

MAKING PUBLIC ENTERPRISES WORK

FROM DESPAIR TO PROMISE: A TURN AROUND ACCOUNT

William T Muhairwe

Public enterprises remain the most dominant medium of service provision in both developing and developed countries. During the 1990s and early 2000s, the outcry about poor performance of public enterprises was overwhelming. Nobody at that time and even now has managed to design a 'blue print' solution. And yet, the fact that service provision through public enterprises is here to stay is the blunt truth.

In *Making Public Enterprises Work: from Despair to Promise*, Dr William Muhairwe, the Managing Director of National Water and Sewerage Corporation of Uganda, discusses the approaches used to turnaround an under-performing state enterprise into a remarkable success story. Drawing on decades of experience, turning 'struggling' institutions, Dr Muhairwe enumerates practical steps taken to make a significant difference in service delivery, for the benefit of any form of enterprise. Combined with facts, simplicity and fun, this book presents a unique account of methods used for constructive engagement and dialogue with donors, government officials, workers, suppliers and, indeed, the public/customers. All chapters are interspersed with tested lessons that any enterprise can benchmark to address its service delivery challenges. It is a great handbook for those involved in re-engineering their businesses.

"... a 'must-read' for sector professionals worldwide." *Paul Kellie, Deputy Director, International Water Association (IWA)*

"... from grass to grace, this book makes a journey of a visionary man, a group full of purpose and an institution that understands the need to rise above adversity. It is a representation of the best in leadership and focus; a skew of tenacity; a story of how management delegation, autonomy and trust in staff conquer the art in institutions of behaviour; a demonstration of structured incentive structure." *Alfred Brown, IDH-WCE, The World Bank*

"... as in-depth insight into the strategic battle to improve performance in a public enterprise ... and certainly deserves to be read." *Dr. Claudia Rodhe, First Vice President, IWA and Susanne Maier, IWA Germany*

"The genius work of empowering staff with 'carrots, sticks and aims one' to cause a cultural revolution and institutional excellence." *Richard Farnsworth, PhD, Cardiff University, UK*

"A page-turning story of enlightened and brave leadership able to use internal incentives to bootstrap a public enterprise to much-improved performance... a roadmap for other would-be reformers on the political and technical ingredients of success." *John Hanco, Gordon McKay Professor, Harvard University, USA*

"Inspired by modern management, this book shows how change can be led by managers in a public enterprise. It gives a classic." *Maria Van Ginkel, The World Bank, Central African Republic*

"... a unique, firsthand account of how a successful reform can be done in practice ... a must read for those engaged in the difficult task of reforming public enterprises." *Philippe Moko, IDH-WCE, The World Bank, Washington DC*

"This book is a must read for any practitioner who seriously wants to better understand how performance can be improved within a public enterprise." *Alfred Rodhe, The World Bank Institute, Washington DC*

"An uplifting account about achieving a policy ... a demonstration by Dr. Muhairwe that it can be done and done successfully... a highly recommended read for all managers and leaders in the throes of overseeing change in their respective fields." *Robert Katushanga, CEO Water Group, Uganda*

"This book demonstrates how visionary leadership and ownership by the beneficiary institutions can utilize development support to reform and scale up service delivery... a must read for international development partners." *Dr. Thomas Schild, Country Director and Hermann Hesse, GIZ, Germany*



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About the Author



Dr William T. Muhairwe is a Management Specialist trained in Economic and Business Management. Since 1998 to date, he has been the Managing Director (MD) of National Water and Sewerage Corporation (NWSC). While at NWSC, he has instituted high performance turnaround initiatives that have transformed the organisation into a profit-making government parastatal. Dr Muhairwe has spearheaded the formation of an External Services arm in NWSC that presents an excellent model on how a utility can help its peers to benchmark best practice solutions, at affordable costs. Apart from Uganda, some of the beneficiary countries include Kenya, Tanzania, Rwanda, Zambia, Nigeria, India, Mozambique and Ethiopia. Formerly, Dr Muhairwe worked for the Uganda Investment Authority as its Deputy and eventually Ag Executive Director for three years, and was responsible for attracting inward private investments in Uganda. Prior to that he was the MD of the East African Steel Corporation, a Joint Venture Company between the government of Uganda and a private company (The Madhvani Group). Dr Muhairwe has key competences in strategic planning, performance turnaround policy formulation, private sector development and stakeholder management.

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