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Dakar, Senegal, 12 August 2016 (IDEP) - In its efforts to support African countries to build their human resource capacities and promote socio-economic development, the African Institute for Economic Development and Planning (IDEP) recently organized a course for middle and senior level government officials and managers responsible for policy formulation and decision-making.

The course on Mineral Policy and Contract Negotiations was held from 11 to 22 July 2016 at the IDEP headquarters in Dakar, Senegal, catering for English and French-speaking African lawmakers.

The officials from various ministries, including mines and industry, spent their time in Dakar honing their skills in how to design and manage policies for their respective ministries, legal and regulatory frameworks necessary for the development of their countries, their sub-regions and the continent at large.

“The course, which is offered annually, is part of our short traditional courses that we organize every year to help build, upgrade and update the technical aptitudes and proficiencies of mid-career and senior government officials in economic management and development planning,” IDEP Director, Karima Bounemra Ben Soltane, said.

IDEP’s main activities are organized around a portfolio of capacity development and training programmes as well as a set of policy research and dialogue initiatives that are meant to help member States in particular.

It also offers on-demand advisory services to governments and public institutions, and serves as a forum for exploration of alternative thinking on African development.

This year, 22 participants from Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Central Africa, Chad, Côte d’Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo, Egypt, Ethiopia, Guinea, Kenya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Swaziland and Togo attended the course.

Among the participants were five women as IDEP also seeks to empower women on the continent.

The overarching objective of the course, the IDEP Director says, is to contribute to the development of a critical mass of highly skilled middle and senior policy officials and decision-makers on the continent who will be suitably or better equipped to design and manage mining policy, legal and regulatory frameworks for the development of their countries and the continent.

Participants, through the questionnaires of evaluation, indicated that the course in its content

and design met their expectations satisfactorily.

Dr. Ibra Guèye Dioum, representing the Minister of Mines and Industry of Senegal, spoke at the closing of the workshop and praised IDEP for continuing to help equip policy and decision-makers on the continent with the much-needed skills that can help Africa's development.

Members of the Diplomatic Corps or their representatives also attended the closing ceremony and encouraged the institution to continue to implement more capacity building programmes that will benefit the continent through its well-equipped policy makers.

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