



## PSC deploys online technology to interview job applicants



*PSC Vice Chairperson Ms. Charity Kisotu (left) and Nairobi Metropolitan Services Health Secretary Dr. Josephine Kibaru conducting online interviews at Commission House, Nairobi, on 29th April 2020*

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### By Habel Shiloli and Badi Khamis

The Public Service Commission concluded interviewing 1,311 shortlisted candidates in various job cadres for Universal Health Coverage program (UHC), through WebEx and Telephone on 5<sup>th</sup> May 2020.

The virtual interviews that began on 29<sup>th</sup> April 2020 were expected to end on 30<sup>th</sup>, but due to connectivity challenges that some candidates experienced, the exercise ended on 5<sup>th</sup> May.

This was the first time that the Commission tested the technology on a large number of applicants, following the Government's directive against congregating, to manage COVID-19.

The interviews were conducted in eight different boardrooms at Commission House, chaired by a Commissioner and supported by an IT assistant.

According to Mr. Bernard Wekesa, a Principle ICT Officer at PSC, the guidelines

given to candidates to ensure successful video interviews stated that they must have or be in possession of a smart device, either a smart phone, a tablet or a laptop that should be sufficiently charged on the day and time of their interview; they must have access to reliable internet connectivity on the day of their interview; and should have arranged to be in a sufficiently lit, quiet place away from background noise that

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could hinder the progress of the interview.

They were also required to download the Cisco WebEx Meetings Application from App Store for Apple iPhone or iPad; App Store for an Apple iPhone or iPad; Play Store for Android Phone or Tablet; and <https://www.webex.com/downloads.html/> for Apple or Windows Laptop

The vacancies

were advertised early April 2020 seeking for registered clinical officers; nursing officers; pharmaceutical technologists; medical laboratory technologists; community oral health officers; radiographers; enrolled nurses and community health assistants.

PSC was required to interview candidates



Commissioner Amb. Patrick Wamoto interviews a candidate from Mombasa County through video in Boardroom V in the Commission House.

from six counties which did not have Public Service Boards in place. These included Nairobi, Baringo, Kitui, Lamu, Mombasa and Kirinyaga.

Each Commissioner had a WebEx account to be used as a personal room to invite and interview shortlisted candidates.

## Chairman, Commissioners and senior PSC staff contribute to COVID-19 Management

By Habel Shiloli

Commissioners of the Public Service Commission and Senior Secretariat staff last month contributed KES 1,365,000 as part of their support to government efforts to combat Covid-19.

The appeal for voluntary contribution was made by Chairman Stephen Kirogo to

the Vice Chair, Commissioners and senior secretariat staff at the beginning of the month of April 2019.

Commission's Chief Executive Officer, Simon Rotich in his appreciation memo to staff commended the positive gesture and urged staff to continue being philanthropic.

## Selection Panel for Auditor General inaugurated

By Badi Khamis

**A** seven-member selection panel that will recruit the new Auditor General was sworn in on Wednesday, 22nd April 2020 at Commission House.

The panel was appointed by the President through Gazette Notice No. 3138 of 17th April 2020.



*Chairperson for the Auditor General Selection Panel, Mr. Mutua Kilaka taking the oath of office administered by PSC's Assistant Director Legal Services Ms. Christine Baari .*

While presiding over the ceremony, the Public Service Commission (PSC) Chairman Mr. Stephen Kirogo reminded the panel of the critical role ahead of them.

He noted that the office of the Auditor General already has a huge backlog that requires urgent attention of the substantive office holder.

“The exercise must be completed in the shortest time possible, we will make sure we have facilitated you to undertake the task smoothly,” he said.

Assistant Secretary to the Cabinet Mr. Kennedy Kihara, informed members of the panel that the country expects the most competent person to hold the AG's office.

“The citizens expect you to

nominate a person of impeccable integrity who will not be controlled by any person or authority,” he stated.

The panel Chairperson Mr. Mutua Kilaka appreciated the sensitivity of the task ahead and promised on behalf of the panel that they will ensure they deliver on their mandate without external interference.

“We will do everything within the law and the stipulated timeline to deliver,” he assured.

This is the second panel charged with the same assignment after the first panel that was constituted in October 2019 was unable

to find suitable nominees among the candidates.

The Panel, comprised of Beatrice Gathirwa, Njeri Wachira, Veronica Birgen, CPA Edwin Makori, Ceasar Barare, and Erick Onyango will seek fresh applicants to be interviewed for the job.

