7th PICARD Conference

Marrakesh, MOROCCO

25th – 27th September 2012

A Case Study of Leadership and Management Development at Kenya Revenue Authority, with a specific focus on Women in Leadership

Presented by :

Beatrice Memo (Ms)
Commissioner of Customs Services
Kenya Revenue Authority.

Structure of Presentation

- Brief introduction of Kenya Revenue Authority (KRA)
- Mandate of KRA
- Structure of KRA
- Leadership and Management Development at KRA, incl. experience with the WCO LMDP
- The Women Leaders at KRA and their achievements
- Lessons learnt and challenges
- Conclusion

Introduction of KRA

- Kenya Revenue Authority is a Government agency enacted in 1995 by an Act of Parliament, CAP 469.
- The Authority comprises 4 revenue departments namely; Customs, Large Taxpayer Office, Medium and Small Taxpayer Office and Road Transport.
- There are several support departments which include; Technical Support Services, Corporate Support Services, Legal, Internal Audit, Project Management and Business Office, Investigations and Enforcement, Board Secretary
- In total, there 11 departmental heads who directly report to the Commissioner General

Mandate of KRA

- Collection of Government revenue comprising Customs duties, Domestic taxes, Road Transport fees,
- Collection of agency fees on behalf of other government agencies/ministries
- Facilitation of trade
- Security & protection of society
- Collection of statistical data

- KRA collects 95% of the government exchequer revenue.
- The Financial Year 2011/2012, KRA collected US$9Billion with Customs collecting US$ 3 Billion. KRA contributed 96% of the exchequer revenue.
- This Financial Year 2012/13, KRA is expected to collect US$ 11 Billion of this Customs collection has been placed at US$ 3.5 Billion

- **KRA Structure**
- KRA is headed by a Commissioner General who is assisted by 6 Commissioners heading;
- Customs Services Department;
- 2 Domestic Taxes (Com- LTO and Com – MST)
- Investigations and Enforcement
- Technical Support services
- Corporate Support Services

KRA Policy on Leadership Development

- KRA has in place a Corporate Plan that runs for a period of three years.
- Each year of the Plan period is divided into four Perspectives under the Performance Contracting arrangement.
- These are; People Perspective, Internal Processes Perspective, Customer Perspective and Financial Perspective.
- The People perspective is where Leadership and Management Development programmes fall.
- Every department must include key activities on people development in their Performance contracts .
- This perspective is evaluated on quarterly basis in the course of the Contract year.

The People Perspective

- Under this perspective, each Manager is required to have the following programmes in place for all cadre of staff;
- Competency Development by nominating staff to attend and participate in workshops and seminars organized by KRA or other Institutions
- Annual Training Programmes covering – technical, leadership, and general managerial areas.
- Encourage staff to undertake professional courses and become members of Professional Associations e.g. Accounting, Management, HR, ICT
- Have in place exchange programmes for staff with specialized skills to conduct training in administrations that may request for this assistance e,g, in audit, valuation, classification etc .

- At the end of every year, staff appraisals are conducted and each appraisee must state what courses s/he has attended and if the training has been beneficial to them.
- On self development, staff who attend specialized courses or further studies are sponsored by KRA .
- During tax clinics, officers go out to learning institutions to facilitate lectures on tax matters and integrity.
- This has ensured that officers who joined the organization with minimal educational skills have acquired qualifications in various fields including University degrees, Post graduate degrees and some are even pursuing PHDs.
- There is room for further improvement as more and more offers from sponsors are received for interested staff.
- This has fitted quite well in the overall KRA HR Strategy.

The Leadership & Management Development Programme

- The LMDP in Kenya Customs is part of the wider Finnish funded projects in the ESA Region.
- The Project Manager, Ms Ritta Passi is a woman!
- The Kenya Customs is the third administration after South Africa and Namibia, to benefit from this programme following a two-week workshop held in Mombasa Kenya in the month of July for Senior and Middle level Managers. This programme equipped managers with skills on how to handle complex issues in the course of their customs duties
- 16 Senior Managers actively participated in this workshop. 8 of the trainees were Customs ladies.

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KRA experience with the WCO LMDP

- The WCO LMDP was a great eye opener to the participants on ;
- - Modern management practices
- - Development of individual leadership qualities
- - Personal development exercises related to self-awareness

In the following areas;

- - Strategic Management,
- Leadership Skills, Visioning, Management styles,
- People Management, Integrity, Negotiation,
- Communication, Change Management.

