

Auditor General's Special Report on the Performance Of the Development Officers in the Public Service

Auditor General's Department

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1. Executive Summary

Out of the employed population of the public service (Government and Semi- government Sector) established with the primary objectives of providing a quality service to the people by the Government Institutions and strengthen the Government Institutions, a proportion of 14.5 percentage of officers are employed. Enrollment of Graduates as Development Officers had been a prominent reason to the quantitative growth of the public service in recent period. In this regard it was revealed that according to the current surveys conducted, out of the total number of public officers 41,668 are Development Officers.

The attention should have been paid in the matter of obtaining a knowledge in respect of evaluation of the materiality of the services provided , framing the nature of the duties commensurate to the salary paid , being stationed on duties, proportion of the work environment structured and how far this service focused to the requirements of the people from the graduates joined to the public service in this manner.

According to the audit test check carried out more than 86 per cent out of the Development Officers enrolled were Arts Graduates and nearly a proportion of 75 per cent out of those officers were female officers. Even though the Development Officers Service is considered as a field occupation, about 22 per cent were stationed officers out of the officers and the number of field officers were 78 per cent. Further, the number of projects undergone on supervision by those officers during the year had been ranged between 02 and 09.

As a result of non- implementing an annual transfer procedure by preparation of a Scheme on Transfer for the Development Officers employing in the same work station for a long period has also effected to the performance and it was confirmed that the expected performance from the service of Development Officers had not been fulfilled.

2. Background of issuing of the Report

Passing out of the Graduates had occurred internally and externally through the Government Universities during the past several decades and a huge improvement of qualifiers in higher education originated from the private higher education institutes as well as the institutions which offered the higher diplomas equal to the Degree. As a result of that a social ideology was improved as offering suitable jobs thereto for the highly educated persons as a responsibility of the Government.

As a result of Job security existed in the government jobs as compared with the private sector, Graduates were organizing with the expectation of jobs in government sector and demanded from the government and this condition was improved up to a powerful conversation by the activities such as conducting protests and hunger strikes. These Graduates had been enrolled to the service with the expectation of getting contributed to the expedition of the development activities as per the Government Policy at the beginning such as Programme Officers during the period of 2005 - 2006 and as Development Officers during the period of 2011 – 2015. Out of the officers enrolled as such were attached to the District Secretariats, Divisional Secretariats where the divisional administrations based on by attaching a majority of percentage to the Ministry of Home affairs and the officers enrolled to the Local Government Service to the Provincial Councils and the Local Authorities. The Development Officers attached in this manner are being set up to achieve the stationed duties of the Public Management Assistant Service and various duties (sectors such as agriculture, health, educational) as Development Officers in the Grama Niladhari Divisions. In this background, as there was an unavailability of defining a definite assignment and a duty station to the officers since the problematic circumstances occurred in several instances with regard to the performance, job satisfaction of the officers enrolled for the development of the public service, the study conducted with this regard was the background for the issuing of this report.

3. The Audit Methodologies followed

3.1. Checking of Registers and Books

3.1.1. Service Minute of the Development Officers

3.1.2. Cabinet Memorandums and Cabinet Decisions relating to the recruitment of Development Officers

3.1.3. Duty Lists for Development Officers

3.1.4. The number of Development Officers and the information received from the Provincial Councils and other Ministries, Departments in respect of the duties of them.

3.2. Answers received to the questionnaire provided for the identification of the job satisfaction of the Development Officers who were selected on sample basis.

3.3. Face to face discussion.

3.4. Obtaining information from the Divisional Secretariats with regard to the implementing of development projects.

3.5. Obtaining the answer for the Draft Audit Report.

4. Scope

Recruitment of the Development Officers, establishment of the duties, assigning of the duties, Supervision, employing for the public requirements, job satisfaction of them and identification of problems were carried out.

5. Limitation of Scope

My Scope was subjected to the below mentioned limitations while preparation of this report , .

- 5.1.** Inability of obtaining the details of all the Development Officers employed in all the Ministries and Departments.
- 5.2.** Attaining to observations based on the answers received to a Questionnaire submitted to the Development Officers and the possibility of the availability of non- realistic information and inaccuracy information among those answers.
- 5.3.** Submission of incomplete information and non- submission of information for the questionnaire by the certain officers.
- 5.4.** Expression of reluctance to confirm the important information in writing while having discussions with the officers and happened to be based only on the written information submitted.
- 5.5.** Incapability of adopting equal measurement for the checking of the performance of the Development Officers as a result of employing them in various fields.
- 5.6.** A number of 41,668 Development Officers are being employed in island wide at present and inadequacy of availability of resource and time for us to obtain the information with regard to the all of these officers.

