

SCORE CARD

ON REFORMS

APM: THE ONLY REFORMER IN 2019 PRESIDENTIAL RACE



President Mutharika with his commissioners who were working under his strong leadership

When President Peter Mutharika talked of reforming the public service when he took over power in June 2014, doubting Thomases went to work, charging that the victorious Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) leader just wanted to score political points with the reforms rhetoric. Nothing would come out of the reforms talk, they said. Less than a year later—in February 2015—President Mutharika proceeded to launch the reforms package whose drafting he had supervised with an eagle's eye to show his administration's commitment to transforming the public sector so that it can become competitive, modernised and an effective vehicle for delivering better services to Malawians. Even with the reforms taking off thereafter, the nay-sayers could still not believe that it was happening. Although APM has demonstrated again and again his strong belief in the criticality of "an efficient, effective, accountable, predictable, transparent, and responsive public service for the delivery of equitable and quality public services and for realisation of national development goals" some folks could not just believe that it was possible. Maybe, just maybe, the doubters could be forgiven for having lost hope and faith in ruling parties' ability to make reforms a reality given the history of how reforms had flopped in the country since independence. From 1964, Malawi has unsuccessfully tried to implement public sector reforms aimed at improving governance, efficiency and effectiveness that are crucial for delivery of quality services to citizens, for realising national development goals and for making Malawi globally competitive.

Talk of the reforms out of the Skinner Commission of Inquiry in 1963 that were implemented soon after independence aimed at transforming the colonial public service and aligning it to the developmental needs of an independent Malawi.

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Then in 1966, the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) undertook a Public Service Review to complement the recommendations of the Skinner Commission. UNECA recommended the need to also address issues related to leadership and institutional development for the public service to be better placed to facilitate development. However, only institutional restructuring was undertaken and leadership reforms were not implemented, according to the Office of the President and Cabinet (OPC). By 1983, there was the Civil Service Review Commission under the chairmanship of Sir John Herbecq whose recommended reforms were implemented during the structural

adjustment era to help Malawi to withstand the shocks of increased global oil prices, high costs of debt servicing, falling prices of agricultural commodities and a bloated public service.

The public service also needed to reform in line with the imperatives of the New Public Service Management paradigm which, among other things, called for decentralisation, infusion of private sector management practices in the public service, reduction of the public service and improved public sector governance and accountability. The pain that the Herbecq reforms brought on Malawians was excruciating under Hastings Kamuzu Banda's Malawi Congress Party (MCP) as the structural adjustment programmes the dictatorial government embraced blindly brought serious economic problems that are still being felt today.

These are just examples of reforms that were introduced, but flopped.

Since independence, experts count more than 80 reform efforts with decimal results. Then along came President Mutharika with a renewed impetus for reforms. APM was the game changer who has done—in just five years—what could not be done in 50 years.

Inspired by the need to address challenges experienced with previous reforms and make reforms work; driven by the need to make the public service more efficient, effective and accountable in the face of the deep seated inertia and stagnation that had come to be associated with the public sector, as well as the "Cash-gate" scandal under People's Party and Joyce Banda's watch that displayed deep corruption and theft in the public service, President Mutharika set up the Public Service Reforms Commission on June 23, 2014 to champion the implementation of the

reforms.

The Commission was mandated to chart the national direction and establish national priorities in the public sector reforms that would ensure successful change towards a dynamic, efficient and effective public service.

The Commission thus provided strategic leadership in the generation of reform areas, their Presidential approval and the beginning of the implementation of the same.

President Mutharika later spearheaded the development of the reforms policy—launched last year—to institutionalise the reforms agenda as initiated in 2014, launched in February 2015 so that they are entrenched formally into the government machinery.

"This in effect means that reforms will now become part of the formal architecture of government as institution," notes OPC.

In his foreword to the policy, President Peter Mutharika commits to improving the welfare of the people of Malawi and to transforming the country to a technologically driven middle-income country.

"Malawi has to achieve the global sustainable development goals and become a productive, competitive and resilient nation, as outlined in the Malawi Growth and Development Strategy (MGDS) III of 2017, in order to achieve the middle-income country status. This will require a public service that is fit for purpose, results oriented and high performing to facilitate positive transformation of the economy and modernization of the country," says the President. He added: "My government's administration re-launched public sector reforms in 2015 with a renewed impetus covering all the three branches of government i.e. the Executive, the Judiciary and the Legislature. We need reforms that will align allocation of resources and operations in the public service to support achievement of the MGDS III outcomes: reforms that will bring public sector institutions, non-State actors and citizens to work together for the common good; reforms that will help to enhance trust and confidence in the public service and government and; reforms that will improve service delivery to all parts of Malawi."