Women leaders in Customs

Customs **main divisions** are Headed by women

These are;

- Commissioner of Customs Services
- Valuation, Tariff and Origin
- Risk Management
- Enforcement
- Jomo Kenyatta International Airport

Ms Beatrice Memo

•**Commissioner of Kenya Customs, KRA**

- **Profile:**

- Appointed Commissioner of Customs Services in March 2012
- Holds a Masters of Business Administration degree in Strategic Management from Moi University
- Trained as Customs administrator at the Customs Training Centre, Kenya
- Career Customs officer for over 20 years
- Was Project Manager for the Customs Reforms and Modernization project that saw the migration from a Manual Customs processing environment to a paperless environment
- Headed two main Kenya Revenue Authority Regions in Kenya

- Has held several leadership positions at the national and regional level including;
- A Trained Trainer in Harmonized System
- A member of the East African Revenue Authorities Technical Committee – Head of Delegation for KRA and Chairperson twice
- Participated at the Harmonized System Committee meetings in Brussels from 2009 until the appointment as Commissioner
- Accredited WCO Customs Reforms and Modernization Advisor
- A Member of the Kenya Institute of Management

Ms Mercy Njuguna

Head of Enforcement, Claims & Refunds Division

Ms Jayne Ayako

Head of the Risk Management Office

Ms Pamela Ahago

Head of the Valuation, Tariff and Rules of Origin Division

Ms Rose Gichira

Head of Jomo Kenyatta International Airport

Qualifications

- Generally these women leaders in Kenya Customs hold the following qualifications common to them;
- Masters Degrees in Strategic Management
- Underwent Customs training for a period of two years after completion of university education and before starting their careers in Customs administration
- Have worked in different sections/stations in the country as Customs officers and station managers
- Have served the customs department for over 20 years
- Have served on Customs Regional and International Committees at EAC, ESA, COMESA, WTO and even at WCO
- Have been seconded to some Customs administrations in the world to assist in Capacity building activities.

The Kenyan Law

The new Constitution of Kenya which came into force in the year 2010 provides for at least 1/3 of government positions to be reserved for Women, subject to the relevant qualifications.

- There had been a perception that women in Kenya were marginalized for a long time despite having the necessary skills as the men.
- This new provision has ensured that women play a major role in National issues. This requirement has also been extended to political representation and all organizations are required to comply with this requirement when recruiting or conducting promotions.
- KRA has actually offered 50% of the top positions to women leaders.

Lessons learnt

- Leadership and Management Development has enabled Managers become good planners able to control and drive the objectives of their operational areas with great ease.
- Managers are also equipped with the confidence and courage to address the challenges arising from the threats posed in the course of their work.
- A majority of Women leaders in Kenya are well educated and have the skills necessary to manage sensitive departments/organizations and even ministries previously a preserve for men.
- Women managers tend to be patient, and, from the KRA experience, a majority have worked for over 20 years.

- From my personal experience, I have had to strike a balance between family and career, making sacrifices on time and other personal matters.
- With time, I have developed self-confidence, strived to achieve goals as nothing has come easy.
- I also realized that I had to look for different ways to improve my skills and abilities through reading professional books, journals and materials on personal development, attending and participating in Leadership workshops.
- During my free time I give talks to groups of people on invitation.

Challenges

- Women leaders are still not taken seriously in as far as decision making is concerned and many a times a decision made by a woman leader tends to take long before implementation. Thanks to the new constitution in Kenya, that this is not the case in the country's institutions.
- Even where the law is in place in certain administrations, women will always be given the departments/divisions deemed to be easy to manage, of course this has been different at the Kenya Revenue Authority.
- A woman leader has to contend with difficulties arising from working odd hours, working away from home and even staying away from the family on travels/engagements outside town/country.

Conclusion

- The LMD programme has enabled a majority of young officers who joined the KRA with limited education qualifications to improve on their skills through sponsorship for various programmes by the Authority
- Generally, the Programme has empowered managers to become independent thinkers, quick at decision making and able to address operational challenges in the course of their work without unnecessary beauraucracy.
- From the Kenyan experience, organizations are encouraged to give the women a chance and build confidence in their performance.
- I got such a chance and I am proud to be one of the few women leaders in my country.

Ahsante Sana for your attention

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