Chapter 10

Capacitation/ Training and its Funding in the Public Service

In many countries, specific institutions are established to facilitate, manage and coordinate training for civil servants. In developmental states in particular, most of the training is mandatory for people who want to join the public service and for existing employees who want to be considered for promotion.

Problem statement

Research points to the fact that many public servants have tertiary qualifications. However, the extent to which pre-service education and training qualifications prepare people for the public sector work environment is questionable given that higher education institutions provide generic and high-level academically oriented programmes. In instances where in-service training programmes are offered to existing public servants through bursaries and other support mechanisms, many of the programmes are generic and not based on a thorough needs analysis. The training offered is largely theoretical and is conducted in a class-room type setting without any follow-up support or on the job coaching. The training is also not compulsory for career progression in the public service. This has led to assertions that university degree and diplomas do not prepare candidates to be proficient in the tasks required of public service occupations.

Weaknesses with the relevance of pre-service education and training necessitate the need for structured induction programmes for new employees and reorientation programmes for existing employees. However, the current funding model for the National School of Government and training funded through SETAs does not allow such generic courses to be offered on a scale commensurate with the need. Additionally, the compulsory induction programme that was introduced in 2012 does not have the capacity to offer induction to all new entrants into the public service.

In spite of challenges with the relevance of some of the in-service education and training programmes, government spends a lot of money on the continuous development of public servants through short courses and full qualification programmes. However, there is no assessment of the impact of such programmes on employee performance and productivity and the overall functionality of the public service.

In the context in which there is a high level of unemployment and a shortage of skills in the country, the public service is also criticised for not playing a critical role in the provision of work-related training for youth and new or unemployed graduates through learnership and internship programmes. Coupled with this is the lack of a comprehensive system that provides information on the skills levels and utilisation of public servants, due to challenges in the implementation of the HR Connect system by the Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA). The 2014-2018 National Integrated Human Resource Development
Plan, amongst others, seeks to address these weaknesses by transforming the public service and public sector at large into a learning and training space for existing employees, plus youth and unemployed graduates in areas such as engineering, law, accounting and public administration and management.

**Lessons from developmental states**

To support its developmental agenda, China puts emphasis on training and development and attracting human capital. The Civil Service Law and Regulations of the People’s Republic of China (no date) provide the legal and administrative basis for training. The training is provided by specialised training institutions such as party schools, administrative colleges, the Cadre College and civil service training centres. The first China Academy of Governance was established in 1994 and in 2005 three more national institutions were established in 3 different areas in China. The training network has been expanded to include over 100 institutions at the provincial level, 5000 at the municipal level and approximately 2300 at the county level. Training is divided into four categories, namely:

- Training for newly recruited public servants that is provided during the probation period;
- Training for officials newly promoted into leadership and supervisory positions;
- Training for public servants who are involved in specialised areas; and
- In-service training for all employees to update officials on key developments in government.

In particular, the China Executive Leadership Academy of Pudong (CELAP) provides executive development and leadership training and the China Academy of Governance (former China National School of Administration) provides vocational training in public administration, employee well-being and general management. In addition, the Academy offers training programmes leading to qualifications in Public Administration. The party schools teach existing employees on the values driving socialism and the conduct expected of party members, including those who are deployed to government institutions. To ensure loyalty and coherence, training for civil servants is paid for by the government.

In Malaysia, there are more than 200 intuitions responsible for training at various levels of government. Training for civil servants is managed and coordinated by the Public Service Department, which is also responsible for the management of recruitment, placement and transfer of employees. The National Institute for Public Administration (INTAN) offers vocational training in public administration and the Razak School of Government, which is a private company established by government, focuses on leadership development. Most training programmes are mandatory for confirmation of probation and promotion purposes for all levels. Institution-specific training is coordinated by the relevant departments. All training programmes are designed locally and delivered in collaboration with local and international higher education institutions, and where necessary, experts from the private sector and state-owned entities are invited to train on specific topics. Training for government employees is paid for by government, and private sector people are allowed to attend some of the training programmes at their own cost. The government training institutions are fully fledged campuses with teaching and residential facilities, and some of the courses offered in these institutions are fully fledged qualifications in the area of public administration.
There is a dedicated School of Public Administration in Botswana, whose objectives are to:

(a) Provide Senior Executives with relevant skills and competencies;
(b) Provide the public service with relevant administrative skills and competencies;
(c) Enhance the public service capability to effectively drive and implement the Government reform agenda; and
(d) Provide action research for public service decision making and professional advisory services to Government ministries and departments.

