

RSOG on Implementing Transformation Program: An Exchange Between Malaysia and Tanzania

When : 11 June 2013

Where : Razak School of Government

Omari Issa (CEO) President Delivery Unit, Tanzania

Choy Lup Bong, Head Delivery Management Unit, Health Care, Ministry of Health

Speakers : **Dr.Norliza Zakuan**, Head Delivery Management Office, Ministry of Education

Dr.Waitchalla Suppiah, Head Delivery Management Office, Crime National Key Area, Ministry of Home Affairs

Moderator : **Cheryl Lim**, Associate Director, PEMANDU

About The Forum

Prolific author, Wayne Dyer once said “Transformation literally means going beyond your form”. Though geographically apart, Malaysia and Tanzania are common in many respects such climate, culturally diverse, blessed with natural resources and gained independence around the same time. To elevate a nation from a developing to a developed one requires a clear vision, rigorously thought action plan, determination and, most importantly, the participation of all. In any national transformation program the involvement and support of the public service is vital.

Malaysia is no stranger to transformation and having undergone transformation through various forms since independence: from forging a new nation state out of loosely integrated territories, to moving from an agrarian society to an industrial one. The rapid changes across the globe in recent times has again compelled Malaysia to think outside-the-box, this time in order to escape the middle-income trap. Hence the launch of National Transformation Programme, which has produce encouraging results over the last two and a half years sine its launch.

In reflecting and evaluating ones journey so far, it become all the more valuable when compared with another on a similar jooourney. This forum was held to initiate an exchange of experiences and observations of Malaysia and Tanzania. In the interest of time, it zoomed into a few specific topics under as follows:-

Tanzania's Transformation Program and Lab Experience.

The Experience in Implementing the Transformational Initiatives.

The Characteristics of Effective Transformational Leadership.

Summary of the Tanzania's Transformation Program and Lab Experience

His Excellency President Kikwete visited Malaysia in June 2011 and was introduced to the lab methodology applied in Malaysian's transformation program. Impressed with the method, he expressed his interest to replicate it in Tanzania. In August 2012 PEMANDU held a briefing to the Tanzanian Cabinet. The Tanzanian Government adopted the same approach of PEMANDU's Big Fast Results (BFR) methodology in Malaysia. PEMANDU conducted eight weeks of labs (Feb- April 2013) with more than 250 participants, six 3-foot implementation of programs, five visits by the President and more than 60,000 lab hours logged by Tanzanian delivery labs teams.

Six focus areas namely Energy, Agriculture, Transport, Water, Resource Mobilisation and Education were identified as their National Key Result Areas. The focus areas were shared with the public and a three year implementation plan was drafted, and received the approval from the Cabinet in April 2013.

There was initial resistance and skepticism towards the labs in the beginning. However, after six weeks everyone in the team was happy with the group outcomes. A sense of inclusiveness was profoundly felt where public and private sectors worked hand in hand towards a common cause and goal.

Summary of the Experience in Implementing the Transformational Initiatives

It was the consensus from both the Malaysian and Tanzanian stakeholders that every party concerened must share a common vision and mission. Strong political buy in is the necessary starting point as, more often than not, large transformational initiatives are top-down driven.

Support and the human factor are also extremely important and focus must remain on outcome and efficiency of the process. It is important to streamline processes in ensuring

that there is no redundancy for example in the case of procurement where it does not necessarily have to go through so many layers of red tape.

Another critical factor is flexibility. For instance, in the case of crime hotspots, there must be flexibility of officer movement and deployment. For example, the collaborative effort between the army and police has been a positive move towards combating street crimes in Malaysia, which to a certain extent also contributed towards improving the image of the police.

Summary of the Characteristic of Effective Transformational Leadership

It was the consensus that those entrusted to lead the national transformation initiatives must have a strong personality and able to face challenges with a lot of perseverance. Good communication skills, will power and 'doing whatever it takes' are requisite traits. Leaders must be able to influence and engage relevant stakeholders effectively to be able to quickly arrive at decisions and resolve issues.

Issues Raised

- As far as the transformational experience is concerned, the method, approach and pace applied was well thought through. If given a chance to re-start, it will most likely be the same path taken.
- The setting up of a specific outfit to drive innovation is timely to complement the on-going transformation programme in Malaysia. Based on the premise that innovation has no boundary, the outfit entrusted to drive innovation in Malaysia can also contribute in the transformation program in Tanzania.

About the Speaker

Omari Issa is the Chief Executive Officer, President Delivery Bureau for the Government of Tanzania. He holds a Bachelor of Science with Honours from Polytechnic, Central London, UK in 1972 and obtained his Master in Business Administration from Columbia University, New York in 1980. He currently sits on the Board for the Rwanda Development in Kigali. He is Chairman of the National Economic Empowerment Council in Tanzania, Board member of the Africare in Washington DC, Member of the

International Advisory Council for China Investment Corporation in Beijing and also a Non-Executive Director for Millicom International Cellular in Luxembourg.

Dr Noorliza Zakuan is the Head of Delivery Management Office, Ministry of Education from January 2011 till present. Her primary job responsibilities is on Strategy Planning and Policy Analysis in particular to the Education sector. In 2009, she was the Education Consultant to the Ministry of Education in Oman.

Dr. Waitchalla RRV Suppiah is currently the Undersecretary of the National Key Result Area (NKRA) Reducing Crime, Ministry of Home Affairs. Prior to that, Dr. Waitchalla was with the Immigration Department as the Director of Communications and Corporate Affairs and had served as a public servant across other ministries and departments such as National Institute of Public Administration (INTAN) and the Ministry of Defence. She was also a Trainer and subject matter expert in Change Management, Negotiation, Conflict Management and Crisis Management at the Leadership Centre, National Institute of Public Administration (INTAN), and has successfully organized the Civil Service Seminar, an annual flagship event at INTAN.

Mr. Choy Lup Bong is the Head of the Delivery Management Office established under the Healthcare National Key Economic Area (NKEA) to drive and coordinate projects identified under the healthcare sector to grow Malaysia's economy. Previously, he has also served in the Human Resource Division of the Ministry. Mr. Choy has vast experience in the civil service, beginning his career as an Administrative and Diplomatic Service officer in the Public Service Department in 1981. Since then, he has served in the Ministry of Human Resources dealing with labour policies and the Ministry of International Trade and Industry where he was responsible for trade practices and multilateral trade issues.

Contact

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