

Contract System Pertaining to the Employment of Permanent Secretaries in the Public Service in Uganda

This chapter analyses the third country case study – Uganda – on the contract system pertaining to the employment of permanent secretaries in the public service. The aim of this chapter is to investigate and understand how the contract system of employment in the public service is implemented under the public sector reforms in Uganda. The following areas are covered in the chapter: overview of public sector reform, contract system pertaining to the employment of permanent secretaries, autonomy and room for expression of leadership, and management models used in the civil service reforms. The poverty eradication action plan, promotion of competition in service provision, structure and implementation of results-oriented management, performance assessment and performance management of permanent secretaries are also captured in the chapter. Finally, entitlements given to permanent secretaries in the employment contract, value for money, conflict resolution mechanism, evaluation and lessons learned complete the chapter.

Overview of public sector reform

Uganda is widely acclaimed as an African success on account of achievements in macro-economic reforms, poverty reduction and political stability, following years of civil war, economic decline and worsening poverty. Progress on these fronts was accompanied by a succession of governance reforms, ranging from an ambitious programme of civil service restructuring, the creation of a series of semi-autonomous public agencies, reforms in public expenditure management, decentralisation, innovations in service delivery, and legal and institutional measures to combat corruption (Robinson, 2004).

Prior to gaining this recognition, however, the disastrous state of the public sector had led the National Resistance Movement (NRM) government to promise a fundamental change in the management of public affairs through the Ten-Point Programme (changed to fifteen) which, among other things, aimed at building and consolidating democracy, building an independent and integrated economy

while fighting corruption at all levels of society. Hence the Civil Service Reform Programme (CSRP), initiated in 1988 and operationalised in 1989 with the setting up of the Public Service Review and Reorganisation Commission (PSRRC) under the CSRP, heralded one of the fundamental changes in handling public affairs and policy formulation in the country (Olum, 2002). The review of documentary evidence confirmed the fact that the country has gone through the three waves of reform posited by the UNECA, and the nature of the reforms in the mid-2000s showed that the conceptualisation of these programmes benefited from lessons and ideas drawn from international experience in public management reform. The conduits of information, ideas and inspiration were largely through the Commonwealth public administration networks. It was through these sources that ideas for reform along the lines of New Zealand and the UK diffused into the Ugandan policy system.

Contract systems pertaining to the employment of permanent secretaries

Since the 1990s the Ugandan public service and policy system has undergone reform. Some of the projects included the creation of executive agencies such as the Uganda Revenue Authority, National Agriculture Research Authority and other agencies, which have adopted contractual appointment and some have signed performance contracts. Much of the reform has been supported by the World Bank. The civil service has also undergone reforms since the latter part of the 1990s and permanent secretaries have been put on contract, while their recruitment has been reformed to include competitive examinations. The appointment of the permanent secretary is underpinned by the merit principle. The competitive exams for recruiting the permanent secretaries cover four subjects including public policy, human resources, financial management and communication. Each paper lasts three hours. The exams are set by experts and written by hand with question papers printed the night before the exam. The examination process also includes what is called 'basket presentations', in which the candidates pick a piece of paper with a topic written on and then asked to address the panel consisting of his/her colleagues and public service commissioners. This presentation is graded and added to the final assessment of the candidate. There is also an oral examination for all prospective candidates for the post of permanent secretary.¹

The eligibility criteria for appointment to permanent secretary qualifies anybody who is commissioner (or director) and above, in the public service, to apply and sit for the exam. Appointment to permanent secretary is thus not restricted to those who have passed through the ranks of the service like the under secretary, but also experts from outside the public service. Vacant posts are advertised both internally and externally. It was around 1998 that the contract system was invoked by an executive act, and permanent secretaries were asked to consider the proposal. The proposal did not receive a positive response from every official; some of them did not like it all. The

prospective candidates had to retire from the permanent and pensionable service in order to be considered for the post of permanent secretary. This act is followed by an application for and collection of end-of-service entitlement in the form of what is called a 'commuted gratuity'. The new contract of service for the permanent secretary is for three years and it is renewable upon good performance. However, the contract can be described as an employment contract, which does not have a performance agreement with measurable targets, even though tacitly the permanent secretary is supposed to operate within the results-oriented management framework that the government has adopted.

