phase was more on institutionalizing this performance management system and tools as the instruments that can help the government perform better. And the third phase will be more on quality assurance. Thereafter it will become the norm to practice and operate efficiently by the public service in serving the mass. So when I was in the Civil Service Reform as accountant, or more as an administrator, I assumed the same role with PSRPI. I mean, with PSRP until it was closed in 2007 in December. A new program PSRPII, which is the second phase, was designed during 2007. Since things were changing, we needed to redesign the earlier designed phase. So with PSRPII now is -- now I am the project coordinator, more advising the components on the program rather than really doing in terms of accounting and administration as the program is mainstreamed.*

*My rise into these positions is more attributed to my ability to team play. I'm a very good team player. I'm also very innovative. There are several things that I changed as I was carrying out the program, which is... avoiding to be at the top, but rather working with everybody across the line, more on a horizontal basis rather than vertical. And this gave me to be accepted by everybody and to be liked by everybody to run the*

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*program, because they were part of management and implementation. They participated in running the program, and I was more on a facilitation role rather than a managing role. Now, since the first phase ended, we had to be recruited again competitively because we could not move to the next phase without a competitive edge. So the office advertised for the post. Fortunately, I managed to also get recruited under this second phase because of my experience, ability and the capacity in carrying out the reforms. Public Service Reform Program is one of the best performing in the region and I know that Permanent Secretary had been awarded by the World Bank for, you know, being able to lead the program well. Our previous PS, one Mr. Joseph Rugumyamheto. So this was all because of the consistence and the persistence in ensuring reforms success.*

SCHALKWYK: OK. All right. This is part two of the interview with Ms. Mkony. So could you talk about the challenges and issues facing the civil service before the reforms were started?

MKONY: *Some of the challenges were lack of systems to operate and to run the government. The issue I mentioned about the government taking up all the tasks instead of, you know, concentrating on the core functions, and therefore it became a burden for the public servants, to carry out their duties efficiently. So for lack of that, then we had to undertake reforms, so that we streamline the government. We looked at the cost of running the government, and that's how the reforms have been developed and measured in this country. And it has been done in phases. As I said, the first phase, which was civil service reform, was more to restructure the government and rationalize functions. And then the next phase was to put in tools that would let the public service offer better services and efficiently to the public.*

SCHALKWYK: OK. And could you talk about some of the specific goals of the Civil Service Reform Program and how these goals were decided on?

MKONY: *Some of the goals... Well, as I said, the restructuring. And therefore, there was a retrenchment of employees. Looking at the capacity of the employee -- of the public service so that it could perform. You could have deadwood in the system, and therefore you would not be able to efficiently offer the services. And another goal was really to concentrate on the core business of the government, which is policy formulation and managing the rule of law and things like that. So those were the utmost goals for the earlier reforms. And now the goal is more on poverty reduction and development growth for the citizen. And therefore we have a vision, national vision, 2025, which stipulates that... And a strategy for that matter, which we call MKUKUTA, which is now the adopted strategy in which the nation is steering all its efforts towards reduction in -poverty..*

SCHALKWYK: I'm sorry, could you spell MKUKUTA?

MKONY: *MKUKUTA in Swahili is Mkakati wa Kukuza Uchumi na Kupunguza Umaskini Tanzania but in English it is National Strategy For Growth and Poverty Reduction. National Strategy For Growth and Reduction of Poverty. ( NSGRP).*

SCHALKWYK: Right. And how does the restructuring of the civil service fit in with those goals?

MKONY: *First, it was to make it lean, as in other words was small and affordable. And also to look at the core functions, and also to see what can be hived off in terms of other entities taking them up. For example, we introduced what we call the executive agencies, so that some ministries that were more on an economic venture could have an agency that was dealing with the business type of services that are crucial for government to still continue doing issues of utility. Utility is a very crucial issue which any government should be on top of, and therefore, the executive agencies were created as you have your eyes on but hands off, kind of, to reduce the bureaucracy that exist in the formal government that existed during the Civil Service Reforms. Also, we did introduce a private sector participation in some of the services, and therefore we contracted out services to the private sector.*

SCHALKWYK: What sort of services did you contract out?

MKONY: *We did contract out cleaning, messengerial, as well as security. Those are the commonly outsourced services across the government right now. But each ministry, when we did get out this program of PSP -- we call it PSP -- they did identify areas where they can still PSP, but then it relates to sequencing and timing. So when the time is opportune, then other services will also be outsourced so that the government really remains with its core business.*

SCHALKWYK: And what is the relationship of the executive agencies to --

MKONY: *The ministries.*

SCHALKWYK: -- the ministries.

MKONY: *As I said, it's eyes on and hands off, so the permanent secretary of the ministry chairs the board of the executive agency to know how it is running, but it's more run as a business entity, so they do make business plans rather than a strategic plan.*

SCHALKWYK: And who else would be on the board of this?

MKONY: *There would be people from outside in relation to the executive agency. If it is on the utility part of it, then you have people who are in power in energy and water, and therefore it's well selected and composed to have an encompassing and participatory board that can inform better the operations of the agency.*

SCHALKWYK: And then how successful do you think these have been?

