

REPOSITIONING THE AFRICAN PUBLIC SERVICE FOR THE REALIZATION OF NATIONAL VISIONS

**A REPORT BY THE YOUNG
PROFESSIONALS AT THE 32nd AAPAM
ROUNDTABLE CONFERENCE HELD IN
DURBAN, SOUTH AFRICA**

INTRODUCTION

- We are grateful to the Commonwealth Fund for Technical Cooperation, the AAPAM Council, Executive and our respective governments for creating and giving us the opportunity to get exposed, learn and grow. The AAPAMYPN has been here for five years now and we request for continued support of all stakeholders to ensure that the initiative of bringing of both new and existing Young Professionals into AAPAM is sustained.
- We thank the presenters for the wonderful presentations
- We thank the conference organisers and the people of the Republic of South Africa in particular the people of the beautiful province of Kwazulu Natal who have successfully hosted the 32nd RT Conference. ---Siyabonga Ngakulu
- We are committed to the improvement of the delivery of quality services through the AAPAM Platform and therefore advocate for and support the repositioning of African Public Services for the realization of National Visions. Below are some of lessons from this Conference that we learned can assist in the repositioning of African Public Services for the realization of National Visions

LEARNING POINTS

- **Evidence based decisions and activities based on research findings**

It is important to implement evidence based decisions and activities based on research findings. This enables effective planning, proper allocation of resources, and easy implementation and evaluation of activities.

- **Capacity building both in training, handling resources and infrastructure in both central and local authorities**

Capacity building both in training, handling of resources and infrastructure in both central and local authorities is very essential in putting up an enabling environment for African Public Services to realize national visions. This is largely attributed to local authorities or countryside programmes which are often neglected because Public Officers are deployed in areas which do not have adequate infrastructure

- **Communicating of national visions to the citizens** by the politicians will assist African Public Services in realizing national visions- e.g. it will create awareness among the citizens about their rights and enable them demand for quality services from the government and public service

LEARNING POINTS

- **Advocating for and involving of stakeholders is a key component in realizing national visions** e.g. Civil society, Private Sector and NGOs
- **Succession planning and training of the young generation** is key in realizing national visions. It is therefore very important to generate knowledge based public services through knowledge sharing
- **Appreciating the concept of entrepreneurial public services as a dynamic approach to realizing national visions.** However, its merits and demerits should be understood and how they relate with the systems and procedures of the respective bureaucracies
- The need for Public Servants to be **politically conscious while executing their duties and also desist the temptation of engaging in “active” politics** because it ruins their careers.
- **Having effective performance management systems**
- **Avoid bad habits practiced by the public servants. Stop the blame games and take responsibility and be accountable**
- **Bridging the gaps between politicians and public servants**
- **Avoid adopting first world policies that do not address the needs and concerns of the citizens in Africa**
- **Emphasizing ethics, professionalism and supervision to combat quiet corruption**

OBSERVATIONS

- The papers on the theme were very rich and academically empowering, however a very crucial element of patriotism that is essential in assisting the African Public Services to realize national visions was not well articulated.
- As we all know, aid plays a major role in assisting African Public Services realize national visions. Ways in which aid should be effectively handled so as to benefit Africa were not fully expressed.
- In order for African Public Services to know whether they are realizing their national visions, they should have monitoring and evaluation systems. Some presenters did not communicate their M&E types.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- **“Execusitis”, Complaining & Constant Lamentation-**

When theme and sub themes for the RT are sent out presenters and respective countries should develop presentations that offer practical solutions to address some of these challenges

Compilation and sharing of success stories- Presenters should share some of the great success stories that have come out as a result of participating and learning from the AAPM RT Conferences

Leadership education should be included in the primary and secondary school curricula for African countries to address the challenges raised through out the presentations

CONCLUSION

- ✘ As we leave Durban with fond memories, let us take with us the responsibility to reposition the African Public Services to realize national visions.
- ✘ It is upon ourselves to be the change that we would like to see across the entire continent!