The public service commission addresses imbalances in the recruitment process in favour of minorities. For example, if the assessment for a particular ministry ends in a tie, the preference is given to a female candidate. An equal opportunity also exists, which is tantamount to affirmative action in which regard posts could be given to Muslims over Christians. Presentations from countries like Kenya, South Africa and Tanzania are said to have come to study the system in Uganda.

Autonomy and room for expression of leadership

In terms of autonomy and room for expression of leadership, Article 173 of the 1995 Constitution provides protection for public officers so they can execute their public duties without fear or favour. It notes that a public officer shall not be discriminated against for having performed his or her duty, and shall not be dismissed or have his/her rank reduced. Similarly, Article 166 (2) of the 1995 Constitution (Amended in 2005) provides that the Public Service Commission shall not be subject to the control or direction of any authority, except that it shall take into account policy related to the public service. The merit principle by which the permanent secretary is appointed also acts as a buffer against arbitrary dismissal, and Article 42 grants a right to fair and just treatment in administrative decisions. The articles governing finances also protect the permanent secretary from arbitrary dismissal due to conflict over financial propriety and spending with, for example, the minister.

In Article 62 of the Constitution the permanent secretary is made the accounting officer and he/she is therefore has the firmness and authority to deal with the commissioners and directors over spending in the departments of the ministry that are under his/her control. The budget is prepared through working groups. Cash budgets allow for cuts by the Ministry of Finance, but a decision has been made to ring-fence the budget pertaining to training and capacity building. Other supporting institutional mechanisms such as the results-oriented management model and an output-oriented budgeting system have been used to harmonise financial management across the public service. In addition to this, the Public Finance and Accountability Act makes the permanent secretary as accounting officer, personally and pecuniary responsible, for the performance of his/her ministry. In addition to this, the Public Procurement and Disposal of Public Assets Act of 2003 provide that the accounting officer should

be responsible for signing contracts. All these provisions, when put into effect, ensure significant elbow room for the expression of leadership by the permanent secretary.

Management models used in civil service reform

Civil service reform is one of the most visible and protracted areas of governance reform in Uganda. The civil service reform programme begun soon after the NRM government came to power in 1986 and has continued under various guises to the present. The most radical initiatives were implemented in the late 1980s as part of the structural adjustment package with an emphasis on cutting costs through downsizing and rationalising the bureaucracy. Payroll and establishment controls were put in place, most benefits were monetised and take-home pay was modestly increased. In the latest phase of reform the emphasis had shifted to enhancing performance through results-oriented management with consolidation of pay and pension reforms.

Uganda's civil service in 1986 was bloated, highly corrupt and inefficient. It was incapable of performing basic service delivery or policy implementation functions. Many civil servants did not turn up for work as rates of pay were nominal and most had other sources of income to meet their basic needs. There were large numbers of ghost workers on the government payroll who either did not exist or were deceased. Bribery was rampant. The disastrous state of the civil service was the product of years of political strife and civil war which contributed to economic chaos (Robinson, 2004).

The Uganda Civil Service Reform Programme (CSRP) received political approval in May 1993 and was launched with World Bank loan support. Its overall goals were to improve the efficiency, accountability and performance of the public service through an interlocking series of reforms. A semi-autonomous Civil Service Reform Secretariat was formed to manage the change process, staffed by expatriate advisers and government technocrats who received salary increments by way of performance incentives.