MKONY: *Some have been quite successful. Like we have one which is a business administration and licensing agency. It used to be very tedious to register a business, but now BRELA is doing very well. We had the registration insolvency and the trustee issue for agency RITA (Registration, Insolvency and Trusteeship Agency), which is to register birth and deaths. And also there was a lot of bureaucracy, but now it has*

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*been streamlined and they're running on a commercial rather than a more bureaucratic norm, so services are quite improved moving from getting a birth certificate from three years to one to three days. Yes.*

SCHALKWYK: OK. And have there been others that have been less successful and can you think about why they've been less successful?

MKONY: *I wouldn't say they have been less, but rather it's the nature of the agency themselves. Because some of the agencies, really, they're still offering basic social services, and therefore they have to get subventions from the government, and therefore they will still have a red tape kind of situation.*

SCHALKWYK: OK. Could you talk a bit about the motivation for civil service reform?

MKONY: *When it was introduced, there was always the issue how will the ministries and public servants themselves take care of the reforms? It was a challenge and so when we began the Civil Service Reform Program they had what they will say local cost compensation. They would compensate those who are more involved with the reform program better than the rest, so that there was some kind of a buy-in to start with. I wouldn't know whether it was kind of using the Pareto 20/80 principle that you have a few on board who will have the job done... When others see the successes that come in, they will join. Another issue that we took on board was the issue of 'quick win'. We looked for situations where you could change fast. And some of the quick wins we did with the Minister of Lands, with the title deeds, because also it was taking a lot of time. Therefore, when we picked up about -- more than ten quick wins and they proved successful, these were quite an incentive for others to also participate in reforms.*

SCHALKWYK: Was there an effort to sit down and plan the process, or the order in which things were done, and who was involved in that process?

MKONY: *Can you come again, please?*

SCHALKWYK: Was there an effort to sit down and plan the Civil Service Reform Process and who was involved in that planning?

MKONY: *There were people who were involved ... There was actually studies that were carried out at any stage of development of the reform agenda. Even before the Civil Service Reform Program in 1993 and later on. The Civil Service Reform, which was a five-year, was also like diagnostic to inform about the situation. So diagnostic studies we are undertaking, as well as when we carried over the Civil Service Reform Program, then we knew where we should take the program, the next phase of the program. And therefore, a group of public servants undertook development of the strategy for the next reform program. So there were about 25 of them from various ministries at the level of directors and assistant directors. They reviewed and developed a strategy for the Public Service Reform Program and it was being championed by the public service management office. I mean, this office championed the development of the phase of PSRP. And even as we developed the next phase, like PSRP II -- which we did last year, it's also about getting stakeholders*

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*views, doing some -- carrying out a study and looking around and asking what do they perceive to be the best way to do it and what are the consequences after we did it. So it is very involving and participatory.*

SCHALKWYK: OK. At this point, how do you think this planning has worked out? Have you been able to follow through on those plans? What would you change in those plans if you were to start again?

MKONY: *For us, it has really worked very well from one phase to another because of the approach in which we designed the phases and the way for it, which is quite the involving type. We have had other reforms that have stagnated and it's all about leadership. Who's leading that reform and how enthusiastic and committed that leadership is to that reform program. And therefore, our reform has really been very fortunate that it has always had the backing from the top level, the President to the Chief Secretary and to the rest of the government.*

SCHALKWYK: And who would you describe as the constituents for the reform?

MKONY: *The constituents is the top leadership, which is His Excellency, the President, because they have always launched the programs, they have always been on top and keen for the program, and therefore, that gives it a very committed level.*

SCHALKWYK: OK. My next set of questions are going to deal with some specific kinds of reform in which you've played a role and if you don't have much experience, just let me know and we can move onto the next set of questions. And I'd particularly just like to know your experience behind your role in this. So I'd like to talk about professionalization, of merit based recruitment and hiring. And could you describe the procedures and standards used in the system of recruitment in the civil service and how has this changed over the period of the reform program?

MKONY: *Earlier on this area of public service was more on nepotism or know-who, and therefore it was not on merit. And therefore, with the coming of the reforms, one of the issues that was high on the agenda was recruitment on merit and we had the full component on meritocracy. But you hire for the quality and for the job that is around... Otherwise, people are just joining the public service haphazardly. So the reform was concentrated on that as one of its key achievements in building the capacity of the public service, getting the best. The issue of retaining them now in the service was a challenge, too, because of the wage and the salary that is paid to the public servants. So fortunately, early on people didn't want to join the public service, but with the reforms, it became more palatable to join the service because there was more transparency and good working condition... There was a future. People could see there was a future in the public service and that really helped a lot because we embarked on advertising posts, interviewing, and negotiating, so we became more open and staying in the system also and in the public service, we introduced what we call the open performance review appraisal system. Instead of the confidential system that used to be there, which could be subjected to favoritism and nepotism and that one also, I think, give people confidence that you are joining an institution that has some standards and procedures and rules.*

SCHALKWYK: What criteria are used in promotions and what weightings of things like seniority, education, skills or performance management given? Or performance evaluations given?

