

# Human Capital Insights

**National Human Resources  
Development Council  
of Sri Lanka**

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## Message from the Chairman



I am extremely happy that the National Human Resources Development Council of Sri Lanka (NHRDC) is bringing out the annual Human Capital Insights Magazine. The organization's magazine always provides a platform for the stakeholders to gain a piece of new knowledge. Moreover, on this occasion, I convey my good wishes to the staff of NHRDC in their endeavors.

Owing to the post-COVID 19 pandemic and the prevailing economic crisis, Sri Lankans are living through a challenging time, and the present ongoing situation has affected the socio-economic activities in the country. However, we are confident that our organization will make a positive contribution to the country in this critical situation.

At this critical juncture, enhancing the labour market to meet the global demand is essential. Most contributed sectors to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) need to be encouraged. With the aim of strengthening foreign remittance, investing in skilled labor is a timely requirement. As the present government encouraged and provided opportunities for public sector employees to work abroad and in the private sector would ease the burden on the government. Moreover, the exposure gained abroad will have a positive impact on the Sri Lankan economy. Accordingly, NHRDC started to revise the National Human Resources Development and Employment Policy of 2012 (NHRD&E Policy) to provide ways and means for developing those people to match the global and private sector requirements. NHRDC, as the apex body of human resource development in the country, will engage with the government for the betterment of the country.

Further, NHRDC has currently focused on catering to the different generations in the workforce in order to face the local and global challenges since their knowledge, skills, attitudes, and aspirations are different. It is vital to identify the career aspirations and trends of the ambitions of the future generations as they may change the shape of the labour market.

I believe that the Human Capital Insights magazine is a forum that could aptly be used for knowledge sharing. This magazine has made an earnest attempt in this direction and brought out certain aspects of the NHRDC. Further, NHRDC will continue to be a stronger institute amid the challenges you can rely on.

May Triple Gem Bless you!

Chinthaka S. Lokuhetti  
Chairman  
NHRDC

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# Results-Based Management Thinking for HRD Professionals

The main objective of this short essay is to explore the basic concepts and approaches of the Results-Based Management (RBM) system. I also wish to discuss its historical background, its uses in development results, the challenges of results-based management systems, and its impact on output and outcome. It is essential to assess efficiency and effectiveness through organizational learning, accountability, and performance monitoring and evaluation in this context. Although results-based management is an aspect of new public management, many different terms are often used while searching for RBM. The equivalents of the same model found in the literature is management by results, performance management, rational management, development cooperation, and effects of management practices. However, herein RBM will be used for simplicity.

## Early Thinking and Practices of RBM

Results-based management is partly one of the principles of the rational model that came to be called New Public Management in the late 1980s but has also been developed into its management model. It is a model that combines practical steering tools and mechanisms. Peter Drucker, an Austrian management professor, and management consultant, initially germinated the contemporary ideas of RBM. In “The practices of management,” he focused on a management approach called Management by Objectives. The manager’s focus on their corporation’s past and current activities is a potential problem. He, therefore, argued that there is a significant risk of not achieving the corporation’s goals if the corporation’s purposes do not guide its work. Figuratively, Drucker compared the objectives, or goals, with a compass showing a ship at sea, i.e., the corporation or organization (Drucker, 1954). It is a participatory working tool designed to focus people’s minds on what matters, namely, performance in terms of results. Drucker insisted on successful results orientation as a mindset and a perspective on management rather than a precise set of instructions. During the 1960s and 70s, this

approach thrived in both the private and public sectors.

Since the 1990s, the RBM has played a vital role as a well-established management strategy or tool for development. Different organizations, multilateral agencies, donor agencies, etc., have been using the RBM approach for enhancing and improving the development results. Hatten and Schroeder (2007) highlighted RBM in managing and measuring results. Inputs, outputs, outcomes, and impacts have become familiar catchphrases. Some development practitioners consider it as part of the problem, a requirement that consumes time, energy, and resources and obstructs the actual development work.

Nevertheless, there isn’t any common understanding that all organizations already have management systems in place. RBM aims to mainstream the philosophy, policies, principles, practices, goals, and objectives of managing results into existing management and institutional mechanisms. Variations in semantics and language applied to RBM and the numerous definitions among different organizations suggest a certain degree of confusion or dissonance over what RBM is.

The state-of-the-art RBM is commonly and widely used in the development works by donor agencies or institutions. After the 1990s, the use of RBM became widespread in, of course, different forms. Numerous development organizations, agencies, private companies, and NGOs adopt varying definitions for this term without a commonly accepted description. The purpose and challenge of RBM depend on multiple factors revolving around the circumstances. There are considerable differences from agency to agency regarding the progress and experience with result-based management systems. Therefore, RBM’s adoption and implementation need clarification on its specific meaning and concept, as confusion would prevail unless otherwise.

## The core of the Process in RBM

In particular, RBM emphasizes the importance of defining expected results with the involvement of key stakeholders, assessing the risks that may impede anticipated results, monitoring programmes designed to achieve these results through the use of appropriate indicators that report on performance. A 'result-chain' is at the core of this process: human and financial resources (inputs) generate activities that produce results in the short term (outputs), as well as in the medium, end-of-project, term (outcomes); and in the long term (impacts). Therefore, RBM guides all management activities towards achieving defined results at its core. It represents a fundamental re-orientation away from previous management approaches emphasizing inputs and activities. It is presumed that results would follow if the inputs and activities were made appropriately dynamic.

In RBM, management functions consist of planning, organizing, leading, and controlling, focusing on achieving performance targets. Arif, Jubair, and Ahsan (2015) discussed that RBM is one of the excellent management systems in which all efforts focus on optimum result achievement under the basis of norms of good governance. They have further pointed out that RBM's framework results in better findings than this moment's monitoring practice executed in public sectors. RBM's framework monitors project purpose directly, aligning with long-term purpose assessment. Meanwhile, different scholars have identified that RBM effectively increases performance as demonstrated by customer care, meeting performance targets, and producing qualified products. It shows that the RBM implementation may hold organizational performance.