The implementation of the reform agenda was underpinned by neoliberal policy perspectives on minimal state intervention coupled with rationalisation of structures. This began with the merger of the Ministries of Finance and Planning and Economic Development. In addition to this, the number of ministries was reduced from 38 to 21 in 1992 through a series of mergers and closures. A radical downsizing plan was prepared with the objective of reducing the total public service to 150,000 by 1995 through elimination of 'ghost workers', the abolition of the group employee scheme, a voluntary retrenchment scheme and a selective freeze on employment. Non-salary benefits for most civil servants in the form of vehicle and housing were monetised, though allowances were retained for top officials. There was a series of across-the-board salary enhancements in the early 1990s, followed by selective increases for particular categories of staff thereafter with the intention of achieving the objective of a

minimum living wage by 1996. Substantial donor funding was provided for technical assistance and voluntary severance packages for civil servants and soldiers.

Other models of managing the public sector were introduced en suite as donor interest in supporting what seemed to be an unfolding success story. A new public sector reform programme (PSRP) was launched in 1997 with the aim of reviving reform momentum. In July 1998 pay reform was designated as one of the five national priority programme areas. The recruitment freeze was lifted in December 1998, largely to accommodate the need for large-scale recruitment of teachers for the Universal Primary Education programme launched in 1997, and to hire in new staff where shortfalls had emerged. Even though less trumpeted, the moving spirit and manager of all these reforms was the permanent secretary.

The documentary evidence shows that the Ugandan public sector seems to be in a perpetual state of reform, mostly due to the abundance of aid resources and a flow of goodwill towards the government. Current reforms have continued to deepen the results-oriented management (ROM) model as a means of generating efficiency and payroll and pensions reform. A payroll cleaning exercise was initiated to regularise and improve the efficiency of salary payments for public servants along with the creation of an integrated personnel and payroll system. This was designed to reduce salary delays and prevent unauthorised payments and irregularities through computerisation of the payroll. The latest initiative is a Capacity and Performance Enhancement Programme which is envisaged as a demand-driven approach in which individual departments can submit bids for capacity-building initiatives which are funded on a competitive basis. As compared to early success in downsizing the civil service, the results in terms of pay reforms and efficiency gains have been much less impressive. The Presidential Commission's target of achieving a minimum living wage for civil servants by 1996 was not achieved. Public sector salaries remained well below the private sector despite progressive salary increases, averaging 42 per cent of comparable jobs in the market (Robinson, 2004). Discussions with officials of the Public Service Ministry and information supplied in various issues of the reform newsletter indicated that most of these payroll and internal capacity-building efforts continued to 2008, and new dimensions of planning and managing the economy have been introduced, including the poverty eradication action plan, but the ROM model has remained fairly stable and its institutionalisation has deepened over the years.

The Poverty Eradication Action Plan (PEAP)

The PEAP serves as Uganda's national planning framework for long-term development and was launched in 1997 following two years of extensive stakeholder consultation. As the government's blueprint for achieving its central objective of reducing poverty, the PEAP has four major policy objectives:

1. Creating a framework for fast and sustainable economic growth and structural transformation

2. Ensuring good governance and security
3. Directly increasing the ability of the poor to raise their income
4. Directly improving the quality of life

The PEAP sets the framework for sectoral and district plans, and the relationship between the two levels is iterative. The PEAP specifies national and sectoral targets and monitors indicators for assessing progress in implementation. The government has also developed a Poverty Monitoring and Evaluation Strategy aimed at improving accountability, information flow between policy-makers and service and beneficiaries, with a view to improving policy design (Byaruhanga, 2002). The permanent secretaries are in charge of implementation of the PEAP and they give account of progress to the cabinet secretary and Parliament in their budget policy.

Promotion of competition in service provision

Under the NRM regime, the Government of Uganda has made serious attempts at introducing competition in the way public goods and services are delivered. The commonest method now in use is through contracting out services such as roads, street parking and waste management. Although contracting out has produced some positive effects on the way these services are delivered to the consumers, especially regarding efficiency, and effectiveness, a lot still remains to be done in terms of their quality and quantity (Olum, 2002).