Since 2014, the impact of the Mutharika-led reforms have been staggering, making him the only true reformer in line-up of presidential candidates for the May 2019 elections as this Score Card demonstrates by showcasing what has achieved at Ministries, Departments and Agency (MDAs) level as well as at local council levels.

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Public Sector Reforms turn around councils



Chief Director responsible for reforms in OPC, Seodi White

Four years after President Peter Mutharika administration launched progressive measures in local government to implement public sector reforms, the fruits can now be seen councils. Over the years, the past governments have been talking about reforming the public sector, but never a time was any of the past government took the initiative to kick start the reforms, but President Mutharika DPP led government took the bold step to start the reforms.

Four years down the line, district councils, though facing some teething problems are now proud of the success stories.

In a report from a conference looking at council reforms a few months ago, councils demonstrated remarkable progress and tangible achievements in the implementation of their reform areas and showcased the benefits that have accrued from the implementation of the reforms in their respective local authorities.

"The conferences provided an appropriate forum for replicating the success stories, which have so far been registered during the implementation of the reforms in the councils," says the report.

Leading by example was the councils' parent—the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development—which, through the public sector reforms programme—has managed to complete devolution of human resources in councils, fully devolved the development budget to Local Authorities (LAs) to bring development closer to the people and achieved the amendment of Local Government Act.

The Ministry also reported that it initiated rural development reforms that saw finalisation and establishment of funding mechanism of the Integrated Rural Development Strategy (IRDS) and review of legislation for Chiefs Administration.

In the devolution of human resource in councils, the Ministry managed to devolve the payroll to all the councils with servers currently instituted in the following LAs: Kasungu, Lilongwe, Mzuzu, Blantyre, Balaka, Machinga, Zomba and Blantyre. The Ministry also managed to implement the staff rationalisation programme, develop Local Government Human Resources Guidelines, and formulate recruitment plan, which has been submitted to the Department of Human Resource Management and Development (DHRMD).

“ In a report from a conference looking at council reforms a few months ago, councils demonstrated remarkable progress and tangible achievements in the implementation of their reform areas ”

The devolution of the development budget to LAs has resulted in councils identifying and implementing micro projects much faster for people's benefit than ever before.

"Ministry of Finance, Economic Planning and Development (MOFEPD) will proceed to detach the earmarked micro projects from National Public Sector Investment Plan (PSIP) and resources on the same disbursed to councils to facilitate the operationalisation of District Development Plans (DDPs).

"Resources for some micro projects have been devolved to councils (including borehole fund, construction of classroom blocks) to support the

implementation of the DDPs have been devolved, including deliberate interventions at Village Development Committees (VDCs) and Area Development Committees (ADC) level," reads the report.

The Ministry also reviewed the Legislation for Chiefs Administration and Cabinet Paper was drafted and ready for submission to Cabinet in which the Chiefs Administration will devolve, including the process of devolving chiefs' honoraria is underway. At council level, LAs are geared to launching e-ticketing to boost revenue collection that would in turn enable them to pay salaries for their direct employees and provide better services to communities.

For example, Lilongwe City Council (LCC) said public sector reforms enabled the council to enhance revenue generation that included developing and operationalising the Local Revenue Enhancement Plan (LREP).

"Currently market collection is at an average total of K19 million per month, the council is expecting improved revenue collection upon successful redeployment of staff," said LCC in its report.

LCC further said it has submitted four markets proposals to Local Development Fund (LDF) for possible funding towards development of market infrastructure and has also engaged serious traders to construct structures in the proposed markets in line with its plans.

Dedza district council said thanks to the Mutharika-led reforms, the LA is implementing has rapidly expanded delivery of socio-economic services for the betterment of people of Dedza, initiating four campaigns on improved local income generation, establishing additional cattle markets, outsourcing Borna Bar and constructing six more irrigation schemes with a total of 95 hectares while maintaining other schemes are achievements that can be attributed to the APM reforms agenda.

"To date 2,100 lead farmers have been trained in various technologies and approaches, about 800 hectares were planted with a diversity of crops, 25 percent of the farmers have been reached with soil conservation techniques and fifteen percent (15%) more farmers have been drilled on water conservation techniques and 13 community forest areas have been established," said Dedza in its report.

Other success stories of the reforms include economic empowerment of people in various cooperatives through sale of certified products and steady provision of potable water through engagement of local mechanics when the boreholes break down in Mchinji District Council.