Several deliberations indicate that the RBM sets a platform for determining management policy thinking from a policy-making line in an organization. Human resources would be crucial in adopting performance standards and implementing the performance-based budget in institutions. Also, to successfully implement performance-based assessment, RBM would consider organizational competence and commitment at all organizational levels. It is crucial to have a new financial accountancy system and management po-

licy, competent human resource management, and continuous drive and support from an organization.

## The Puzzle in Outputs and Outcomes

The core discussion of this article on RBM is on extensive academic projects experienced at the final phase of Master of Administration programmes. It outlines the concepts of RBM and how we are capitalizing on outputs and outcomes. In study encounters, outputs and outcomes do have a simple connotation. Outputs, outcomes, and impact are terms used to describe changes at different levels. As illustrated in the preceding discussion, outputs are the products, goods, and services that result from a development intervention. These projects produce outcomes – the short-to-medium-term effects of an intervention – and eventually impacts. However, there is a significant inconsistency in the interpretation of these concepts. As per OECD's (2011) definitions of the different terms when it comes to RBM in development cooperation, the explanations are as follows;

### Definitions of Terms as per OECD (2011)

- **Input** : The financial, human, and material resources used for the development intervention.
- **Activity** : Actions taken or work performed through inputs, such as funds, technical assistance, and other types of resources mobilized to produce specific outputs (Related term: development intervention).
- **Output** : The products, capital goods, and services that result from a development intervention; may also include changes from the intervention relevant to the achievement of outcomes.
- **Outcome** : The likely or achieved short - term and medium - term effects of an intervention's outputs.
- **Impact** : Positive and negative, primary and secondary long-term effects produced by a development intervention, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended.”

According to the problem, ‘output’ and ‘outcome’ are abstract terms and vary in meaning. It tends to see both outputs and outcomes as impacts of policies and decisions and take their importance for granted. However, researchers use the terms results, consequences, and outcomes interchangeably. Three terms describe the effects of a programme or activity, particularly its achievement or progress toward established goals. In most cases, outputs and outcomes have been explicitly distinguished. Table 1 provides greater clarity of the two.

**Table 1:** The Seven Dimensions of Outputs versus Outcomes

Outputs	Outcomes
System dynamics : Decisions and policies delivered by the system	System dynamics : Changes in demands to and support for (input) the system
Cause : All purposeful action is seen as a means to achieve goals	Effect : All intended and unintended consequences related to such output
System-oriented : All decisions and policies delivered by the system	Context-oriented : All developments in the context of the system are either related or unrelated to the output
Time frame : The immediate effects	Time frame : Intermediate and long term effects
Descriptive : What is done	Normative : The evaluation of what is done.
Nature : Intentions, words, the broad decision or policy definition	Nature : Actual changes in behavior, actual implementation (micro-output)
Concrete : Easily measurable	Abstract : Fuzzy and hard to measure

**Source :** Johan A. M. de Kruijf & Michiel S. de Vries (2018)

## Confusion over Impact of Outputs and Outcomes

The definition of goals has significant clarity-issues, mainly on the premise that goals, in general, cannot be achieved. It is necessary to define measurable goals, to be able to measure results, a habit that has been a subject of criticism. One of the possible implications of only setting measurable goals is the risk of avoiding defining goals that are difficult to measure. As Talbot (2007) puts it, we make essential what can be measured because we cannot calculate what is vital. Focusing on the process instead of concentrating on the performance and results can lead to validity issues. If defined indicators do not measure the change that is supposed to be measured, the implications of such a shift would be the risk of the gauges becoming the organization’s real goals instead of indicators that correlate with the higher-level goal. Hence, there is an inherent risk of missing unintended consequences since the evaluation will only shed light on the pre-set measures. The popular idea of what can’t be measured will lead to organizations adapting their activities to be measured. For instance, authorities may change their priorities towards less urgent operations in a hospital to keep the waiting time down.

In the public sector, measurable goals are political goals that are complex and difficult to operationalize, and they lack the quality of quantifiability. There is a significant risk that these measurable goals create a more short-term focus in such circumstances. The general public appoints political leaders for a specific term, and the natural trend is that it is for a political cycle (Specific period unless otherwise changed). The politicians wish to achieve the goals set up within that period. In the RBM debates, this political cycle issue is an attribution problem. It connects to the availability of information from one cycle to the next cycle.

On the one hand, there is a risk that the pressure on presenting results and statistics about a specific period will increase the need for such data and functional data systems in a particular context. On the other hand, all the information created must showcase what outputs and outcomes are produced from a specific project. It could get tra-

nsmitted to the next phase where the other party or new leadership can interpret nature differently, as it's a general phenomenon on the political front.

### RBM - Way Forward

Results-based management is a management strategy, or a set of management principles, aimed at achieving essential changes in the way organizations operate, with improved results as the central orientation. The primary purpose of this thinking and practicing model is to improve efficiency and effectiveness through organizational learning and, secondly, to fulfill accountability obligations through performance reporting. It also underscores control over outputs, which creates a need for measuring performance through regular follow-up, evaluations, and audits. Ideally, one of the basic assumptions is that politics and administration should separate, as they have different agendas. However, one can't execute without the blessings of leadership. Once the goals formulate, it is up to the executing power to shape the operations towards reaching the goals by achieving objectives.

In future decision-making, the results and evaluations are also expected to be analyzed and used to enhance accountability and effect changes in financial means if the goals are not achieved. Reporting results and performance increases the demand for well-defined goals and indicators. It also demands the drawing and execution of comprehensive and detailed plans. It connotes that the purposes need to be specific, measurable, achievable/accepted, realistic, and time-bound (SMART). The goals are for achieving broader directions and objectives within a specified period.