MKONY: *About from what I know in OPRAS, which is where you set your own objectives, individual objectives at the beginning of the year, and when you succeed, you could be promoted but somehow if there was a vacancy. If there's no vacancy, then someone cannot just be promoted. But when there's vacancy, the right candidate is sought around and is promoted. We have recently, from what I know, decentralized most of the recruitment and promotion to the accounting officers, and therefore, much of public service management maintains the standard for which someone should look. We have what we call a standing order. A standing order describes exactly how we should promote and who should be promoted as a guide to the managers who are doing this. But it is more based on seniority and the qualifications and the ability to do the work. Experience also comes into play. Therefore, it isn't so much different from what you have in a private company.*

SCHALKWYK: And do you have any tests or standards for recruitment? Could you talk about those, if you have an experience with them?

MKONY: *What do you mean by standards?*

SCHALKWYK: When you recruit people, do you have a set of standards that people need to meet before they could be considered? What do you look for in the interviews?

MKONY: *Depending on the level of... Depending on the level for which you are recruiting, definitely you look for education and then you look at experience, relevant experience, as well as age. You sometimes look at the age, gender. Now we have a unit, a full unit that is dealing with diversity issues and some of the standing regulations is... You need to not look at the gender, but rather to look at the diversity issues that arise. So if you have a disabled person who is performing well, he gets the first priority to be hired. So is with women and men. So when they took a man and a woman, they compete exactly the same, chances are you will take the woman more than the man if have same qualities-- so that we achieve the Beijing affirmative action and our government is right there committed to that.*

SCHALKWYK: In some countries, for efficiency or other reasons, formal procedures are not always followed to the letter. What is your experience here?

MKONY: *Well, I would think it's only in a few instances where they are not so much followed. So -- and it would be for a reason. Some of the things... You see like the power is vested on the President. He has the power to appoint anybody in a position that he feels that. So it is in the Constitution. Short of that, then you have to follow the procedures.*

SCHALKWYK: And is this a change from the past?

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- MKONY:** *Not to the worst. But, you know, it was even... The current institution is different from the past, and therefore it depends on the situation.*
- SCHALKWYK:** All right. You described nepotism in the civil service earlier. How did you presumably... The current procedures are different, and there are procedures now rather than just hiring in those ways. Could you talk about how you changed the methods for hiring to get away from nepotism to more standard best systems?
- MKONY:** *It was when we introduced the transparency issue of you advertise. There are more people involved in the recruitment. We have a committee that is responsible for recruitment, which is diverse also in nature, and therefore, every process is subjected to scrutiny by more than one eye. I mean, one person. So that to some extent, we reduced a lot of that nepotism.*
- SCHALKWYK:** One of the challenges often facing civil service is the implementation of performance management. And you talked about the performance management scheme earlier. Could you describe to me the process of performance management and evaluation?
- MKONY:** *The performance management system has a lot of areas that were dealt with. . We had strategic planning, operational planning. A systemic planning for the government so that you come up with a work plan that you can execute. One of... Also, another area was the OPRAS, which is Open Performance Appraisal System. This one is after the organization has set, you know, because we... Normally, with the PMS, you develop the strategy planning involving almost everybody in the organization and the objectives that are set... Each division takes one of the objectives and implements it. Breaks it down into sectional objectives and also to individual objectives. So each one knows the stake he has in achieving the higher --- the top objective of the organization, as well as these objectives are also, again, in line with the national strategy. So you have to set your objectives afterwards, you fill in the form at the beginning of the year with your supervisor on the targets and activities to be undertaken. Then, a half year later, a review of your performance against the set targets. Therefore, if you find your performance is lagging behind or you have improved, then those are documented in the form. We have a specific form that is filled in. And the individual assesses his performance first and then after the due date when they have to do these evaluations, then they sit with their supervisor and supervisor now assesses the marks for which the individual has put down and they compromise on whether that was really what he deserved or she deserved and they come to an agreement and then that's how you are assessed. If someone needs some training because of... for which he couldn't perform work, then that one is amicably agreed. You could have someone witness during the assessments and evaluation, as well, if someone needs to.*
- SCHALKWYK:** What were the major challenges in introducing the performance management schemes?
- MKONY:** *Introducing the tools was a challenge for the -- mostly MDAs, ministries, departments, and agencies. When we developed them, we tested with a*

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*pilot in some -- few ministries first. For the POPSM, and ministry of finance, ministry of planning, and privatization then, and ministry of health.*

SCHALKWYK: Why did you choose those?

MKONY: *First, these are... The three are central and the other one is they are sectoral ministries. Therefore, we kind of looked at ones that were not so widespread and the one that was widespread to give us the inkling of how we should introduce that. And then we engaged the consultants to take the MDAs through the process.*

SCHALKWYK: Who were these consultants?

MKONY: *They were international consultants. We recruited them internationally and each consultant took a set of ministries. We did divide the ministries into their mandates. Like we had administrative ministries, we had economic ministries, we had the social ministries, and the like. So it took us a long time to recruit the consultancies, and as well as take the ministries in the process.*

SCHALKWYK: Did you encounter any challenges?

MKONY: *Some of the challenge was it was new. These were new tools we introduced, so buy-in was really very difficult. The consultants were always complaining that they are not getting the full support and they...*

SCHALKWYK: So who weren't they being supported by?