Measurement of performance-based outputs

Theoretically, performance assessment under results-oriented management (ROM) should suggest best practices and should target key outputs characterised by high-level objectives, outputs and performance indicators. These characteristics should relate to their contribution to the quality of the final product and building of commitment to perform effectively.

Five categories of performance criteria have been applied, even if unsystematically, in Uganda:

1. Measurement of high-level objectives
2. Clarity of outputs
3. Relevance of performance indicators
4. Whether the plan preparation process is satisfactory
5. Collection of information and/or data

Performance standards have thus been set out in various public institutions using the results-oriented and quality management principles. The time, quantity, quality,

customer satisfaction, response rates, stakeholder participation, outcomes, outputs and other methods of assessment of performance are being popularised. However, in Uganda many government officials initially resented the idea of performance measurement as it meant changing the way work was being done. This resentment led to the adoption of crude performance benchmarks that remained on paper, as they ended up not being implemented.

The output-based budgeting (OBB) model has also been an important tool that is used in performance management of scarce public resources in Uganda. This tool is based on results and total quality management as effective tools in forcing organisations to act on the performance information that is available to them (Olum, 2002).

Structure and implementation of results-oriented management (ROM)

Due to issues of slow implementation and the need to simplify the Presidential Commission report's broad recommendations, in late 1992 it was agreed by the Ugandan Cabinet that two overriding objectives would inform the civil service reform process:

1. Payment of a minimum living wage
2. Introduction of results-oriented management

Results-oriented management is intended to provide practical guidelines for defining objectives with measurable performance standards and suggesting how and when the reform components will be implemented by ministry, district and individual civil servants. A baseline service indicator is to be developed through a service delivery survey, with the help of WB/EDI, thus allowing policy-makers to assess reform inputs and outcomes in terms of the highest net marginal benefits to the public.

In a civil service reform paper the UN Public Administration Network (UNPAN) elaborated on the components related to ROM.² The revised action plan for the reform reflecting the twin objectives of paying the minimum living wage and implementing ROM contains six major components:

1. Rationalisation of ministries and districts
2. Strengthening the capability of the Ministry of Public Service (MPS) to manage and champion the reform
3. Monetisation of benefits
4. Job grading
5. Code of conduct and discipline
6. Information programme and communication strategy for reform

The number of ministries was reduced from 38 to 21, as recommended by the Commission in 1992. The rationalisation of ministries and districts aimed at producing smaller and more accountable organisations performing only core functions. This permitted the release of funds for improving remuneration and offering opportunities for privatisation of non-core activities, eliminating duplications and enhancing co-ordination among ministries. The ministerial reviews followed a process involving a team of three to five people from MPs, local management consultants and expatriate advisers who interviewed key ministerial staff, conducted surveys, and reported their findings to the MPs. Similar reviews were performed at the district level to reconsider the role of government, set objectives and priorities, agree on performance indicators, remove redundant staff, and focus specifically on capacity-building plans.

The focus here was to decentralise functions from central ministries to local governments according to the Decentralisation Act of 1993, and to devise the transfer of operational responsibility for the delivery of services and necessary staff, funds and assets previously controlled by the central government. Overall, within the ministries and districts, a 50 per cent reduction in staff was recommended for the revised establishment. Arrangements were also made for demobilisation of over 30,000 soldiers who participated in the liberation struggle. To implement new staffing levels for the restructured ministries, the President appointed The Implementation and Monitoring Board (TIMB), comprising senior citizens who conducted interviews to identify staff to remain in approved positions, staff in redundant positions, and staff declared redundant and no longer required by the government for employment. TIMB interviews assessed each employee's performance with an A, B, or C rating: 'A' for exemplary performance, 'B' for acceptable performance, and 'C' for unacceptable performance. A significant downsizing of central government civil service was carried out in five distinct areas: removal of 'overdue levels' (approximately 6,339 officials and 7,421 teachers), removal of ghost workers (about 42,000), abolition of group employee scheme (temporary short-term employees, about 30,000), redundancies arising from ministerial reviews, and a voluntary retirement scheme in which about 4,500 participated.

