



THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA

**THE NATIONAL RECORDS AND ARCHIVES
MANAGEMENT POLICY**

PRESIDENT'S OFFICE
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CHAPTER TWO

2.0. SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS.

Several initiatives have been taken to improve records and archives management. Following the Enactment of the National Records and Archives Management Act in 2002, the Government took several institutional and capacity development measures as follows:

- (i) Restructuring of registries in Ministries, Independent Departments, RAS offices and Local Authorities;
- (ii) Training of Records Management Assistants from public offices;
- (iii) Formulating, producing and distributing Registry Procedures Manual and Records Retention & Disposal Schedules to Public Offices;
- (iv) Undertaking construction of National and Zonal Records Centers;
- (v) Building capacity of records and archives management personnel in public offices;
- (vi) Introducing records and archives management courses at both Diploma and Certificate levels at the Tanzania Public Service College; and
- (vii) Establishing Scheme of Service for Records Cadre.

Despite all these initiatives, public offices still face inadequate supervision, control and management of public records, which has led to a number of problems including leakage of government information to unauthorised persons. Other issues and challenges, which have not been properly

addressed by public offices due to lack of holistic Government policy include:-

- i. **Inadequate records storage facilities:** Registries in ministries, Independent Departments, Regions and Local Government Authorities have inadequate storage facilities, accommodation and supplies. Due to space problems most of the public offices accommodate both closed and current records in the same storage area;
- ii. **Low priority accorded to records and archives management:** Records management function is given a low priority in the sense that there is inadequate management attention by Heads of Public Offices and records users;
- iii. **Emergence and use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT):** There is a lack of standards and guidelines of managing electronic records making it difficult to capture, store, retrieve, maintain security, preserve and migrate electronic records;
- iv. **Legal and regulatory framework:** Records and archives management issues are partially addressed by existing policies and legislation like The National ICT Policy of 2003, The Cultural Policy of 1997, National Security Act No. 3 of 1970, Records and Archives Management Act No. 3 of 2002, Founders of the Nation (Honouring Procedures) Act No. 18 of 2004 and Evidence Act (Revised Edition) of 2002. However, these legislation and policies are not comprehensive to cover all aspects of records management lifecycle;
- v. **Limited skills and capacity of registry staff:** Most of the registry staff have little or no records management training. In-service registry training and staff development

ceased for some time. Registries are perceived as dumping place for non performing employees. Some cases Office Attendants, Messengers, Watchman and Gardeners were promoted to registry posts;

- vi. **Standards and procedures:** There is non-compliance to records management standards and procedures by Public Offices;
 - vii. **Vital records plan:** There is no plan for managing vital records in public offices;
 - viii. **Coordination mechanism:** There is no coordination mechanism for public and private records and archives management in the public offices; and
 - ix. **Ethics of public servants:** Some public servants do not abide by the established government ethical conduct and most of public offices have ceased to provide induction courses to new employees.
- As a result of these challenges, poor records and archives management has contributed to the following problems:-
- i. Delay in decision making;
 - ii. Lack of integrity and accountability;
 - iii. Denial of citizens' rights;
 - iv. Difficulties in accessing information;
 - v. Lack of monitoring and evaluation strategy;
 - vi. Leakage of Government Information to unauthorized persons;
 - vii. Under utilization of new technology; and
 - viii. Vital records produced by individuals or private sector are not accorded with national values.

These challenges call for an articulate and dynamic policy that will guide a focused records and archives management system. This is important since there has not existed any coherent policy to guide the management of both public and private records. This policy is designed to address these challenges and exploit new technologies to enable the records and Archives Management services to contribute effectively to the socio-economic development of the country. This policy therefore provides the public service and the public at large, with a direction on records and archives management.