MKONY: *It was... You know, you are coming in with your new thing and people had their own things and the way they were doing things. They didn't want to lose their comfort zone, for you to sit with them to start planning something they don't know. So slowly, those who...because we had to put an incentive. There was a fund. There was a fund that the MDA that completes the cycle of performance management could access for its reform implementation. We called it performance implement fund. So those are the champion ministries. When other ministries saw that they were getting the funds to implement their activities, then they also followed suit, although the fund was not to last long, but it was to give them some initiative to move towards it.*

SCHALKWYK: And where did the funding... Where did the money from the fund come from? Was it from donors or was it from...?

MKONY: *It was from donors.*

SCHALKWYK: OK.

MKONY: Yes.

SCHALKWYK: And was there a broad base of support for these programs in the community or society? Or was it... How did the public react to them?

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- MKONY:** *The reforms in the initial years were seen as being driven by the ministries and being, you know, top down approach. It was seen as a top down approach, something that they didn't conceive, and therefore they couldn't know how to implement. So the first civil service was designed that way first, but with the Public Service Reform Program, we involved more stakeholders. We even carried out a symposium that involved even political people—politicians--and even then it also seemed still to be driven by some circles rather than being all developed by the citizen. So we embarked on education, information, education, and communication campaigns. You know, we now like hold the public service day, which is a whole week of events of public services open to the public. They ask questions and all that. So it's becoming more understood by the public than it used to be.*
- SCHALKWYK:** So looking back at the changes with regards to professionalization and merit recruitment, what would you say worked particularly well and have these become institutionalized?
- MKONY:** *Well, you know, there were gains that we are seeing for those who embarked on meritocracy. The organizations were well managed. People could speak the same language because of their understanding. Therefore, for those who embarked on that, the capacity to implement was better and the performance of their institution was also seen. For those who didn't, some ministries, you still find there is the poor quality of services.. So it's all about the quality.*
- SCHALKWYK:** And do you think the civil service provides an atmosphere in which... An environment in which civil servants can do their jobs effectively?
- MKONY:** *The earlier public service was suffering from a lot of -- lack of capacity in terms of tools to -- working tools. Good, you know, office accommodation like this one, it was hard to find in the public service. But as the reforms set in, this is changing. Even the earlier reform program, public service reform phase one. Some of the resources were spent on retooling the offices and also building the capacity in terms of human resources. So most of the people went for training, for skills and competence training to make them perform better. Therefore, I think with the reforms, things are changing to the better.*
- SCHALKWYK:** So I wonder if I could talk to you now about the sequencing and management of the reform process and what exactly your job as the coordinator is to do with regards to the sequencing.
- MKONY:** *The sequencing of the reform is not the sole responsibility of the coordinator. Rather, it emerged from when we are designing the program, and knowing that, you cannot do everything at the same time. And this -- and I particularly see that the sequencing of this particular program has given the aids to perform better because you could come back and see where did you go wrong and rectify faster because you have that opportunity for reviews and all that. For me, as a coordinator, also gives me the opportunity to do piecemeal achievements, and therefore, you show results faster, and therefore you could be trusted for the next phase. That kind of situation, that's how we -- it has come about. So it is important for any reform because reforms will always be*

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*there. There's no way reforms are going to end, and therefore, with the changing world and the globe -- the directions around the world and nowadays you can't say you are through with reforms. So they will continue being there and the sequence comes out of the need of the day. Need of the day.*

SCHALKWYK: And what advice would you give other reformers with regard to sequencing of the forms?

MKONY: *It is important that they sequence the reforms, because we have seen others that could not take out -- take off because of lack of sequencing and also being able to articulate what can you do now and break it into components that you can achieve. Setting in a logical framework the outcomes that are expected of that phase. And we normally develop what we call triggers, which is what triggers you to do, what you want to do and those are measured in the final analysis when they were implemented.*

SCHALKWYK: Could you give me an example of a trigger?

MKONY: *Is like when we said all 75% of MDAs should be on the performance management system. So someone coming in looking at the MDA and finding who are using the OPRAS forms and things like that. Oh, you can say developing quick- wins, several of them for a certain period of time.*

SCHALKWYK: And have some reforms proved difficult to complete because other reforms haven't taken place or have some reforms undercut others?

MKONY: *Yes. There are several crosscutting reforms like ours. We have the legal sector, we have the financial. So these, we call them crosscutting reforms. They are crucial for every reform because they are interdependent. They depend on each other in terms of... Public Service Reform Program is supposed to have ensured capacities, then the public service to implement the other reforms. The legal sector needs to see into how efficiently the legal system is working so that -- for conforming rules and regulations. Therefore, some reforms have suffered because others didn't take place, especially the local government reform program, which depends almost on all crosscutting reforms. So there is need to... So there's need for them to go at the same pace. Unfortunately, what we found is most reforms do not start on the same time. So others came later, and therefore the issue of reform not being done is mostly because others are lagging behind.*

SCHALKWYK: So you talked a lot about government evaluating its core areas of responsibility. And could you talk a little bit more about what those areas are? What you decided those areas are to focus on.

