

**United Nations Economic Commission for Africa**

**AFRICA'S PLAN OF ACTION FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF STATISTICS  
ON FOOD SECURITY, SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE AND RURAL  
DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA (2011-2015)**

**TRAINING COMPONENT**

**GUIDE ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE HUMAN RESOURCE  
POLICIES OF AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS AGENCIES**

November 2013

## Table of contents

<b>Introduction</b> .....	1
<b>1. Concepts and definitions</b> .....	2
<b>2. Overview of human resource management policies in agricultural statistics agencies (ASAs)</b> .....	4
<b>3. Guidelines on the development of a human resource management policy in the ASAs</b> .....	6
3.1 Phases of the prospective management of human resources .....	6
3.1.1 Identification of jobs and their evolution.....	6
3.1.2 Quantitative analysis of human resources .....	7
3.1.3 Analysis of gaps and skills assessment.....	7
3.1.4 Joint means of adaptation .....	8
3.1.5 Monitoring and evaluation of action plans .....	8
3.2 Outline for the implementation of a GPEEC (Prospective Management of Jobs, Staff and skills) in ASAs.....	9
3.2.1 Documentary reference.....	9
3.2.2 The contribution of ASA to GPEEC .....	10
3.3 Guidelines for developing a training plan within the ASA .....	10
3.3.1 The training plan.....	10
3.3.2 Process of preparation of a training plan .....	11
3.3.3 Implementation of the training plan .....	12
3.3.4 Some suggestions on the development of courses.....	13
3.4 Guidelines for Staff Recruitment.....	14
3.4.1 Definition.....	14
3.4.2 Recruitment procedures .....	14
3.5 Guidelines for the appraisal of staff performance .....	16
3.6 Good practices in human resource management to be encouraged within the ASAs. ....	17
<b>4. Partnerships and initiatives in support of the ASAs</b> .....	20
<b>5. Conclusion and Recommendations</b> .....	20
a. Recommendations .....	20
b. Conclusion .....	22
<b>Annexes</b> .....	23
Appendix 1: Outlines of a Training Plan .....	23
Appendix 2: Structure of the job description questionnaire .....	23
Appendix 3: Job description Outline .....	24
Appendix 4: Outline of the letter of assignment.....	25
Appendix 5: Outline of the Record of Expectations.....	25
Appendix 6: Outline of the programme of activities .....	26
Appendix 7: Outline of an activity report.....	27
<b>Bibliography</b> .....	28

## **Abbreviations and acronyms**

ASA	agricultural statistics agency
GPEEC	prospective management of jobs, staff and skills
NIS	National Institute of Statistics
AFRISTAT	Economic and Statistical Observatory of Sub-Saharan Africa
SADC	Southern African Development Community
COMESA	Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa
UEMOA	Economic and Monetary Union of West Africa
TC	Technical Committee
SWOT	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats
NSAS	National System of Agricultural Statistics

## **Introduction**

### **Background and rationale**

Agriculture plays a central and strategic role in the development of Africa. It is the key to economic growth, the rise in incomes and living standards, the alleviation of poverty and the improvement of food security. Alleviating poverty and achieving the Millennium Development Goals in Africa absolutely depend on the development of agriculture. Having realized the important role that agriculture plays, the Heads of State and Government of Africa adopted an African initiative, the Detailed Programme on the Development of Agriculture in Africa, in 2003 to assist African countries in the revival of agriculture as a strategy for combating poverty and hunger.

In view of the importance of agriculture, its planning, management and monitoring must be based on solid grounds. It all requires the long-term availability of comprehensive, reliable, up-to-date and consistent data. Such a goal cannot be met by any of the existing systems, as they are all weak, uncoordinated and starved of adequate resources.

Given the above situation, a Global Strategy to improve agricultural and rural statistics was established by the international community and endorsed in February 2010 by the United Nations Statistical Commission. Africa is fully committed to the implementation of the Strategy via its 2011-2015 Action Plan for the improvement of statistics on Food Security, Sustainable Agriculture, and Rural Development. This plan has three major components: technical assistance, training, and research, led respectively by the African Development Bank, the Economic Commission for Africa and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations.

In compliance with the schedule of implementation of this action plan, agricultural statistics agencies in charge of collecting and storing agricultural data were supposed to represent the backbone.

For the ASAs to live up to expectations, it is therefore important for weaknesses in their operations to be identified so that effective measures are more adequately envisaged for them to become operational within the framework of Africa's Action Plan as part of the Global Strategy. In pursuit of that goal, human resource management is one aspect that requires consideration and achievable through better planning and appropriate training of staff within the agricultural statistics agencies in African countries.

To assist these agencies in the development of their human resources, a reference document on human resource management policy was commissioned by ECA.

### **Structure of the Guide**

The guide comprises the following parts:

- Part one is an outline of some basic concepts in the field of human resource management;
- Part two, which is titled overview of policies on human resource management in agricultural statistics agencies (ASAs), provides a description on what currently obtains in the field of human resource management and also addresses issues of institutional ranking of ASAs;

- Part three provides guidelines on the development of human resource management policies in ASAs; it also deals with the technical aspects of human resource management, particularly with regard to the prospective management of jobs, staffing and skills (GPEEC), training and appraisal of staff;
- Part four is on good practices in the field of human resource management which need to be encouraged within the ASAs;
- Part six focuses on partnerships and initiatives in promotion of the ASAs;
- Part seven contains recommendations and the conclusion;
- Forms and other documentation to be used as references by ASA human resource managers for updates and future improvements in human resource policies appear in the annexes.

## **1. Concepts and definitions**

- **Human Resources**

Human resources refer to the skills and abilities of staff in terms of interpersonal relations, communication, technical knowledge, planning and management.

- **Management of Human Resources**

Human resource management refers to a set of functions and measures which aim at mobilizing and developing staff skills to ensure greater efficiency in pursuit of the strategy of an organization.

Human resource Management covers many areas: recruitment, career management, training, performance appraisal, dispute management, social dialogue, motivation and commitment of staff, communication, job satisfaction, working conditions, etc.

- **Human Resource Management Policy**

Human resource policy is a formal statement of principles and rules that are set by an organization and shared to ensure that it is owned and observed by staff so as to move the management and organization in a desired direction.

It may apply to any aspect of human resources (training) or to a set of operations i.e. the prospective management of jobs, staffing and skills (GPEEC).

It begins with a strategic vision of the organization which is broken down into action plans for the purpose of achieving an effective management of human resources. It provides the underlying support for the implementation of the strategic work plan of the organization.