TIMB assessments also led to removal of 11 of the 32 permanent secretaries in the central government. At the end of the rationalisation process, it was determined that the wage bill could be raised from 21 (1994/95) to 31 per cent (1996/97) of current expenditures over a three-year-period to achieve payment of the minimum living wage to the reduced establishment.

The second component of the CSRP, strengthening Ministry of Public Service capability to manage and champion the reform process, was achieved by modernising the technical facilities (computer and other office equipment) and training of senior staff in records management and system control (i.e. computerised position-coding system, personnel management information system and other control systems). By providing comprehensive training and technical support to its own staff at all levels,

MPS emphasised the importance of improved management of human resources, served as a model for capacity-building and strengthened management and supervision for other government ministries and agencies.

The Ugandan Management Institute (formerly the Institute of Public Administration), played a significant role by designing and implementing a comprehensive training program in support of the CSRP for all levels of civil servants. The government also established a Payroll Monitoring Unit in the MPS to monitor and verify entry and exit from the payroll; this proved particularly effective in the teaching service, where the payroll was reduced by nearly 25,000 staff over a three-year period.

The third and fourth components of the CSRP, monetisation of benefits and job grading, called for an accounting of all non-cash benefits, coupled with a revision of the overall salary structure, using job evaluations and specifications. Some items of non-cash benefits, namely housing, vehicle and other benefits for senior officials, were monetised at US\$1,500 to US\$2,000 per month, and the MPS initiated the sale of 2,259 houses and 4,741 vehicles owned by government to generate revenues for meeting the wage bill. A transparent salary system and a new position-coding system were introduced. However, ministers, and other senior civil servants continue to enjoy non-cash benefits for transport, fuel, electricity, housing, as is the case in many other countries, both industrialised and developing.

The fifth component of the reform strategy, the Code of Conduct and Discipline, was elaborated in a series of workshops held across the country for senior government managers, focusing on their role as leaders in the civil service reform and on results-based management. Along with the Code of Conduct and Standing Orders, the Leadership Code of Conduct for political and administrative leaders outlines specific prohibited conduct and requires that disclosure of interests and assets be made to the Office of the Inspector-General of the Government (IGG). A four-point action plan to combat corruption was developed at a highest level workshop organised by the IGG, facilitated by the WB/EDI and Transparency International, and attended by parliamentarians and senior civil servants. These workshops strengthen the fight against corruption and emphasise performance standards. A more effective baseline indicator developed from the service delivery survey allows for measuring reform progress and establishing realistic standards and targets within the ministries and districts, thus facilitating the process of instituting results-oriented management in the civil service.

Finally, the sixth component of the CSRP, the Information Programme and Communication Strategy for Reform, was achieved through distribution of publications, meeting reports and quarterly reports describing progress against the action plan to the public, civil servants and the donor community. The role of the media in the process of information dissemination was recognised, and journalists were invited to attend two courses to improve their skills and effectiveness in serving the public interest regarding the CSRP. Other elements of the information programme

included assisting the MPS in making professional presentations in various forums, and identifying and monitoring communication problems among stakeholders, donor co-ordination, and other media activities to heighten public awareness of the reform programme.³

Although performance is said to be the most important factor for promotion, it has to be pointed out that, until recently, length of service was equally if not more important in the civil service. However, the introduction of results-oriented management in selected ministries and districts was expected to supersede this method eventually. Qualifications are also beginning to feature more prominently as a basis for promotion in the public sector, thus encouraging civil servants to go for further education while in service.⁴

Performance assessment and performance management of permanent secretaries

As at July 2008, performance instruments were in place for rank and file public servants, but a similar formal measurement mechanism was yet to be devised for the permanent secretary. Jane Kyarisiima-Mwesiga, a Commissioner at the Ministry of Public Service, noted that the gap in the reform was related to the lack of a broad human resource strategy for the public sector, which will deal with succession planning, human resource planning, and training. However, this was going to be addressed through a project supported by the World Bank.