MKONY: *One that I know for sure is the policy formation and development and the issue of rule of law. So policies are the guides. Everybody has to do and to behave, so when they are not to the standard, they are not to the expectations of the stakeholders, then things don't go right. So mostly those are the core areas of every ministry that is established. Rather than really the government doing as we used to do early on, you leave*

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*the doing to the private sector. Unfortunately, the Tanzania private sector had not developed too well, so that's why you find government still holding on to some few of those areas that could have been privatized.*

SCHALKWYK: And how does the reform process fit in with the goals of streamlining government?

MKONY: *Especially the crosscutting reforms, they are to help the government perform, and therefore, some of the key -- we call key result areas of these reforms should be focused on that, improvement in terms of policy development by all the ministries. And like our public service reform. That is a key result area for one of the components.*

SCHALKWYK: And how broad has the implementation of the reforms been? You talked about the pilot project with the performance management, but in other areas.

MKONY: *After the pilot, of course, we rolled over to all the MDAs. The second phase of the Public Service Reform Program is designed now that it's not driven from the center, because the earlier one was being driven from POPSM and what we call the supply driven. But now it's... We designed it that MDA will manage their own reforms and we give them resources. And therefore, now it has, you know, cascaded down to the MDAs and we took them through a facilitation process of how they should choose a reform agenda in their respective ministries. And it has proven to be quite receptive by the MDAs. We recently had a supervision mission. Actually, it lasted only last week. And when they went down to the MDAs, they were saying, "We are happy that POPSM has really, really relinquished the powers to us -- to manage the reforms -- in that we were facilitated well by them when taking the reforms up." That was the first round of facilitation. We intend to do also to the executive agencies, as well as to independent departments, and then later on it will seem a natural cause because now reforms are mainstreamed into the MDAs, what we call medium term expenditure framework (MTEF). They plan for them, they put the money in their plans, and they implement. So they just give us reports of implementation and then we consolidate the reports for further reporting.*

SCHALKWYK: So some countries have the problem of keeping the reforms in place after the official reform process has been completed. What mechanisms have you used to help continuity of political reform as people move in and out of industries or ministries?

MKONY: *With the attrition of people, like... We have -- like our program, we have mainstreamed the program. It's not more managed as a unit. You know, some reforms were implemented in a unit form, where you had a chief executive and those who were implementing experts, for that matter. But our reform is now mainstreamed, so the directors are the component leaders... It is mainstreamed to the structure of the ministry. And therefore implementation is now not done by the expert that is us. We just facilitate them out. But done by themselves, you know, identifying the areas of implementation, they plan from the section after the directorate, after the institution. So sustainability becomes more relevant, but those which are still on the project mode than on*

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*mainstreamed will face a sustainability challenge... They risk it when people leave and reforms I stagnate.*

SCHALKWYK: All right. How have the ministries reacted to this mainstreaming, making reforms part of their jobs? Have they felt that this has added to their workloads or stretched their capacity? How have you dealt with that?

MKONY: *It was the same feeling also here when the program was mainstreamed. But we kept on informing them and educating them that their core business, whatever they are doing is what they are supposed to reform in the first instance, not something coming from outside. And therefore, it is just making their work to be done in a better and more informed way. So slowly they understood that. But even as we are going to the ministries, same kind of feeling was there, that, "Oh, you are coming to add more work to us, how can we do your reform work and then do our normal work?" So the challenge remains on how to tell them that what you are doing is a reform -- what you are doing currently is what needs to be reformed, and therefore applying for that tactic... For us here it was quite difficult... It took some time. But once they knew that was part of the job, then they now do it on a usual manner rather than calling it a reform. So that's why mainstreaming the reform is important at an early stage.*

SCHALKWYK: And how has the availability of resources affected the way you've conducted reforms or the type of reforms that you have chosen to implement?

MKONY: *Resources are important because for lack of them you cannot implement the reforms because there's a lot of capacity building, there's a lot of consultancies playing in and to take into consideration, and therefore for you to access the resources is how you use the resources. For those programs that have used the resources for their intended purposes, they have continued to be supported. For those, then, who will not understand the rules and the procedures, then they are stuck. So some of the reforms are stuck because of -- I wouldn't say misuse, but for not using the resources for their intended purposes.*

SCHALKWYK: All right. So is there a system where resources are only provided if results come through?

MKONY: *Yes. I mean... Yes, because, you know, you sign a credit agreement-- and MOU ... And procedures are all stipulated in them. So when they come to review and they find you're out of your way, immediately they suspend. They suspend. A suspension of the loan or grant.*

SCHALKWYK: OK. So who suspend -- who's suspending this loan?

