

Josiah F. Joeekai, Jr.

Speech at the National Consultancy
Policy Guidelines Launch



Your Excellency, Joseph Nyuma Boakai, Sr., President of the Republic of Liberia
Members of the Liberian Senate and House of Representatives
My Fellow Cabinet Colleagues and other Officials of Government
Your Excellencies: Ambassadors, Resident Representatives, and Heads of Delegations accredited to Liberia
Our Dynamic Development Partners
Civil Service, Human Resource, and Teachers' Associations
Civil Society and Media Organizations
Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen

Your Excellency, I, along with my two Deputies, Hon. Darlington A. P. Smith and Hon. Dahnu Mieyan, wish to express our heartfelt gratitude for serving in your government. We are deeply honored to be a part of your administration and pledge our unwavering support for realizing the crucial ARREST Agenda, a shared vision for the development and progress of Liberia.

Your Excellency, in October 2020, the Government of Liberia took steps toward enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of its operations by consolidating the oversight of consultancy services under the purview of the Civil Service Agency (CSA). This strategic move was aimed at centralizing the management and coordination of consultancy services across various government agencies. By doing so, the government sought to streamline the allocation of funds earmarked for consultancy services, ensuring they address critical governmental needs where existing staffing and capacities fall short.

The overarching goal was clear: To optimize the utilization of consultancy resources, maximize value for money, and ultimately bolster the government's objectives. Before this initiative, these resources were frequently misapplied on extending employment contracts that failed to substantially contribute to spending entities' operational efficiency or effectiveness.

However, despite these measures, challenges persisted. Some government agencies continued to engage consultants disproportionately, often without adhering to performance standards or transparent guidelines. This lax approach under the

previous administration of former President George Manneh Weah led to a pervasive misallocation of resources and a blatant disregard for accountability, resulting in the squandering of public funds.

The repercussions of such negligence were starkly evident in the financial losses incurred by the government. Just within the last fiscal year alone, the Government of President George Manneh Weah misapplied a staggering US\$6.1 million on so-called consultancy services that yielded negligible, if any, tangible results. In other words, consultancy resources were wasted, misapplied, and unaccounted for. Your Excellency, in the newly established policy guidelines framework developed by the CSA, a competitive framework has been instituted to level the playing field for all spending entities seeking consultancy services. This framework aimed to eradicate disparities and ensure equal opportunities for entities to address knowledge gaps within their respective domains. Moreover, it sets rigorous standards and procedures governing the implementation of consultancies across the Central Government.

A critical aspect of this framework is the emphasis on accountability and performance evaluation. Consultants or consultancy firms are now required to meet key performance indicators established by contracting entities and overseen by the CSA. This shift in focus from mere employment extension to tangible results is pivotal in reshaping the consultancy landscape within the government.

The new leadership of the CSA has embarked on this proactive course of action to address this systemic corruption issue and fortify the government's institutional capacity, evidenced by the crafting of comprehensive policy guidelines to manage consultancies across the Central Government effectively. These policy guidelines were meticulously developed to ensure value for money and stringent performance accountability for consultants hired.

As part of this reform measure, the CSA has proposed allocating a US\$2 million cap on consultancy expenditures in the 2024 fiscal year. This prudent measure will lead to a cost-saving of US\$4.1 million, thereby curbing excesses and rooting out corruption that plagued the consultancy landscape under the Weah administration.

By instituting this fiscal discipline and accountability mechanism, the government will safeguard public resources and pave the way for genuine progress and development initiatives to flourish.

Your presence at the launch of these policy guidelines marks a significant milestone in our journey toward prudent financial management and accountability. We express our sincere gratitude for your unwavering support and commitment to advancing our shared vision for progress and development, and we remain steadfast in our resolve to realize the aspirations of the Liberian people.

Thank you!



