



The Centre for Civil Society

Centre for Civil Society and African Ombudsman Research Centre Seminar: Improving Service Delivery in Africa

Facilitated By Advocate Arlene Brock: Director, African Ombudsman Research Centre

Speaker: Dr Victor Ayeni

Date: Tuesday 6 November 2018

Time: 13:00-14:00

Venue: CCS Seminar Room A726, Level 7, Shepstone, Howard College, UKZN

Topic:

The provision of services is at the heart of contemporary governance and public administration. However, and quite understandably, many states continue to face difficult challenges not just in providing good and quality services but in containing various negating factors in the delivery process. In this seminar I will share my thoughts on four key service themes, namely: a) securing quality service; b) corruption and service provision; c) promoting client-centered and participatory approaches; d) enhancing state capacity. The aim is to provoke a discussion around ways African public administrations can further improve their service delivery processes drawing on the lessons of recent international experiences.

Speaker Bio:

Dr Victor Ayeni is an accomplished scholar and practitioner with over 30 years' experience at senior-levels in African universities, international development and African governments. He is a leading authority on African governance and public administration. He has carried out teaching, research and policy advisory assignments in over 45 countries in Africa, Asia, Caribbean and the Pacific. Dr Ayeni is probably most well-known for his work on the Ombudsman and related oversight institutions. In fact, his pioneering work in this area helped position the Commonwealth Secretariat as a leading technical player in this area. He has served as Director of the Governance and Institutional Development Division of the Commonwealth Secretariat, London, and before that Deputy Director and Lead Adviser in Governance and Public Sector Management at the Commonwealth Secretariat.

In 2016 Dr Ayeni was appointed as an Honorary Research Fellow under the Democracy, Governance and Service Delivery (DGSD) Programme of the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC). His extensive research and professional work on Ombudsman and oversight bodies sets him out as one of Africa's leading minds on the institutional responses to securing ethics and integrity in government, resolving citizens' grievances, and ensuring that public services are responsive and clients-focused. By way of example, his publication on Empowering the Customer – The Citizen in Public Sector Reform, London, 2001 is a well-regarded reference document on service improvement reforms and institutionalizing citizens' (and clients' service) charters in the service delivery process. Similarly, his publication on: 'Ombudsmen as Human Rights Institutions' in the Journal of Human Rights, December 2014 (Philadelphia, USA), presents a definitive statement on a long-standing debate on the human rights aspects of governmental oversight bodies. Dr Ayeni is currently Director and Managing Consultant of the Governance and Management Services International (GMSI), a UK-based firm which specialises, among other areas, in undertaking policy research and advisory support to states and organisations in developing countries and transitional democracies (see: www.gmsiuk.com).

Light snacks will be served.