The RBM model characterizes a shift in focus, from inputs and activities to the outputs and effects, i.e., outcomes. It further implies a change from previous governance focus on detailed instructions on how the resources are used, which is generally without the desired tangible link to the realization of expected results and objectives of the organization. Thus the increased focus on RBM is viewed as more critical than producing reports connected to quality, desired results, efficiency, and cost-effectiveness. It is apparent execution of

results first thinking and engaging deeper understanding of the problem/s, root causes, and clarity in project components.

Management by Objectives uses the term "objective," but the question remains whether that term adequately defines the concept? With RBM, the terms inputs, activities, outputs, short-term outcomes, medium-term outcomes, and long-term impacts are well-defined, and they carry specific and different meanings. Thus RBM creates a more significant focus shift for the future, inviting us to be more practical in our endeavours. We prefer to discuss problems and analyses of the situation in detail. We hardly look at the results systematically and work out backward for genuinely effective results. It is what the RBM model aims at producing.

To put it in a nutshell, therefore, RBM is a tool for monitoring and managing strategy implementation. It, in many respects, is similar to a logical framework and a strategy-implementation tool. In other words, it provides a framework.



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# A Glimpse on the Whistle-blowing Practices in the Banking Institutions of Sri Lanka

Whistle-blowing refers to the disclosure by organisation members of illegal, immoral, or illegitimate practices under the control of their employers, to persons or organisations that may be able to effect action' (Near & Miceli, 1985:4). It is the act of informing people in authority or the public that the company they work for is doing something wrong or illegal' (Oxford advanced learner's dictionary, 2000). In simple terms, whistle-blowing functions as a channel for reporting misconduct, fraudulent activities and all sorts of illicit or unethical practices within an organisation to internal and external parties. It is a crucial mechanism in the pursuit of better corporate governance specially in banking institutions which have a wider public obligation with a diverse set of stakeholders compared to non-bank organizations. Corporate misconduct was identified as one of the primary reasons for the financial and economic crisis that happened throughout the world. Sri Lanka also has experienced instability in the financial system due to various acts of corporate misconduct that had taken place in commercial banks. Basel Committee on Bank Supervision (BCBS), which is an international standard setting organization for banks, has recognized the critical importance of timely escalation of problems to higher levels within banks. According to BCBS, employees should be encouraged and made able to communicate, confidentially and without the risk of reprisal, legitimate concerns about illegal, unethical or questionable practices. In this regards a well communicated whistle-blowing policy and adequate procedures and processes, consistent with national law need to be in practice. In line with this, the Legal and Compliance Department of the Central Bank of Sri Lanka has introduced a whistle-blowing policy in 2015. Whilst there are number of international and national approaches, policies and procedures for effective employee whistle-blowing in banks, an important questions remains on its actual practice towards instilling good governance in these institutions.

To examine the realities of the employee whistle-blowing practices of banking institutions in Sri Lanka, the writer has interviewed several key bankers, a bank consultant, an independent economist and a financial journalist. Findings through the participants' accounts revealed that in practice, employee whistle-blowing is not effectively implemented in banks due to social, cultural and legal factors in terms of protection to employee-whistle-blowers. An experienced bank consultant opined on the effective implementation of whistle-blowing in banks: "To know how effective the compliances are, banks should have a solid system for whistle-blowers. Nobody should know who blew the whistle. If it is revealed, it means that the policy is not strong. If there is no encouragement, then they will just have the policy, and that's all. It will not work in practice". Interviewees have expressed that in practice, whistle-blowing is discouraged in banks. The anonymity of the whistleblower is not protected. One participant, a bank manager commented: "Whistle-blowing sometimes goes against the whistleblower. The anonymity of the subject is not protected sufficiently. If the protection is thereby law, then I think there will be more people coming forward. And also, more manipulations and misuse of resources will go into the public domain as well". Adding to the same view, another participant who is the chief compliance officer of a leading bank commented: "There is a whistle-blowing policy in my bank. However, recently one of our chief officers was removed for blowing the whistle. He was interdicted". While appraising whistle-blowing as a mechanism that could be used to stimulate good corporate governance practices, a prominent economist in the country noted that the practice is discouraged due to high personal cost and weak legal protection available for whistle-blowers: "Whistle-blowing is a good thing to improve fair practices in banks. But in Sri Lanka, there is no official or legal protection for whistle-blowers. Because of that, those people who blew the whistle have done that at a great personal cost to themselves".

'Complaining' is regarded as a whistle-blowing practice that arises from external parties such as depositors and the general public. An interviewee who is a senior bank manager has noticed a lack of public complaints, which has a direct impact on bank service development. Opportunistic behaviours of bank managers and board members could further be triggered due to the weak public pressure on bankers' misconduct: "Complaining is kind of a whistle-blowing and so it is important for improving the service also. But it is not happening. Consumers are not much powerful enough in the country." Insufficient, inaccurate, and biased information on bank performance also contribute to weakening the whistle-blowing. Information disseminated through corporate reports and media conceal the real picture of bank affairs. As mentioned by the participant who is a financial journalist, media freedom of the country is crippled through their dependence on government advertising: "Newspapers are watchdogs. But are these watchdogs barking? They are not. Media is dependent on advertising they get from banks and the government. They report in favour of them. There is no pressure for banks in continuing their wrong practices". Corruptions are not uncommon in banks involving officers from a lower level to higher levels. As to interviewees' claims, employees do not stand up against these un-ethical practices due to the high personal costs involved such as losing their jobs. This is manifested when a bank deputy general manager cited: "whistle-blowing is there as a process. But it is not effective because of the fear of the people". As was evident, a weak and discouraged whistle-blowing process increases the presence of opportunistic managerial behaviours in banks.