6. Introduction of the Recruitment Procedure of Graduates for the Sri Lanka Development Officers Service

6.1. Performance of the Methodologies in respect of the recruitment of Development Officers

6.1.1 According to the Cabinet Memorandum No. MF13/NEW REC-2011(Annexure 1) on the month of May 2011 submitted with the objective of organizing the Public Service more efficient for expediting the development process of Sri Lanka as per the Budget Proposal of the year 2011, it had been proposed to grant the job opportunities for 15,000 Graduates who had obtained an internal degree from reputed universities whilst the recruitment of Graduates as Development Officers. The unemployment of each Graduate should have been certified by the relevant Divisional Secretariat therein. Furthermore, an allowance amounting to Rs.10,000 is being paid at the training period of one year to the Development Officers who had obtained the new appointments and also it had been expected the approval for offering the Sri Lanka Development Officers' Service Grade III (Salary Scale 2006 - MN 4) posts after the completion of the training period and the approval for that had been granted by the Cabinet Decision No. අම/ 11/ 1083/ 504/ 090 of 12 May 2011 (Annexure 02) .

6.1.2 Again, according to the Budget Proposal of the year 2012 with the Cabinet Memorandum No. DMS/ A/ 2011 of 07 December 2011 (Annexure 03), it had been expected to grant permission to the District Secretariats to occupy the graduate trainees in their Divisional Secretariat Divisions' activities by enrolling temporary basis for a maximum period of 6 months by paying a monthly allowance of Rs.10,000 for the Graduates who have the ability of collecting the required information for the rural development, various welfare and minor industrial development activities, ability of analyzing of data required to identify the problems and barriers exists in the activities such as identifying of projects and programmes

and the valuation of projects and the approval for that had received by the Cabinet Decision No. අමප/ 11/ 2260/ 504/ 179 -1 of 22 December 2011 . (Annexure - 4)

Since a barrier arisen to follow the actions according to the Service Minute due to the Graduates who had enrolled under the above Schemes had taken action to file cases in courts , the approval had been given for the provided decision to enroll the Graduates for the 06 months period by the Cabinet Decision No. අමප/ 11/ 2260/ 504/ 179 -1 of 22 December 2011 (Annexure - 4) to change as the maximum enrolling period was one year by the Cabinet Decision No. අමප/ 12/ 1283/504/ 118 of 27 September 2012 (Annexure - 5)

6.1.3 The approval had been given by the Cabinet Decision No. අමප/ 15/ 0906/ 610/ 013 -1 of 09 July 2015 (Annexure – 7) to enroll as the trainees considering as a policy matter with regard to the Note dated 17 June 2015 captioned by the Minister of the Public Administration Provincial Councils and Democratic Governance as the granting of solution for the problem with regard to the graduates who had not obtained the opportunities to enter to the public service as the Graduate Trainees, the Graduates who had completed the degree as at 31 March 2012, completed the qualifications in the Development Officers Service Minute (Annexure 6) and who had presented an appeal in writing including the proved matters for not selecting to the Graduate Trainee Scheme in the year due to a reason out of the control of the candidates.

6.2 Preparation of the Service Minute of the Development Officers and permanent of the Service of the Graduates and Other Officers who were overage

6.2.1 In terms of the Extra Ordinary Gazette Notification No. 1745/ 11 of 14 February 2012 (Annexure 6) the “Service Minute of Programme Officers” was established and a duty including with the activities such as the expected objectives of the development projects implemented by the Government; the duties consists of the activities such as investigations related to the duties of the executive levels, collecting information and

data, analyzing, compilation of reports , surveys were mentioned in that as the duties assigned to the Development Officers. Further, it had been mentioned more over to that a number of 45,000 approved posts of Programme Officers were available , minimum age limit was 21 years and maximum age limit was 35 and , recruitments would be carried out according to the merit order out of the highest marks receivers based on the results of the structured interview without based on the written test (promotions, efficiency bar, other information including absorption) . However, the “Programme Officers Service Minute ” had been revised as “Development Officers Service Minute” by the Gazette Notification No. 1774/31 of 07 September 2012 (Annexure 8) .