CHAPTER THREE

3.0 RATIONALE, SCOPE AND OBJECTIVES.

3.1 Rationale:

Over the past decade, great progress has been made to establish a solid foundation for managing Government records. From 1997 to date, a records management improvement programme, focusing on subject files, has been undertaken in Ministries, Departments and Agencies. The aim of these initiatives was to decongest and restructure registries, to introduce new guidance and procedures for organizing and managing paper records and to train records management personnel. The formulation and adoption of records management scheme of service has opened the way for a comprehensive and integrated approach to the knowledge and skills required across the records and archives field. The enactment of the Records and Archives Management Act No. 3 of 2002 is also a significant step forward.

Records management is thus a key function of the Government Programmes and services and is therefore an information base of the Government. Important as it is, records management lacks a comprehensive infrastructure of policy, standards, business rules and procedures, ICT strategies and professional staff supported by effective accountability frameworks and management structures.

Lack of Records Management Policy contributes to poor records management practices in the public service. This has resulted into delays in decision-making process, denial of citizens' rights, corruption, lack of accountability and unauthorized access to government information, thus undermining the government efforts to enforce good governance and the rule of law. This calls upon the formulation of a records management policy.

3.2 Scope of the Policy:

This policy covers all public and private records and archives, both paper and electronic records. These records include subject records, specialized records (e.g. land records, judicial records, medical records, financial records, immigration records, birth and death records), vital records and personnel records generated, received and held by Public offices including those of Tanzania Missions abroad. All public records and archives, regardless of their format and/or medium, should be managed, throughout their life cycle, in accordance with the requirements set out in this policy. This policy shall also cover those records and archives of the Union matters as stipulated in the Constitution of the United Republic of Tanzania of 1977 Article 4(3) 1st schedule. In addition, this policy covers private records of national interest relating to individuals and organizations.

The Policy also promotes a culture in which all records and archives that document the life and development of the nation are valued as part of the nation's archival heritage. In that regard, the Policy addresses the following issues related to records and archives:

- i. Compliance by records creators and users;
- ii. Reliability and authenticity of records;
- iii. Deployment of new technology in the management of records and archives;
- iv. Classification of records and archives;
- v. Tracking and use of records and archives;
- vi. Storage and protection;
- vii. Vital records;

- viii. Specialised records;
- ix. Access to records;
- x. Disposition of records;
- xi. Acquisition and preservation of archives;
- xii. Personnel records management;
- xiii. Information maintained about individuals (individual privacy records); and
- xiv. Review of legislations related to Records and Archives Management.

The National Records and Archives Management Policy, shall provide the direction on the management of public records and archives of the United Republic of Tanzania in accordance with statutory requirements, based on the national and international standards.

3.3 Objectives.

This policy intends to provide a reliable, effective and efficient records and archives management services for the achievement of National Vision, mission, goals and strategies. In order to achieve the above vision and mission, this policy has the following objectives:

- i. To ensure reliable, accurate and complete evidence - based decision, action and transaction or communication;
- ii. To ensure accessibility of public records and archives for as long as they are needed to support the legitimate information needs of government and citizens;
- iii. To promote public trust, optimise information sharing and re-use and reduce duplication in accordance with legal and policy obligations;

- iv. To ensure safety and security of public and private records;
- v. To acquire and preserve records of enduring value to the nation from public offices, private institutions and individuals; and
- vi. To optimize public participation in preservation of records and archives for the development of the nation.

CHAPTER FOUR

4.0 POLICY ISSUES, OBJECTIVES AND STATEMENTS.

The following are the policy issues, objectives and statements of the National Records and Archives Management Policy.

4.1 Policy Issue: Compliance by records creators and users.

Records and archives keeping practices in public offices are frequently not followed by desk officers and are not enforced by senior public officials. This situation has provided a room for public officials to become non accountable and non compliant to records and archives management rules and procedures.

Policy Objective.

To ensure accountability and compliance to records and archives management.

Policy Statements.