Present at the occasion were PSC Vice-Chairperson Ms. Charity Kisotu, Commissioners Ms. Joan Otieno, Dr. Reuben Chirchir, Amb. Patrick Wamoto, Dr. Joyce Nyabuti and Mr. Andrew Muriuki.

Others were Deputy Commission Secretaries Ms. Jane Chege and Mr. Remy Mulati and PSC Directors.

## Recruitment process for Nairobi Metropolitan Service staff commence

By Pauline Muriuki

**T**he Public Service Commission (PSC) has announced 1000 vacant positions in the Enforcement Department of the Nairobi Metropolitan Service.

The positions include 300 Enforcement Officers and 700 Enforcement Constables. Entry level for Enforcement Officer II will be at Job Group/Grade/Scale CSG I I while Enforcement Constables

will enter at Job Group/Grade/Scale CSG I 4.

In order to be appointed to the grade of Enforcement Officer II, a candidate must be in possession of a Bachelor's degree in any of the Social Sciences from a recognized institution; be aged between eighteen (18) and thirty (30) years; be physically and mentally fit; and also be in possession of a Certificate of Good Conduct from the National Police Service.

For appointment to the position of Enforcement Constable, a candidate is required to be in possession of Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE) mean Grade D Plus ( D+); be aged between eighteen (18) and twenty-six (26) years; be in possession of a Certificate of Good Conduct from the National Police Service; and be physically and mentally fit.



*An aerial view of Nairobi metropolitan*

The advertisement read in part, "Interested and qualified persons are requested to make their applications online through the Commission's website [www.publicservice.go.ke](http://www.publicservice.go.ke) or jobs portal: [www.psckjobs.go.ke](http://www.psckjobs.go.ke)."

The Enforcement Personnel will be hired on a three (3) year contract which will be renewable subject to satisfactory performance. The Enforcement Constable CSG I 4 and Enforcement Officer II CSG I I have the opportunity to advance to the position of Director, Enforcement CSG 4 within the Career structure for the Cadre if they demonstrate exemplary performance.

Enforcement Constables duties will include maintenance of proper records relating to enforcement work; preparation of reports, statements and attending courts to give evidence or testimony relating

to prosecution of violators; implementation of annual enforcement work plans and preparation of annual enforcement reports.

Enforcement Officers duties will include enforcing laws, policies, standards, regulations and procedures in the area of jurisdiction; collaboration with relevant agencies in performance of work; assisting police or any other authority in investigation of violation of laws; and identifying areas of violation and preparing reports; among others.

The advertisement which will close on 19<sup>th</sup> May 2020, was carried in MyGov insert of 26<sup>th</sup> April and the Daily Nation and Standard newspapers of 27<sup>th</sup> April 2020. It is also available on the PSC Website.

## Gabriel Juma gets a Doctorate Degree

**G**abriel Juma Okumu, Deputy Director Governance has been conferred with a Doctor of Philosophy Degree (PhD) in Business Administration and Management (Human Resource Management Option).

Dr. Juma was among six PhD students who were conferred with the degree during the Dedan Kimathi University of Technology's 9<sup>th</sup> graduation ceremony conducted virtually on Friday 8th May 2020.

He thanked the Commission for sponsoring him for the doctorate programme, and the CEO's office for supporting him to attend international conferences, in order to present papers that were later

published in renowned journals.

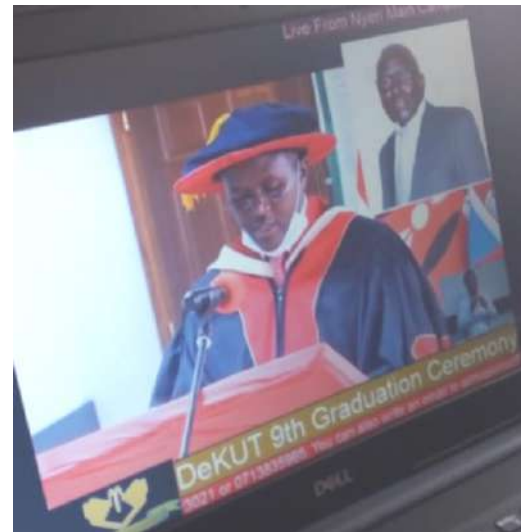
"These enabled me to fulfil the requirements for the award of the degree," he said.

The title of his thesis was **"Human Capital Development and Economic Growth in Kenya: Best practices from South Korea and Singapore 2002-2014"**.

