The Government of Botswana recognized from the outset the significant role of human capital as a key element in achieving economic development. The principal thrust of human resource development is to create a strong human resource base with the right knowledge, skills, attitudes and values, which enhance productivity and competitiveness. To this end, the government has over the years established an elaborate human resource development system in order to meet the needs of the economy. For public sector manpower development, the University of Botswana remains the primary institution in the country. This paper outlines briefly the lessons that could be drawn from the organization and administration of Centre for Specialization in Public Administration and Management (CESPAM) established at the University of Botswana with the support of Southern African Development Community (SADC) and operating in partnership of some donor and international organizations for human resource
development effort. The authors argue that in addition to the several possible measures and modalities for human resource development exposed, the CESPAM experience has significant lessons for others, especially in regard to the effective use of external and internal collaborative efforts.

Introduction

Human resource development is an essential requirement for developing the capacity of public and administration machinery. Both public and private sector organizations have to attract, develop, retain and motivate their staff with attractive conditions of service, a conducive work environment and appropriate opportunities for further education, training and development in different fields and at different levels. Human resource development strategies have therefore to be developed at macro and micro levels. Adequate provision of resources for education and training of different categories of personnel at different levels in various public and private organizations is imperative and needs priority attention. Resources allocated for the task have to be rationally utilized by undertaking effective manpower planning at macro and micro levels of central government, local government and specific ministries, departments and public enterprises. Training plans at micro level should include and strike a healthy balance between long term educational programmes resulting in the award of degrees, diplomas or certificates, and training programmes of shorter duration with practical orientation in the form of workshops and seminars. Education in public administration needs a balance between academic and practical orientation. The contents of the programmes need to reflect global and international orientation but take into account adequately the local situation and needs. The curriculum has to reflect the appreciation of an interdisciplinary approach, which recognizes the close relationship of public administration not only with politics and law but also with subjects such as economics, sociology,
history and geography. Due appreciation of the local political, social, economic and cultural environment is also important.

Although some foreign institutions may be identified as offering appropriate training, the institutions within the region may be cheaper in terms of costs and may be more relevant to the needs of the trainees. Some trainees may need to undergo academic programmes leading to certificates, diplomas, degrees or post-graduate qualifications whereas for some short-term courses in the form of workshops may be more advisable. However it needs to be recognized that if an organization is to remain dynamic and the staff conversant with best practice, training as a source of learning must become an integral part of every organization’s activities and the staff at all levels including those at the top should be prepared to undergo it if and when the need arises. In the development of training institutes, the caliber and equipment of trainers is quite significant. As academics, senior public servants, business managers and expatriate staff have their strengths as well as limitations as trainers, the training team should be balanced to facilitate the contribution of people with different strengths to ensure a strong team of trainers. The countries engaged in the task of human resource development for effective public management have to develop the capacities of their local and regional training organizations for this task.

**Botswana’s Experience in Public Administration Education and Training**

The government of Botswana has recognized the significant role of human capital as a key element in achieving economic development. The principal thrust of human resource development is to create a strong human resource base with the right knowledge, skills, attitudes and values, which enhance productivity and competitiveness. (Sharma and Mhlalauli, 1993). The government therefore undertakes manpower planning to guide education and training in order to meet the needs of the economy. The government has given high priority to investment in human resource development and education and there has been a big
expansion in primary, secondary and university education in the country during the last forty years after independence along with expansion of vocational and non-formal education. (Republic of Botswana, 1997; 2003).

For public sector manpower development, the University of Botswana remains the primary institution in the country. Some other significant training institutions for training in public administration include the following. Institute of Development Management (IDM) offers courses of short duration to citizens of Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland in this region. The Botswana National Productivity Centre (BNPC) organizes workshops and seminars for different categories of personnel for enhancing productivity. The Botswana Institute of Administration and Commerce (BIAC), forming a part of the Directorate of Public Service Management (DPSM) of the government also offers long duration courses leading to Certificates and Diplomas in addition to the short courses.

The University of Botswana established its independent identity in 1983 after being a component college of the joint university of Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland (UBLS) since independence. From its very modest beginnings, the university’s total enrolment in 2005 rose to about 13000 full time students including the faculties of engineering and agriculture and affiliated colleges. The medical faculty is being born and the government has taken a decision to establish a new (second) university in the central district of the country.