6.2.2 After - wards , according to the Memorandum called as the explanation of the Minister of Public Administration and Home Affairs for the Cabinet Decision (Annexure 10) included the observations submitted by the Minister of Finance and Planning with regard to the Cabinet Decision (Annexure 9) for the granting of the permanent appointments in accordance with the Service Minute of the Sri Lanka Development Officers Service for the trainee Graduates by the Minister of Public Administration and Home Affairs dated 29 August 2013, by following the terms of the Public Administration Circular No.46/90 as a matters of a policy, the approval had been granted by the Cabinet Decision No.අමප/13/1011/523/046 dated 24 December 2013 (Annexure 11) to grant the permanent appointments to the Diploma holders as Development Officers enrolled into this Graduate trainee to be limited only to this opportunity in contrary to the terms of the Service Minute of the Development Officers.

6.2.3 As a result of the attention had not been paid to the age limit at the recruitment stage while enrolling as trainees to the Development Officers Service, the graduates who were at the age between year 35 - 45 had been enrolled and it had been a problem that their age had passed the age 35 when permanent them on their posts. To solve that problem the approval had been given to recruit the trainee graduates in between age 35-45 in contrary to the regulations relating to the age limit in the Development Officers Service Minute

and it had been ordered to make necessary action to grant the permanent posts to the 3,797 trainees in between the age 35- 45 recruited for the training inquiring the Public Services Commission to follow the terms in that Service Minute thoroughly whilst the recruitments are being done in future considering of the terms as a special circumstance in terms of the Cabinet Memorandum No. අමප/12/1112/523/006-1 dated 23 August 2013. (Annexure 12)

- 6.2.4** According to the Cabinet Memorandum submitted by the Minister of Public Administration and Home Affairs on 30 June 2014 the approval had been given by the Cabinet Decision No. අමප/14/0885/523/021 dated 19 September 2014 (Annexure 13) to recruit 47 trainee Graduates who had passed over the due age limit in contrary to the terms in the Development Officers Service Minute in respect of the maximum age limit .

7. Observations

7.1 Observations revealed by the Data Analysis

The following observations are made based on the information obtained from 2000 officers as a sample of the Development Officers out of the 17,263 employed under the Ministry of Home Affairs as at 15 March 2017. (Annexure 27)

- 7.1.1** According to the stream of the Degree obtained by the officers employed in the Development Officers Service established with the preliminary objective of providing the job opportunities to the unemployed Graduates, the Arts graduates were at a high percentage of 86.15 . Details appear below.

	Percentage

Arts Graduates	86.15
Commerce stream Graduates	10.00
Higher National Diploma Graduates	3.25
Other Subjects	0.35

It was observed that the non - creation of sufficient job opportunities for Arts Graduates in the society, the increase in providing of Graduates as compared with the demand existing for the Arts Graduates in the job market were the reasons affected for this.

7.1.2 Out of the number of Development Officers a proportion of 74.9 percentage was female officers and male officers were a less proportion such as 25.1 percentage.

7.1.3 Whilst consideration of the answers for the questionnaire given to the Development Officers, it was observed that due to the below mentioned reasons the job satisfaction of those officers was at a lower level.

Comments given	Percentage of the number of officers	Number of officers (out of the sample 2000)
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Lack of a Promotion Scheme and the deficiencies exist in the atmosphere for the opportunities of appearing to the competitive exams which were the basic qualification for other Executive Grades.	36.35	727

Lack of proper environment and space	10.55	211
Non- providing the duties entitled to the post	6.75	135
Non-compliance to the qualifications	6.65	133
Lack of common recognition	4.5	90
Inadequacy of required stationaries and office equipment required for the achievement of duties	2.85	57
Insufficiency of salaries and allowances	1.8	36
Political Interference for the duties	0.65	13
Occurring problems in respect of the senior/higher level officers	0.6	12
Lack of an evaluation with regard to the achievement of duties	0.55	11
Unavailability of proper supervision	0.3	6

7.1.4 While analyzing whether there is a proper work environment available for the Development Officers a 87.2 per cent as a proper environment available , 10.55 per cent as proper environment not available and 2.25 per cent had not made any response with regard to the work environment.

