

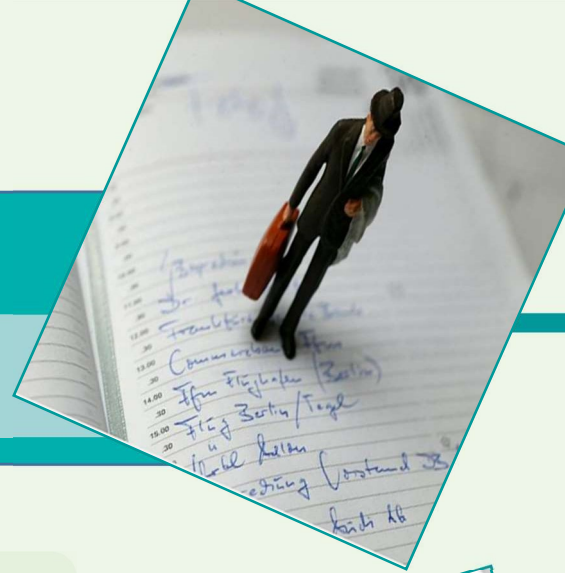


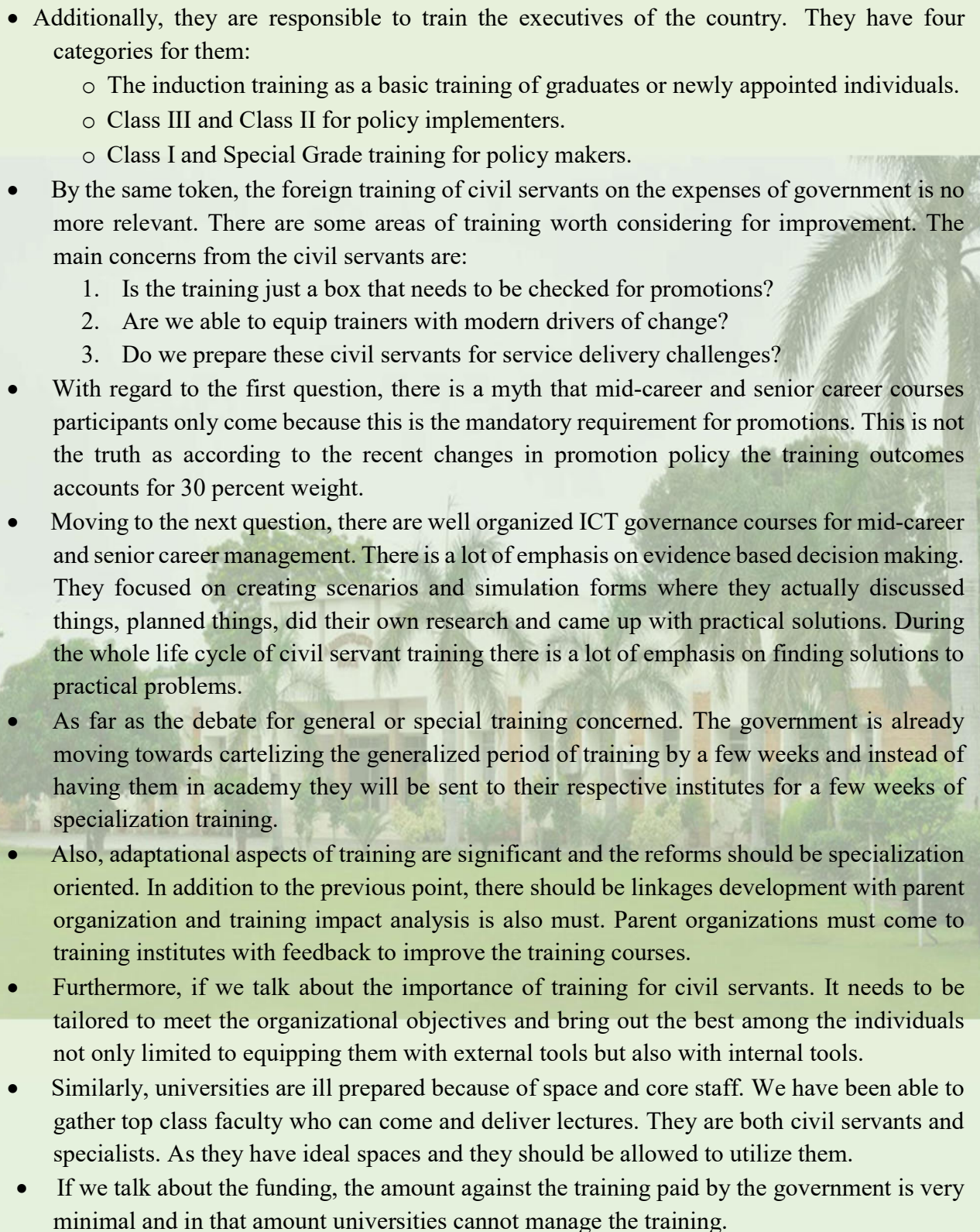
Civil Service Training

The previous webinars of Civil Service Reforms concluded that the major problem of current civil services is policy inconsistency and poor policy development. Our situation is getting worse as the government refuses to make policies and everything is done by the donors. Resultantly, our governance system is declining all the times. The training of civil servants always puts a question on productivity.