It incorporates the following aspects: identification of key areas of human resource management from the vision and strategic actions of the institution to the drafting, approval and implementation of the procedures.

There is a whole series of human resource policies, the main ones being:

- Employment policies, which refers to policies on recruitment, promotion and retirement; policies as they apply to particular groups (youth, disabled, elderly workers ... ) and the relevance of job requirements and to the skills sought;
- Wage policies which set the level and terms of remuneration;
- Safety and security policies, improvement of working conditions, health and welfare which all contribute to safeguarding the human capital, curtailing any unforeseen costs and improving the labour/management climate;
- Training and capacity building policies which contribute to the enhancement of human capital;
- Information and communication policy which helps to promote the implementation of human resource policies and shared values ;
- Involvement and participatory innovation policies;
- Industrial relations policy which is based on a definition of the scope of negotiations and consultations and on the ways to and means of ensuring their implementation.
- Policy of recognition which determines what or who needs to be recognized and the procedures to be observed for the purpose of such recognition;
- Policies with regard to social and cultural activities;
- Time management policies which contribute to facilitating adaptation;
- Diversity policies: which aim at ensuring that diversity an asset;

- **Career Plan**

The career plan outlines the phases of progress towards the mastery of the job with each step representing movement often in terms of performance. Thus, the career plan identifies positions in terms of incremental steps to be held by beginners with varying qualifications right through to the end of their careers and depending on their performance, conduct and time to be spent in each position.

- **Motivation**

It is a state of mind which is reflected in terms of the inner/outer strength which triggers action, attention and persistent focus. It is therefore easy to understand that motivation affects conduct at the workplace and is recognized as a factor in job performance. Motivation is influenced by:

- The wage structure;
- Consideration by others;
- Recognition of achievement;
- Justice and fairness in dealings with colleagues;
- Determination of goals and their evaluation;
- Career management;
- Human resource development (training).
- To stimulate motivation, the key processes in terms of human resource management are: appraisal, skills development and career management.

## **2. Overview of human resource management policies in agricultural statistics agencies (ASAs)**

Recent available evaluation of national systems of agricultural statistics highlights a number of institutional and organizational weaknesses in addition to material, financial and human resource deficiencies which affect the qualitative and quantitative production of statistics.

At the institutional level, there are various structures, ranging from ordinary services to departments or the main offices in charge of agricultural statistics. In some countries, several structures are involved in the production of agricultural statistics: one for data on plants, another for livestock statistics and even a separate unit for environmental statistics. One observes further that in some countries, it is the main office of statistics that produces data on agriculture. In most cases, all these structures come under the ministries in charge of agriculture, livestock and the environment and enjoy little or no autonomy in terms of management. In addition, they suffer from constant reorganization by their supervisory ministries.

They do not have their own human resource management policies separate from those of their supervisory ministry. Human resources within a public institution are governed by legal instruments and regulations on the management of civil servants. In such circumstances it becomes difficult for the agencies concerned to engage in the medium and long term planning of certain aspects of human resource management such as recruitment, training or refresher courses and remuneration. In fact, the career plan for officers in these structures does not differ from what obtains at the Civil Service Ministry of the country.

Institutions with a public establishment or State Corporation status and entitled to financial and management autonomy may have their own human resource management policy. In the case of the ASAs, which are the main offices but which are not autonomous in terms of financial management, their human resource management policies are determined by Human Resource Departments of the Supervisory Ministry.

Within public administrations, recruitment projections, in some cases, are mainly based on piecemeal arrangements with no rational basis. When ASAs are engaged in national surveys, the recruitment of providers (investigators and independent consultants) is done for a limited period of time. Staff recruited in that case is managed through service contracts.

Institutional constraints are at the very basis of the weaknesses observed in the management of the human resources of the ASAs. The main weaknesses are:

- Human resource that is low in terms of numbers and qualification in most ASAs and which translates into the lack of a “critical mass” of personnel trained in statistics. As a result, it is difficult to create Operational services and to produce regular and diversified data in light of new demands in terms of data on rural and agricultural statistics;
- For the rare ASAs with staff in sufficient numbers, there is often no proper balance in the utilization of the various categories of staff statisticians. Senior staff are often few while the general staff is bloated in numbers. This may result in two situations:
  - o Systemic dysfunction as intermediate or junior level staff are under-employed, while the few senior staff are not productive in terms of their managerial duties. Furthermore, there is the tendency to assign such managerial tasks to staff unqualified for such duties.

- Outsourcing of certain activities, including management level tasks so as to bridge the gap created by inadequate staffing;
- Most ASAs have not formulated a human resource development strategy to enable them to strike a balance between outgoing and incoming staff in the agricultural statistical system: such strategy, if it does exist, should include career management plans, incentives to retain staff within the agencies, as well as training and refresher courses. The absence of a human resource development strategy provokes the flight of qualified ASA staff to other more promising horizons;
- Quite often in the ASA, recruitments are not planned; they occur from time to time. That aside, many statisticians in the ASAs are there by default, as they have not found something better. The absence of recruitment planning does not allow for projections to be made on personnel required for more important future activities. Besides, by assigning some staff required in the ASA by default, the desire or enthusiasm to work in the field of agricultural statistics is stifled. That could lead to a decline in the level of supervision or to a slowdown in the implementation of activities as the most competent staff are the ones who leave;
- There is an information gap on the supply and demand for agricultural statisticians. Such gaps between ASAs and training structures do not facilitate the transmission and/or accommodation of training needs. Dialogue between these structures could lead to training programmes being adjusted accordingly;
- One of the recurring problems in ASAs is the low level of motivation among staff;
  - ASAs do not have a training plan for staff: a coherent framework for conveying training requirements is lacking. This results in a gap being created between the real needs and the type of training received;
  - Low level of staff motivation is one of the main causes of the flight of qualified senior staff from the ASAs. Motivation or incentives must include both financial considerations and opportunities for vocational training and advancement;
- Lack of training courses for agricultural statisticians;
  - Schools and training centres which offer courses in agricultural statistics in Africa are very few and the closing of some centres which organize refresher courses (the Munich Centre) further cut down on training opportunities. Capacity building is seriously affected.
  - Institutes of statistics do not train agricultural statisticians who become immediately operational. In fact, the course content of the institutes does not adequately provide for the agricultural component; it is merely a module lasting a couple of hours. A full course on agricultural statistics ought to be taught in the schools. Staff from such schools should have a longer period of adaptation and experience as agricultural statisticians.
  - Very few special training sessions are organized on agricultural statistics;
- ASAs also suffer from a chronic shortage of funds and equipment, which thus inhibits their ability to produce and innovate. This problem could be resolved by resorting to external aid with the assignment of technical advisers and the direct funding of human resource management programmes or plans.



