

**Communique of the 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Virtual Conference  
of Africa Public Service- Human Resources  
Managers Network (APS-HRMnet) 23<sup>rd</sup>-25<sup>th</sup>  
November, 2021**

**THEME**

**“Driving Africa’s Development Agenda through  
Diversity and Adapting to Uncertain Times: The  
Role of the HR Practitioners”**

In conceptualisation of this conference, we noted that, a robust human resource system is a key determinant of organisation and national development. It is the pillar for implementing Africa’s strategic framework for socio-economic transformation; Agenda 2063.

The Covid-19 challenges such as new technologies, demographic changes, climate change and globalization, have catalysed poverty, increased job insecurity as well as outright unemployment in some cases. This has presented the demand for new skills for human resources in public sector institutions; the need to ensure cohesion of human resources for institutional performance while working remotely. This

social, economic and political destabilisation calls for coordinated effort to create decent work for all; as the foundation of a green, inclusive and resilient recovery and the time is now (UN Secretary General, 2020).

The 7<sup>th</sup> APS-HRMnet Annual Conference has presented a platform where knowledge, exchange of ideas, peer capacity enhancement and identification of new trends and strategies for driving and sustaining momentum towards achieving Agenda 2063 have been discussed. The conference has further provided the practitioners with the opportunity to identify strategies for adapting to uncertain times.

The Conference was made possible by the APS-HRMnet with the support from UCLG AFRICA, UNDESA and UPSHRMnet. It drew participants from the following countries Uganda, Tanzania, Ghana, South Africa, Morocco, Mozambique, South Sudan, Namibia, Ethiopia, USA and Armenia with a total of 70 delegates comprising of Heads of Public Service,

Permanent Secretaries, Professors, Directors and Human Resource practitioners.

The conference was opened by Mrs Lucy Nakyobe Head of Public Service and Secretary to Cabinet in Uganda. In her address, she noted that, the operating environment for the public sector institutions is becoming more and more complex because of Covid-19 and other known work place issues, we therefore need a deeper and more diverse public service that is client centered.

The UN Representative Dr. John Kauzya highlighted the renewed hope for transforming public sector institutions in the 2030 agenda, the goals clearly emphasize the importance of public sector institutions

in achieving the agenda and there is total commitment from global leaders to support the Public Service.

In order to transform the public service, let's embrace innovation but innovation is not about technology alone but a re-arrangement of the government structures to remove obstacles that affect service delivery. The Human Resource Manager therefore, needs to know how to manage in a new way, in particular, managing interpersonal relationships, partnerships, clients and how to get people to work together. The Secretary General of UCLG remarked in his solidarity message.

Africa's Development Agenda cannot be achieved if Public Service has not embraced diversity and find

ways of adapting to uncertain times. We have lost time in terms of the targets for Agenda 2030.

**The objectives of this conference were:**

Broadly to share experiences and ideas that will propel Africa's human resource practitioners into strengthening public sector institutions to remain relevant and responsive to the needs of both the workforce and the citizens at all times.

Specifically, the conference was organised to:

- a) identify strategies that will facilitate Africa 's Public Sector Institutions to undergo digital transformation, become resilient and restructure operations to the hybrid model of work; office/home;
- b) Agree on the fundamental values that all HR Practitioners must adopt in nurturing institutional human resources regardless of the country specifics;
- c) Review and sanction the APS-HRMnet Innovations Awards Framework to trigger its

operationalization as part of the strategy to promoting innovation amongst Africa's HR Fraternity.

**The objectives were achieved through well thought opening remarks made by the Head of Public Service of Uganda, the President APS-HRMnet, the UN Representative and the solidarity messages from partner associations. In addition, the following papers were presented:**

- 1) The Role of Human Resource Practitioners in Transforming Public Sector Institutions in Africa to achieve the sustainable development Goals.
- 2) Rebranding Africa 's Public Sector Workspaces to respond to the 4<sup>th</sup> Industrial Revolution (4IR) and propel Africa 's Development Agenda: The Call for the HR Practitioner
- 3) Harnessing the Transformative Potentials of Artificial Intelligence in building resilient Public

Sector Institutions and Workforces: Morocco Country Experience.

- 4) Africa Public Sector capacity to absorb the 4IR shock and the Ethical Implications.
- 5) Managing Diversity in the Work Place post Covid-19: The role of the HR Practitioner.
- 6) Harnessing Partnerships and Collaborations for Public Sector Survival and Sustainability: Implications for the Human Resource
- 7) Readiness of HR Professionals to upskill Africa 's human resources to productively live, learn, work and participate in the digital world.
- 8) Rewarding HR Professional Practice for Transformative Public Service Delivery: The Innovations Awards Framework,

**We collectively agreed that,**

- In these times of scarce resources, we need to exploit the benefits of the digital revolution. Experiences on how the Digital Revolution has made learning across the global faster and cheaper have been shared.
- Human Resource Managers have a core role to play in the transformation agenda by performing the strategy experts' role, work organisation experts, employee champion and agents of transformation adviser and change agent
- There is need to undertake strategic investment in workforce training approaches, invest, and promote workforce training programs that align with institutional goals, talent practices, skill needs, and culture
- While humanness and empathy are going to be fundamental in transforming the public service,



the more digital and high tech the world becomes, the less close human relationships get and social connections. There is need for all of us to find solutions to this obstacle to effective HR management

- Digital divide between those who have no access to automated services viz a viz those who have. The SDG on inclusivity is threatened
- After a turbulent period like no other in recent memory, there has never been as universal a need to re-align working norms for all employees. As leaders, we need to commit to building a more equitable and inclusive workplace for all including diverse populations.
- Need to foster right mindsets and right attitudes

**We will continue this journey and sustain the momentum we created in the last three days. We already have many creative ideas on how to embrace diversity and adapt to uncertain times.**

**This is what we commit to do:**

1. We need to embrace the DNA of a Public Servant as presented by Dr. Kauzya , develop messages and actions to make it a core value of every Public Servant
2. We need to build strong partnerships with the private sector to deliver effective services. Let's advise our respective countries to develop detailed legislation with a better regulatory regime for the private sector to support service delivery without compromising standards

3. As APS-HRMnet, establish local chapters and mobilise additional members in support of the APS-HRMnet agenda
4. Fast track the commitment for the 6<sup>th</sup> APS-HRMnet to develop articles for the book titled Human Resource Management in African public sector: The current state and future direction
5. Implement the strategic actions contained in the innovations framework.
6. Leveraging on all available opportunities to continuously build capacity of members. Mindset change and the need for strong leaders featured prominently through presentations.
7. APS-HRMnet commits to support the African HR fraternity to embrace an innovative culture to enhance the professionalism and visibility of the HR function. 0752500483

8. Get started with the current framework for the innovations award. Improvements will be made through experience and sharing best practices.
9. Developing new HR strategies to embrace the challenges of the post Covid-19 era
10. Look out for the founders of APS-HRMnet in South Africa, Kenya, Malawi, Tanzania and Uganda, they are in strategic positions to support the APS-HRMnet.