Key Messages

- First of all, in the past there was an aversion to write anything on paper. There was no training after passing out from the academy or until the servant wanted to take the advanced course which was required for the promotion. Further, there was no specialization criterion but now this trend has been changed.
- If we look at the intake, it also has been improved to a great extent. A plethora of foreign graduates are joining civil services. However, here the main concern is that what about the domestic graduates as foreign graduates always preferred over domestic. Is it not the responsibility of the state to equip the domestic graduates with skills equivalent to the foreign graduates?
- In addition to above, the major problem with our programs is that they are too general. We should make our programs more challenging or at least divide them into smaller groups.
- Besides, if we observe the civil services of Sri Lanka, they change their training structures from time to time according to the need of the nation. Although, a new model of training is in the designing phase. The present model of training is based on different aspects such as mandatory training, ongoing and on request training courses and training about current issues. Moreover, in Sri Lanka, the Master of Public Management is a mandatory requirement for civil services.



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- Additionally, they are responsible to train the executives of the country. They have four categories for them:
 - The induction training as a basic training of graduates or newly appointed individuals.
 - Class III and Class II for policy implementers.
 - Class I and Special Grade training for policy makers.
 - By the same token, the foreign training of civil servants on the expenses of government is no more relevant. There are some areas of training worth considering for improvement. The main concerns from the civil servants are:
 1. Is the training just a box that needs to be checked for promotions?
 2. Are we able to equip trainers with modern drivers of change?
 3. Do we prepare these civil servants for service delivery challenges?
 - With regard to the first question, there is a myth that mid-career and senior career courses participants only come because this is the mandatory requirement for promotions. This is not the truth as according to the recent changes in promotion policy the training outcomes accounts for 30 percent weight.
 - Moving to the next question, there are well organized ICT governance courses for mid-career and senior career management. There is a lot of emphasis on evidence based decision making. They focused on creating scenarios and simulation forms where they actually discussed things, planned things, did their own research and came up with practical solutions. During the whole life cycle of civil servant training there is a lot of emphasis on finding solutions to practical problems.
 - As far as the debate for general or special training concerned. The government is already moving towards cartelizing the generalized period of training by a few weeks and instead of having them in academy they will be sent to their respective institutes for a few weeks of specialization training.
 - Also, adaptational aspects of training are significant and the reforms should be specialization oriented. In addition to the previous point, there should be linkages development with parent organization and training impact analysis is also must. Parent organizations must come to training institutes with feedback to improve the training courses.
 - Furthermore, if we talk about the importance of training for civil servants. It needs to be tailored to meet the organizational objectives and bring out the best among the individuals not only limited to equipping them with external tools but also with internal tools.
 - Similarly, universities are ill prepared because of space and core staff. We have been able to gather top class faculty who can come and deliver lectures. They are both civil servants and specialists. As they have ideal spaces and they should be allowed to utilize them.
 - If we talk about the funding, the amount against the training paid by the government is very minimal and in that amount universities cannot manage the training.

- Glaringly, universities have their own objectives and contributions in knowledge. However, the training programs are job related and different from the universities program. At first we have to differentiate the academic and training programs and need to build separate institutes for training and academic purposes.
- Another point of view is that only the civil servants can train the junior civil servants.
- In support of the above-mentioned point, job training is important in recent days and it is the organizational responsibility. This 14 weeks training program should have been divided into two parts. Civil servants have to spend 10 weeks for general training and 4 weeks for specialization training which is on job training after every 10 years. Further, there should be specialization training which might be a step towards the right direction.
- Apart from the local training opportunities these civil servants have foreign training opportunities such as short-term, medium term and long term from which mostly are donor funded. For instance, only during the 2015 and 2019 eleven-hundred civil servants received foreign training mostly short term.
- Moreover, the training structure of MCMC and SMC more or less is the same. This is more discipline oriented than development of skills, knowledge generation and analytical thinking. There is more emphasis on listening than interaction, exchange of ideas and learning from experience.
- Last but not least, it is apparent that there is a clear disconnect between training and work environment. As the nominations of these civil servants are not based on skill requirement or technical need they rather are based on seniority of officers. Therefore, every entry into training programs should be through a qualifying exam.



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=26uBt_7rx2g&feature=emb_logo

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