With the above analysis, a number of guidelines must be pursued to improve on the status of the ASAs.

### **3. Guidelines on the development of a human resource management policy in the ASAs**

Prospective management of jobs, staffing and skills is a core concept in human resource management. Its goal is to provide an organization with qualified manpower in sufficient members at the right time. Such management includes:

1. Outlining the processes involved in making projections on human resource needs;
2. Formulating a strategy on the training of human resources as part of the annual planning and evaluation process;

Prospective management aims at enabling the timely availability of staff with the required qualifications (knowledge, experience, skills and abilities) and the motivation needed for them to be able and willing to perform the activities or duties and responsibilities as may be necessary at any time in the life and development of the agency over a period of three (3) to five (5) years.

These definitions implicitly include a notion of time and risk. The time factor for instance would require that decisions on recruitment, training and staff promotion needs be spaced out over time (see diagram below). As for the concept of risk, that would include addressing the issue of staffing in terms of numbers and qualifications.

#### **3.1 Phases of the prospective management of human resources**

Prospective human resource management has three main phases: i) identification of the jobs and their evolution; ii) quantitative analysis of human resources and iii) the analysis of the gaps and assessment of skills.

##### **3.1.1 Identification of jobs and their evolution**

To identify jobs and how they evolve, two key questions need to be asked:

- What is the structure for the future?

In view of the increasingly frequent reorganization at unit level or at global level with the incidence of mergers and takeovers, it is crucial for ASAs to determine how their structure will be (to avoid duplication...). What emerges in this case is the notion of a strategic plan for the institution which would include an organizational and functional outline.

- What will be the skills and jobs of the future?

A prospective study of professions would be required to establish the future needs of the organization and the skills required to cope with such needs.

### **3.1.2 Quantitative analysis of human resources**

Attention should be directed at adapting resources reflected in terms of positions to the needs of ASAs in the short and medium term. Reflection should be on how professions have evolved and on a sample simulation of the assignment of a person to a position.

A number of criteria may be chosen for that purpose such as “what would be the average age of the staff?”

- Analysis of the age pyramid;
- Estimate of the number of resignations, dismissals, retirements;
- Knowledge of the promotion policy and its implication on projections and on deviations;
- Analysis of changes in the flows of standard positions: where do the staff for each job come from? How long do they stay? Where do they go?

There are various tools already available within the structure of the agency to facilitate such analysis they include:

- The Organizational chart;
- Age and seniority pyramids;
- Annual performance review;
- The labour/management appraisal.

### **3.1.3 Analysis of gaps and skills assessment**

These qualitative and quantitative studies allow for projections into the future and for the assessment of the gaps that may exist between job requirements (skills) and the profile of resources (available skills).

Various imbalances may emerge:

- In the short-term, understaffing for instance due to the increased workload. In that case, it could be managed through the use of hourly schedules, employment contracts, part-time arrangements, subcontracting, etc.
- In the medium and/or long term, this would apply for instance to retirements, dismissals, transfers. In such cases, it would be necessary to identify precisely "who does what and how" and hence the need to have an employment/skills reference criteria in the organization. The purpose in this case is to identify, for each area, the set of skills that can be determined through knowledge, conduct and know-how related to the profile and position. In that way, it is possible to have a map of available skills. Based on such a map and the gaps observed, courses could be designed and proposed for the purpose of acquiring skills that are suited to the changes and needs of the future.

Such a reference criteria is built in several stages:

- A compilation of all existing information: the purpose here is to determine the situation as it obtains in each service, take stock of the needs and anticipate changes. To produce such a reference, the contribution of each member of staff of the agency is needed as each one is required to reflect on what they know and what they do, and to identify the types of tasks to be performed to achieve a goal.

- An identification of the key activities and related skills. Generally this is done through interviews that are used to assess the skills of an individual. One relies on a specific methodological approach in conducting the interview:
- Prioritization of skills as well as determining the level of control: there is need here to determine an individual's level and the qualifications required (in line with the qualifications desired for the position).

Then, once the skills are prioritized, an appraisal is done to determine whether the person is a beginner, or whether he/she is experienced or confirmed.

Such skills reference criterion is the first tool of the GPEEC. The reference criteria should be based on key areas of the job and must not go beyond ten professional positions. It must not be too complex and should be easily captured and understood by those involved.

The reference in each job should include:

- Occupation: title, responsibilities, professional situations, duties;
- Responsibilities: performance, conditions of success, professional conduct, values;
- Prerequisites: level of education, professional experience, skills and competencies, special conditions;
- Progress: proficiency levels (steps in mastering the profession) and thresholds (shifts in performance).

The creation of a reference table provides an overview of skills. It allows for a quick identification of the levels of versatility and the detection of critical points so that corrective measures are envisaged.

### **3.1.4 Joint means of adaptation**

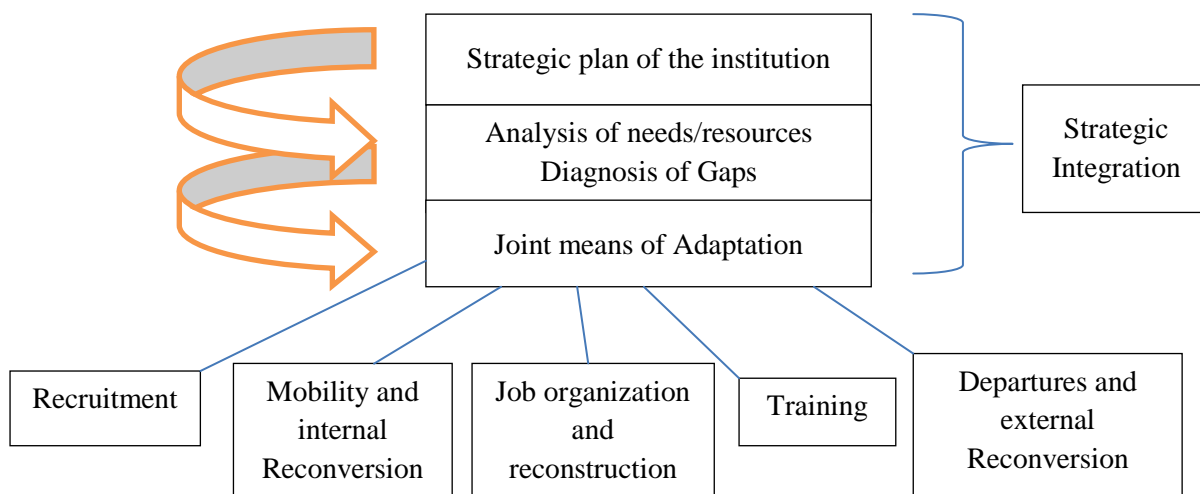
Joint means of adaptation refer to all actions identified, approved and shared for purposes of implementation. These could include:

- The recruitment plan that deals with new contributions from schools;
- Mobility and internal reconversion: mobility refers to movements to other central or decentralized structures if any; internal reconversion applies in the case of staff who have acquired skills while in service and have thus become agricultural statisticians;
- The organization and management of jobs: this in brief refers to activities related to the restructuring of the ASAs (new chart);
- Training: training activities are outlined in the plans or programmes (developed above);
- Departures and external reconversion: departures may be voluntary (resignation, dismissal, retirement, standby, secondment) or involuntary (death).

### **3.1.5 Monitoring and evaluation of action plans**

Various action strategies should be recorded in sheets while they are being implemented. Evaluation should be carried out each year and at the end of the period of the GPEEC. Yearly evaluations allow for activities not implemented in previous years to be shifted to subsequent years. This could be done either internally or through outsourcing to consulting firms. The final contributor should be able to vouch for the credibility of the findings.

The following diagram is an outline of the strategic approach of the GPEEC: the strategic steering plan



On the whole, GPEEC aims at determining the number and quality of human resources. It should be based on a number of tools of which the most used are:

- The strategic plan of the institution;
- The integrated framework of investigations;
- The organizational chart of the institution;
- The job description;
- Age pyramids and seniority;
- A yearly evaluation records;
- Overall institutional assessment.

### **3.2 Outline for the implementation of a GPEEC (Prospective Management of Jobs, Staff and skills) in ASAs**

As part of the implementation of national strategies for the development of agricultural statistics, ASAs would need a human resource management tool even if they are not autonomous in their management. The implementation of the plan of action of a strategy may call for the involvement of a multitude of experts and field workers. Their involvement could be by way of secondments, assignments, recruitment and training. A training and recruitment plan would be necessary.

#### **3.2.1 Documentary reference**

- Staff rules and regulations: this is usually the law as it applies to jobs and to civil servants and set out in the Official Gazette, which serves as the documentary reference.
- The legal instruments on the organization of recruitment as well as direct and professional competitive examinations supervised by the ministry and/or by the human resource departments (HRD).

- Staff records opened and managed by the Human Resources Department (HRD) including the personnel department of ASAs for follow up purposes within the ASAs. For the records to be complete, they should include the curricula vitae, certificates of various courses, contracts and various certificates of satisfactory service, the different positions held (standby, secondment);
- The joint Inter-professional agreement and the Labour Code for the management of staff on contract in the programmes and projects;
- The Public Procurement Code for the management of service providers (consultants, investigators).

### **3.2.2 The contribution of ASA to GPEEC**

- Recruitment: within the ASAs, there is the recruitment of staff, secondment (consultants) and external recruitments (interviewers, supervisors and controllers). Recruitment is conveyed by the ASAs participating in the recruitment process led by the HRD. The ASAs ought to develop a recruitment plan.
- Training: training needs, their assessment, training centres, participants, (level of qualifications) are determined by the ASAs and the implementation done by HRD. In collaboration with the HRD, the ASAs should set up a training plan; internal reconversion and mobility is done by HRD while transfers within the structures of the ASA lies with the personnel services of the ASAs;
- Organization and management of work: these two components are directly supervised by the ASA personnel officer and its officials. This is done by assigning staff at the right time and to the appropriate positions. Their duty would be to provide the required motivation through staff appraisal, setting of goals and accountability, scheduling of meetings, preparation of programmes and activity reports;
- Departures and external reconversion come under the HRD. Those concerned are informed by the ASA.

## **3.3 Guidelines for developing a training plan within the ASA**

### **3.3.1 The training plan**

Staff training is a management tool used in enhancing the status of available human resources and adjusting them to the demands of a constantly changing environment

In terms of welfare, training provides the organization with the social benefits and particular life style in a pleasant and professional working environment.

In economic terms, continuous training is organized throughout the process as a form of investment. It plays a key role in streamlining the allocation of resources; reducing cost, ensuring budgetary stringency, providing support to projects, enhancing productivity and achieving a better quality of service. On the technical side, new technologies are acquired and when necessary through continuous training.

In summary, the ultimate goal of continuous training is to enhance the performance of the human resources by introducing quality and support as part of the process of change.

### **3.3.2 Process of preparation of a training plan**

It is up to the ASA to set up its training plan, seek and establish the most appropriate balance between the knowledge acquired and the skills and abilities required in the positions on the one hand and, on the other, the knowledge and skills actually held by the person occupying the position in the course of the performance of his/her functions.

Such a detailed analysis of the knowledge, skills and conduct required for a position would serve as the basis on which the training plan would be prepared by the statistics agency and on which the training programmes would be grounded. A training plan starts off from the overall strategic guidelines of the management which are then divided into two key segments: a definition of the priority needs of the services and an analysis of the individual and collective demands of staff.

The process of expression of needs could be as follows:

- Diagnosis and analysis of training needs in light of the strategic guidelines, through a review, both comprehensive but also specific of individual and collective needs. The tools to be used could be comprehensive, exclusive to a service based on a specific function, by mail or by staff. The analysis could also be done by using the SWOT technique (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats) and by consulting staff.
- Classification and processing of needs by ranking/prioritization and scheduling of training courses with tools such as project needs and/or course plans or programmes
- Follow-up of training through training and appraisal interviews.

With this method of analysis, the training needs that are suited to the realities of the internal and external environment of the institution can be determined. It concludes with an identification of the various fields of training.

Consultation of staff is an effective tool for the diagnosis and analysis of training needs. It involves gathering information on training needs from the staff. Consultation and continuing involvement of staff in the process of identification of training needs must be done through the needs identification forms sent to staff.

Needs could also be identified through: individual performance appraisal and the GPEEC (Prospective Management of Jobs, Staffing and Skills).

Before embarking on the budget preparation process and after the letters of assignment are issued, the Training Officer must write to each officer in charge a structure in order to bring about the expression of needs.