7.1.5 Out of the Development Officers employed under the Ministry of Home Affairs, 21.05 per cent were based on stations and 78.85 per cent are employed at field duties. Majority of field officers are reported to the Divisional Secretariat Offices / District Secretariat Offices only one day in a week and duties are being done in the office and the Divisions twice in a week (Annexure 14 and 15)

7.1.5.1 A common duty list for the Development Officers who work in the Divisions attached to the Ministry of Home Affairs had been sent to the all the District Secretariats with the signature of the Minister of Home affairs letter No. HAF 1/12/GR/DUTY LIST dated 12 July 2017 (Annexure 15) . Furthermore, it had been mentioned that the required actions to be taken to hand over the duty list to the related officers immediately. However, it had been mentioned that in the information given for the audit questionnaire to the Development Officers ; updating of the magazine called “Sampath Pethikada” identification of the development activities of the division, implementing of them and evaluation as well as achieving the duties assigned time to time by the Institutional Heads were the duties of them. Divisional Secretaries, Planning Directors as well as Development Officers had mentioned the fact that the adequate duties are not available for the Development Officers (Annexure 16) and it was observed that the Development Officers are not followed by to the activities in the duty lists due to the facts with that .

7.1.5.2 Even though the duties carrying out by the group of officers such as Public Health Inspectors, Grama Sevaka Officers and Samurdhi Officers by the Divisional level had been assigned to the Development Officers by that duty lists the facts had been furnished as a result the duties were not available for those officers (Annexure 17) . The facts had been furnished by 4.2 per cent while evaluating the sample of the questionnaire for the confirmation of above matter further the job satisfaction had reduced as a result of lack of proper duties to achieve spending the time for no reason .

7.1.5.3 The Supervision of all the project programmes, activities (Eg. construction of school laboratories, road development programmes, social and cultural programmes) directed to the Divisional Secretariat Offices by the various Departments and Ministries had been assigned for the field officers who were attached to the several Divisional Secretariat Offices in the year 2017 (Annexure 18). However, it was observed that the proportion of programmes

examined annually by a Development Officer according to the details appear below stood at a very low level.

Divisional Secretariat Office	Number of projects implemented in the Divisional Secretariat Offices	Number of Development Officers assigned to the field	Number of projects supervised by the one Development Officer during the year
Divulapitiya	302	103	03
Katana	272	61	05
Negambo	233	36	07
Minuwangoda	332	92	04
Meerigama	297	133	03
Aththanagalla	467	117	04
Gampaha	327	88	05
Ja -ela	271	44	07
Akkareipattu	60	38	02
Nindur	77	25	03
Karaitivu	98	54	02
Potuvil	91	26	04
Uhana	403	48	09
Saindamaruthu	105	17	07
Mahaoya	142	17	09
Adalachchenai	161	59	03
Alayadiwembu	84	29	03

7.1.5.4 According to the audit test checks carried out, from the officers who engaged in field duties 98.41 were given the offices close to their permanent residences and

the adequacy of conducting the supervision by the level of Divisional Secretariats could not be satisfied . It was observed that a large number of Grama Niladhari Divisions attached to a Divisional Secretariats , appointing Development Officers to Grama Niladhari Divisions, while conducting and supervision of other duties exist in the Secretariat Offices doing the supervision of all those officers, conducting of field examinations hundred per cent relating to the occupying in official activities, was a practically difficult matter to the Divisional Secretariat Offices were the main reasons for that. The circumstances of complaints received as the Development Officers are occupying in other jobs during their duty hours (Annexure 19) had occurred. It was confirmed that at the audit examination conducted there is such a condition exists obviously with regard to that (Annexure 20).

- 7.1.6** According to the information obtained from the Health, Nutrition and Indigenous Medicine 323 officers had been attached under the Graduate Scheme to that Ministry. The duties entitled to the Management Assistants Service and Technical Services had been assigned to the 36 officers out of the 163 officers appointed by the Ministry. (Annexure 21).

7.1.7 Development Officers employed in Provincial Councils

The approved and actual number of Development Officers in the below mentioned Provincial Councils according to the details furnished to audit as at 30 September 2017 were as follows.

Province	Approved number	Actual number
-----	-----	-----
Southern	2792	2423
Western	2162	2090
Sabaragamuwa	1682	1564
North West	3714	3571
North Central	1729	538

The following observations are made in this regard.