It is also worthwhile to look at the impact of embedded cultural values and attitudes in the Sri Lankan context and its impact on the whistle-blowing practices of banks. Specific identities in the country's cultural spheres had contributed to the clientelistic political behavior in banks. Influence of cultural characteristics in terms of: respect and recognition, uncertainty avoidance, and power distance have been instrumental in creating a clientelistic bond between a superior and an inferior or between a patron and a client. These clientelistic bonds developed to cope with uncertainty

and are preferred in the high uncertainty avoidance culture as in Sri Lanka, which then acts as a barrier to the effective implementation of whistle-blowing. Besides, lifetime employment which is dearly valued is a concern to whistle-blowers. As mentioned by a deputy general manager of a bank; "people do fear to blow the whistle against unfair practices, as they dearly love the job at the bank". It is evident that in a high power distance cultures with more tolerance for inequality, being quite is preferred over the voice. As mentioned by a manager in a bank "here the culture is that people very rarely challenge their bosses even if the boss is wrong". Thus, these clientelistic practices in banking and related institutions reflect the impact of cultural attitudes and cohesiveness in the context on whistle-blowing practices.

However, it was also evident that employees tend to rely with certain groups such as employee unions to indirectly blow the whistle. As mentioned by a Union secretary: "Bank employees come to us (employee union) to blow the whistle. They are scared of losing their jobs for complaining. So we talk on behalf of them and assure that he is protected". Being a member of the employee union is viewed as a safety net, even for top managers. Speaking from his experience, a manager recalls the union support in re-appointing his colleague who was interdicted as a result of political victimization: "The pressure from the government for the top management is massive. Employee union plays a role in between to stop these influences. In one such case, the union was involved and resolved the issue". It was the view of the participants that the affiliation with employee union gives protection for employee in whistle-blowing employees. Social groups are influential in banks and are beneficial for members in the given politicised environment. Views expressed by another participant indicated the union's role as a voice in the employee-whistle-blowing process: "we have had enough cases of whistle-blowing through employee union". Such group relationships have a deep concern over members' welfare and getting equal treatments.

As the concluding remarks, whistle-blowing has proved to be a useful tool in exposing wrongdoing in banks, yet the cultural factors, weak institutions, clientelism and weak legal protection constitute a huge hindrance for the potential whistle-blowers in banking institutions. Whilst there is enormous room for the development of effective whistle-blowing practices in banks, it is first expected that the country need a unified law on whistle-blowing in order to ensure uniformity and certainly the protection of whistle-blowing-employees. Finally this review concludes that: (i) the employees play a critical role in preventing and exposing unethical practices in banks, (ii) personal relationships and trust building matters in whistle-blowing in banks given the cultural and political attributes of the context and (iii) policy makers have a critical role in strengthening the judiciary towards promoting whistle-blowing and protecting whistle-blowers from victimization in banking institutions with a view to instill a better governance; a timely need.



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# Investment in Education Pays Off Tomorrow

## Background

Production of a human capital reserve of high standards that is essential for the economic and human development of the country is expected from the higher education system. The availability of a human capital reserve with such a higher education level is a significant factor for a country's future development.

The Government of Sri Lanka expects to expand Higher Education opportunities in the country, but due to several other public investments including social welfare that needs to be looked after by the State, investments for Higher Education have been limited. Therefore, with the participation of the private sector, the Government has decided to expand opportunities in Higher Education to enable students with GCE Advanced Level examination qualifications to continue their Higher Education if they are unable to get placement in State Universities due to the limited capacity.

In this endeavor, the Government provides opportunities to those students, with GCE Advanced Level qualifications who cannot cope with higher education course charges of foreign universities, foreign university-affiliated local institutes, or local non-state degree awarding institutes recognized under the Universities Act.

## Role of the Government of Sri Lanka for Higher Education

The State is responsible for providing equal opportunities for all qualified students to have access to Higher Education. The limitations of the resources in State Universities curtail the said equal opportunities. The Government, therefore, needs to take alternative measures to make it possible. If the private sector as an equal development partner of the country's economy has a willingness to participate in a Public-Private Partnership to provide

Higher Education to the younger generation of the country in a high-quality manner, the State would need to only spend or invest on a part of the required amount as the interest of the course fee but not for any other physical resources or infrastructure as provided in similarity to the State Universities. Hence, by providing an interest-free loan to students who are deprived of Higher Education and facilitating them to obtain a qualification which is demanded by the job market, through the Non-State Higher Education Institutes will be the possible means of action that is required in the present stage.

## Objective for Expansion of Higher Education

The Higher Education system is expected to produce a pool of high-level human resource capital, which is essential for the economic and human development of the country. The availability of such a pool of highly educated human resources is of central importance for the future development of the country.

The majority of Advanced Level qualified students are unable to bear the cost of the course fee of Higher Education in affiliated Universities, go abroad for Higher Education, or are unable to afford courses in local Non-State Higher Education Institutes recognized by the Ministry of Education. Hence, interest-free concessionary student loan schemes for Degree programs with high market demand, which is designed with employability should be in place. Therefore, the State sector should make necessary arrangements to provide collateral-free loans from the State bank to facilitate students who are not selected to State Universities and who cannot afford to follow the fees of Non-State Higher Education with opportunities to continue their Higher Education without any financial restrictions.

## What is Interest Free Student Loan Scheme?

Interest Free Student Loan Scheme (IFSLS) was launched in 2017 as per the directives of Budget Proposal in 2017 with the objective of increasing the accessibility for higher education. This programme facilitates to produce a pool of high level human capital which is essential for the economic and human development of the country while providing more opportunities for youth to engage in higher education.

Under this, action is taken by the government to grant an interest free loan subject to a maximum of Rs. 800,000.00 for pursuing degree programs with higher market demand and professional value, which are approved by the Ministry of Education. Further, an interest-free loan amount subject to a maximum of Rs. 300,000.00 is also granted for additional expenses of the students, on their will.

It is a compulsory requirement to use the online application to apply for the Student Loan Scheme and for registration. An opportunity has been provided to the students to select a course at their most preferred institute, through the latest software system. Hundred and eight (108) degree programmes in seventeen (17) non-state higher education institutions which have been recognized by the Ministry of Education, can be followed by the students under the facilitation of this loan scheme.