Meanwhile, the Head of the Public Service (HOPS) is mandated to review the work of the permanent secretary and will be required to use an instrument developed by the Public Service Commission. In the absence of a formal measurement system, a crude or subjective system exists in which the permanent secretary submits a report to the HOPS and the PSC on his/her achievements three months before the renewal date. The report of the permanent secretary has to be seen by the responsible minister. If the minister has anything to say about the report of the permanent secretary, this must be put into writing. Asked whether there have been occasions when contracts have not been renewed, the HOPS noted that there had been one occasion in which he did not support one permanent secretary's renewal application. Two permanent secretaries have also gone away into private practice and opted not to renew their contracts. The HOPS is the authority who makes recommendations to the PSC for renewal.

Uganda has 17 ministries, one president, two vice presidents, four service commissions and the public service commission. There should be 17 permanent secretaries, but three posts were vacant in July 2008. Two of these vacancies were due to ill health and death. Similarly, out of the 15 at post, there were five women permanent secretaries and the rest were men. One new permanent secretary had been appointed and

was awaiting assignment. There were many women directors as well. For example, in the Ministry of Public Service three out of four directors were women.

A Permanent Secretaries Board is functional, and meets on a monthly basis to engage in self-assessment and discuss submission of cabinet papers, especially when papers are returned for reworking by the responsible ministry. The meetings of the Permanent Secretaries Board are chaired by the HOPS and attendance is mandatory – absentees receive a reprimand.

As the permanent secretary was on contract and had to work with officers and heads of department who were employed on permanent and pensionable terms, the results-oriented management system that has been adopted by the Government of Uganda allowed the permanent secretary to institute a system involving an Annual Performance Plan (APP) for the heads of department (HODs) each financial year. Similarly, the permanent secretary signed the Performance Appraisal Instrument for the staff of the ministry upon receiving these appraisals from the HODs. The permanent secretary derives his/her key output targets from the policy statement agreed between him/her and the minister and the Head of the Public Service, as well as the strategic objectives of the ministry in question. Accountability for results within this governing framework depends on the commitment of the minister.

A 'Draft Transformation of the Public Service' paper was expected to be published by government at the end of 2008, intended to stipulate the basic philosophy behind public management and generally deal with issues such as client focus service, efficiency, effectiveness and responsiveness of the public service. The draft paper was also intended to suggest solutions for transitional problems such the requirement for a stringent performance management regime, so that the permanent secretary will eventually sign a performance agreement as part of his or her contract, according to the interview with Kyarisiima-Mwesiga, 21/07/08.

Other challenges facing the evolving system were outlined by John Lwamafa, permanent secretary for Ministry of Public Service, who observed that an important conjectural issue was the motivation of other officers who are not on contract, and the need for an incentive framework, especially commensurate pay to match the new responsibility of the permanent secretary.

Entitlements given to the permanent secretary in the employment contract

Most of these entitlements have been monetised and include a medical allowance which could be used to buy insurance, mobile phone allowance, transport allowance, monthly salary, a gratuity of 40 per cent that is payable annually and security at home (a maximum of two security guards at home).

Value for money

The contract system of appointments has introduced a level of efficiency in public management, according to the senior public service officers who were consulted during the fieldwork in July 2008. The effect, they argued, could be seen in the firm grip with which management is controlled by the permanent secretary, as the officers now have to account for what they do with public resources given to them in the budget. But there are questions about how many contract terms one should serve, especially as the retirement age is 60 years. An important issue under consideration was whether a permanent secretary should serve beyond age 60.

