

Foreword

As governments around the world embark on a new paradigm to improve public service delivery, it is important to document the policies and processes so that public sector policy-makers, senior managers, academics and others who are at the centre of performance management can learn from each other.

This study, therefore, forms an important part of the work of the Governance and Institutional Development Division (GIDD) of the Commonwealth Secretariat. In pursuing the GIDD mandate for public sector development, we concentrate our efforts on strengthening institutions that contribute to good governance and developing public sector capacity for effective delivery of public services through various strategies. To accomplish this, we must be able to conduct active research into the activities that contribute to good governance practices and share these results with member states.

This study is on the contract system of employment for senior government officials in four countries of the Commonwealth Caribbean (Belize, Guyana, Jamaica and St Lucia). This adds value to our work in promoting good governance principles and the development of human resource capacity in public services. The results of this study were presented at the Regional Caribbean Meeting of Cabinet Secretaries and Heads of Public Services in November 2007. Current research is now being undertaken in the Pacific region (Cook Islands, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Tonga and Vanuatu) and this will be followed by similar research in the Asia region. Further publications will therefore follow, based on the findings of these research activities.

The results of the study point to the need for documentation of our processes in public services and for consistency in the application of our procedures and processes.

We will continue to work with member states in advancing good government principles, human resource capacity development and performance-based budgeting, which are all key components that support a performance management framework for efficient and effective delivery of services. We will continue to share with member states public service experiences for the benefit of all Commonwealth countries.

I wish to commend Dr Philip Osei, Senior Fellow, Sir Arthur Lewis Institute of Social and Economic Studies, University of the West Indies and Dr Joan N Nwasike, the Regional Adviser for the Caribbean in GIDD for this initiative.

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