These unique programs are designed for students. That is, the loan is given to the students and the repayment process is based on them. This interest-free loan is available to students for four or three years after graduation, with a one-year grace period of seven or eight years, with monthly repayments. Here the free period of one year is given to the student to develop the method of repaying this loan. Two guarantors are required to provide the loan, but the financial or income level of the guarantor is never taken into account and one guarantor is one of the parents and the other guarantor must be a close relative of the student.

The Higher Education Division regularly observe the educational activities of the students and the educational institutions are also closely monitored. Through all these programmes, the government is taking the initiative to create a productive workforce for the country tomorrow. Students are the responsibility of the government. Through this programme we are handing over this responsibility to the tomorrow while us being held accountable.

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# A National Postal Connectivity to the Plantation Sector

## 1. Introduction Global Context

For a long time, the only Communication people had to exchange ideas was the post. Postal services play a central role in the productivity of any country. The services transport mail and small packages to destinations around the world, and they are mostly public corporations. However, there has been increased privatization of postal operators in the past 20 years, and government restrictions on private postal services have eased. Postal authorities are often also involved in telecommunications, logistics, financial services and other business areas. Postal operations involve providing domestic and international postal services – receipt, transport and delivery of mail, specialized mailing services, operation of postal facilities and sale of postal, philatelic and mailing supplies. The world postal network in 2009 was based on around 650,000 post offices and 5.5 million postal employees (one-third women and 20 per cent part-time) providing postal services throughout the world. There are around 8 million postal workers overall (including private and informal services, and parts of courier services). In recent days postal services adopting technological advances in the sector.

### 1.1 Local Context

The vision of Postal department is to become the most distinctive institution in Asia to provide fully productive and quality Postal service based on modern technology as to customer delight. The mission is to provide an attractive postal service locally and internationally using resources efficiently in partnership with the private sector. Moreover, the sector has been introduced modern technology, motivating the staff in a pleasing working environment while adhering to productivity concepts and winning the trust of customers by creating new products, services and improving existing services. Example: Elders Allowance, Public assistance Monthly allowance, allowance for medical assistance, Famers, Fisheries and Civil

Pension payments are being implemented through Post office Network channel, without charging any fees either from the beneficiaries. Because it is the public services.

### 1.2 Major Functions of Department of Posts

- Becoming the best postal hub of South Asia by providing a more efficient services through proper study of work, income-based grading and employee motivation.
- Converting the postal service which has earned the confidence of the consumer by providing a door to door service into a -high quality and more efficient services by employing modern marketing strategies.
- Expanding the postal service to satisfy the needs of the Sri Lankans living abroad.
- With the dawn of peace, promoting postal services by effectively deploying the skilled workforce in communication and social welfare activities.

The postal service in Sri Lanka has a long history date back (xxx year). It was the British who started and modernized the postal service. The objective of the Government of Sri Lanka is to make public services available to all ethnic groups in all parts of Sri Lanka without any discrimination. But as far as the postal service is concerned, there is still a plight among the plantation people that cannot be handed over or received by the government postal officer. This may indicate a continuing lack of concern for the postal service, especially for the plantation population, which has a population of about one million who are backbone of Sri Lankan economy.

## 2. Plantation Context

### 2.1 Background

The plantation sector in Sri Lanka has been playing an extremely important role in the country's economy. Tea is also a major export product for Sri Lanka, contributing over 13% of export revenues in 2017. It earned 20% of total government revenue in 1975, and plantation crop exports accounted for over 90% of total export revenue in 1965, and over 70% in the late 1970s. As the sector's international competitiveness has declined since 1977, its economic importance has decreased. Still, at the time of appraisal in 1996, the plantation sector contributed to approximately 4% of nominal GDP and approx. 18% of total exports, and employed approx. 16% of the working population, making it an important industry that earned foreign currency and created jobs.

The postal service is found to have many shortcomings at the plantations sector in Sri Lanka. Various measures were taken to remove them. Deficiencies were pointed out in the early days when letters to the gardeners were handed over to the plantation management and due to the lack of proper addresses to the plantation houses, letters were often received late and not received. Therefore, the main demand was that postal services should be provided directly to the people through the plantation administration. One problem is that government services do not reach the plantations.

### 2.2 Inefficiency of Agent Post Office system

In this context, the Agent Postal System was introduced in 2002. Accordingly, post offices were established in more than 125 estates. In addition, only one person from the estate was appointed as the Deputy Chief of Staff. How transparent was his appointment? Or was merit and skill taken into consideration? Or was it political? The Influence of Garden Management? Is debatable. In the first year, Rs. 3000, in the second year Rs. 2000 and in the third year Rs. 1000 was determined to be provided. He was also expected to be treated as a sub-postmaster. He was also expected to be treated as a sub-postmaster. He was responsible for selling stamps, collecting mail, and collecting envelopes from the available post office. The respon-

sibilities that had hitherto been with the estate management were in a sense replaced.

In 2005, the officers claimed that Rs.1000 was not enough and that they had no income at these post offices and demanded an increase in their allowances. However, it is unfortunate that they are discriminated against, especially in Sri Lanka, for not being paid the same monthly salary as other government postal officers. But, after discussions at the Ministry of Plantation Infrastructure, it was decided that this method was inappropriate and could not be continued and that alternative arrangements should be made.