MKONY: *I mean, the bank World Bank or Development Partner can suspend, and so the borrower has no means for finance. It is informed that this program is not performing or it has done something very erroneously here, so we are suspending. And there are stages to suspending the funds for the program. You are first informed and you asked for an explanation. If you don't give any satisfactory explanation, then it goes to the board of the World Bank, and then it is suspended. Yes.*

- SCHALKWYK: And could you talk about the skills needed for reform and the capacity demands of reform. What was the skills base in the civil service at the beginning of the reform? Did you need to bring in any external help?
- MKONY: *Reforms need the skills and experience, and therefore, we did bring in several advisors. For each component, there was an advisor who stayed for about two years with the directors. And after that, then we had a few experts again to sustain the capacity of the public service. So now, some of the components do not have either an advisor nor an expert. Only in a few areas. But you really need the capacity for people who will see the urgency because undertaking reforms needs speed, the speed to implement and there was a factor that most of the reforms are on project...I mean, in terms of development, and they have a timeframe for implementation. Then you need to keep the momentum for implementation.*
- SCHALKWYK: And have you made distinctions between long-term and short-term goals, and have these ever pulled in different directions?
- MKONY: *Normally, we align them in terms of achievement. So long-terms still are there, but you have to develop short-term goals to achieve that long-term goal. So like our vision 2025, and the strategy which is MKUKUTA. We have three clusters of MKUKUTA so each MDA objective has to be linked to and develops what will achieve the MKUKUTA strategy and MKUKUTA goal towards the vision.*
- SCHALKWYK: And who's been in charge of the reform process? Who's been managing the reform process? Is it a single person? Is it mainly through POPSN? And how is that related to delegation into the ministries?
- MKONY: *Who was managing the reform from early on was the chief secretary, who is the head of the public service. So he has the permanent secretary below him for accountability and reporting, and therefore each reform has a steering committee that is chaired by the permanent -- I mean by the chief secretary. Of recent, because we have developed what we call a national framework for coordination of the reforms, and also we have established a unit within the chief secretary's office. So this unit is with the chief secretary at the state house and is the one which is responsible for coordinating and informing the head of the public service about what is happening with each reform, so he is the one who is in charge of all the reforms.*
- SCHALKWYK: And how have the reforms affected -- we've talked about this a little before. But how have the reforms affected the workloads that people already have?
- MKONY: *You see, in terms of affecting, it is only misunderstanding. So even here, when we introduced the reforms and say they are mainstreamed, we didn't give people time to think about it. It was just there are no experts anymore. We don't have a unit for projects, so you are the one. So the permanent secretary in the meeting in the conference room told the directors, "You have conceived the baby and you have to deliver it." So that's how it rolled over. So you need bold decisions by the leaders.*

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*That's how it happened here. So I think in others, they are hesitant about that, so people keep on saying, "I have other duties. I cannot do the reform duties." So that is where someone needs to come in and tell them "what you are doing is what you need to improve", and that becomes a reform. Yes.*

SCHALKWYK: And if you were to have any advice for other countries, for other people in other countries about controlling and managing reforms, what would it be?

MKONY: *To have a very... To have a good leader to lead the reforms. A leader or a manager for that matter, because reforms, I think, is not more about leadership, it's more about managing and asking for results all the time. Here we did put in an institutional arrangement whereby every -- after two weeks, every component leader will report on progress made and whether there are any constraints to implementation.. So it became part of the system, so they will sit on Friday as a component and get divisional reports and consolidate a departmental report, they know Monday we have a meeting for reporting. That one put them on board faster and they became accountable... When you sit in a meeting, conducting effective meeting means not listening to the processes rather than the outcomes or the constraints. Someone would just have to say what constraints they face, what they are achieving, the milestones that you had said you will meet etc. If they find there's a constraint, the permanent secretary asks, "Who do you think needs to help you on that?" So that way you find people coming with solutions rather than problems.*

SCHALKWYK: I wonder if I can talk about the organizational structure of the civil service. And have you made any large scale structural organizational changes?

MKONY: *Well, yes, there have been. Actually, when the President appoints the cabinet, normally that signals a restructuring in some ministries and some departments, and therefore calls for everybody to read their mandate. This ministry is responsible for facilitating restructuring of the institutions, so they do apply -- they bring in their suggestions and then we sit with them, we look at the structure and the mandate. When you look at the mandate of the organization for which it is vested then you know what structure will be able -- best structure to implement the mandate. And therefore... They have... They have -- they have happened several times because ministries have changed. We had 18, they went to 24, they change. Sometimes this -- ministries merge with another one. So restructuring happens almost all the time.*

SCHALKWYK: And have there been any changes in the way -- in the career paths of civil servants?

MKONY: Sorry?

SCHALKWYK: Have there been any changes in the career paths of civil servants?

MKONY: Career path?

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SCHALKWYK: Yes.

MKONY: *Well, people who join at the lower level, they expect to be the directors and later on to be permanent secretaries. So the more higher it goes, the less the vacancies exist, and therefore if you don't succeed to reach the top, you either can go horizontal to another minister and do something different. But otherwise, they are quite limited... Once you are not director, it's almost like you've reached the top and you stay there.*

SCHALKWYK: How much security of tenure -- how much job security do civil servants have and how does this effect efficiency and accountability?

MKONY: *I'm not a public servant myself, so I wouldn't be able to answer that very well, except I know they are permanent and pensionable. I know they are permanent and pensionable, and therefore, when they reach 60, they have to retire. Yes.*

SCHALKWYK: OK. I wonder if I could talk a little bit about pay policy, I know you mentioned it earlier, as well as the retrenchment in stock size. So were you involved at all in the retrenchment process in the 1990s?

