

STRENGTHENING THE CIVIL SERVICE INSTITUTE

CSI now operates under a new business model similar to that of private enterprises, a new structure geared for the latest training and development trends, and a new brand that communicates CSI's value proposition.



BACKGROUND

The Civil Service Institute (CSI) is the training and research arm of the Civil Service Commission (CSC). Established in 2011, CSI supports CSC's vision to be Asia's leading center of excellence for strategic human resource and organisation development by 2030. By providing training and human resource development interventions to all government officials and employees, CSI aims to develop productive public organisations that are run by credible and high-performing civil servants. While CSI achieved several milestones in carrying out its mission, its structure was not responsive to latest training and development trends. It also lacked a business model to make CSI a robust enterprise. Recognising the need to strengthen its training arm, CSC partnered with PAHRODF in 2013 in implementing Strengthening the Civil Service Institute – a 4-month technical assistance project meant to boost CSI's development, making it robust and abreast with trends in workplace learning and performance. ■

INTERVENTION OVERVIEW

The intervention meant to strengthen CSI's relevance and sustainability by reviewing and developing operational plans, programs, services, and business processes. It will also enable CSI to determine its best-fit organisation model, given its current strengths and desired strategic direction. It is also expected to identify human resource and organisation development (HROD) activities required to implement the appropriate organisation model and business plan. The Technical Assistance project was implemented in 3 phases: (1) Environment Scanning and Context Analysis, (2) Strategy Formulation and Business Process Development, and (3) Development Planning and Materials and Mechanisms Creation. These components built upon each other to ensure that the members of CSI acquire both knowledge and experience in setting up and managing the learning institute in a smooth and deliberate manner. ■

COMMITTED RESULTS



IMPLEMENTATION PROGRESS

CSI currently operates under a new business model similar to that of private enterprises. The institute follows a structure geared for the latest training and development trends. It also carries a whole new look: new brand, logo and tagline that communicates CSI's value proposition. This branding identity is printed on the institute's new marketing and training collaterals. CSI's physical office layout was also transformed from a traditional government set-up to a more corporate environment. Under CSC's Learning & Development intervention, CSI staff members learned to operationalise the gains of the business model and the CSI plan. CSI also oriented regional offices on the new business model including roles



*"CSI. Shaping the Servant-Hero
Towards Public Service Excellence."*

and program delineation between CSI and regional offices. It also integrated the new brand into on-going public courses. CSI conducted 17 regular programs and three customised programs for the public sector with an average number of training participants of 35 per program. ■

ASSESSMENT



Relevance

Strengthening the Civil Service Institute is a necessary intervention for improving the delivery of services of CSI. It strategically contributes to the achievement of CSC's vision to become Asia's leading center of excellence in strategic human resources and organisation development by 2030. CSI is envisioned to be a front runner in training and a learning institution of choice. It is expected to be at par with the best in the private sector and the best in the public sector. Despite these clear visions, however, CSI lacked the competency and capacity to pursue its goals. The Facility, through the technical assistance, helped CSI achieve its goals.



Effectiveness

Through the technical assistance, CSI underwent a makeover: new business model, organisation structure, office layout, and a whole new brand and look. CSI now has a more refined and pronounced business model, value proposition, and expanded customer segmentation, boosting the staff's morale and enthusiasm to pursue the institute's relevant training offerings to the public sector. These improvements are acknowledged by CSC and CSI management as well as other stakeholders.



Sustainability

Sustainability of the intervention's results was initially challenged by the retirement of CSI's executive director, Agnes Padilla, in 2014. The momentum of the assistance's gains was nonetheless sustained by CSI's new executive director Arthur Florentin who is a champion of HROD reforms. In his new role as CSI's executive director, ED Florentin continues to refine CSI's structure and improve the institute's efficiency to deliver its services.



Potential Impact

With close to 100 million Filipino people being served by just about 1.2 million government employees, the continuous learning of government employees through the trainings offered by CSI is vital in improving their service delivery. In fact, capacitating the 1.2 million government employees would magnify the effect of their service delivery. ■

“The civil service institute (CSI), with help from the Facility, now has a business model, a corporate image and is being run unlike an ordinary office. This is important for CSI, which is positioned to be instrumental in pushing and maybe moving the vision of the CSC.”



