



Core Skills Framework in Africa

Tsukuba, Japan

5 September 2014

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**Guide on the development of the
human resources policies of agricultural
statistics agencies**

Overview of human resource management policies in ASAs

- Recent available evaluation of NSAS 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.
- Institutional level: various structures, 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.

Overview of human resource management policies in ASAs

- In some countries, NSO produces data on agriculture **BUT**, 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. Therefore, they suffer from constant reorganization by their supervisory ministries.

Overview of human resource management policies in ASAs

- ASAs do not have their own human resource management policies separate from those of their supervisory ministry. In such circumstances it becomes difficult for the ASA 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.
- Institutional constraints are at the very basis of the weaknesses observed in the management of the HR 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.

Overview of human resource management policies in ASAs

- 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:
 - 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.

Overview of human resource management policies in ASAs

- 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.;
- 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.;
- 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.

Overview of human resource management policies in ASAs

- 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.

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;

Phases of the prospective management of human resources

- Prospective human resource management has three main phases:
 - i) identification of the jobs and their evolution; so, two key questions need to be asked:
 - What is the structure for the future?
 - What will be the skills and jobs of the future?
 - ii) Quantitative analysis of human resources
 - iii) Analysis of gaps and skills assessment

Implementation of a 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.

Partnerships and initiatives in support of the ASAs

- Restructuring of the ASS 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 TA.
- However, for such TA to be effective, it must create sustainable statistical capacity by promoting nationals to takeover and be in charge of national statistical production.

THANKS