### 2.3 Appointment of Estate Postman

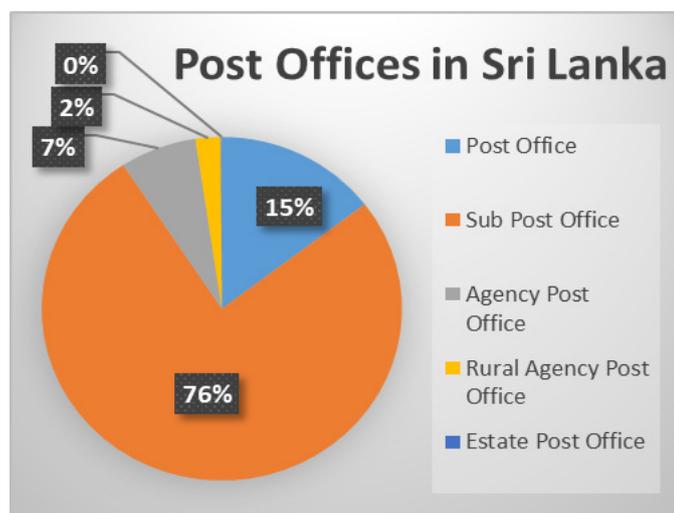
A cabinet paper was submitted to the Cabinet in 2005 to restructure the postal service and a committee was appointed by the Secretary, Ministry of Communications and Posts to look into the matter and submit a report. The Treasury representative of the leadership and the Secretary to the Ministry of Plantation Infrastructure Housing and Community Development were also appointed. One of the recommendations of this committee is to appoint a section of the Estate Post Officer as per the requirements. According to this, the requirements were to be met at the district level and the educated youth were to be selected and appointed through interview. Although a resolution was passed in 2005, its implementation was delayed due to a lack of follow-up. Following the Cabinet decision in 2007 to appoint 500 postmasters to the plantation postal service for the plantation postal service, only 400 were approved by the Treasury, and 344 plantation youths were appointed.

A committee comprising Additional Secretary of the Ministry of Plantation Infrastructure was appointed to oversee the appointment process. Despite the cabinet resolution to appoint 500 people. The appointment of only 344 people caused a gap in the latter period. The available opportunity also shows the level at which it can be used correctly. Despite many attempts at the time, it has not been implemented to date. However, the approval of the Treasury to appoint 100 people as plantation post officers in mid-2019 may not be implemented. Prior to 2002, it was estimated that 1500 post-

men were needed for plantations. However, the cabinet approved 500 of them, of which 400 were approved by the Treasury and only 344 were appointed. The issue is why there is a gap, Cabinet approval was reduced, and the Cabinet did not take action to increase the general number of Treasury approvals. In addition, appointments for 16 persons have not been made and those who received are considered as missed opportunities.

Department of Posts has been a strong network channel throughout the country. The modern technology has still not reached the remote rural areas. However, Department of posts has a plan to bring basic communication modern technology to the remote areas and provide online service to rural folk, through postal network channels. Already 653 post offices have been connected with online facility successfully and provided services to the general public.

Figure: 1



Source: Performance report of department of Postal, 2018

### Postal services measuring indicators

- Number of people supplying the service from each post office - 4791
- Land extent supplying the service from each post office (Square km.) - 15.4
- Land extent supplying the service by one postman (Square km) - 8.4
- Number of people supplying the service by one postman - 2842

### 3. Services of the Postal Department

Business mail services was introduced in the year 2013 with a view to retaining the public and private business community who make more effect to the national income further with the post and contributes for 70% of total postal articles capacity and the revenue progress achieved by the business letters postal service by now has been clearly affected to the whole revenue growth of the postal department.

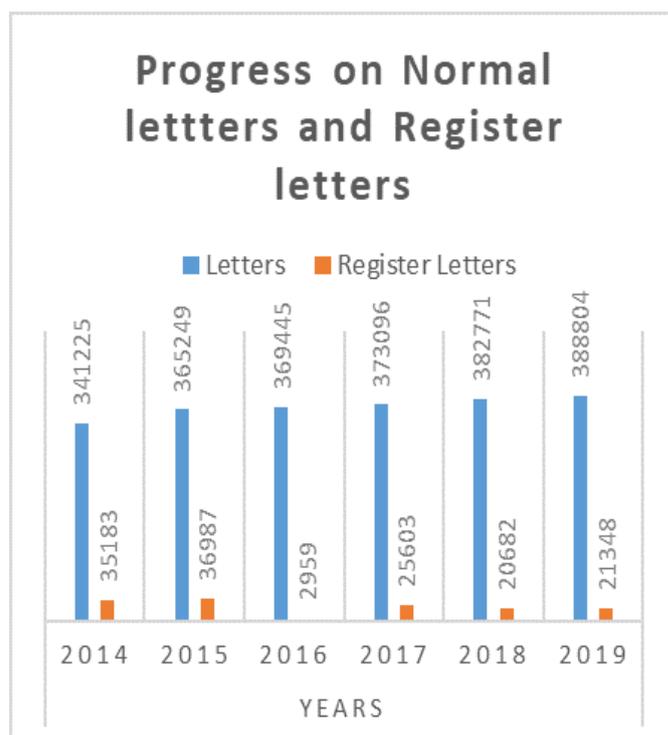
#### Comparison of total revenue and number of letters of business mail service in 2017/2018

Figure: 2

Year	No. of letters	Progress		Income (Rs.)	Progress	
		No. of letters	%		Income (Rs.)	%
2017	74,397,284	7,567,236	10.	1,164,823,841.00	116,015,380.00	10
2018	81,964,520		17	1,280,839,221.00		

Source: Performance report of department of Postal, 2018

Figure: 3



Source: Performance report of department of Postal, 2018

### 3.1 Postal services

The Post offices delivering services. are , Letters post service (Local/foreign), delivery of parcels (Local/foreign), speed post/ International Expedited Mail Service (EMS), special service on other postal articles- Registered- Value payable post, business letters postal service, domestic speed post, bulk Mail Service, be post – e-business service. According to the figure: 3 delivering letters rapidly increasing in the last five years. At the same time, the importance of the letters and communication between people has increased. Especially, students who are living in the plantation sector can easily receive their exam admission and identity cards. On the other hand, because people are interacting with the public and private sector through the letters, will increase the revenue the government.