Former CSI Director
Agnes Padilla

FACTS AND FIGURES

PAHRODF INVESTMENT



NUMBER OF CORE PARTICIPANTS



Duration

February - June 2013

of REAPs

18

Produced Output

1. Benchmarking report that included the assessment of the CSI vs private sector training institutes
2. CSI technical structure and required competencies
3. Assessment of CSI staff against their required competencies
4. CSI branding guidelines
5. CSI branding collaterals
6. CSI operations manual
7. External training policies in preparation for ISO certification

EMERGING LESSONS AND GOOD PRACTICES

- 1 Learning and development of CSI staff is crucial in implementing the new business model. Capacitating the CSI staff through learning and development programs is crucial so they can effectively execute the new business model. Initial assessment showed a significant gap of staff skills among the CSI staff with only 5% meeting the required competencies for the new system.

- 2 Leadership of CSI middle management will drive sustainability of the institute's business model. The exercise of leadership accountability at the level of CSI directors and division chiefs should be felt in the institute. By prioritising the implementation of their respective staff's individual development plans, CSI middle management can help drive the sustainability of the business model.
- 3 Support for the CSI Brand by all CSC Offices will ensure the sustainability of intervention results. The buy-in and support of all CSC offices are important as CSI carries out its mandate. The commission should consider doing initiatives that would create a supportive atmosphere around CSI. It may also stress that the CSI brand is an extension of the CSC brand and, thus, should be equally supported by CSC.
- 4 CSI can make the most of the assistance by immediately starting its customer engagement efforts and laying the CSI basic services infrastructure as prescribed in the CSI Operations Manual. Basic processes, tools and systems that support Service Fulfilment should already be put in place by the Institute Services Team as prescribed in the CSI Operations Manual. Touching base with CSC Regional Offices and defining the new rules of engagement between CSI and said offices will also help pave the way for stronger and more beneficial partnerships. ■

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1 CSC may consider hiring individuals who match the competency requirement of CSI or are already familiar with the new business model. These individuals will help deliver CSI's value Proposition and Brand Promise more efficiently and more effectively. A full time coach may also be hired to oversee the completion of the new roles and targets.
- 2 Similar projects that will be implemented in the future may consider enhancing the communication plan to get acceptance and follow-through of stakeholders. ■

Realising the Commission's Vision - CSI as the Catalyst

“We already knew what we wanted to do, we knew where we wanted to go, but we needed some help from other organisations and people.”

This was the honest admission of Director Maricar Aquino, Director III of CSI. Director Aquino adds, “Right from the start it was clear to us, our mandate and what we were supposed to do to help realise the vision of the Commission. Admittedly, we were not that prepared, the people were not that competent. There were a lot of things that needed to be done. We needed help.”

Timely help came when the Philippines Australia Human Resource and Organisational Development Facility (PAHRODF) got involved. With what seemed like a “meeting of the minds” between the commission and PAHRODF, two (2) fully-funded intervention programs were conducted by the latter: 1) Strengthening the CSI in February 2012-January 2013 and 2) Learning and development from early 2013 - June 2014. According to Director Aquino, “It’s a blessing that HRODF came into the picture...little by little, the things that we’ve dreamt of were given to us, were provided for us by the intervention.”

CREATING ALLIANCES

Grateful to PAHRODF for the opportunities provided to her and the entire CSI organization, Director Aquino senses the deep concern that PAHRODF has for the Commission. Sharing the same vision for the Commission, she sees how PAHRODF wants more than anything to see this come to fruition.

Referring to the relationship with PAHRODF as a “healthy partnership”, she singles out the HR Symposia that was held in 2013 and repeated last April as among the notable collaborative efforts in partnership with the Facility. With this, she foresees many more beneficial projects that can be undertaken by the Commission with the assistance of PAHRODF.

As a result, she mentioned that participants were highly engaged, eager and open to learn. “The staff I would like to think, were excited about the whole thing. It was emphasized to all of us that this is for our good. We are the research arm of the Commission that’s why we have to be capacitated. Everything that we do should be looked into or be improved. Actually we were all committed to the project,” adds Director Aquino.

With the entire CSI staff, from the executive directors, directors, division chiefs, and technical support staff as participants, the outcome was eagerly embraced by the entire CSI organization. Enthused Director Aquino, “No one was excluded. Everyone was involved. Everyone was consulted so the output of the project is shall I call, owned by all of us.” ■