This whole process (preparation and implementation) of training courses could be summarized as follows:

<b>Participants</b>	<b>Process</b>	<b>Means</b>	<b>Tools</b>
Agency Main Office	Strategic Guidelines	Group meeting, business, legal and technological intelligence	Phases (overall, per service, by function, by mail, by staff)
Services Manager	Breakdown into operational goal for each service	Service meeting	Meeting report on the expression of training needs
Heads of services	Analysis of current skills Emerging needs	Individual and group interviews	Meeting report on the expression of training needs
HRD	Centralization of needs, budget monitoring, monitoring of training activities	Summary table of needs; Record sheets on Training and Appraisal Interviews	Records sheets on training and appraisal interviews
Joint technical committee	Approval of the Training charter/ plan	TC meeting	Table of Needs, Projects and/or training programme

### **3.3.3 Implementation of the training plan**

Once the training plan is approved, courses should then be determined and scheduled. That activity is the responsibility of Training officer or of a designated officer. The training plan should be made available to the ASA Training Officer for Information.

To implement the training plan, the head of the training unit:

- Could take charge of some courses;
- Assign courses to some other training institute with some financial contributions considered;
- May not provide funding or organize some courses.

The official will be responsible:

1. Where training is outsourced, to follow up on the procurement procedure and work closely with the providers for TDRs. The specifications must provide the context, goals, type of participants, planning, arrangements etc.;
2. If it is internal, to work with the trainer and beneficiaries for the purpose of implementation;
3. To ensure that a report is provided on the outcome of the training;
4. To ensure a post-mortem appraisal of the training, which allows for the improvement of any aspect of the training (material conditions, teaching methods, facilitators, documentation), the assessment of the facilitators of the course, preparation of the training programme for the following year and the introduction of adjustments to the training programme for the following year; and
5. For submitting a report on the training programmes.

A training plan can only rely on the existence of appropriate training centres that meet the desired requirements (level of qualification). The training plan should be as detailed as possible for the first year.

### **Consideration of the action plan in the NSAS and the annual activity programme of the NSS**

A manual on the mainstreaming of sectoral statistical data in Africa in section 2B of version 01 provides a framework for the integration of sectoral statistics. That framework includes several strategies one of which is titled “Comprehensive Human Resource Strategy: same procedures for the training, recruitment and promotion for the entire staff of the NSS”. It can only be implemented if the NSS is properly coordinated. The current trend in many countries is to entrust the management of the careers of statisticians to the central institution of the NSS so that all government statisticians would have the same status.

#### **3.3.4 Some suggestions on the development of courses**

Various assessments of national statistics systems in African countries point out the recurring problem of scarcity of qualified staff in the ASAs. To rectify the situation, action must focus on two areas: i) ASAs should adopt a policy of effective and continuous human resource development; ii) Schools and training centres for statisticians should be in a position to provide the agencies with qualified staff in adequate numbers. On that issue, mention could be made of some of the activities that need to be initiated:

1. The development of initial training in agricultural statistics by opening a department of agriculture or one with agriculture as a major in the agricultural training schools that exist in African countries (both schools and centres with regional or national goals);
2. Encourage continuous training and organize refresher courses by opening or strengthening vocational training centres in agricultural statistics;
3. Encourage the ASAs in each African sub-region to pool their resources and suggest modules, techniques or guidelines for consideration by schools and training centres so that trained personnel could become immediately operational; to that end, guidelines or standardized programmes need to be developed as a basis for certification in the statistical training system via Africa’s integration;
4. Design protocol agreements with schools and training centres to ensure regular training for a pre-determined proportion of agricultural statisticians;
5. Establish a system of accreditation of training programmes in Agricultural Statistics in Africa that meets the training requirements of the ASA;
6. Promote vocational training and refresher courses for ASA staff by facilitating their access to training centres;
7. Encourage ASAs to develop training plans for a more or less lengthy period by regularly filling out applications for the training of agricultural statisticians;
8. Encourage ASAs to admit end of course trainees so as to accommodate them within a agricultural statistics environment and raise their enthusiasm for a career in the sector;



9. Promote an agricultural statistics component as part of the activities of the African Group on Human Resources and Statistical Training (AGROST) which specifically aims at pooling information on initiatives and programmes in support of statistical training;
10. Provide advocacy for the mobilization of resources for training in the field of agricultural statistics;
11. Ensure the continuous use of agricultural statisticians in the ASAs;
12. Coordinate donor support for training in agricultural statistics in Africa.

### **3.4 Guidelines for Staff Recruitment**

#### **3.4.1 Definition**

The recruitment process is an essential element of human resource management as it allows the organization to have and acquire the skills that it needs.

Recruiting is a strategic activity which seeks to fill vacancies or newly created positions in the organization.

Recruitment can be done internally, through staff who meet the job requirements or externally by attracting a sufficient number of candidates who possess the qualifications and motivation to occupy the vacant positions.

#### **3.4.2 Recruitment procedures**

The process of decision-making in the recruitment process is complex and based on successive phases:

1. Definition of positions

This phase provides for the preparation and/or update of the job description of vacancies in order to reflect changing expectations.

2. Definition of the job profile

The job description is used in this case to provide further details of the skills required to successfully fill the vacancy or vacancies.

3. Identification of sources of recruitment

Managers could recruit internally through transfers and/or movement of staff in the office. This process of recruitment is faster and less costly. The means used are:

- Advertisement
- Internal memoranda
- Memos or departmental meetings
- Intranet
- Internal appointment.

The other option is external recruitment where the position advertised calls for skills, qualifications or experience that are only available on the job market to enhance the potential of the organization.

It is costly but more comprehensive. It could be done by:

- Advertising the vacancy notice in the media, and/or on the website of the agency,
- Reference to the roster of unsolicited applications,
- Outside recruitment.

#### 4. Implementation of recruitment methods

This could be done by an internal recruitment unit or by the human resource department itself, a conventional recruitment firm or a head hunter. The head hunter contacts persons of interest and makes the offer.

The choice of the above operators would depend on the job profile (executive, manager, other), the sector of activity, the scarcity on the market of the profiles sought. It would also depend on the resources earmarked for the recruitment process.

#### 5. Launching of the recruitment

This is a technique whereby potential candidates are informed, it could be done by notice or communiqué, internet, personal contacts with structures specializing in the hunt for talents.

#### 6. Receipt of applications

Applications are received after an announcement is made. The process must be transparent

#### 7. Review of files (short listing)

The purpose here is to compile a short list of the candidates that are best equipped with the skills required after a review of the applications. A committee (responsible for human resources, beneficiary services, and management) will be established to ensure that the exercise is credible.

