

UN forum awards Tanzania for embracing IT in public services

By Getrude Mbago

THE United Nations (UN) Public Service Forum 2024 has awarded Tanzania for its efforts to digitalise services in public institutions specifically for initiating the e-Mrejesho platform under the e-Government Authority (e-GA).

Tanzania is among the only two African countries that received the award recently during the forum conducted recently in Songdo-Incheon, west of Seoul in the Republic of Korea, the other being South Africa.

The system has been identified by the UN as a platform that enables the government to collect citizens' opinions and complaints digitally and thus make policy decisions and implementation on time.

In a statement availed to the media, stated that during the three-day annual a total of 15 local governments and public institutions from around the world were honoured with the United Nations Public Service Awards (UNPSA).

The awards were presented by Li Junhua, UN's Under-secretary-general for economic and social affairs, and the Republic of Korea's Interior Minister Lee Sangmin and received by Tanzania's Deputy Permanent Secretary in the President's Office (Public Service Management and Good Governance), Xavier Daudi.

"I would like to congratulate all the awardees of the U.N. Public Service Awards. Your initiatives have showcased the breadth of innovations that governments are undertaking for inclusive development and fostering a culture of innovation in the public sector, which encourages generation of new ideas," Li Junhua, UN's Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs, said in his closing remarks.

He said it also means leveraging the technology to streamline the process and delivery of public

services is critical in an effective and responsive public sector.

Li said throughout the session they heard inspiring examples of impactful public sector initiatives regarding digital technology advancement.

Speaking soon after the awards, e-GA's Director General, Eng. Benedict Ndomba, said the e-Mrejesho platform is helpful in saving time and money, where a citizen is not forced to travel a long distance to public office to submit his/her complaints or making a follow up on the implementation, instead, he/she can do it digitally through his/her mobile phones.

"In the past when a person wanted to present complaints over public service, he/she was forced to physically submit them in the suggestion box or send a letter to the particular institution, but currently it is done digitally," he explained.

He added that the platform also empowers government agencies to make informed decisions based on public needs and concerns, fostering adaptability and responsiveness in governance while also enhancing the citizen experience and engagement with government agencies.

On March 13, this year when swearing in some leaders at the State House in Dar es Salaam, President Samia Suluhu Hassan directed the government leaders to use the e-Mrejesho system in receiving views from the citizens and giving feedback.

Samia said the public leaders should understand and use various ICT systems available in the government, including the e-Mrejesho in order to improve efficiency in their responsibilities and service delivery.

"Go and use the e-Mrejesho so that you get feedback from citizens as well as citizens get information from you. This is how we can work efficiently," she said.