MKONY: *No. I had not joined. But when I joined, I found there was a program known as retrenchment. So when they retrenched about 50,000 or so employees, then they set up a redeployment program which they called like retrenching with a smile, so that at least someone doesn't feel so bad. There were two issues to redeployment. One was those who were retrenched. They were given some funds to attend training in an entrepreneurship development. And others were given funds to start small business, to attend a training program on how to start a small business through a voucher, there was a voucher system that was used. It proved futile... To others, it did help because of the training they got. There were people whom you could not deploy back into the service. Retrenchment came with a notion that those who remained will be remunerated better, but it didn't happen, because the few that were retrenched were not really getting paid highly to match the remaining gap. Therefore, the expectations were not met by the retrenchment process, but it is an exercise that was done without so much chaos like it is happening in other countries. I hear in other countries they cannot even mention about. So here it was done smoothly, somehow, but their deployment also lasted for about two, three years, but then it also ceased because there was malpractice. The voucher system It wouldn't follow the retrenches to the villages, considering how large Tanzania is. So it didn't increase the wages. However, it remains a credit that we managed to retrench 50,000 employees without so much -- so much trouble.*

SCHALKWYK: So why do you think you were able to retrench them effectively?

MKONY: *I think they managed because first there was a campaign that was undertaken and information people were given. Because others actually volunteered to be retrenched because the handshake was good. So only to find after some time of spending that money you cannot sustain with that. So then it becomes a bitter pill. Sweet as it was in the*

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*beginning, it became a bitter pill, so... And Tanzanian culture is not, it wasn't during that time the culture for resistance. Tanzanian culture has always been harmonious. .*

SCHALKWYK: OK. And in the pay -- in the pay policy, what were the attempts made to increase -- increase the level of pay in the civil service?

MKONY: *The medium term pay targets that have been set in the policy was to enhance pay for the technical, professional and management cadres of the public service and, as usual, pay will all depend on the capacity of the government to pay. So if your revenue is not increasing, then pay increase will sort of become a problem. But over -- over the period of the reforms, pay has increased substantially. And I think it's somehow 27% growth... Other people might give you better data on what level they have increased.*

SCHALKWYK: Have you had any experience with training programs or capacity building efforts in the civil service reform? And were there any efforts to identify gaps in capacity and how did you -- how did you go about it in defining these caps?

MKONY: *Training needs assessment were conducted in several -- several times and training plans are now being developed. But basically, you know, the capacity of the public sector was very low. There wasn't any capacity. So any capacity intervention that was undertaken was more on a need basis or on an ad hoc basis rather than on a concerted effort that you could define across the board who needs to be trained and in what and a sequence for training. So most of the capacity interventions that are undertaken are more spontaneous and of recent, the only ones that we have done systematically is on leadership development, whereby we have given it across the board to, let's say, all the districts, the executive directors, or you give it to all the district administrative secretaries. The same cause for, you know, in a sequence manner. So otherwise this is a challenge now and this reform program, the current phase, is now looking into more what they can do structurally in capacity building and developing training plans*

SCHALKWYK: And who does most of the training?

MKONY: *Training is conducted in country and -- as well as abroad. And where we need to train en masse, en masse, then we bring in the trainers to train in the country. So it's cheaper and you cover more people. But otherwise there are local institutions as well as international institutions and consultants or trainers.*

SCHALKWYK: Has there been any relationship with treasury institutions like the University of Dar Es Salaam or the Public Service College?

MKONY: *The Tanzania Public Service College trains the lower cadre of the employees. University of Dar Es Salaam only train on the academic part of it. Like if you want to send people for master's degrees, then that one is -- that one -- people go to university. And also we have a program for women, where we sponsor about 50 women each year to undertake a*

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*master's program. So they enroll in a master's program in a university in Tanzania. We don't send them abroad.*

SCHALKWYK: How many people do you normally send abroad every year?

MKONY: *I think less than -- less than 30.*

SCHALKWYK: OK.

MKONY: *Less than 30.*

SCHALKWYK: And is it a concern that people who are trained leave the civil service and find better employment in the private sector?

MKONY: *It's very few, because the type of people that we train, they already have their positions and they're already in the public service. Early on, the government used to have what they call the bond. Bond because -- so that you promise to work for the government. Now it is -- I don't think its there—I don't know. But we... For skills enhancement and the capacity enhancement, we all send in service staff or they will definitely come back. We don't train for first degree or things like that.*

SCHALKWYK: And how have you gone about attracting the scarce skills into the public sector and what sort of skills are these? Have these typically been?

MKONY: *Yes. Attracting and retraining these technical and professional staff is quite a challenge. So I think there's a scale they have set for them. Entry point is different from their normal cadre. They call normal cadre. So technical and professional are more, "renumerated". I think they are paid better and more compared to their other colleagues. There have been some -- what they call the LCC by the donors so that they could keep them, especially during the reform process -- they will give them top up. But these have -- recently have become quite unpopular because of the sustainability issue. We cannot sustain. So what has happened to keep them is improve the working environment.*

SCHALKWYK: And so how has the environment improved?

