

# MESICIC on site visit Belize 24 - 26 April, 2018

A Joint Presentation by  
The National Trade Union Congress  
And  
Public Service Union of Belize

## Objective

To share Unions Perspective on recommendations issued to Belize during the Second Round on:

Government Hiring Systems and;

Training and Remuneration of government officials .

These apply for the different branches of government.

# Recommendations of Second Round

## **PUBLIC SERVICE INCLUDING JUDICIAL & LEGAL SERVICES**

Strengthening the systems of government hiring through relevant legislative and/or administrative procedures

- Develop, the process of selecting and appointing candidates to posts,
- Examine the existing job descriptions and classifications
- Adopt, clearly defined criteria for the advertisement of hiring opportunities or vacancies

# Recommendations - Cont'd

## **PUBLIC SERVICE - Cont'd**

- Adopt, and in keeping with the principle of due process, provisions for the establishment of administrative challenge mechanisms
- Strengthen the legal provisions regarding the Service Commissions

## **Government Open Vote Workers Regulations**

- Develop the process of selecting and appointing workers

## Recommendations - Cont'd

### NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

- Develop, the process of selecting and appointing staff
- Adopt, provisions which provide that the selection and recruitment process for staff is to be based on merit.
- Adopt, provisions which require the publication of staff vacancies that arise.

## Recommendations - Cont'd

### National Assembly - Cont'd

- Adopt, in keeping with the principle of due process, provisions for the establishment of **administrative challenge mechanisms** to clarify, modify or revoke substantial acts that are part of the recruitment and selection procedures for the National Assembly,

# Methodology

- Review of experts observations
- Review of relevant legislation, government policies and directives
- Interviews with staff and Department Heads
- Meeting with CEO Ministry of the Public Service
- Research on internet and at the Government Archives Department.

# COMMENTARY ON RECOMMENDATIONS

## Hiring Systems for various branches of Government

- Recommendations fully supported
- Government has failed to implement recommendations despite prolonged passage of time. Retrogressive Acts
- Selection and Recruitment Manual released in 2002 forms excellent basis for passage of legislation
- Recruitment process in manual can be made more transparent if evaluation criteria is disclosed to candidates



## COMMENTARY - Cont'd

### ADMINISTRATIVE CHALLENGE MECHANISMS

- These mechanisms are essential to ensure that suitable candidates are selected on the basis of merit and not on the basis of favoritism.
- Mechanisms do not exist.
- Mandatory civil society and unions involvement in mechanisms

## COMMENTARY - Cont'd

Strengthen legal provisions regarding Service Commissions

- Judicial and legal services (Belize Const. 110/E, 2 and 3)
- Appointment contrary to constitution, need to be regularized
- National Assembly (NA Staff Act, National Assembly Staff Act, 2000)
- Committee not on par with Public Service Commission
- Conflict with Integrity Commission Act - Clerk is Acc. Officer
- Resolve apparent conflict of interest

## COMMENTARY - Cont'd

- Belize Public Service Regulations, 2014
  - While still in use, it is in the process of revision (MPS, PSU & APSSM)
  - Needs to clarify/define who is a Public Officer(only at FARA 2(1))
- Government Open Vote Workers regulations
  - Process for selection of workers not transparent
  - Need for policy to curtail hiring on this basis
  - Need for the timely transitioning of officers from open vote to PE. No information available on this matter.

## COMMENTARY - Cont'd

### TRAINING

- Clerical - for those second class clerks who are confirmed in their appointments.
- Promotional -for second Class clerks to become First Class Clerks
  - For officers to be eligible to enter the technical fields within the Government.
- There are some technical offices that create personalize modules for the specific Ministry or Department. These modules cover the functions of the Officers and a small portion on ethics and probity.

# COMMENTARY - Cont'd

## JOB CLASSIFICATION

- The Job Classification and Compensation exercise is still on going.

The Job classification and compensation exercise should:

- Provide new information to determine whether the current labour market within the Public Service pay structure is appropriate or may need adjustment.
- Provide insight and recommendations as to whether the Public Service current compensation structure, policies and practices are effective or in need of adjustment.
- Include the evaluation of the Public Service current job descriptions and the potential need to perform edits and/or major re-writes to improve the documents as primary sources of information for performance appraisal, recruitment and retention.

## COMMENTARY - Cont'd

- Equitable Remuneration and Probity in the Public Service
  - Have not come across studies on this matter
  - Could be an interesting topic for consultancy
  - Studies conducted in other countries has linked equitable remuneration with probity in the Public Service
  - It is essential to address security of tenure matters
  - Major challenge with FUNDING of study.
- . ADVOCACY

## OTHER REMARKS

- Disappointed that very little has happened since implimention over 15 yrs ago
- Political will necessary
- Things have gotten worse
- Need to consider ways to enforce compliance
- Unions/civil society have been marginalized in process
- Should be involved in all aspects including Procurement and Matters of engagement of civil society

THANK YOU