



**THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA**

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**THE NATIONAL RECORDS AND ARCHIVES  
MANAGEMENT POLICY**

PRESIDENT'S OFFICE  
PUBLIC SERVICE MANAGEMENT  
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## **ABBREVIATIONS**

<b>EDRMS</b>	Electronic Document and Records Management System.
<b>HCMIS</b>	Human Capital Management Information System.
<b>ICT</b>	Information and Communication Technology.
<b>ISO</b>	International Standards Organization.
<b>LGAs</b>	Local Government Authorities.
<b>MDAs</b>	Ministries, Departments and Agencies.
<b>PO-PSM</b>	President's Office, Public Service Management.
<b>RAMD</b>	Records and Archives Management Department.
<b>NRAMP</b>	National Records and Archives Management Policy.
<b>PSRP</b>	Public Service Reform Programme.

## GLOSSARY

**Access:** Right, opportunity, and means of finding, using or retrieving information.

**Archives:** Records of enduring value or Institution responsible for the management of Archives or a building or part of a building in which archives are preserved and made available for consultation.

**Audit trail:** Record of transactions within a record keeping system providing evidence of any activities in relation to a record that permits reconstruction and examination of those activities.

**Capture:** Registration, classification, addition of metadata and storage of records in a record keeping system.

**Classification:** Systematic Identification and arrangement of business activities and/or records into categories according to a logical structure and rules.

**Creation:** The first phase of a record's life cycle in which a record is made or received and then captured in a record keeping system for action or reference.

**Current records:** Records used for the conduct of the current business.

**Data:** Electronic representation of information in any form suitable for transmission, interpretation or processing.

**Destruction:** Process of eliminating or deleting records beyond any possible reconstruction.

**Disposal:** The actions taken with regard to records as a consequence of their appraisal and the expiration of their retention periods.

**Disposition:** Range of processes associated with implementing records, retention, destruction or transfer decisions, which are documented in disposition authorities or other instruments.

**Document:** Recorded information, which can be treated as a unit.

**Documentary materials:** Means books, correspondence, memoranda, papers, pamphlets, works of art, models, pictures photographs, placards, maps, films and motion pictures including but not limited to audio, audio visual or other electronic or mechanical recordings.

**Electronic records:** Records generated and/or stored in electronic form.

**File:** An organized physical assembly (usually within a folder) or documents grouped together because they relate to the same subject, activity or transaction.

**Folio:** Individual document within a file.

**Life cycle:** Refers to the life of records from their creation to their destruction or permanent retention.

**Metadata:** Data describing the context, content and structure of records and their management through time.

**Migration:** Act of moving records from one system to another, while maintaining the records' authenticity, integrity, reliability and usability.

**Minister:** Means the Minister responsible for records and archives management.

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**Non-current records:** Records no longer needed for current business.

**Personnel Records:** A series case files relating to the staff employed by an organization.

**Place of deposit:** Building or part of a building in which records/archives are preserved and made available for consultation.

**Preservation:** The processes and operations involved in the physical protection of records and archives against damage.

**Private records:** Records created, received or maintained by individuals or private institutions.

**Protection:** Safeguarding records and archives from unauthorized access, deletion, alteration and environmental degradation.

**Public Office:** Any government institution, including Tanzania Missions abroad, that creates, receives and maintains public records.

**Public records:** Records created, received or maintained by Public offices for conducting their business transactions.

**Records and Archives Management Department:** The Department responsible for ensuring that public offices adhere to good record management practices.

**Records:** Recorded information regardless of form or medium created, received and maintained by any institution or individual in the pursuance of its legal obligations or in the transaction of its business and providing evidence or the performance of those obligations or that business.

**Records centre:** Building or part of building designated for the low-cost storage, maintenance and retrieval of semi-current records pending their eventual disposal.

**Records management:** Field of management responsible for the efficient and systematic control of the creation, receipt, maintenance, use and disposition of records.

**Record keeping system:** System which captures, manages and provides access to records through time.

**Registry:** The administrative unit for the receipt, control and maintenance of current records.

**Restructuring:** Reorganization or improvement of record keeping system.

**Retention and Disposal schedule:** The control document recording appraisal decisions and prescribing disposal action. Also known as disposal list, or disposition schedule.

**Semi-current records:** Records required only infrequently for the conduct of current business.

**Specialized records/case files:** Records, which are of their own distinct function and content such as land records, judicial records, medical records, financial records, immigration records and birth and death records.

**Vital records:** Records critical to the ongoing operations of an organization or the establishment of operations after an emergency or disaster.



## FOREWORD

The Government of Tanzania is implementing a range of strategies and reforms to improve social and economic conditions, quality of life of all Tanzanians and reduce poverty, the success of which depends on among other things, the proper management of records throughout their life cycle. It is an undenied fact that we are living in an information age where records and information is regarded as a key resource in all places, from home to work places.