- i. The government shall put in place records and archives management systems and guidelines to support adherence to standard and best practices.
- ii. The government shall provide a framework for responsibilities so that all employees who create, use or manage records are accountable for complying with appropriate records management standards and practices during the performance of their duties.
- iii. Heads of public offices shall appoint Records Coordinators to coordinate records management activities in MDAs and LGAs and oversee compliance with NRAM and procedures.

4.2 Policy Issue: Reliable and authentic records and archives.

Records and archives regardless of media or format ought to be properly managed throughout their life cycle in order to safeguard the reliability and authenticity. The life cycle of records includes three main phases: Current, Semi-current and Non-current. Throughout their life cycle, records should be managed and controlled so that they can be placed in their correct context, identified and retrieved when required, protected against damage, destruction, unauthorised access and, when their business use has expired, disposed-off routinely. Currently paper and electronic records in public offices cannot be easily retrieved when required, less protected against damage, destruction, and unauthorized access and their authenticity is questionable. This causes the government to have decisions based on *ad hoc* information.

Policy Objective.

To have a reliable, authentic, integrity and usable records and archives to support government decisions.

Policy Statements.

- i. Public offices shall ensure that records are created, acquired and maintained to meet policy, programme, service, business and accountability requirements; and to ensure they are relevant, reliable, complete and comply with International Standards on Records Management (ISO 15489).
- ii. Public offices shall ensure that decisions are documented throughout the evolution and execution of policies, programmes and services.
- iii. Public offices shall manage records of government business from the moment they are created or received and throughout their life cycle until their disposal either by destruction or transfer to the department responsible for records and archives or any other designated place of deposit.

4.3 Policy Issue: Deployment of new technology in the management of records and archives.

Records are increasingly being generated or held by a wide range of application systems, some of which are highly structured and complex such as Human Capital Management Information System (HCMIS), which control the payroll and other related information of government employees from employment to retirement. While more documents are created or received electronically by officers through computers, there are no standards and structures to ensure that records/documents are properly organized and controlled so that they can be retrieved when required.

Policy Objective.

To have proper record keeping systems that capture records created or received by public offices electronically.

Policy Statements.

- i. Public offices shall ensure that all records created or received in the course of government business are captured in record keeping systems with sufficient information (metadata) about the record and its record keeping system, to enable the records to be understood and used for as long as it is needed to transact government business.
- ii. The government shall develop and approve standards, procedures and guidelines for the management of electronic documents and records.
- iii. The government shall ensure that electronic records are migrated to new generation of systems whenever there is technological obsolescence.

4.4 Police Issue: Classification of records and archives.

Classification of paper based records takes place at the level of the individual document or folio, or at the file level, or both. Classification of electronic documents is achieved by saving records in EDRMS. In this case, part of the classification process may be automated. Printing and filing the document as a paper copy in a registry file can also achieve saving an electronic record in a record keeping system. However, some records received or created by public offices do not follow the rules and procedures of classification. This situation is costing public offices in the sense that some of the information are misplaced, lost, misfiled and cannot be retrieved.

Policy Objective.

To have a proper classification system for public records and archives.

Policy Statements.

- i. Public offices shall classify all records captured in record keeping systems so that their existence and key identifying information are documented.
- ii. Public offices shall ensure that classification systems of records are managed and monitored by appropriate officers to ensure their effectiveness, accuracy and sustainability.
- iii. The Government shall from time to time produce, approve and disseminate national standards and guidelines for the classification that comply with international standards.

4.5 Policy Issue: Tracking and use of records and archives.

Tracking of records and usage within records management systems is a security measure for public offices. Only users with appropriate permission shall perform the tasks for which they have been authorized. This requirement has a greater significance for records held in electronic record keeping systems because of the vulnerability of electronic records to unauthorized access, alteration and deletion.

The use of a record is a transaction that needs to be captured by the records management system. Use of the record affects its access and disposition status and need to be documented for audit and accountability purposes and to provide evidence that the record's integrity has been monitored and maintained. Tracking of records usage in public offices is one of the stumbling blocks for quick decision-making. Most of the information needed for decisions cannot be timely located due to poor records tracking systems.

