
1: During the International Symposium of on Human resources, participants from African countries some of whom had been sponsored by UNDESA to attend the symposium, held a meeting to discuss how they can better network in improving professionalism and capacities of human resource managers in the Public Sector in Africa. It was attended by participants from South Africa, Swaziland, Uganda, Lesotho, Kenya, Tanzania, Zambia, Mozambique, and Mauritius. In addition Mr. Rhodes, the Chairman of the International Civil Service Commission, Mr. Lavelle from the World Bank, and Mr. John-Mary Kauzya from UNDESA as well as Neil Reichenberg and Mr. Jackson of the IPMA-HR attended.

2: Participants noted that their participation in the symposium was an eye opener to the need for networking and professionalizing human resource management in the Public Sector in Africa. They therefore expressed congratulations to the Public Service Commission of South Africa for having organized and hosted a very successful Symposium, UNDESA for having funded their participation and initiated the small meeting to discuss the issue of a network for Africa’s Human resource managers in the Public Sector. They also thanked IPMA-HR for having accepted to hold its international symposium and conference for the first time in Africa.

3: It was proposed that the participants from African countries gathered in Cape Town be a nucleus to form an international network of human resource managers in the Public Sector in Africa to mobilize, coordinate and support the growth and strengthening of the capacity of human resource managers in the public sector in Africa. The idea was well received and discussions were held on how to make the first steps and how to move forward to nurture and implement the formation of the network. It was proposed that there be a smaller group of seven people to work and concretize the proposal of forming the network (IPMA-HR Africa especially in preparing a background document that can help to shape the thinking further. The background document would be shared first among the members of the smaller group and then later shared with the rest of the participants in the Cape Town meeting. Participants were invited to volunteer to be part of the 7 member group.

4: The following volunteered:
   i. Mr. Mpendulo Mazibuko, Principal Human Resources Officer from Ministry of Public Service and information of Swaziland
   ii. Ms. Odette Ramsing the Director General of the Public Service Commission of South Africa
   iv. Ms. Jennifer Karimi Njiru, from the Public Service Commission of Kenya
   v. Ms. Nonuruse Jully Human Resources Manager, Cabinet Office, of the Kingdom of Lesotho
   vi. Ms. Thecla Shangali, Secretary to the Public Service Commission of Tanzania
   vii. Ms. Angelina Ungele, AAPAM Young Professional at Mzumbe University in Tanzania

5: Ms. Odette Ramsingh was requested to chair the group and M. Mazibuko, and Ms. Muwanga volunteered to prepare the first draft of the background document. Owing to the topic of the AAPAM Roundtable Conference to be held in Swaziland in
September 2007, it was proposed that as many as possible of the participants attend the Roundtable and use the opportunity to discuss the formative documents of the network, sensitize the managers of the Public Service in Africa present during the roundtable to support the network, and at the same time enhance their knowledge on the topic of leadership in the public sector in Africa. However, it was noted that participating in the AAPAM Roundtable was expensive and it was difficult to know who would afford to be there and who would not. UNDESA was requested to explore the possibility of funding at least the 7 participants who volunteered to work on the draft formative documents of the network so that they can lead the discussion on the network during the AAPAAM Roundtable and they can finalize the document.

6: As a simple guide for the writing of the formative document, it was proposed to the group that the document should briefly outline the issues related to the undeveloped professional status of Human Resource managers in the Public Sector in Africa and the need to rectify this situation through, among many other things, creating a strong professional network to champion the cause of professional development and strategic positioning of HR managers in Africa. It should outline some of the on-going efforts such as the attempts to form national HR Associations and present a case briefly for an Africa wide Association of Human Resource Managers in the Public Sector linked with the IPMA –HR and other international associations of similar objectives. It should give the objectives that net work of the Human Resource managers in the Public Sector in Africa can achieve and how they are of great value to the development of the capacity of public sector institutions in Africa. The gist is that developing the capacity of human Resource Managers in the Public Sectors in Africa will have a multiplier effect in building the capacities of other professions because the HR managers are strategic in determining whether or not there are capacity building strategies, programs, and activities in the Public sector.

Note written and distributed by
John-Mary Kauzya of UNDESA who chaired the meeting