MKONY: *Better -- better equipment, with computers, new office accommodation. So at least the people feel they are in a -- they are recognized when they are working. It's not like where it was before it was terrible. But nowadays I think someone coming in to join our institution; they definitely join because we have a big nice building. The office I'm staying in is an old office. So they would have called them huts. But when they find a building nice as this, they have joined -- they will join. And there's no problem really getting young graduates to join in the public service, because even then, the private sector is not developed, and therefore, the only opportunity they have is the public service, which is large, the largest employer, yes. There's an advantage that it has the large -- the capacity to employ.*

SCHALKWYK: And do they have... Do they get other benefits?

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- MKONY:** *Depending on their position. I think there are benefits that are given to the permanent secretaries, directors. Yes. Fringe benefits exist for them.*
- SCHALKWYK:** Has there been any effort to involve the public in setting goals or involved in the reform process, to get any grassroots feedback?
- MKONY:** *Yes. Like in our program, when we develop the program, we do involve them. The private sector, NGOs, we call them into a seminar, we sensitize on what we want to do. We commission consultants to go around and seek for the advice and move forward. So that one gives you really very good input into where you want to go and how you should go and how you should involve them.*
- SCHALKWYK:** And what sort of feedback have you got from them with regard to goals? What are the priorities of the private sector? Of the NGOs and of the public?
- MKONY:** *Right. Each one of them... You know, because we do a stakeholder analysis, each one of them has a different need and would like to be involved in a different manner. So like the private sector would want the policies to be clear, well-updated most of the time. The services that they get from the public institution to be efficient and on-time, which -- almost everybody wants that. The non-state actors need to be involved in all stages of policy development if they want to be...their voices to be heard. And therefore, we even have set up a complaints handling mechanism where they can complain. And these complaints are taken up. So it has changed. The public service relationship with them, other organizations, completely changed. It's not like the confidential type of situation that existed -- that existed early on.*
- SCHALKWYK:** So could you talk a little bit more about the complaints handling mechanism? How do people leave complaints?
- MKONY:** *You can do it through writing in the newspaper. There are people who are always looking for, you know, complaints in the newspaper. You can leave it in suggestion boxes. There are suggestion boxes in offices. You can report it directly to anybody who you think or the Permanent Secretary or the Minister. And we have an office where you can complain... Now these are systematically responded to. And we have put in a timeframe for responding to those which are within certain limits. And another tool that we have developed is a client service charter. So this client service charter give our customers and clients a framework for which to start complaining, because otherwise they cannot complain on something like this within or without -- within or without our capacity and capability. And therefore, the client service charters of each institution sets out the timeframe for doing a service, how to be handled in terms of the service delivery. So that forms the basis for complaints.*
- SCHALKWYK:** So religious or cultural divisions or language differences can complicate service delivery. Have you encountered any problems like that in Tanzania?

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- MKONY:** *Not really, because of our cultural background and social background and our upbringing as a nation by Mwalimu Nyerere. So we are quite a homogeneous society that works together quite well. If it will happen, it will be on/around an individual basis, but not institutional... Because some of the values of public service is impartiality to service. So you cannot practice politics in the office, nor religion. And tolerance has to exist within society. And advantage is, the use of Swahili across the board, which everybody can communicate with now.*
- SCHALKWYK:** So I'm wondering what is the relationship between the Zanzibar public service? Is it separate from the mainland?
- MKONY:** *No. It is part of the reform, actually. The strategy for reform in this office takes in consideration the Zanzibar reforms. So the public service reforms of Zanzibar, and this one, they are working together. Only theirs is a bit behind, but we are putting them on board. Yes.*
- SCHALKWYK:** And are there any aspects of the design or implementation of reform that reflect local traditions or cultural practices? Specifically Tanzanian ways of doing things that may not be transferable to other areas?
- MKONY:** *I think it's a level tolerance, which... I mean, when you might want to do it very fast, Tanzania is quite a go easy society, and therefore you have to put that -- the learning curve and doing it in a pace they think is reasonable for them so they don't rush into things. And especially if you don't understand what it is. We don't know who -- about our future. You know, this new generation also is coming up with a different way of approaching issues, and therefore it might change. But otherwise, since we've been quite the close society, so even things move in a close manner and in our own pace.*
- SCHALKWYK:** All right. Thank you very much. I've just got one question to finish off, and that's if you had a chance to write a handbook for people who had to manage civil service reform, what kinds of topics would you consider most important? And so what would make this handbook most useful to you if you were starting at the beginning again?
- MKONY:** *I think you would put issues of commitment by top leadership to really want to change and to carry the reform further. And to walk the talk, walk the talk. Tanzania, sometimes they talk too much and walk less. So walk the talk and to persevere. Nothing good comes easy and therefore you have to constantly keep on coaching and offering feedback so that people feel comfortable about taking the reforms, otherwise it's not something that you read in a book where they assume someone will really take it up and know what to do with it. So it needs constant coaching and reminding and celebrating little successes that come along, and giving people hope that it's meant to deliver what it promises to do. And it should be very participatory, very participatory for it to work efficiently and faster.*
- SCHALKWYK:** OK. Thank you very much. I appreciate your time.
- MKONY:** *Thank you very much, Andrew.*