Increased synergy and cooperation among workers in different sectors was noted in Ntcheu District Council while there was an improvement in the work ethic among employees and the willingness to work has replaced the business as usual way of doing things in Ntcheu and Thyolo District Councils. Kasungu District Council was able to implement the reform on reducing neo-natal and maternal mortality rate. Zomba City Council was rated highly in creativity and innovativeness for hiring an individual with special skills with regards to revenue generation who is

outside the common service, but at a high professional level and were able to pay him using their own resources. The report has words of encouragement to the councils.

"Councils should differentiate routine activities which are operational in nature from game changing reform activities which will require councils to do things in a totally different way e.g. development of a website is an operational issue while the introduction of paying health services is a game changing matter which would enhance revenue generation for efficient and effective delivery of health services. "The councils should think outside the box and think of hiring experts outside the common service to accelerate the implementation of reform areas which require special skills. The councils should overcome the problem of resource constraints by searching for new ways of financing their projects," reads the report.

During the conferences it was established that all the councils shared similar challenges that were affecting and retarding progress in the implementation of reforms, including limited knowledge on the concept of reforms by staff and politicians at council level, political interference, resistance to change and unwillingness to participate in reform activities by staff and other stakeholders and very limited financial resources to support reform activities.

It was also established that weak institutional capacity of the councils due to shortage of professional staff in the administrative sectors, archaic policies/by-laws to direct operations of the councils and limited transparency, accountability and coordination amongst stakeholders in the provision of essential services were also some of the challenges.

"Limited monitoring and evaluation framework to assess the implementation of programmes, some key functions have not been devolved to the local councils thereby making it difficult to implement reforms in areas that are under control of central Government, duplication of activities due to very limited coordination between central and local government in the implementation of reforms and lack of clarity on the boundaries between the City/Town and the District Councils," reads the report.

But Chief Director in the Office of the President and Cabinet responsible for reforms Seodi White assured that the Mutharika administration will work hard to deal with bottlenecks standing in the way of reforms.

Other recommendations included the need to enhance the Public Service Reforms Unit while councils and the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development should document and publicize major milestones that have been achieved during the implementation of the reforms. It was also recommended that councils should sensitize all political structures before implementation of reforms, increase revenue base through investments and strengthen institutional capacity of the councils to implement the reforms.

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MINISTRIES EMBRACE PUBLIC SECTOR REFORMS



APM has improved service delivery in sectors such as energy

Most of Malawi's Government Ministries have embraced public sector reforms that were introduced by President Peter Mutharika in 2015 in an effort to improve service delivery in the public sector.

According to the Report on The Reforms Monitoring Programme to Ministries and Departments conducted from May 25 to 28 June, 2018, there was commendable progress made by the majority of Ministries in the reforms implementation process.

The Public Sector Reforms Management Unit (PSRMU) reported that progress on selected projects/programmes/sites was validated and solutions were explored and agreed during the monitoring visit are also outlined the report.

At the MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, IRRIGATION & WATER DEVELOPMENT a lot of progress has been made as the ministry presented a progress report that showed that National Irrigation Board was established and is operational.

The Ministry also reported the establishment of National Irrigation Fund and that seed money for the National Irrigation Fund has been provided in the 2018/19 Financial Year. Farmers have started submitting Project Proposals for funding.

The ministry also enactment of enabling Agriculture Acts and Policies that included the Seed Policy, the Extension Policy, the National Fertiliser

Policy, the National Agriculture Policy, the National Irrigation Policy, the Plant Protection Bill, the Pesticides Amendment Bill, the Tobacco Industry Bill among others.

MINISTRY OF CIVIC EDUCATION, CULTURE AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT key reform areas and specific activities that were undertaken included the restructuring the

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Department of Culture resulting in splitting the department of culture into three namely museums and Monuments (Museums of Malawi and Antiquities), arts (Arts and Crafts and Censorship Board) and national Records and Archives Services (National Archives and MG Registries).

The Ministry developed a devolution Plan and Management Guidelines and were submitted to the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development and OPC in preparation for a Cabinet Committee Meeting.

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE commercialized Malawi Defence Force Engineers Battalion and will be registering a company. So far, the Engineers Battalion has contracts valued at close to K15 billion, mostly in road construction contracts such as Zomba-Changalume Road, Area 43 Roads, Blantyre City Roads and Tsangano-Mwanza-Neno Road.

The Ministry was in the process of establishing a Military Referral Hospital, with the tendering process for selecting a contractor almost complete and actual construction of the hospital is expected to commence soon at Area 35.

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY has made progress in reforms in areas of introduction of new criteria for the promotion of teachers, improvement of school governance and management through legally recognised institutions.

