

COUNTRY PAPER

**SENIOR EXECUTIVE
DEVELOPMENT
PROGRAMME**

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BRUNEI DARUSSALAM
13TH ASEAN CONFERENCE ON CIVIL SERVICE MATTERS
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1. The changing role of the civil service

As the administrative machinery of the executive branch of government the civil service for the past two decades has evolved functionally. Mainly with the spread of liberalism especially in the west the civil service has slowly shed its traditional role of providing goods and services which could be delivered more efficiently by the private sector. The public sector's role has eventually been limited to ensure equity, security, and regulatory.

Brunei Darussalam's public service, like most in other developing countries, may not have arrived at that stage. Indeed it still plays a great role in the provision of public goods and services. At the same time it also balances its role by serving as facilitator for growth and development as well as stabiliser. The *raison d'être* (underlying basis) is the slow growth of the private sector (because of over dependence on oil and gas), the immature domestic market forces and the need to play its traditional socio-economic function as a source of employment.

2. The need for continuous development

In the changing environment within which the Civil Service exists especially in a competitive regional and global arena as well as the ever demanding customers it serves the development of its human resource is no longer an option. Human Resource Development which in the past may have been described as a luxury is now a necessity. While focusing on the technical development of its

employees, the Brunei Darussalam Civil Service has also directed its attention to the machinery that drives the technical capability of the organisation – namely the management. Various programmes have been launched within the past decade. Apart from the short courses conducted by the Civil Service Institute three other programmes have taken prominence.

- a. The Supervisory Development Programme
- b. The Executive Development Programme
- c. The Senior Executive Development Programme

The Supervisory and Executive Development programmes are conducted at University Brunei Darussalam for a period of three and four months full time respectively. These are scheduled annually. The Senior Executive Development Programme is however an on-going programme throughout the year.

3. The Civil Service of Brunei Darussalam

The Brunei Civil Service is structurally divided into five main divisions - each further divided into various scales. The lowest division is Division Five - these are the office boys, the junior clerks, the drivers, gardeners etc. while the highest are the Permanent Secretaries in the GA group. The assistant and deputy directors are in Division Two and One while the Directors General and Directors are in Division One the Super Scale (SS) band. The Permanent Secretaries are in Group A.

4. The Senior Executive Development Programme

The programme is designed for senior officers in Superscale C, B and A in Division One, categorically Directors and above often described as the second echelons who may eventually take over the politico-administrative roles of the permanent secretaries. It is therefore essential to continuously develop them with

not just new management methods but also with the awareness of regional and global development. The Senior Executive Development Programme provides for the officers to go on working visits to neighbouring countries and whenever deemed relevant even to those outside the region. Each officer would be responsible for preparing a working paper with action plans related to service delivery problems or policy issues within their organisations and specific areas that they need to look into at the target institution/country. These visits would result in comparative studies and analysis with adoptions and adaptations of best practices.

5. The Programme Objectives:

The programme is therefore designed to:

- a. increase innovativeness – thinking out of the box
- b. improve capabilities to implement the government's vision
- c. provide a platform for the senior officers – the next level after attending the previous two programmes
- d. enable them to look at administrative and managerial problems from “outside” and to prevent “introvert and mainstream thinking” – looking at things from a different perspective
- e. help prevent “tunnel vision” in solving problems
- f. enable them to think “away from their comfort zones”
- g. challenge them to come up with programmes and action plans that must be implemented – designed to add value to their organisation specifically and to improve public service delivery generally
- h. act as a mechanism for succession planning – identifying those who have the capability to go to the next level.

There are various tangible and intangible benefits from this programme:

Tangibly it helps prepare the officers with new skills and insights to carry out an even more challenging tasks at the next level in their career path and development. It also helps solve “domestic public service” problems with a more comprehensive solutions through comparative analysis, and it will eventually improve further the administrative machinery of the government with the ultimate benefit being enjoyed by the customers – the public.

Intangibly it helps establish administrative network with neighbouring countries, expose the officers to a more global approach towards problem solving and supports their career development and growth.

6. Selection of officers:

Officers may apply by proposing a working paper which must identify problems that they want to solve or improvements that they want to make. They may also be nominated by their respective departments or ministries. The problems or improvements must be micro rather than macro problems or improvements and must be related to the implementation of the National Development Plan, civil service reforms, quality and productivity improvements, the implementation of e-government programmes, education, social, religion, sports and those related with current government agendas. But it must be management related.

