



The Republic of Uganda

Judiciary

**REGIONAL PLANNING WORKSHOP FOR JUDGES, REGISTRARS, CHIEF
MAGISTRATES AND MAGISTRATES GRADE ONE IN CHARGE STATION
FROM CENTRAL REGION HELD AT IMPERIAL ROYAL HOTEL,
KAMPALA ON 8TH -9TH DECEMBER, 2014**

**CLOSING REMARKS
BY**

**HON. JUSTICE DR. YOROKAMU BAMWINE
PRINCIPAL JUDGE**

The Principal Judge
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Tuesday 9th December, 2014

Your Worships,
Distinguished participants,
Ladies and Gentlemen;

I congratulate you upon successful completion of this very important workshop aimed at improving Planning and management processes in the Judiciary.

It is my utmost belief that the funds committed to this activity are indeed well spent and this will show in the improved quality of targets set and reports submitted in a timely manner. The planning Cycle is statutory and has set time limits for submission of targets, budgets and reports. I will emphasise the following issues;

Submission of Individual and Court Targets: The allocation of resources in the Judiciary must now be pegged on achievement of Targets. Likewise, the much needed reward system in the Performance Evaluation tool being developed cannot be operationalised without setting specific targets. This will in addition, make it easy for the Ministry of Finance, Parliament and the donor community to vote funds for the Judiciary with clearly set targets and eventual outputs. Setting individual targets gives you a performance purpose!

Performance Appraisal: The issue of staff appraisal by managers of Courts has been highlighted. It should be noted that while measuring performance of staff under your supervision,

weaknesses need to be pointed out as a basis for development of a relevant training needs assessment. Some members of staff have taken a very long time without attending a refresher course while others attend courses repeatedly! Such a practice should be discouraged so that all staff are given equal opportunities to improve skills. The Judicial Studies Institute in collaboration with the Human Resource Department should urgently come with a training needs assessment.

Financial Management (Accountability): While we have tried to ensure that you are well facilitated, the reports coming from the field especially from the audit unit do not really depict a good picture. Some Judicial Officers treat Operational funds intended for running the Courts as personal income and yet they deliberately delay or fail to submit accountabilities. This practice is not acceptable and you should endeavor to comply with accountability requirements as set out in the Public Finance and Accountability Act, 2003 and other laws.

You should note that as a result of non-accountability and misuse of public resources over the years, we are now answering audit queries arising from misappropriation of bail money by some Judicial Officers. We have already been directed by the Public Accounts Committee to attach salaries or Estates of Officers who misappropriated funds. Those of you who refuse to comply with these stringent measures on accountability will at one time be required to appear before PAC to answer in person (please take heed).

Case Statistics: While this issue has already been noted, I wish to emphasise that disposal of cases is the core business for the Judiciary. Funds are voted to the Judiciary in order to ensure that people access justice through timely and efficient disposal of cases. However, while you dispose off cases, it is our duty to account to parliament in terms of statistics to justify the funds appropriated to the Judiciary. We cannot therefore do so without your timely submission of accurate data to Data center for compilation and analysis. A reporting format has been circulated by the Senior Economist and I am sure you appreciated it.

I wish to urge you to prevail over your staff and ensure that accurate statistics are routinely submitted to the Data center before the 5th of every month. Funds for Judicial heads of station who do not comply with this requirement shall have funds to their courts withheld and disciplinary action preferred against them.

Estates Management: *We have made efforts to ensure that you work in a conducive environment by lobbying for construction of premises for Courts and also paying rent in timely manner for those awaiting construction. It is however your duty to ensure that these Court premises are maintained in good condition.*

Management of transport and other Equipments: The use of Government vehicles in the Judiciary is spelt out in our transport policy. However, the condition of most equipments especially vehicles is displeasing and they take long before being serviced.

Pro-Poor approach: In the discharge of your duties, I urge you to pay special attention to the vulnerable members of society particularly the elderly, Persons with Disability, women, Orphans and widows among others. This will ensure a human face that will endear the judiciary to the people from whom Judicial power emanates.

Administrative interventions:

- **Image building:** In order to improve the image of the Judiciary, a number of interventions have been put in place such as recently launched anti- corruption action plan, the JLOS Integrity committee activities and the Peer committees. The PROs Department should put emphasis on the finalization and popularization of the Communication Strategy as a way of improving the general image of the Judiciary as opposed to the current public perception.
- **Rationalisation of O/P:** In order to ease operations at the various levels, we are going to come up with standardized allocation of resources as O/P. We have also provided some imprest for O/S in the various Courts. This is intended to meet minor repairs and maintenance costs.
- **Staff allowances;** We have continued to provide all staff on a monthly basis with a two night per diem, footage and lunch allowances. In regard to mileage, you apply to the office of the SJ after completing the requisite forms and attaching a copy of the logbook.
- **HIV/AIDS support:** Some funds are available towards the support of staff with HIV/AIDS provided one presents a

medical proof to Human Resource department in confidence.

- **Staff Training:** The Judicial Studies Institute should conduct a needs assessment to establish training needs for all Staff in the Judiciary. You are therefore requested to compile the training needs of staff under your supervision.
- **Critical support staff required at the Stations:** we have given you a go ahead to identify and recommend qualified individuals for recruitment on local contract terms. This only covers copy typists, Clerical Officers and process servers.

'BUSH' LAWYERS:

Field inspections have revealed sophisticated levels of craftiness by some perpetrators of corruption at JLOS centres. Some syndicates, most of them the jobless, hang around Courts, offices of Resident State Attorneys and even Police stations. They approach desperate litigants and promise to help them have their issues sorted out. They then extort money from them either in the names of those officers or claim that they are court officials.

Some officers of questionable integrity are said to give them audience and protection. Where up-right officers deny them cover, they resort to maligning, undermining and intimidating them. They are known to draft complaints to judiciary administration on behalf of the litigants, the idea being that if the complaints accumulate, those officers will be transferred and replaced by those they can easily manipulate. Hence the

notorious term 'bush lawyers.' Some are known to even manipulate the media to portray those officers as corrupt.

Way forward:

- *JLOS institutions ought to be aware of them and take collective action against the vice.*
- *The affected institutions ought to deny them cover through use of intelligence officers, police, etc.*

In areas with strong DCC, they inflict little damage. In the judiciary, they are known to be anti-reforms such as Mediation and Small Claims Procedure because by the very nature of these innovations, the litigants can handle their issues with little assistance from 'bush' lawyers.

Please guard it well: I mean your personal image and the corporate image of organization you serve- the Judiciary.

I wish to thank all those who have worked tirelessly to make this workshop a success particularly, the team from the Registry of Planning and Development and the Finance Committee for providing funds for this vital activities. However, for better results, this should be planned per high Court Circuit before holding a bigger budget Conference for representatives.

Finally, I wish you a safe Journey back home and ask you to utilize the knowledge gained in this workshop to boost your performance. I have the honour of declaring this workshop officially closed.

FOR GOD AND MY COUNTRY