Conflict resolution mechanism

There are three main human agencies through whom any conflict at the level of the ministry is dealt with in Ugandan public administration. The head of the Public Service, who is concurrently cabinet secretary, is better placed to mediate in any conflict between the permanent secretary and the minister. This is normally a collegial approach in which the HOPS/cabinet secretary inquires into the issue by speaking to the two parties separately, and then attempts to bring the two together for an amicable solution. If resolution is defied at that level, the matter may be referred to the prime minister and finally to the president. According to Mitala and Lwamafa during interviews, matters rarely go beyond the level of the head of the Public Service.

Evaluation of the current reform by a permanent secretary

The field study included an in-depth discussion with a permanent secretary at a workshop for ministers and permanent secretaries at the Kampala Serena Hotel, and helped to provide further evidence and a counterweight to evidence from the two offices mentioned above, as well as a self-assessment by a permanent secretary who was at the heart of implementation and receiving end of the reform. The interview with the permanent secretary for energy and minerals also gave us a rare opportunity to probe how the ordinary permanent secretary views the reform of the conditions and system of employment of the permanent secretaries. The respondent indicated the opportunities and challenges that have been presented by the recent reform. Accordingly, sector-wide groups have been constituted to assist in the management and co-ordination of development and policy. Previous management approaches had categorised the ministries into two: 'key areas' and 'others'. The key areas included water, education and roads, while energy and minerals fell under the 'others' category. The essence of this categorisation was that those areas bunched as 'others' were not treated as priority for various undisclosed reasons. In the respondent's view, this categorisation was based on a policy perspective that looked at economic development in the short term, and allocated budgetary resources based on what constituted drivers of the economy narrowly defined. This perspective on the economic function, however, changed in early 2006 when oil was discovered in Uganda.

The discovery of oil ushered in a new way of looking at the economy in which recognition was given to the energy and mineral sector. This turnaround of perspective was reported to have come about through hard work, planning, advocacy and training and upgrading of human resources. It is claimed that these developments have been reflected in the politics of budget allocation and have led to a new value being placed on the sector. The permanent secretary noted that the budget package of the energy and minerals sector was now four times that of competing sectors and key areas. In spite of the newly acquired status of the sector, however, the remuneration of the permanent secretary has not changed. Similarly, unlike the chief executive officer who can hire and fire, the permanent secretary still operates in an unchanged environment. Stability of tenure under contract is also precarious because the permanent secretary is no longer under permanent and pensionable conditions of employment, and can lose his/her job and a case can drag on for years. What was gratifying, however, according to a respondent, is that evaluation by panel seems to be more objective than being evaluated by one person and this constitutes strength of the reform.

Conclusion and lessons learned

From the foregoing, therefore, the fieldwork produced evidence which shows that Uganda has continued sturdily on a path of public sector reform for over two decades, and an important development has been the introduction of contracts of employment for permanent secretaries. The level of corporatisation of the administrative and policy system, however, is minuscule compared to what happened in New Zealand. The research also revealed that the most critical hallmark of the New Zealand model – a performance measurement instrument and mechanism for assessing the work of the permanent secretary – is yet to be introduced. Similarly, operating environment and culture of management in the public service required a little more reworking in order to anchor and institutionalise the results-oriented management framework that has been adopted across government.

Notes

1. Interview with John Mitala, Head of Ugandan Public Service, 17 July 2008.
2. MDGD – Civil Service Reform Paper. See: <http://unpan1.un.org/intradoc/groups/public/documents/UN/UNPAN001183.pdf> [last accessed 4 August 2010].
3. MDGD – Civil Service Reform Paper. See: <http://unpan1.un.org/intradoc/groups/public/documents/UN/UNPAN001183.pdf> [last accessed 4 August 2010].
4. Republic of Uganda, Public Administration Country Profile. Division for Public Administration and Development Management (DPADM), Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA), United Nations (January 2004), 10. See: <http://unpan1.un.org/intradoc/groups/public/documents/un/unpan023292.pdf> [last accessed 4 August 2010].