Policy Objective.

To ensure that a record is captured by the records management system after being accessed or used.

Policy Statements.

- i. The Government shall provide guidance on procedures for tracking records from time to time.
- ii. Public offices shall ensure that access and usage controls are appropriate to the nature of their business and the records generated.
- iii. Public offices shall ensure that digital systems, which generate or hold records, include audit trails to document the history of the record and whether it has been accessed or changed in any way.

4.6 Policy Issue: Storage and protection.

Records that have been captured in a record keeping system should be stored in proper storage facilities for as long as it may be needed. Appropriate storage conditions ensure that records are protected and accessible when or if they are required in future.

The physical form, future use, retention value over time, security classification and other factors will determine the nature of the storage required. Vital records, which are critical for business continuity, require additional methods of protection and duplication to ensure accessibility in the event of a disaster. Currently public offices have no appropriate storage facilities.

Policy Objective.

To create appropriate records and archives storage facilities and conditions so that records and archives are always protected and accessible when required.

Policy Statements.

- i. The Government shall put in place standards, procedures and guidelines on storage facilities.
- ii. Public offices shall ensure that they provide adequate storage space, supplies, equipment and other resources necessary for safekeeping of their records.
- iii. Public offices shall ensure that storage facilities and systems are capable of protecting records against fire, flood, environmental hazards, unauthorised access and other risks.

4.7 Policy Issue: Vital records plans.

Vital records are important to ensure business continuity in any organization. While it is necessary for an organization to protect all records against fire, flood, theft, technical failure, breach of security and loss, public offices lack vital records and business recovery plans specifically designed to identify, protect and recover vital records in the event of a disaster.

Policy Objective.

To protect vital records for the continuity of key services and business operations.

Policy Statements.

- i. The Government shall approve vital records and business recovery plans for public offices.
- ii. Public offices shall manage and implement vital records and business recovery plans according to standards and guidelines issued by the Government.
- iii. Public offices shall ensure that vital records and business recovery plans include the provision of any necessary hardware, software and procedures manuals to enable the records to be accessed and read.

4.8 Policy Issue: Specialised records.

Specialised records are records that protect the rights of citizens. For instance documents related to land ownership, health information and enforcement of the rule of natural justice. The management of specialised records is fragmented. They are managed by various institutions having different systems and established standards. Consequently citizen rights are compromised.

Policy Objective.

To ensure proper management of specialised records by harmonizing systems that adhere to established standards.

Policy Statements.

- i. The Government shall establish standards for the life circle of specialized records management.
- ii. Public offices and other stakeholders shall adhere to the established standards of specialized records management.
- iii. Individuals or group of individuals shall be responsible to keep copies of information relating to their rights of land occupancy, financial, legal or health matters.

4.9 Policy Issue: Accessibility.

Access or possession of public records and archives to unauthorized persons is prohibited. Heads of public offices are responsible for ensuring that access to their records and archives is consistent with legislative requirements, subject to any legal prohibitions, limits or enforceable rights concerning the disclosure of information, legally or enforceable rights of access may be embodied, for example, in corporate governance, freedom of information legislation and legal process.

Access to private sector records and archives in the custody of the Government or other archival authority will need to be agreed between the parties concerned, subject to any legally enforceable rights of access.

Currently, government records and archives or information are in danger of being accessed by unauthorized persons. This may cause sensitive information of the government to land into unauthorized persons and bring embarrassment to the government as well as the general public.

Policy Objective.

To ensure access to records and archives is in accordance with relevant legislation.

Policy Statements.

- i. Public offices shall ensure that access to their records is consistent with relevant legislative requirements as well as any legally enforceable rights of access.
- ii. The Government shall ensure that public records are open to public access after the period of years prescribed in legislation, unless the Government has approved longer or shorter periods.
- iii. Public offices shall consult the Government in relation to new legislation that affects the security of, and access to records and archives.