The School specialises in short-term continuous development programmes and certificate courses in public service induction, public administration and management, leadership development and enrichment. None of the programmes are compulsory or pre-requisites for promotion, but processes are underway to make some of the programmes compulsory. Formal qualifications are offered by tertiary institutions. Training programmes for senior executives are aligned to the public service competency framework and work-based training is informed by needs analysis and research studies.

Training programmes are mostly funded by government through the normal budgetary process, but the School also receives minimal funding for specific programmes from donors.

**Training and development in the public service in South Africa**

The importance of training and development in the public service is articulated in the Constitution of the Republic, 1996, primary and secondary legislative prescripts, white papers and strategic frameworks, and more recently, the National Development Plan.

**Constitutional, legislative and policy frameworks**

To give effect to the Constitutional imperative of a “development-oriented, transparent, responsive and broadly representative” public service, the White Paper on the Transformation of the Public Service, 1995, was published. Chapter 13, part 13.3 of the White Paper states that, “government has adopted the view that all public servants, from the most senior to the most junior, require on-going training as an integral part of their professional life. The training of senior and middle management must be linked to the processes and policy-making challenges defined by the RDP and this current White paper.” The White Paper goes on to state that “training programmes would need to be flexible in order to maximise the access of workers to in-service training; this will include access to adult basic education.”

Co-ordination, quality and funding challenges in the implementation of training and development in the public service led to the development of the White Paper on Public Service Training and Education, 1997. The White Paper recommended that training should be co-ordinated and delivered through a combination of centralised and decentralised mechanisms, with norms and standards being set at the central level and training delivered through a combination of decentralised provision by state and non-state providers in a competitive framework. The paper explored various funding options, including state and donor funding. At departmental level, the White Paper proposed the setting aside of a portion of the allocated budget for training and development.
According to Section 4 (1) and (2) of the Public Service Act, 1994, “there shall be a training institution listed as a national department in Schedule 1. The management and administration of such institution shall be under the control of the Minister”. Section 4 (3) of the Public Service Act further states that “such institution - (a) shall provide such training or cause such training to be provided or conduct such examinations or tests or cause such examination or tests to be conducted as the Head of the institute may with the approval of the Minister decide or as may be prescribed as a qualification for the appointment or transfer of persons in or to the public service; (b) may issue diplomas or certificates or cause diplomas or certificates to be issued to persons who have passed such examinations.”

Chapter 1, Part IX (A) of the Public Service Regulations, 2001, as amended, states that “employees should have on-going and equitable access to training geared towards achieving an efficient, non-partisan and representative public service. Training should support work performance and career development. It should become increasingly driven by needs, and should be strategically linked to broader human resource management practices and programmes aimed at enhancing employment equity and representativeness.” The regulations further require the executing authority to determine the required competencies of and prescribe training for various occupational categories or specific employees in her or his department. The responsibility to identify the generic managerial and leadership training needs of members of the SMS; ensure that standard courses and programmes are developed on the basis of the identified training needs; and evaluate the relevance and value for money of the courses and programmes is specifically assigned to the Minister of Public Service and Administration (Chapter 4, Part VI (A) of the Public Service Regulations, 2001, as amended).

Pursuant to the Public Service Act, 1996, and the Public Service Regulations, 2001, the Minister for Public Service and Administration published the Human Resource Development (HRD) Strategic Framework for the Public Service, 2008. The framework defines human resource development in the public service as “those efforts undertaken by organizations to ensure that employees are well prepared to undertake their responsibilities and grow into viable careers, thereby adding value to the productivity and service of their organizations, the motivation and performance of their peers and the attainment of the overall vision of the developmental state. In doing so, organisations seek to ensure that the right people are prepared at the right place, at the right time and for the right positions to which they can readily contribute.” The first pillar of the strategy states that “capacity development initiatives” should focus on ‘building human capital for high performance and service delivery’. The capacity development pillar has eight areas of strategic intervention, including internships and learnerships, which are aimed at providing on-the-job experience for young people and prospective future public servants; strengthening systems for workplace learning; integrated adult basic education and training; leadership and management development; and forging partnerships with Higher Education and Training Institutions (HETIs) and Technical Vocational Education and Training institutions (TVETs).  