At the end of the programme each officer would be required to implement their action-plan which must outline the objective of the project, when and how it would be implemented. It would be the responsibilities of each ministry to monitor the progress of the project. Failure to complete the project would be reflected in the officers’ performance appraisal and they may even be subject to actions deemed necessary by their ministries.

7. Critical Success factors:

With the decentralisation of the training and development function each Ministry is responsible for financing the programme as well as ensuring its effectiveness.

The critical success factors include:

Sufficient resources

Realistic project proposals

The right target country/institutions

Commitment of the officers

Support and recognition of the projects

The carrot and stick approach

Effective supervision of the programme

8. Conclusion:

The programme recognises the importance of knowledge workers in building a learning organisation that aspires to continuously improve its services to the public. It is part of the continuous improvement efforts of the government especially in delivering its promises to the public.

- ends -

Addendum:

Samples of macro/micro programmes/issues

Macro	Micro
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Self-sufficiency in agriculture• Employment• Failures of the National Development Plan• Developing SMEs• Manpower Planning• Privatisation dan Commercialisation Programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Process improvement• Process benchmarking• Improving front-line services• Reducing waiting time for approvals• Specific human resource development project• The privatisation/commercialisation of specific process/services

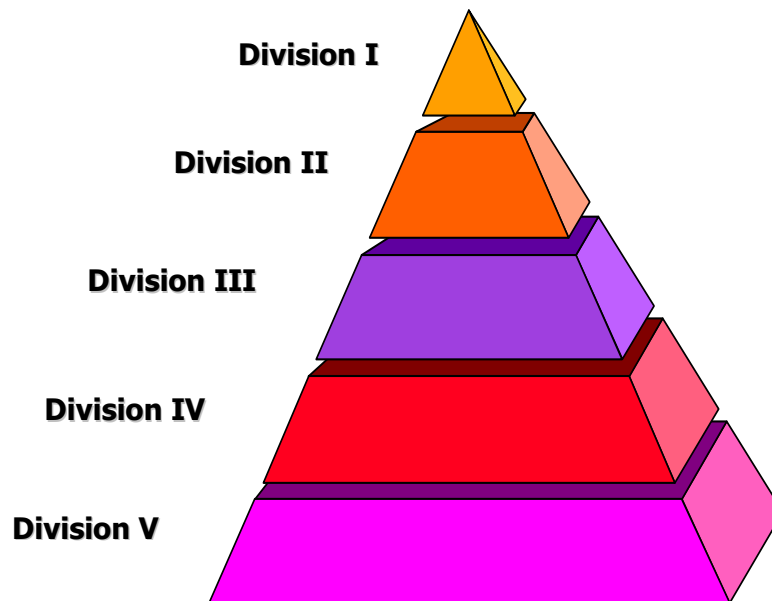


Figure I. The Structure of the Civil Service by heirarchy of Divisions

Fig. 2 The Role of the Brunei Darussalam Civil Service

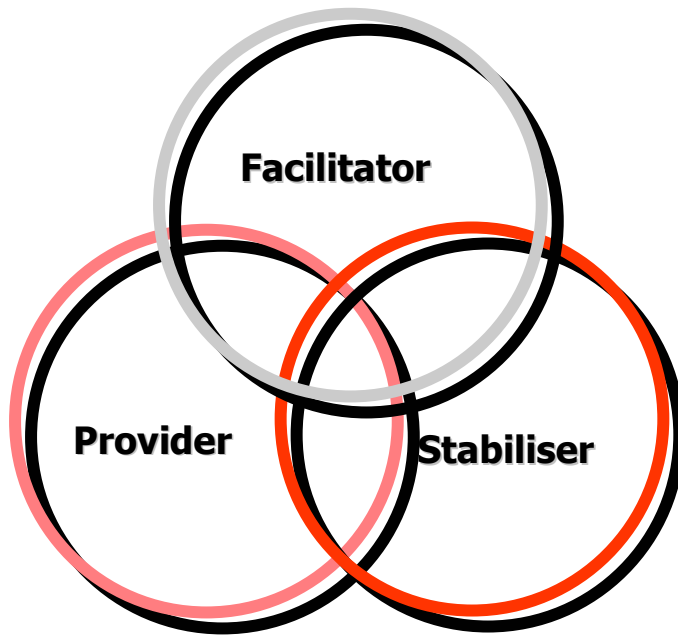


Fig. 3. A Framework For Excellence Delivery.