Dr. Juma also holds a Bachelor's degree in Education from Moi University and a Master of Education Degree in Planning and Economics of

Education from Maseno University. He is a member of the Kenya Institute of Management.

Dr. Juma joins the ranks of other PhD holders in the Commission Secretariat such as Dr. Sylvester Obong'o, Dr. Philemon Kiprono and Dr. Julius Moturi, and is just ahead of colleagues Rahma Hassan, Christine Mulunda and Browne Kutswa who are at different stages of their PhD projects.



*The Dean, School of Business Management and Economics, Prof. David Kiragu reads out Dr. Juma's name for conferment of the degree as the latter's photograph is displayed in the background.*



*CEO Mr. Simon Rotich (left) handing over a monetary token to Ms. Violet Mutumira (center), Chief Assistant Office Administrator attached to the PSC Chairman's office, following the demise of her beloved mother. Looking on is the Director Administration Mr. Gerald Kuhaka.*

## COVID 19- the New Normal

By Dr. Juma Gabriel

**T**he spread of COVID-19 has radically changed how we live and work, in ways we would not have thought possible even two months ago.

The scale of what is happening is hard to grasp. It can logically be equated to the so-called black swan that society and business have feared.

It also could be the kind of challenge we now will face all the time – a new normal. While we continue to grasp the scale of this pandemic, the new challenges we face point to more permanent changes we must make in our lives and how we do business.

Jackline Mugo, the Executive Director of FKE predicts that the pandemic will profoundly change the future of the workplace.

Moving forward, there will be need for the public service to review various human resource policies to support remote working. The policies should ensure employees remain efficient, effective, productive and safe while working from home.

The first step for many public institutions is to define critical clusters of jobs that require employees to physically be present in the office and which ones can be done remotely.

Considerations should include how robust and secure the institution's technology is in supporting remote working; the tools to invest in to enable employees effectively work remotely; the skills employees require to support remote working and ones that require reskilling; and the strategies that need to be put in place to help hold employees accountable even as they work from home.

The government is encouraging



**Gabriel Juma, PhD, MKIM**

institutions to embrace working from home as one measure of controlling the spread of the virus. The faster we adapt to the new changes and make the best situation, the better.

Embracing remote working by public institutions is one effective way of fighting this unseen, very lethal enemy and controlling exponential growth of the virus.

In support of this, tech analyst Ben Evans avers that: *"We're all online now, and, we're all willing to use this for any part of our lives, if you can work out the right experience and business model. Today, anyone will do anything online."*

Flexibility is important in managing COVID 19, either at organizational, family or individual level as it will enable us to adapt to the changes. Organizations should be ready to adapt and respond swiftly to changes happening around us.

Instead of complaining about that which is not within our control, we should play our part by demonstrating great flexibility in how we work to ensure we still effectively serve

our clients.

The keys to success are preparation, agility, accurate data, and a willingness to harvest good ideas from every layer of the institution.

While the pandemic continues to turn the world upside down, new realizations are beginning to dawn on us.

The most important implication of the breakneck changes is that there's no going back to normality. That train has left the station. The coronavirus isn't going away. It may be with us for a while.

Thus, the new normal for most organizations and public institutions include work-from-home or remote working. Indeed, going virtual may be the easiest and best alternative for most organizations.

However, this may be complicated for jobs that can't be done remotely. For such jobs employers should ensure the workplace remains secure by providing face masks, sanitizers and ensuring that the seating arrangement in the office adheres to the 1.5 to 2m metre rule spacing and carrying out regular temperature checks.

Nelly Yatich in an article titled *"Slaying the Giant: An Epidemiologist's Perspective on How Kenya Can Tackle COVID-19"* and published in April 2020 opines that in the case of the COVID-19, exponential growth occurs in the disease rate in humans as long as there is at least one infected person in the population pool, regular contact between infected and uninfected members of the population occurs, and there are large numbers of uninfected potential hosts among the population.

## Emerging Lessons from Public Service response to COVID-19

By Dr. Sylvester Obong'o

Following the outbreak of COVID-19, government announced a raft of measures aimed at saving lives, protecting livelihoods and supporting the health systems in fighting the pandemic.

Implementation of the measures called for cooperation of everybody, more than ever before, and the role of the public service became very central in national emergency response.

When partial lock-down was declared, there were some critical services which could not be discontinued or scaled down. The essential services and their providers continued to work for even longer hours than usual.