The Department of Political and Administrative Studies (PAS) as a part of the Faculty of Social Sciences offers a Bachelor of Arts (Social Sciences) in both public administration and political science, which can also be combined with some other social science subjects. (University of Botswana, 2005A). The number of students enrolled for undergraduate and graduate programmes in public administration has grown steadily. The Department launched a Master’s degree in public Administration (MPA) in 1990/91 academic year aimed at furthering the intellectual and professional development of middle to senior level
staff in the public and private sectors. In 2005 this programme was attended by about 60 students. The majority of students came from Botswana but a number were from other SADC countries. (University of Botswana, 2005B)

Establishment of the SADC Centre of Specialization in Public Administration and Management (CESPAM)

With the support of Southern Development Community (SADC) and the government of Germany through the German Agency for Technical Cooperation (GTZ) a Centre of Specialization in Public Administration and Management (CESPAM) was established within the Faculty of Social Sciences of the University of Botswana in 2000. The Centre was to be headed by a Director whose post was to be at the level of a full Professor of the University and was to be appointed by the University’s appointing authorities taking in to account the requirements of the post of a University Professor with additional strengths required for heading a Centre of this type which could also offer short time training programmes for senior executives in the Public Services of SADC countries. Thus CEPAM is a SADC training institution which, for management and implementation purposes, is housed in the Department of Political and Administrative Studies (PAS) of the Faculty of Social Sciences at the University of Botswana. It is headed by a Director with three support staff. A Deputy Director is in the process of being recruited. It has two bodies that are responsible for governing and managing it: (1) a Management Board; and (2) an Advisory Committee. The Management Board supports the Director in dealing with the day to day management of the Centre and the Advisory Committee is responsible for ensuring that an appropriate link is maintained between CESPAM and SADC and that all regional aspects of CESPAM’s mandate are taken on board. The Advisory Committee meets once a year to review the work of CESPAM.
A Management Board consisting of representatives from different walks of life from various SADC countries was established to ensure that the interests of the member countries are taken into account in the organization and contents of different programmes. Membership of the Management Board is as follows: Dean, Faculty of Social Sciences (Chairperson), Director, CESPAM, Head of the Department of Political and Administrative Studies, CTA(s)/Cooperating Technical Partner(s) of Donors, SADC HRD Sector Contact Point in Botswana.

Membership of Advisory Committee is as follows: Vice Chancellor or Representative (Chairperson), Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic Affairs), Dean, Faculty of Social Sciences, Director, CESPAM, HOD-PAS, Representatives of the Dean of Faculties/Schools of Public Administration in the SADC Region – two at a time for two years on a rotating basis, Representatives of the Chambers of Commerce and/or Federations of Employers in the SADC region to represent parastatal and private sector interests, two at a time for two years on a rotating basis, Director of Social and Human Development and Special Programmes (SADC), a representative of each supporting donor.

The first incumbent of the post of Director was one who was a Professor in the Department of Political and Administrative Studies at the university. When he left, his deputy was appointed as acting director and later confirmed as director. In addition, the Centre was given an Administrative Officer and a secretary.

Establishment of CESPAM at the University of Botswana was recognition of the achievements of the Department of Political and Administrative Studies of the University of Botswana and its high reputation in developing relevant, appropriate and high quality academic programmes. Following its policy of establishing and supporting centres of excellence and specialization in different disciplines in academic institutions of member countries, SADC through competitive bidding and assessment by teams of consultants selected the Department of Political and Administrative Studies of the University of Botswana and in agreement with
this University established CESPAM. The German donor agency GTZ agreed to fund most of the operating expenses involved in addition to the commitment by the University of Botswana to provide office space and pay staff salaries. After its establishment, CESPAM developed strategic partnerships with four international and three regional academic or training institutions/organizations. The three international organizations were: Commonwealth Association of Public Administration and Management; National Academy of Public Administration, USA; York University, Canada; and the Commonwealth Network for Information Transfer. The three regional institutes were: Malawi Institute of Management, Institute of Development Management Botswana and School of Public Policy and Management, Mauritius. These partners worked with CESPAM in delivering the training events for senior administrators in various SADC countries. Twenty one (21) Short Term Executive Programmes (STEPS) have been organized and have been held in various locales throughout the SADC region.

The academic staff of CESPAM and the Department of PAS is well qualified and possesses doctoral degrees from reputable universities. The staff includes Professors, Associate Professors, Senior Lecturers and Lecturers. They have a credible profile of research and publications and are also active in the activities of various academic and professional bodies like International Political Science Association (IPSA), Commonwealth Association of Public Administration and Management (CAPAM), African Association of Public Administration and Management (AAPAM), African Association of Political Science (AAPS), Organization of Social Science Research for Eastern and Southern Africa (OSSREA), Southern African Universities Social Science Conference (SAUSSC), and Southern Africa Regional Institute for Policy Studies (SARIPS). The resource persons for Short Term Executive Development Programmes include, in addition to the staff of the Department of PAS, consultants hired from the region or outside with specific expertise.

Lesson from the Experience of CESPAM
CESPAM was established in 2000 as one of the SADC mandated centres of specialization. A significant number of senior officials from public and private organizations from various SADC countries have obtained the Master’s degree (MPA) of the University of Botswana and have attended workshops organized by CESPAM in different SADC countries. The CESPAM experience can be taken as a success story in terms of the high quality training events it has organized. The operation of CESPAM has been evaluated positively by the SADC Secretariat, the donor agency (GTZ), participants of CESPAM programmes, participating governments and the University of Botswana.