#### 8. Interview and/or written tests

A committee (responsible for human resource services, beneficiaries and management,) will organize interviews with the candidates.

#### 9. Decision

Approval of selected candidates is done by the Head Office.

#### 10. Absorption or engagement

This phase involves taking action to ensure the final selection of the candidate who will either be confirmed or placed on probation for a period of time.

### **3.5 Guidelines for the appraisal of staff performance**

The staff performance appraisal system serves to evaluate not only staff but the administrative services. It therefore requires that staff be involved in the management and proper communication between supervisors and their collaborators.

The main evaluation tools used in public services are:

- The letter of assignment
- Record of expectations
- Programme of activities
- The activity report, and
- The record of evaluation of outcomes and skills

- **The letter of assignment**

The letter of assignment is a written statement from the immediate supervisor setting the goals for each staff in charge of a structure. The latter in turn dispatches similar correspondence to his/her subordinates. Each manager allowed to rate staff must receive a letter of assignment. The letter of assignment is similar to the administrative correspondence from a superior to a subordinate (see template in Annex 4).

- **Record of expectations**

The information sheet (see outline in Annex 5) on expectations spells out the goals assigned to staff by providing details drawn from the letter of assignment. As regards the rating of staff, some other criteria ought to be set so that they are more effective in pursuing the goals assigned to them.

- **Programme of activities**

The programme of activities (see outline in Annex 6) is a schedule of additional or follow-up activities aimed at achieving set goals. It outlines the goals of the structure and spells out the activities to be undertaken, the deadline for their completion, the expected outcomes and the implementation constraints.

The programme of activities of a structure is subsequently incorporated into the programmes of activities of the various administrative units.

The programme of activities for each structure is initiated by the person in charge of the structure and endorsed by the immediate supervisor, before being reflected in a letter of assignment providing the general framework of the programme of activities of public administrative structures.

The programming of activities form part of the participatory approach with the main objective being to gear Public Administration toward the goal of productivity. Programming thus helps to ensure that the administration is more efficient and specifically adapted to an environment that is increasingly competitive.

- **Activity Report**

The activity report (see template in Annex 7) is an instrument for assessing the performance of administrative structures. It also acts as a tool of support for programming insofar as it concludes

with recommendations to be considered in the programme of activities for the next reporting period. The activity report is prepared on the basis of the programme of activities of the administrative structure and the results achieved during the implementation of various activities.

- **Records of Evaluation of outcomes and skills**

Such records could be made up of four components:

- The first is for the identification and monitoring of persons subject to appraisal;
- The second is on the evaluation of results, the mastery of the job, managerial skills and conduct;
- The third is on how the person subject to appraisal has evolved;
- The fourth is a recapitulation of the rating, observations of the evaluators, the views of the person subject to appraisal and the decision of the supervisor.

The period of appraisal interviews is set:

- Prior to establishing the expectations from staff;
- Every three months to adjust goals and carry out corrective measures;
- During the rating of the staff.

The appraisal extends for more than a year. Here with an example the schedule of the AFRISTAT appraisal system:

<b>Period</b>	<b>Tasks</b>	<b>Officials in charge</b>
From 10 <sup>th</sup> to 15 <sup>th</sup> December of year n-1	Annual planning of activities and outcomes	DG, Evaluators, Persons subject to Appraisal
July 31 <sup>st</sup> to August 5 <sup>th</sup> of year n	Midterm Evaluation	DG, Evaluators, Persons subject to Appraisal
Early January to 31 <sup>st</sup> January of year n	End-of-year Interviews and Assessment season	DG, Evaluators, Persons subject to Appraisal

### **3.6 Good practices in human resource management to be encouraged within the ASAs.**

It does not suffice to recruit qualified staff in sufficient numbers for the problem of inadequate staffing to be resolved. In fact, one must know how to ensure that staff is retained within the structure through good governance and other attendant incentives. To achieve that goal, the ASAs must pursue a number of good practices:

1. The training of human resource managers in the ASAs on the techniques of needs assessments and human resource planning; and
2. The adoption of management planning which includes forecasting and making projections on major or long term needs and resources. To achieve a prospective management of human resources management, focus should be on three areas of action;
  - Envisaging changes and accommodating possible systemic failures so as to equate future needs in statistical production to human resource requirements;

- Envisaging inadequacies such as overstaffing, understaffing or the existence of overqualified or not qualified staff;
  - Applying corrective measures in recruitment, career management, mobility and training.
3. Adoption of an approach along the lines of prospective management training through actions such as:
- Producing a report on the human resources situation in the ASAs by carrying out an inventory of such resources in previous years in order to observe trends that are likely to continue or diminish or even accelerate;
  - Making projections of the human resources required for a given period by determining what would be the human resource requirement of the ASAs in quantitative and qualitative terms within a set period (e.g. five years);
  - Determination of foreseeable developments by identifying all internal and external change factors that could affect staffing needs or the job content and skills required;
  - Identifying future employment needs, skills and human resources through the following actions:
    - Conducting an analysis of the changes and simulations used to study effects on employment and staffing needs;
    - Ascertaining the accuracy of the content of future work situations including the skills and staffing requirements for each job.
  - Analyzing of the gaps between needs and future resources by measuring quantitative and qualitative differences between the results of the human resource projections and future needs that have been identified;
  - The development of a policy to eliminate or reduce the expected gaps: determine the main directions of human resource development in future years in order to manage future changes more effectively and then break them down into concrete actions and develop practical plans of action.
4. The calculation of the turnover rate of human resources in the ASA: turnover rate of human resources is the percentage of the workforce leaving the structure during a given period. It is associated with voluntary departures, terminations, retirements or early retirements, deaths or (long-term) sick leave. A good practice is to measure the turnover rate and to take appropriate steps to reduce its occurrence;
5. Conducting a performance appraisal exercise from the stand point of the manager and of the staff.
- At the managerial level: performance appraisal creates a practical link between the goals of the structure, the individual terms of reference of each staff and the criteria for the performance appraisal; such appraisal should focus on staff involvement, participation and accountability;
  - At the level of staff performance: the appraisal is used to assess progress towards the goals set at the beginning and to create new ones; determine one's progress compared to others, build skills and improve on performance;