COVID-19 pandemic therefore offers three important lessons in public sector management, which ought to be taken into consideration going forward.

First is **investing in the people**. Government turned to public servants first for coordination of the fight against the pandemic.

In their response, public servants clearly demonstrated that they are passionate and committed to serving the citizens to the extent of putting their own lives on the line. They have shown overwhelming sense of pride and commitment in their work and a willingness to seek new and improved ways of delivering services to the citizens in need.

While it is increasingly recognized in the private sector that as much as 80 per cent of a company's worth is tied to its employees, there is evidence to suggest that the Government is under-



Sylvester Obong'o, PhD

investing in its talent.

Government continues to spend less than 1% per cent of its budget on staff development, hence a growing concern whether the public service is attracting and retaining the best people. There are skill gaps in critical fields and key leadership level, policy, research and management.

Implementing a clear Reform, Performance and Transformational strategy to improve workforce performance, productivity and strengthen service delivery is therefore critical in the public service

The second aspect that has emerged strongly is the need for **public sector to develop strong leadership** at both individual and institutional level.

Several factors posed challenges to the containment and mitigation measures that were being proposed by the National Government in the fight against COVID-19 pandemic, especially the relationship with County Governments.

The Constitution does not

provide a clear linkage between the National and the County public services hence, the hiring of Health workers, revealed the need for an individual or institution that can provide meta-leadership in the public service.

Meta-leadership is the overarching leadership framework for strategically linking the efforts of different organizations or organizational units to "provide guidance, direction, and momentum across organizational lines that develop into a shared course of action and commonality of purpose."

While Cabinet Secretaries for Health and for Interior and National Government Coordination emerged as meta-leaders in the COVID-19 containment efforts, there is need at institutional level to similarly establish the Public Service Commission as the coordinator of County Public Service Boards.

In times of emergency there is need for a central command, and in other times services to citizens need to be better integrated and made more appropriate to their life experiences and needs.

With proper leadership and coordination, there are opportunities to improve services across different levels of government. Thus, the Public Service as a Meta-public service institution will be able to reach across organizations and sectors to build cross-cutting

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strategies.

The third lesson the public sector can learn from the COVID-19 pandemic, is the need for **developing an ethical, professional and neutral service**.

A core team of public service top leadership has been at hand to provide quality strategic advice. The advice being given has been driven by a cardinal public sector principle of professionalism, political neutrality and a focus on the citizens.

Being free of political influence in the execution of mandate enables public servants to be neutral and fair, thus ethical, not only to all citizens across the political divide but also to protect the citizens against partisan political interests.

In conclusion, COVID-19 has demonstrated that ensuring and enhancing the safety,

well-being and living standards of citizens is primarily a responsibility of the government.

It has also revealed that it requires intervention mechanisms which do not rest solely on recourse to the authority and sanctions of government.

In this fast challenging environment, public sector governance must be approached and perceived as a collaborative process, requiring a wide array of third parties in addition to government to address public service delivery problems.

Public sector leadership must take cognizance of the complexity of new actors, relationships and tools of governance in public service delivery.

The emerging governance framework is less focused on the internal workings of public service and more on the net-

works of actors involved in service delivery.

In spite of being called upon to provide strong leadership in ensuring implementation, the public sector managers can no longer act as commanders and controllers of other actors, but rather negotiate and persuade to achieve optimum output from the increased complexity of relationships in service delivery.

It is for these reasons, that to meet the changing citizen expectations, the public service will require a shift of institutional capacity from the traditional “administration and management skills” to “meta-leadership” or “enablement/negotiation skills”, which are the skills required to engage partners arrayed horizontally in networks, to bring multiple stakeholders together for a common end in a situation of interdependence.

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## World Health Organization update on COVID-19 (as at Monday 11.05.2020)

### Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) outbreak situation

**4 006 257**

Confirmed cases

Last update: 11 May 2020, 03:00 GMT+3

**278 892**

Confirmed deaths

Last update: 11 May 2020, 03:00 GMT+3

**215**

Countries, areas or territories with cases

Last update: 11 May 2020, 03:00 GMT+3



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A Citizen-centric public service

### Mission

To reform and transform the public service for efficient service delivery

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- Professionalism
- Innovation
- Team-work

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- Establishment and Management Consultancy Services
- Performance and Service Delivery Improvement
- Board Management Services
- Compliance and Quality Assurance
- Finance and Planning
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