Table: 1

Domestic Mail, '000	Years					
	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Letters	341,225	365,249	369,445	373,096	382,771	388,804
Register Letters	35,183	36,987	2,959	25,603	20,682	21,348
Post Cards	9,538	10,024	10,025	9,504	9,351	9,828
News Paper and Printed materials	13,101	13,769	14,457	15,179	1,521	14,679
Express Post	82	86	87	110	139	181
Insured	83	87	96	94	296	290

Source: Economic and Social Statistics of Sri Lanka 2020

### 3.2 Agency services

Agency Post- Offices are providing more services to the public, such as money order services, electric money order service national savings banking, western union money transfer, paying Utility bills (Sri Lanka Telecom/Mobitel phone bills /Electricity bills /Water bills), collecting motor Traffic fines, acceptance of insurance premium (Ceylinco general/Ceylinco life/ Sri Lanka Insurance/ Cooperative insurance/Fair first insurance and etc.), examination fees and Social security funds.

### Payments of electricity bills (CEB)

The number of payment and revenue in 2017 and 2018 has comparatively

Figure: 4

Year	No. of Bill collections	Progress		Income (Rs.)	Progress	
		No. of Bill collections	%		Income (Rs.)	%
2017	13,133,707	3,142,672	23	16,978,832,029.00	4,047,681,966.00	23
2018	16,276,379			21,026,513,997.00		

Source: Performance report of department of Postal 2018

Normally, people are living a long distance away from the town or urban areas. Electricity boards, water boards, banks, food cities, and post offices are in town. Because of that, customers face many difficulties paying their utility bills. If the Post office service comes close to the estate government revenue could be increased. Figure 4 shows the number of payment and revenue in 2017 and 2018 has comparatively.

### 3.3 Social welfare services

There are many services provided by the department of Posts such as Payments of pensions, Payments of elders' allowances, Public assistance monthly allowances, Diseases allowances (tuberculosis/ cancer/ leprosy), Pensions of farmers and fishers and laborers. The Plantation communities are gradually improving their working culture into government jobs. Therefore, if the government improves or reboots the sub-post office system in the Plantation sector it would mobilize the youth to find government and private sector careers. There are so many, government circulars displayed and distributed on public awareness through the post office. The government's vacancies publishing Gazette would help the society to change their livelihood.

### 3.4 HR in Postal Service

According to the Performance report of department of Postal 2018, the approved cadre is 22,012 and existing cadre is 20,830 and vacancies gap was 1182. Government could take the necessary action to fill the vacancies. The vision and mission statement said that, the aim is to provide quality service for every citizen's door step in Sri Lanka.

### 4. Way forwards

- A requirement for efficient operation in plantations should be assessed. (Need Assessments).
- Study on the current utilization of 120 Sub-Post Officers constructed by the Ministry of Plantation Housing and Infrastructure and look at how it can be effectively implemented.
- Plantation Houses should be addressed and it should be published in the Gazette.
- Addressing the houses in the estates can be done in consultation with the companies in collaboration with the existing Ministry of Estate Housing and New Villages Development.
- The government should take steps to appoint postal officers in the plantations as well.
- The Estate Post Officers should be paid the same as other Post Officers in Sri Lanka.
- Steps can be taken to develop the post office on a PPP model with the participation of plantation management and plantation companies.
- Civil society, intellectuals, and trade unions should continue to monitor this process.
- Ministers and Members of Parliament should take necessary steps to bring the postal service to the plantations by appointing the necessary postal officers who have taken this to the Government.
- Fulfill the vacancies in Postal Department.

### 5. Benefits of Postal Service

- Making services available to people who are living in the estate to receiving their letter from direct government personnel.
- Reduce the dispute between the labour and Estate management on letters.
- Government newspapers will be made available to the people.
- Create the reading culture in the Plantation sector. Up - country youth can learn about government industries and employment through government newspapers.
- Elderly stamp fees can be easily obtained without difficulty.
- Voter cards can be obtained.
- Features like Registered Mail, High-Speed Package, and Telegraph
- Bank emergency letters will be made available to the public without delay.
- The Exam admission slips and interview letters will be made available directly to the public.
- Savings habits can be encouraged among the plantation people through banks. (National Savings Bank)
- Assist those who serve as government employees to send their sick leave letters and telegrams.
- Newspapers and magazines can be mailed monthly by the youth.
- The horticultural economy will be enhanced by the transfer of money through the post office from home and abroad and thereby the economic development of the country.
- Credit cards and insurance can also be developed through the post office.
- Letters sent through government agencies (District Secretariat, Divisional Secretariat, Pradeshiya Sabha, Ministries), basic documents (birth certificate, marriage certificate, passport, national identity card, vehicle deeds) will reach the people.

## 6. Conclusion

The government could take the necessary action to fill the vacancies. Department of posts' the vision and mission statement said that, they will provide quality service for every citizen's doorstep in Sri Lanka. Therefore, every citizen of Sri Lanka should be getting government service and be treated equally. As per the advocacy of this article, the government should look after their citizens in their territory. It would win citizens mind-set and build statehood among the ethnic groups in Sri Lanka.

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- Performance report of department of Postal 2018

The Island wide Post office network

Province	Divisional Superintendent	Population	No. of Post Offices	No. of Sub Post Offices (unctioning))	Total
Central	Kandy North	1,375,382	28	163	191
	Kandy South		29	182	211
	NuwaraEliya	711,644	23	96	119
	Matale	484,531	22	91	113
Eastern	Ampara	649,402	10	53	63
	Akkaraipattu	39,166	13	53	66
	Trincomalee	379,541	13	48	61
	Batticaloa	526,567	21	66	87
Northern	Jaffna	583,882	31	142	173
	Mulativu	92,238	05	17	22
	Mannar	99,570	08	34	44
	Vavunia	172,115	04	34	38
	Kilinochchi	113,510	04	37	41
North Central	Anuradhapura	860,575	27	183	210
	Polonnaruwa	406,088	12	91	103
Sabaragamuwa	Kegalle	840,648	30	196	226
	Rathnapura	1,088,007	24	189	213
Southern	Galle	1,063,334	40	215	255
	Matara	814,048	30	194	224
	Hambantota	599,903	21	96	117
Uva	Badulla	815,405	30	179	209
	Moneragala	451,058	16	71	87
Western South	Colombo North	2,324,349	33	66	99
	Colombo South		24	93	117
	Kalutara	1,221,948	34	140	174
Western North	Gampaha North	2,304,833	28	100	128
	Gampaha South		28	133	161
North Western	Kurunegala North	1,618,465	22	153	175
	Kurunegala South		21	151	172
	Puttlam	762,396	22	113	135
<b>Total</b>		<b>20,398,605</b>	<b>653</b>	<b>3380</b>	<b>4034</b>