4.10 Policy Issue: Personnel records management.

The success of the Tanzania public service in discharging its functions depends, among others, on the manner of Management of the personal records. Effective management of personnel records enables public offices to manage their employees efficiently and equitably. It encourages informed and consistent decision-making, transparent, accountability, and facilitates the monitoring and evaluation of employee's performances.

This aspect has to be strengthened in the public service, failure of which may result into serious problems to the affected parties. There is evidence of denial of employee's rights while in the public service especially when they retire. Public offices are also facing the problem of decision making due to fragmented personnel information.

Policy Objective.

To ensure personnel records in the public service are properly managed.

Policy Statements.

- i. The Government shall develop standards and guidelines for the management of personnel records;
- ii. Public offices shall ensure that all personnel information that document decisions, actions and processes affecting employees are recorded and properly stored and managed;
- iii. Public offices shall ensure that Master files are created and properly managed to document core records of service, basic personal details and all the records that are needed to document the legal and contractual relationship between the employer and employee; and
- iii. All public employees shall be responsible for the custody of copies of their personal records related to their employment history.

4.11 Policy Issue: Acquisition and preservation of archives.

Records of enduring value can only be identified and selected if they are held within well-managed record keeping systems, safeguarded from damage, destruction, deletion or alteration and transferred to the care of the department responsible for records and archives management at the appropriate time as determined by retention and disposal schedules.

Acquisition and preservation cover the personal records of statesmen, politicians, public servants, community, religious and business leaders, academics, campaigners, writers, artists, researchers and individuals who have made substantial contribution to the nation. currently, the existing guidelines that govern the acquisition of public and private records are inadequate.

Policy Objective.

To acquire and preserve public and private records that are of national importance.

Policy Statements.

- i. The Government shall, through special arrangements, acquire public and private records including those of retired state leaders, private sector and individuals that have national interest.
- ii. The government shall manage, preserve and make archives available for use to public offices and the general public.
- iii. The government shall encourage the general public to build the environment within which public and private records of potential national significance are valued and safeguarded as part of the national history.

4.12 Policy Issue: Maintenance of individual privacy.

The Government of Tanzania recognizes the UN Declaration of Human Rights. The Government also adheres to International and Regional Covenants on Civil and Political Rights. Privacy underpins human dignity and other key values e.g. freedom of association. The growing importance, diversity and complexity of these fundamental rights are major issues. Absence of maintenance of individual privacy and adequate enforcement on the capacity to collect, use and disseminate information relating to individuals has introduced a sense of urgency to the demand for clear direction.

Policy Objective.

To protect individual's privacy information from being accessed by unauthorized persons.

Policy Statements.

- i. Public offices and other entrusted persons shall ensure that records and information related to privacy of individuals are safeguarded to protect human dignity and values.
- ii. The Government shall develop standards and guidelines on issues related to individual privacy.
- iii. The Government, private offices and individuals shall observe compliancy to codes of professional ethics.

4.13 Policy Issue: Disposition of records.

Heads of public offices are required to draft retention and disposal schedules relating to records specific to their institution and implement authorized retention and disposal schedules. Schedules shall cover records and archives in all formats, including electronic records.

Though retention and disposal schedules have been developed and are in place, they are not adequate to allow disposition of all categories of public records. Hence, a comprehensive direction is needed to address this problem.

Policy Objective.

To transfer records of enduring value to the department responsible for records and archives management and dispose valueless records timely.

Policy Statements.

- i. The government in collaboration with public offices shall develop and implement retention and disposal schedules that comprehensively cover all public records and archives, regardless of format or media.
- ii. Public offices shall seek government approval before destroying any public record(s) and transfer records of enduring value to the department responsible for records and archives management, or any other place of deposit as described in the retention and disposal schedules.
- iii. Public offices shall ensure that all records and archives of the privatized or dissolved parastatal office are vested into the custody under the Minister responsible for records and archives management.