The increasing use of electronic systems by government bodies to conduct business has significantly changed the way records are created and kept. Electronic record keeping poses a challenge to the Government to ensure that reliable records are maintained over time as evidence of official business for the purpose of accountability, operational continuity, disaster recovery, institutional and social memory. Documentary evidence provides a framework for accountability, which is the cornerstone of good governance. Records Management is therefore, becoming an important instrument on which principles and practices of modern management depend.

This policy, therefore, sets out a framework within which records and archives of the United Republic of Tanzania can be managed in accordance with statutory requirements and international standards to ensure reliability, authenticity, integrity, and usability for the national development.

The policy applies to all types of records whether subject or case files, transaction records or the specialized records generated, received and maintained by public offices. It also applies to records of national interest generated, received and maintained by private

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sector and individuals, regardless of their form and/or medium. It builds on the solid foundation that was laid by the records management improvement component that the Government established under the PSRP in the last decade.

The policy also calls for review and harmonization of legislations related to records and archives management.



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## CHAPTER ONE

### 1.0. INTRODUCTION

The Government has been actively involved in improving the livelihood of all citizens since independence in 1961. This is reflected in different administrative and sectoral policies and strategies such as the Arusha Declaration (1967), Villagelisation (1967), Decentralization (1972), Universal Primary Education (UPE) 1977 and other on going socio-economic reforms, which started in the 1980s. All these efforts have remained solid references because they are well documented and preserved.

Records and archives underpin all public sector functions and services. They are needed for example, to establish entitlements such as pensions, provide evidence of births and deaths, confirm voting rights, verify land ownership, enable the collection of taxes, support public financial management, to conduct audit and uncover fraud, plan for health care services, treat patients and deliver equitable and efficient justice administration.

The initiatives to effectively manage records and archives started in 1963 when the President issued Circular No. 7 on the management of archives. The Newly independent Tanzania saw the importance of proper records and archives management in order to implement effectively the new roles. For that reason, the government established the National Archives of Tanzania in 1964, and subsequently enacted the National Archives Act No. 33 of 1965. This Institution was mandated to safeguard the archives of the United Republic of Tanzania. However, the Records Disposal Ordinance of 1931, Prisons Standing Orders, Financial Orders 430, Customs Department Instructions 331 & 332 and The National Archives Act of 1965 were confined to the management of archives only and did not address fully the life cycle of records at current

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and semi current stages. As a result current and semi current records were left without sufficient legal framework. Thus, heads of public offices assumed no responsibility to manage these records. These initiatives focused on records that were seen as important for the preservation of the national history, culture and administrative decisions. Personnel records were not part of the records to be managed by this department.

On the other hand, all these efforts did not go hand in hand with the development of human resources to manage records and archives. According to the National Archives of Tanzania Annual Report of 1967/1968 the Department had only four Professional Staff, whose number increased to 15 as per annual report of 1974/1975. Since then, shortage of professional staff has persisted and registries have continued to be manned by unskilled staff working mainly on experience. Shortage and unskilled staff was mainly contributed by lack of curricula in records and archives management.

Apart from shortage of skilled staff, there were no sufficient storage facilities and office accommodation necessary for proper management of records and archives. In addition, the systems used to manage records and archives were fragmented and resulted in loss of records, mis-filling and duplication of records of the same subject matter. This contributed to delay in decision-making and delivery of services.

In the 1990s the Government embarked on the Public Service Reform Programme, and records management was identified as one of the areas that had affected public service delivery. Following these initiatives the Government took several measures aimed to improve records and archives management, including the following:

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Through the Government Notice Number 289 of 1999, the Government transferred the National Archives of Tanzania from the Ministry of Education and Culture to the President's Office, Public Service Management. This resulted in establishment of the Records and Archives Management Department in 1999.

Following this Institutional re-arrangement, the Records and Archives Management Act No. 3 of 2002 was enacted to give the department a new legal mandate to manage public records for their entire life cycle. Under this Act, the Department is now responsible for:—

- (i) Ensuring that public offices adhere to good record 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 in the public service;
- (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 Records and Archive Management Act; and
- (v) Preserving and making available for consultation public records selected for preservation in the National Archives or any other archival repository under the control of the Director.

Despite of all these initiatives there are many challenges that need to be addressed. The foremost challenge is to have a legislation before a policy is put in place. This is due to the fact that the current Act is not broad enough to cover and guide the management of both public and private records. Other challenges revolve around the following areas; creation, capture and receipt of records,

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classification of records and archives, use and tracking of records, storage and protection of records, vital records, access to records, disposition of records, acquisition and preservation of archives, personnel records management, information maintained about individuals (individual privacy records) and coordination of records management activities across the Public Service as well as the Private Sector.

## 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

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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
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