- Other advantages in such appraisal would include maximizing opportunities for career progress, defining training needs and allowing a monitoring and follow-up/mentoring exercise.
6. Integration of training and human resource development in the annual planning and budgeting of the ASAs;
  7. Introduction of measures to encourage staff to stay in the structure by organizing various activities that contribute to ensuring the stability of qualified staff, especially as it is no secret that qualified resources are as difficult to recruit as they are to maintain. In addition, it is much more costly to recruit and train new staff. It is therefore necessary to develop a strategy for retaining human resources;
  8. Definition of a joint system of career management aimed at striking a balance between the needs of the structure and those of the staff, which could contribute to retaining skilled staff within the ASAs by providing opportunities for change and development;
  9. Preservation and transmission of the “institutional memory” (knowledge, ability and experience acquired), which is an essential part of the skill and ability to renew structures;
  10. Creating a culture of competence, respect and fairness in the ASAs;
  11. Development of an innovative social welfare policy (wages, working conditions, incentives etc.) in the ASAs.
  12. Creating a culture of open and frequent communication in the ASAs; the art of communication is crucial in every conventional management exercise: planning, organizing and coordinating, directing and supervising. Organizational communication is a motivating and relational factor as well as in terms of expression, in other words it enhances the self-worth of the individual. The leader is essentially a communicator.

Internal communication plays a fundamental role when it can allay fears and resistance to the introduction of new processes or in regard to the uncertainty that accompanies every new structure; through transparency and proper discussions, it is easy to secure the cooperation and support of all stakeholders in decisions and changes.

The communication strategy should foster direct communication and the language of good relations and eschew formalism which is a hallmark of bureaucracy.

13. Creating a culture of mentoring and feedback by empowering managers in their activities within the ASAs;
14. Development of a culture of recognition of a job well done by staff, which would enhance skills and foster a climate of trust; staff would be viewed as leaders willing to put in the required effort.

Recognition also enhances staff perception of their structure and their commitment to it. However, preference should be given to the recognition of the team rather than the individual.

## **4. Partnerships and initiatives in support of the ASAs**

Restructuring of the agricultural statistical system in African countries calls for concerted action in technical and financial terms. The lack of local expertise and the limited financial means both require that African countries seek international technical assistance. However, for such technical assistance to be effective, it must create sustainable statistical capacity by promoting nationals to takeover and be in charge of national statistical production. Thus, the following actions would have to be pursued:

1. Advocacy for an increase in the financial, technical and human resources allocated to agricultural statistics in African countries, and in a sustainable way;
2. A more effective system of coordination at all levels through international and regional coordination mechanisms and a more efficient system of cooperation which takes into account the needs and priorities of African countries and the process of integration;
3. The development international partnerships for the development of agricultural statistics;
4. The expansion of technical cooperation to include African training centres in agricultural statistics;
5. Engaging and supporting regional statistical committees (AFRISTAT committee on statistical harmonization of the SADC, COMESA and UEMOA);
6. Developing and implementing national strategies for the development of agricultural statistics and providing technical assistance to countries so as to enable them to develop their systems of agricultural statistics;
7. Enabling countries to make better use of technical assistance to develop the skills and expertise of national staff; such technical assistance should focus on training and knowledge transfer to national professionals.

## **5. Conclusion and Recommendations**

### **a. Recommendations**

In light of the above diagnosis and analysis, the agencies will only become really operational when they apply a number of measures. These include:

- (Human Resource Development)

To acquire motivated and competent staff, it is recommended:

- **At the national level:**

- To have a centralized strategy for the management of human resources in the field of statistics. The NIS, in a system coordinated by the NSS, could support such activity;

- To have a training plan for the entire NSAS: training modules developed by AFRISTAT and supported by CESD statisticians who could provide a backup;
  - To develop and adopt motivating salary scales and career plans for each profile;
  - To set up training centres for middle-level managers and develop modules on agricultural and rural statistics for existing staff.
- **Within the ASAs**
    - To define and establish a system of internal promotion and remuneration based on merit;
    - To establish a system of financial and non-financial incentives (wages, working conditions, rewards, awards, etc.);
    - To ensure the continued assignment of statisticians to the ASAs;
    - To organize special recruitments in the short term to fill vacancies within the statistical agencies;
    - To determine the vacancies and, eventually, draft the job descriptions.
- **Development of initial and continuing training**
    - Encourage the ASAs to develop training plans over a more or less lengthy period by regularly submitting requests for the training of agricultural statisticians;
    - Develop partnerships between ASAs and schools or training centres to ensure a more effective accommodation of the needs of the agencies;
    - Enter into agreements with schools and training centres to ensure regular training of a fixed number of agricultural statisticians;
    - Organize training and refresher courses for ASA staff by facilitating access to training centres;
    - Encourage ASAs to admit trainees at the end of their course so as to introduce them to the environment of agricultural statistics and raise their enthusiasm to pursue a career in that sector;
    - Advocate for resources to be raised for training in the field of agricultural statistics;
    - Coordinate donor support for training in agricultural statistics in Africa.
- **Establishing a GPEEC (Prospective Management of Jobs, Staff and skills)**
    - Train human resource managers in the ASAs, on the techniques of needs assessment and planning of human resources;
    - Encourage ASAs to adopt a prospective management approach which is to forecast and carry out projections of the needs and resources required over the medium or long term.
- **Establishment of a performance appraisal system**
    - Assess the outcomes and skills of staff;



- **Raising the status of agencies**

- Agencies should have an appropriate status which allows them to pursue an effective human resource management policy. On the whole, there must be major advocacy for each Ministry to have a directorate of statistics same as in Niger, Burkina Faso and other countries, and to assign statisticians to such directorate.

**b. Conclusion**

The problem of human resource management within the NSS in general and the ASAs in particular is at the very core of the difficulties faced by statistical agencies in producing reliable and up-to-date statistics. Lots of initiatives have been taken to find solutions but unfortunately, the constant mobility of staff is still the order of the day. Discussions could be organized to seek ways to train enough staff and to retain them.

This document is an initial draft that needs to be improved upon through contributions by various stakeholders (criticisms, suggestions and experience sharing).

## Annexes

### Appendix 1

#### Outlines of a Training Plan

Strategic Goal									
Training Subjects	Goals	Period and Venue	Internal or Training Institution	Beneficiaries (Staff and Services)	Year and Priority 1-Urgency 2- Urgency 3- Urgency	Cost of Training (inclusive of all charges)			
						Teaching	Transport	Per Diem	Rental and Supplies

### Appendix 2

#### Structure of the job description questionnaire

❖ **Identification of the staff and the position**

- Name (s)
- Position
- Unit
- Age of the holder
- Scale and level

❖ **Tasks**

- What? (activities or tasks)
- With who?
- Support, tools
- Who decides?
- Who supervises?