4.14 Policy Issue: Legislation related to records and archives management.

The Records and Archives Management Act No. 3 of 2002 was enacted prior to this Policy. There are several areas of the Act that need to be looked at in view of the National Records and Archives Management Policy.

Policy Objective.

To have a reviewed Records and Archives Management Act.

Policy Statements.

- i. The government shall review the Records and Archives Management Act. No. 3 of 2002 and harmonize other legislation in order to meet the requirement of this policy.

CHAPTER FIVE

5.0 LEGAL AND INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK.

5.1 LEGAL FRAMEWORK:

This policy shall be implemented in accordance with the laws relevant to records, including the Records and Archives Management Act. No. 3 of 2002, National Security Act No. 3 of 1970, Law of Limitation Act of 1971 and Evidence Act No. 6 of 1967 revised 2002. In addition, it recognizes the enabling legislative instruments that apply to specific public offices or functions, for example, laws relating to land, judicial, health and financial administration which require the creation and maintenance of particular kinds of records. This Policy shall also comply with other policies related to records and archives management. However, the implementation of this policy shall call for a review of the Records and Archives Management Act No. 3 of 2002, Records and Archives Management Regulations of 2007 and harmonization of other legislation in order to meet the requirements of this policy.

5.2 INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK:

This Institutional framework identifies and defines the roles of various actors in the implementation of this policy. The key actors in the process will include:

5.2.1 President's Office, Public Service Management.

PO-PSM has fundamental role of ensuring that the policy continues to be articulate and dynamic; that the goals and objectives set out in this policy are achieved; and avail financial resources for enhancing basic infrastructures and services. PO-PSM will also encourage civil society and private sector to have a culture of valuing and safeguarding records that are of potential historical value and coordinate various records and archives management efforts.

PO-PSM shall also have a mandate to oversee records and archives management throughout the public service by:

- i. Ensuring that public offices adhere to good record and archives keeping practices;
- ii. Establishing and implementing procedures for the timely disposal of public records of no continuing value;
- iii. Advising on best practices and establishing standards in record keeping and archives preservation in the public service; and
- iv. Establishing and implementing procedures for the transfer of public records of enduring value for preservation in the national archives or such other archival repository as may have been established under the Act.

5.2.2 Records and Archives Management Advisory Board.

The Records and Archives Management Advisory Board shall advise the Minister responsible for records and

archives on general matters relating to the management of the public records and archives of the United Republic of Tanzania.

5.2.3 Public Offices.

Public offices shall be responsible for ensuring the implementation of this policy and related standards and guidelines. Public offices shall also be accountable for the capacity building of their staff on the management of records and archives and promote conditions that value records and archives management.

5.2.4 Records Management Coordinators.

Records Management Coordinators shall be responsible for ensuring compliance with records management standards and procedures in the respective offices. They shall also be responsible for coordinating and liaising with PO-PSM on all matters related to records and archives management.

5.2.5 The Revolutionary Government of Zanzibar.

The Revolutionary Government of Zanzibar shall be responsible for the management of public records and archives of the Union Matters created in Zanzibar in accordance with national and international standards and guidelines.

5.2.6 Stakeholders.

Stakeholders such as researchers, learning institutions, individuals and the general public are expected to support the government in the management of records and archives. They are also expected to exploit the archival holdings in the dissemination of information, knowledge and promotion of written heritage.

CHAPTER SIX

6.0 MONITORING AND EVALUATION.

Records management systems shall be monitored and evaluated to ensure compliance with policy, legislative and procedural requirements in order to improve records management performance. The Department responsible for records and archives management has legislative powers to inspect records keeping in public offices, establish and ensure compliance with standards for the management of public records and archives.

This policy shall be monitored and evaluated regularly for the purpose of making sure that it is properly implemented and reviewed as and when required.

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