In addition to the several possible measures and modalities for human resource development, the CESPAM experience could have some lessons for the region. If manpower development efforts have to be organized with external support of donor agencies and the efforts of the local, regional and external agencies have to be pooled, some useful lessons could be derived from this model. The success of such efforts will depend to a considerable extent on the factors outlined below.

**Sustainability**

Sustainability remains a challenge in donor-aided projects. Donor support is normally for a specified period. If the host institution is not able to meet the expenses at the end of donor support, the sustainability and continuity of the project and its activities are faced with serious strains. In some cases, the activities have to be reduced or discontinued or cannot be pursued as envisaged originally when the donor support is no longer available. Although due care was taken about this aspect when CESPAM was conceived as one of the principles underpinning the German support was that CESPAM should become self supporting in respect of its STEPS programme, the operation of the centre has been affected due to discontinuation of donor support. Since its inception
CESPAM has striven to improve its cost recovery and at this point in time (2006) has achieved over 50% cost recovery. It should be noted that the calculation of cost recovery includes an allowance for the universities support. The MPA programme has suffered from the discontinuance of scholarships provided by the Belgian government and the Government of Germany to selected students from SADC countries to enable them to pursue the MPA degree. With the withdrawal of these scholarships, the participation of non-Botswana citizens from the SADC region has gone down drastically. CESPAM has looked for alternative sources of support and has been able to receive an undertaking for five German scholarships to non-Botswana students for the 2007/2008 academic year from German Academic Exchange Programme (DAAD).

Ownership and Partnership

A key element contributing to CESPAM's success and long term viability is that it has not been donor driven but has always been owned by SADC and the university. The basket of donors who have supported CESPAM have stressed that they are supporting CESPAM as a means of achieving the development objectives of SADC especially as outlined in the SADC Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (RISDP). This existing understanding on the part of both the cooperating partners is of vital importance for the success of the project.

Credibility

The success of any programme depends on the extent to which it is able to establish its credibility with the sponsors, participants, future employers, academic assessors and relevant sections of international community. The factors facilitating the credibility include the academic rigour and standard reflected in the curriculum, relevance, balance between global trends and local needs, caliber and profile of the faculty, liberal and academic environment of the institution, cordiality in the relationship with the governmental institutions, and
strategic partnership with local, regional and international institutions with similar strengths and interests.

**Relevance and Costs**

Compared to the foreign institutions, the local or regional institutions should be more relevant to the needs and expectations of African countries. The CESPAM experience has demonstrated that the skills, knowledge, expertise and relevant experience required in the trainers could be resourced locally or regionally. There is a need for a change in the attitude of governments and potential candidates towards further education and training available within the country, region, continent, and elsewhere. The locally or regionally organized programmes are more economical in terms of per capita expenses on participants, resource persons, and already existing infrastructure and institutional facilities. With these considerations, the Government of Botswana has adopted a national level policy ‘to redirect the placement of trainees to in-country training and the region in order to reduce the costs of training to Government and provide training for more public officers.’ (NDP 9, 371).

**Strategic partnerships and networking**

In the present globalized world, the African countries can gain from international, institutional and organizational cooperation by pooling their scarce resources and expertise. Their institutions need to develop strategic partnerships locally, regionally and internationally as the institutional cooperation and partnership can benefit and strengthen all the cooperating partners in a ‘win-win’ situation. This is what CESPAM has achieved in its Short Term Executive Training Programmes.

**Conclusion**
Botswana has to be credited with various human resource development measures that have been undertaken in the country. Progress can be noticed in the direction of manpower development through significant investment in education and training and gradual improvement in the quality of public service training. Other complementary measures which have contributed to a healthy approach to human resource development include: cautious localization of public service, phased decentralization of personnel management, rightsizing of the public service particularly by restraining its growth, increased use of information technology, computerization of public service records, and continued O & M exercises in the Directorate of Public Service Management (DPSM). Along with various other training institutions entrusted with the task of human resource development, the University of Botswana, Department of Political and Administrative Studies and CESPAM have also given their contribution to human resource development in the country and the region. The lessons drawn from the short experience of CESPAM as identified above, particularly with regard to sustainability, ownership, partnership commitment, relevance, costs, strategic partnership and networking related to the organization and administration of donor supported programmes, could be of help in designing and implementing similar efforts.

REFERENCES


University of Botswana (2005A), Handbook of Department of Political and Administrative Studies, Department of PAS, Gaborone.

University of Botswana, (2005B), CESPAM/Department of PAS, Handbook 2004-5 Master's Degree in Public Administration (MPA) Programme, Gaborone