The National Development Plan (NDP), which was published in 2012, has also put emphasis on the need for a capable, developmental, professional and responsive public service and

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1 TVET means “those aspects of the educational process involving, in addition to general education, the study of technologies and related sciences and the acquisition of practical skills, attitudes, understanding and knowledge relating to occupation in various sectors of economic life” (www.unesco.org) downloaded 21 October 2014. In South Africa such training is offered by former Further Education and Training (FET) institutions.
makes recommendations to address the uneven and poor performance of the public service through the provision of appropriate skills and recruitment of suitably qualified personnel. Training programmes should focus on, among others, management and frontline services to ensure that the service delivered to the citizens of this country is efficient and of good quality. Implementation of the NDP is being taken forward through various initiatives, two of which are outlined below.

The 2014-2018 National Integrated Human Resource Development Plan outlines five outcome-oriented goals which are aligned to, among others, the National Development Plan (NDP) and the National Growth Path (NGP), of which goal number three focuses on a “capable public sector with effective and efficient planning and implementation capabilities (Human Resource Development Council, 2014:9). The key deliverables for this outcome-oriented goal is the “revision of the public service HRD strategies and plans in line with the vision of the NDP for a professional and capable public service” and the need to “turn the public sector into a training space” (Human Resource Development Council, 2014:10).

The Medium Term Strategic Framework (MTSF) for 2014-19 has outlined fourteen strategic outcomes that cut across the various chapters of the NDP. In particular, the role of “an efficient, effective and development oriented public service and an empowered, fair and inclusive citizenship” is dealt with in outcome twelve of the MTSF. Some of the key outputs for this outcome put emphasis on the achievement of “sufficient technical and specialist professional skills” and “increased responsiveness of public servants and accountability to citizens”. The strategic plans of all public service departments are aligned to the MTSF.

**Provision and funding of training and development in the public service**

In addition to HETIs and TVETs that offer pre-service/under-graduate and post-graduate qualifications and short-term training programmes, there are several institutions that are mandated to offer specific programmes in the public service and/or specific sectors in the public sector. For example, the Department of Justice and Constitutional Development has a Justice College that offers various types of courses for, among others, officials from the department and public service employees from other departments; the Department of Health operates Nursing Colleges; the South African Police Service has a Police College that provides for new recruits and existing officers; and some provincial administrations have training academies. There are also Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs) that are responsible for coordinating sector-specific training and development across the public and private sector.

The recently established National School of Government (NSG), which replaced the Public Administration, Leadership and Management Academy (PALAMA), is responsible for the provision of education, training and development programmes in the public service. The current and former institution is established in terms of Schedule 1 of the Public Service Act, 1994, as amended. The objective of the NSG is to develop a professional and capable public service for a developmental state. The NSG offerings include a combination of compulsory training programmes for all public service officials, tailor-made programmes based on the needs of various government departments and optional programmes that are necessary for
continuous training and development. The NSG is expected to implement the following programmes:

- The Compulsory Induction Programme (CIP), which targets all new public service employees and is aimed at ensuring that all public servants are oriented to the public sector and to their respective job responsibilities.
- In-service learning and development programmes that give public servants access to continuous quality learning and development that will make an impact on public sector performance and service delivery, targeting administration support staff, management and executive leadership.

Prior to the establishment of the NSG, PALAMA coordinated the provision of short and medium-term training and development programmes in key targeted areas such as human resource management, labour relations, financial management, ethics and anticorruption, gender mainstreaming and diversity management. It also coordinated the provision of training for the management and leadership echelon in collaboration with several higher education institutions. Training programmes in these areas included mentoring and coaching, an executive development programme, and an accelerated development programme for middle managers. Within the public service, PALAMA worked closely with provincial training academies and sector-based training providers.