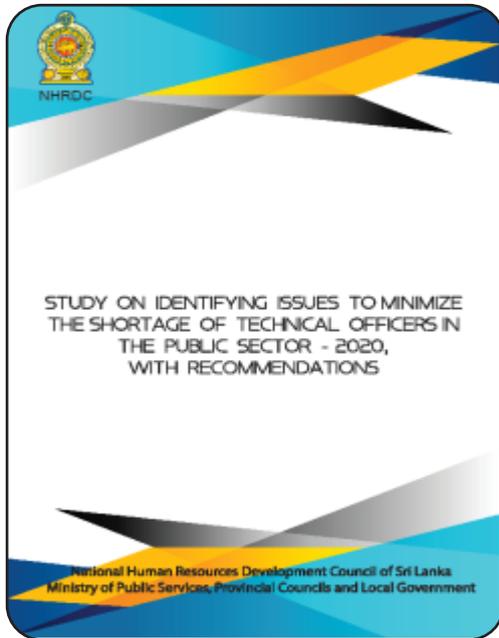


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# Study on Identifying Issues to Minimize the Shortage of Technical Officers in the Public Sector-2020, With Recommendations



The Technical Grade Officers are the Public Sector service staff responsible for performing the activities in the nature of multi-tasks that are supportive of the role of the executives of the institutions. According to the Secretary, Ministry of Public Service, Provincial Councils, and Local Government, there is a significant number of vacancies in the Technical Grade positions (especially of Technical Officers) in the Public Sector in Sri Lanka which has become a major issue for the effective service delivery of the Public Sector institutes. The NHRDC of Sri Lanka conducted a study in collaboration with an expert committee to identify the existing shortage, the main influencing factors which have caused the increased shortage of TO positions, and the recommendations to minimize the shortage of TOs in the Public Sector in Sri Lanka.

Initially, Sri Lanka Technological Service was established as an Intermediate Level Integrated Technical Service in 1977 and was restructured as the Sri Lanka Technical Service on 01.07.1994. Then, in 2006 the Technical Services Board was established to resolve issues in the Sri Lanka Technological Service. Later on, the Technical Services

Board was abolished and the Sri Lanka Technical Services Division was created. At the same time, an Advisory Committee was appointed and the Public Services Commission has given its approval to the Appointing Authority of each institution to take the necessary decisions on TOs (such as recruitment) after consulting the Advisory Committee.

There are about 159 job categories identified under Sri Lanka Technological Service but the current study has only focused on “Technical Officer” with salary code MN-03, MN-07 and the specialization area of Civil, Mechanical and Electrical cadres for this assessment.

In order to achieve the study objectives, both primary and secondary data were collected for analytical purposes. Due to the unavailability of existing cadre details of TOs in State Own Enterprises (SOEs), the weighted average method was used to calculate this. Under the primary data collection, the NHRDC research team has conducted a structured telephone survey from a randomly selected sample of passed out students from the year 2014 batch of National Diploma in Engineering Science of Institute of Engineering Technology – Katunayake and collected 89 responses.

In the analysis, the study found that Provincial Councils System, Central Government System, and SOEs were having 941, 646, and 1,024 TO vacancies respectively during the study period, and altogether there were 2,611 TO vacancies in the Public Sector up to the end of the year 2019. But when considering the supply of TOs, around 2,500 students passed out in 2019 as qualified persons in the Technical Grade positions, and according to the sample survey out of the passed out students only around 13 percent were engaged in the Public Sector.

According to the telephone survey, the study has identified that the supply of TOs is dominated by males where 71 percent of respondents were males and the highest number of respondents were in the Civil Engineering field. Out of the total respondents the majority (89%) were employed during the study period.

The most powerful factor influencing joining the Technical Grade Positions in the Private Sector was “more opportunities and ease to engage in Private Sector than Public Sector”. The majority of the TOs who are currently employed in the Private Sector are NOT willing to join the Public Sector in the future, but at the same time, there is a considerable percentage (39%) of TOs willing to join. Here, the most interesting fact is “job security” which is the most influencing factor in people joining the Public Sector in the future which was the same for the currently employed TOs in the Public Sector. By analyzing all the information, the study has identified several issues and possible recommendations.

Key issues and recommendations are as follows:

Issues	Recommendations
An insufficient number of qualified persons to be absorbed into technical positions in the Public Sector and the difficulty of retention of trainees in the service.	Expand the training capacity by using existing facilities as per the demand and establish Professional Diploma awarding (Electrical, Mechanical and Civil Engineering) Public and Private technical training institutes covering all nine Provinces
There is no centralized information system/or database developed to identify existing cadre details of Technical Officers in the Public Sector	Establish a centralized database to connect all related details of TOs in the Central, Provincial Governments, and SOEs’ and update it at least annually.

Lack of women’s participation in technical field jobs in the Public Sector	Emphasize gender equality and women’s inclusiveness in Technical Officers’ positions.
Difficulty in finding Public Sector TO positions for newly passed out students	Relevant heads of the institutes in the Public Sector should maintain a connection with relevant technical training institutes and plan the period of recruitment to absorb the passed out students of each technical training institute as OJTs immediately.



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