❖ **Relationships**

- Hierarchal
- Functional
- Working Relationships

❖ **Requirements**

- Physical
- Intellectual
- Training (general and technical)
- Experience

❖ **Career development**

- Seniority
- Expected Promotion

Appendix 3

**Job description Outline**

I. JOB IDENTIFICATION	JOB TITLE:	Date of job description: No: Version:
	DIRECT SUPERVISOR: MANAGEMENT/SERVICE:	Approval of the supervisors Name: Function: Approval:
	REQUIRED PROFESSIONAL CATEGORY:	Approval of the supervisor Name: Function: Approval:
II. DETAILS OF THE POSITION 2.1. DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES 2.2. NATURE AND SCOPE OF ACTIVITIES a) Management (or technical activities) b) General administrative activities		
III. Required Resources 3.1. General 3.2. Particular		
IV. WORKING RELATIONSHIPS 4.1. Knowledge required 4.2. Professional skills		
V. FUNCTIONAL RELATIONS 5.1. Internal working relationships 5.2. External working relationships		
VI. PERFORMANCE INDICATORS		
VII. PROFILE OF THE HOLDER 7.1. Being the holder of ... 7.2. Professional experience required Have at least ...		
VIII. PROFILE OF THE HOLDER 8.1. Professional qualification (diplomas) Being the holder of ... 8.2. Professional experience required Have at least ...		
IX. SPECIAL JOB RELATED STRESS		

Signature of the incumbent

Signature of the supervisor

**NB:** Staff occupying similar positions must all complete the individual sheets to facilitate checks

Appendix 4

**Outline of the letter of assignment**

Ministry of ...

General Secretariat ...

Agricultural Statistics Agency ...

Head Office ...

From:

The ..... (Title of supervisor)

To .....

Subject: Letter of assignment for the year .....

Following Letter of assignment No: ...../..... of ..... which was sent to me by Sir/Madam .....and in conformity with the duties and responsibilities assigned to you ....., I hereby request that you prepare your programme of activities in light of the following goals:

- .....;
- .....;
- .....;
- .....;

You are hereby informed that your performance will form the basis of your rating in respect of the year .....

I wish to assure you of my readiness to extend my support in pursuit of this assignment.

Appendix 5

**Outline of the Record of Expectations**

Ministry .....

Administrative unit.....

**Record of Expectations for the year 200 .....**

1. Identity of the staff and the immediate supervisor

Name (s) of the staff:	
Services:	Occupation:
Category, scale, grade, and step:	
Name (s) of immediate supervisor:	
Position of the immediate supervisor	

2. Expectations of staff

Serial No	Expectations	Deadlines	Production Constraints	Outcomes
Staff			Date and Venue	
			Supervisor	

Appendix 6

**Outline of the programme of activities**

Ministry

General Secretariat

Head Office of the ASA.

Programme of activities for the year 20...

- **Introduction** (Reminder of the duties of the structure and goals of the letter of assignment)
- **Programming of Activities**

<b>Serial No.</b>	<b>Goals</b>	<b>Activities</b>	<b>Deadlines</b>	<b>Constraints</b>	<b>Expected Outcomes</b>

Place and Date

Initials of the officer in charge of the structure

Appendix 7

**Outline of an activity report**

Ministry  
Secretariat General  
Agricultural Statistics Agency  
Activity for the year 20...

- **Introduction** (Reminder of the objectives assigned to the head of the Ministry)
- **Table of implementation of activities**

Serial No	Goals	Activities	Expected Outcomes	Achieved Outcomes	Gaps (%)

- **Gap Analysis**
- **Outreach Activities** (not part of the programme)

Serial No	Activities	Achieved Outcomes	Duration

- **Conclusion** (Lessons and suggestions)

Place and Date

Signature of the officer in charge of the structure

## Bibliography

1. Christian BATAL, “La Gestion des Ressources Humaines dans le secteur public” Volume I and II.  
Volume 1: Analysis of jobs, employment and skills;  
Volume 2: Assessment of resources, needs projections, formulation of HRD policies.
2. Françoise KERLAN et Yvon Minvielle, “Guide de la previsionelle des emplois et des competences”  
This document:
  - Provides new insights in terms of precautions and recommendations for annual interviews, professional assessment, skills assessment and the development of the training plan;
  - Provides numerous standard record sheets bearing on methodology;
  - Provides practical case on the management of jobs and skills.
3. Alain MEIGNANT “Manager la formation”
4. Reference document for the training of professionals.
5. J-M. Peretti, "Gestion des ressources humaines"
6. This document should assist all those engaged in management duties enabling them to oversee the human resource component. It is up-to-date and with practical illustrations; it also meets the needs of executives in charge of human resources, operational managers and students in professional schools and universities.
7. Jean-Marie Barbier, Marcel LESNE, "L'analyse des besoins en formation"
8. This is a study conducted by a research team from the Centre for the training of trainers at the “Conservatoire National des Arts et Metiers” (France), at the request of the “Centre de Research d’Etudes et de formation mutuelistes et societes” of the “Mutuelle Generale” of National Education.
9. Direction du personnel, “Elaborer un plan de formation: note de recommandation sur l’élaboration de plans de formation en services extérieurs de l’Equipement: principe de marche”, Paris MELATT 1988
10. This document provides a clear definition of a training plan and the benchmarks to be met in the production of a good training plan.
11. L. Mathis, "Gestion previsionelle et valorization des ressources humaines”, les editions d’Oganisation”  
This document refers to techniques and practices on the adaptation of human resources, ranging from a quantitative and qualitative angle to one of internal and external changes in the organization or structure.

**Some training centres offering courses in Human Resource Management Policy:  
Groupe Cegos**

Courses can be tailored to meet the specific requirements of the client:

Tel: + 33 01 55 00 95 95 / +33 01 55 00 95 99

By mail: Cegos 19 rue René Jacques 92798 Issy Les Moulineaux Cedex 9

Trans African Institute for Development

Head Office

2nd Floor, Mbandzeni House, Church Street, Mbabane – Swaziland

P.O. Box 8413, Mbabane, Swaziland, H100

Tel: +268 7 606 5911 / Fax: +268 2 404 3872

E -mail: registrations@taidonline.com / taid.training@ gmail.com

Capacity Africa

Madonna House, 3rd Floor Suite 3D, Westlands Road, Westlands

P.O. Box 58182-00200 Nairobi Kenya

Tel: +254-20-4452674 / 4450937