- 7.1.7.1** According to the information submitted by the North Central Provincial Council , out of the Development Officers who earn salaries under MN4 category approximately a 42.19 per cent had been employed for the duties of Management Assistants Service belonging to the salaries of MN2 category (Annexure 22) . Accordingly, as a result of carrying out the duties relevant to one post by the officers who earn salaries under two categories, it was observed that the problematic environment had occurred whether the officers had employed efficiently and effectively .
- 7.1.7.2** Even though the Chief Secretary had informed that the duties of the Provincial Management Assistant Service had not been assigned to the Development Officers in the Southern Provincial Council (Annexure 23), according to the information obtained from the Local Authorities directly by the audit it was revealed that the Development Officers were employed in Management Assistants' Service (Annexure 24) .
- 7.1.7.3** The Chief Secretary had informed that it was difficult to furnish the information with regard to the officers who are doing the duties in Provincial Management Assistants Service in the Western Provincial Council (Annexure 25) . Nevertheless it was able to confirm according to the complaint submitted to the Sri Lanka Human Rights Commission the duties of Management Assistants Service and the duties relating to lower salary scale posts were assigned in the Western Provincial Council also. (Annexure 26)

7.1.8 The proposals presented by the officers themselves in respect of the motivation of the Development Officers, working environment and the satisfaction are appear below according to the each measurement evaluated by the audit as a percentage of the sample .

Proposal	No. of officers as a percentage	No. of Officers (Sample 2000)
Providing of office facilities and sanitary facilities sufficiently	19.55	391
Conducting training programmes	18	360
Supplying of office equipment and stationary	17.25	345
Uplifting of salaries and other allowances	10.25	205
Providing duty lists	9.3	186
Uplifting of coordination among the institutions	4.3	86
Assigning adequate duties	4.2	84
Make provision for programmms	3.2	64
Preparation of a methodology for the evaluation of work	2.15	43
Implementation of Productivity Concept	1.95	39
Assigning of field duties	1.25	25
Creating of a proper work environment	0.75	15
Regularization of transfers	0.5	10
Conducting of efficiency bar examinations in proper manner in regular period	0.25	5
Providing an office	0.2	4

- 7.2 Even though the posts should be created after carrying out a Work-load Assessment before offering the appointments to the Graduates, the officers were occupied in the duties available after the recruitments were done.
- 7.3 It was observed that the certain field officers were assigned in Public Management Assistants' duties with the Gramasevaka Officers and Development Officers who were attached to the duty stations .
- 7.4 A majority percentage of Development Officers employed in field duties report for the duties only a day or two days in a week to the Divisional Secretariat Offices and even though it had been mentioned that the sufficient space and office equipment were not available to the Development Officers the authorized officers had expressed that the reservation of office space was practically impossible for the officers who reports to the office once in a week.
- 7.5 The Graduates were recruited as Departmental posts prior to the establishment of the Development Officers Service and it was observed at the audit examination carried out the Development Officers had expressed as they had served more successfully while employing them in order to the requirement and occupied them on the duties two or three days of a week for the field duties after occupying them in a certain time period iionsnt the duty station but after the establishment of Development Officers Service as a result of employing the Graduates only for the field duties , the knowledge in respect of the office activities is comparatively less.
- 7.6 Since the Development Officers' Service is a Service under the Combined Services , even though the transfers of that service should be implemented by the Ministry of Public Administration and Management as a result of non-implementing of that up to the year 2018 it was observed that the officers are being occupied in the same places for a long period .

Special Report on the performance of the Development Officers in Public Service

8. Recommendations

- 8.1** The supervision of the activities of the field officers should be carried out in proper manner and their duties should be investigated by progress reports.
- 8.2** Actions should be taken to avoid to assign the duties as much as possible which should be carried out by the other officers according to the service minutes of their services.
- 8.3** Immediate actions should be taken to minimize the matters affected adversely to the satisfaction of the officers.
- 8.4** Identification and assigning of duties should be maintained in updated manner as ensuring the gaining of a sufficient service as per the expenses incurred by the Government for an officer.
- 8.5** The minimum qualifications and the maximum age limit for the recruitment of the Development Officers Service should be maintained in fixed manner.
- 8.6** It should be examined by conducting a study as the duties relating to the Development Officer Service to understand whether it could be able to manage employing a less number of officers and if there is an excess cadre, the possibility to transfer properly for other suitable duties.
- 8.7** A methodology should be prepared to measure the performance of the officers

9. Conclusion

- 9.1 It is concluded that the adequate attention had not been paid for the supervision of them to obtain a optimum performance for the salaries and allowances paid through the Sri Lanka Development Officers Service which was established based on as remedial action for the unemployed Graduates and the requirement of gathering information for the development activities.
- 9.2 It is concluded that the establishment of the Sri Lanka Development Officers Service , recruitment of officers and placement was not implemented in order to the identified requirements according to the proper scientific evaluation.

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September 2018

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