The PALAMA approach to training and development has had mixed results. The major weaknesses of the training approach and programmes included the following:

- Training focused on individual needs instead of building organisational capacity.
- Training offered was fragmented, lacked strategic focus and was not relevant to continuously changing contexts.
- Programmes reached less than 3% of public service employees and were predominantly focused on management and leadership.
- The outsourcing cost recovery model resulted in a focus on income generation and an escalation of the costs of training, which made PALAMA less competitive when compared to many higher education and training institutions.

In addition, only one training programme offered by PALAMA/NSG, that is, the Compulsory Induction Programme, which was introduced in 2012, is mandatory for confirmation of probation. Implementation of the CIP is characterised by challenges such as the shortage of trainers and there are no mandatory programmes for promotion purposes and many of the programmes are not accredited. The shortage of trainers has been criticised on the basis that mechanisms have not been put in place to tap into the expertise of existing public service officials and competent former public servants, commissioners and ministers.

The weaknesses in the training and development programmes offered has meant that many Public Service employees preferred to obtain their short-term training from accredited public and private HETIs and FETIs/TVETs. This is in addition to pursuing formal qualification studies.
through higher education institutions, with the financial support of government departments in line with their approved bursary schemes. It is estimated that national and provincial departments spend approximately 2-4 billion rand per annum on employee bursaries for formal qualifications and ad hoc funding for short-term training programmes. Most of this money pays for programmes that are offered by public and private FETIs and HETIs. The decentralised model for funding the NSG has also meant that public service institutions such as the NSG compete for resources with private and public TVETs/FETIs and HETIs.

The legislative and regulatory framework to facilitate training and development in the public service in South Africa is in place. However, coordination of the training offered by various institutions, including HETIs, remains a challenge. According to the Minister of Higher Education and Training, Dr Blade Nzimande (Developmental State Conference, 13 November 2014) “we have enough resources in the Public Service for education and training to really make a big impact in building this developmental state. The issue is, are we using that maximally?”

**Issues for consideration / policy options**

Informed by the preceding discussion, the proposals outlined below are organised into various categories.

**Training programme design, curriculum development and implementation**

To ensure that learning and training programmes are appropriately designed and address specific needs, the following should be addressed:

- The NSG, in collaboration with departments, should conduct a thorough needs analysis and skills audit to inform curriculum design for broad public service and sector specific programmes;
- The DPSA should roll out the HR Connect System supported by the State Information Technology Agency (SITA) to all departments;
- The DPSA and all departments should ensure that information on all qualifications and short-medium training attended is captured on PERSAL;
- The NSG, in collaboration with SETAs, should support departments to develop and implement occupation-specific training (i.e. on-the-job training) for existing employees, youth learnership and interns; Norms and standards for public service training should be set;
- Dedicated capacity in the National School of Government (NSG) should be developed to facilitate and coordinate training;
- The NSG should work closely with HETIs and FETIs/TVETs to influence their pre-
service training and development programmes;
- Put mechanisms in place to make leadership development mandatory and link training with promotion; and
- The NSG should develop and implement a strategy to utilise suitably qualified/competent existing employees and former public servants such as HODs, Commissioners and Ministers as trainers and mentor.

Induction and reorientation
- The implementation of the Compulsory Induction Programme (CIP) for all newly-recruited employees should be fast-tracked, and should target all levels, from junior entry positions to senior management. This should be done by strengthening partnerships with HETIs, FETIs/TВETs, provincial academies and other public institutions to deliver the induction programmes.
- The NSG should implement the developed re-orientation programme for existing public servants in order to reskill SMS members and all employees at the beginning of every term of the new administration.

Monitoring, evaluation and impact assessment
- The NSG should implement a training programme on transversal monitoring and evaluation, targeting employees at the supervisory, middle and senior management level.
- The NSG, in collaboration with relevant departments and other stakeholders, should put in place a system to review the role and effectiveness and efficiency of training provided through the NSG, provincial academies, and relevant service providers such as accredited public and private TVETs and HETIs.
- The NSG, in collaboration with the DPSA, DHE, and SETAs should assess and clarify the role of the public service in the provision of training to youth and new/unemployed graduates in different fields.

Funding for training
- Review the funding model for the NSG and other public sector training academies to ensure the effective coordination of training in the public service.