There was also progress in governance and management through a College Board for each Public Teacher Training College, establishment of the Malawi Qualifications Authority and review of Rural Teachers Allowances.

At the MINISTRY OF FINANCE, ECONOMIC PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT, progress has been made in the establishment of National Planning Commission (NPC) formation

of a Functional Internal Audit System, ensuring that IFMIS is fully configured to integrate all Governments Accounts, upgrading IFMIS Data Centre, electronic Funds Transfer (EFT), operationalization of MG Account No 1 and Public Debt Accounts and ensure that funding to MDAs as well as payment systems are working efficiently.

The MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND POPULATION is reforming hospital operations through the Central Hospital Autonomy, decentralization of the district health system, establishing the Malawi Health Fund and implementation of National Health Insurance Scheme.

The MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS AND INTERNAL SECURITY is working on establishing a Malawi Police Service Resources Mobilization Project which, among other things, will establish commercial driving and riding school, breeding and training of dogs and dog handlers, a private security training unit and embark on commercial farming.

In police reforms are also being implemented in the administration that would see affliating Police College in Zomba being affiliated to the University of Malawi.

Reforms in the Malawi Prison Services include enhanced agricultural production and improved skills development while in the Department of Immigration.

Other Ministries are also pushing hard to achieve President Mutharika's vision of an efficient public service that serves Malawians better.

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Immigration: Epitome of APM's reforms



R.I.O explains to the Minister while the DG looks on



The Minister cutting the ribbon marking the official launch of R.I.O(e) whilst the DG looks on.

The Department of Immigration and Citizenship Services—which falls under the Ministry of Homeland Security—is an excellent example of how President Peter Mutharika's determination to implement his progressive reforms agenda is directly benefitting the people.

Among other functions, the Department issues Malawian passport to Malawian citizens. Long before Mutharika's reforms, passports were only being printed at its headquarters in Blantyre, at Central Region Immigration office in Lilongwe and the Northern Region Immigration Office in Mzuzu. For the Southern Region, that meant Immigration Headquarters took responsibility of issuing passports because in the Eastern Region, the Department did not have a fully equipped and secured office that could have accommodated the project as it was with other regions.

But when President Mutharika introduced the reforms the Department's Director General Masauko Medi was one of the first controlling officers to embrace the reforms and implement them aggressively. Medi's first step was to have a well facilitated regional office in the Eastern Region located where districts in the eastern region—Balaka,

Machinga, Ntcheu, Salima and other part of Dedza—would easily access the point. Thus, Mangochi was chosen as the new nerve centre of the Eastern Region.

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The bringing of the Regional Immigration Office in Mangochi was completed in 2018. A full Passport Issuance System (P.I.S) was successfully installed. Thus, on October 18 2018, the Regional Immigration office was officially opened by former Minister of Homeland Security Cecilia Chazama. The new regional headquarters instantly changed the lives

of people in the six districts by, among other things:

- Cutting travelling costs for passport applicants who were travelling long distances outside the region to apply for Malawian passport.
- Reducing congestion of passport applicants in other regions.
- Reducing the influx of irregular migration by increasing Malawians' access to passports.
- Reducing the rate of human and child trafficking.
- Increasing revenue collection
- Boosting visibility of immigration operations in the region through mounting of roadblocks, deporting of illegal immigrants, among others.
- Issuance of different immigration permits such as Business Residence Permit, Temporally Residence Permit, Permanent Residence Permit, Visitor's Permit, and Business Permit.

Mlambe One Stop Centre

Throughout these developments, President Mutharika was walking step-by-step with the Immigration Department and other agencies to ensure that they deliver the vision he wanted.

Thus, in accordance with his reforms agenda, President Mutharika officially opened the One Stop Public Services Delivery Centre on 28th March 2018.

This centre is a building where different government services are provided and passport issuance being part of it. Immigration started offering its services at Mlambe building on 12th October 2017 prior to its launch in March 2018.

The centre is complementing the Immigration Eastern Region's office by helping to serve more people. At Mlambe alone, 3500 passports have been issued so far while the Regional Immigration Office at Mangochi Boma has issued 6 000 to date.

On average, the regional office prints between 50 and 60 passports per day against daily applications ranging from 70-80, an astounding performance rate. For Traditional Authority (T/A) Makanjira, the coming in of Mlambe One-Stop Centre has helped a lot of people, especially in his area who have been subjected to travel long distances to access passport services.

“People would have enough money for the passport and fail to get it because they had no money to travel to Blantyre to process the passport. We are very grateful that government decided to bring this service to the people,” he said.

Makanjira said he has been signing a number of passport application forms lately, an indication that people are now finding it easier to process the passports as it is nearer.