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THE LAUNCH OF AFRICAN MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTES NETWORK (AMDIN)

A CONCEPT PAPER [Draft]

Preamble

This concept paper gives a brief background to the establishment of African Management Development Institutes Network (AMDIN), which will be launched on the 25- 26 August 2005. The South African Management Development Institute (SAMDI) is playing an active role ahead of other participating Management Development Institutes (MDIs) by virtue of its location in the host country of the launch.

This paper further seeks to highlight some of the activities that AMDIN will engage in, in supporting the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD)'s objectives of enhancing the capacity of African Management Development Institutes. This would enable them to provide effective capacity development interventions to public service cadres in their respective countries collaboratively or individually.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

The Development Policy Management Forum ¹(DPMF) initiated a major conference of Management Development Institutes/Public Administration Institutes (MDIs) in 2000 to discuss the challenges facing MDIs in the light of major problems facing African governments as a result of the intensification of globalisation and internal conflicts in many countries. The conference decided, among other issues to work towards the establishment of an African Network of MDIs which it was hoped would provide a continental forum for MDIs to begin dealing with the new challenges facing them and African governments. The conference requested DPMF to work towards the creation of the African Network. The Conference was held within the framework of the New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD) and the decision to establish the African Network was considered part of the objectives of NEPAD.

Between 2001 and 2003, DPMF organized annual conferences/workshops during which important decisions were taken towards the establishment of the African Network. In 2003, the DPMF organized Workshop of MDIs, agreed to establish the African Management Development Institutes Network (AMDIN) and to be launched in 2004. The Workshop discussed and approved a Strategic Plan for AMDIN and requested SAMDI and ECSC to prepare papers on Research and Consultancy and Curriculum to be presented at the launch of AMDIN. A Pan-African 'Governance and Public Administration' capacity development programme, as approved by African Ministers of Public Service, was adopted by the Workshop.

An Interim Executive Committee² (IEC) was elected and charged to prepare a Constitution for AMDIN to present it at the launch. The IEC's first meeting was held at DPMF after the Workshop. The Committee decided to ask DPMF to continue facilitating the launch of AMDIN in December 2004 or early 2005. After consultations, DPMF, on behalf of the IEC, asked SAMDI to undertake the task of facilitating the launch of AMDIN in South Africa by end of 2004 or in 2005.

Given that AMDIN intends to implement the African Ministers of Public Services approved Pan-African Programme "Governance and Public Administration" and that this Programme and other AMDIN activities are part of NEPAD's objectives, the launch of AMDIN became a collaborative activity with NEPAD and the South African Ministry of Public Service.

2. Activities of AMDIN

¹ PMF is an independent Pan-African non-governmental civil society organization based in Addis Ababa and hosted at the United Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA). Its founding and present Executive Director is Professor Abdalla Bujra.

² The members elected were Dr.Callistus D. Ndlovu, of ZIPAM (Chairperson), Prof.Sheikh A. Abdalla of ASCON (Member), Mr.Titus Gateere of KIA (Member)

The capacity of public sector institutions is essential to sustaining effective economic growth and responsive public sector services. To ensure that the public sector has the required capabilities, governments from across the African continent have established a variety of training institutes. These institutes, often with donor support, have established and continue to establish programmes for the training of public sector officials. However, as government financial contributions to these institutes are minimal, many find it difficult to establish appropriate programmes and build their own capacities for the effective delivery of training. In many instances, governments have had to rely on sending officials for training to countries in the north, thus further weakening the role and contributions of established MDIs.

Fundamental to the overall purpose of AMDIN, is the development of public administration institutional capabilities and the enhancement of knowledge – across the African continent – in areas of critical need and within the broad functional and institutional focus areas outlined in the approved programme. The programme places specific emphasis on building the capabilities of African Management Development Institutions (MDI's) so that they can play a lead in continental, regional and national public sector capacity development interventions. This focus was highlighted by the declaration of the Conference of Ministers of Public Service, which calls on international partners to actively support the programme 'through the provision of critical resources, and collaboration in building the capacity of local institutions and their staff to ensure sustainability into the future'.

Central to the strategic plan for the establishment and functioning of AMDIN adopted at the DPMF organised workshop of potential Network participants in Ethiopia in December 2003 was that the vision and mission of AMDIN should be the Network's aspiration to contribute to development and poverty reduction in Africa. The strategic plan contains the following vision and mission statements respectively:

“For MDIs to be centres of excellence capable of responding to African development challenges and global engagements”

“To create for African MDIs a platform that articulates their collective voice and that promotes mutual partnership and collaboration with a view to developing leadership and management capacity in response to the needs of the African people and their governments”

In the initial strategic plan for the establishment of AMDIN, the challenges that confront MDIs are outlined. Of particular importance is that many MDIs have found it difficult to retain and/or establish a reputation for excellence in training and curriculum. The plan further notes that outside of local, regional and international networks and partnerships, it will be difficult for the MDIs to develop a reputation for excellence. The plan therefore suggests that the value of products and services (certificates and graduates) of MDI's would amongst other things – be enhanced through a partnership between MDI's and their clients. A particular weakness of many MDIs is the failure to develop leading edge curricula and supportive training material. This weakness is particularly evident at the level of training that is directed at building high-level management knowledge and skills.

Training programmes of the majority of the MDIs are by tradition management training programmes modelled after the western nations' ideals. These programmes pay little attention to dogmas of good governance, democratisation and conflict management within the African context. Most MDIs comprehend these problems and are expanding their programmes. Some are even engaged in the review of courses to meet the changing demands of liberalised market economies that characterise the 21st century. Notwithstanding these attempts, some stakeholders are still questioning the worth and merit of the products of these MDIs.

AMDIN intends to be the fora where MDIs capacities will be enhanced to face the challenges outlined above.

The activities of the Network are grouped as Core and Supportive activities. The former are grouped into two activities, namely: 1. Research and Consultancy and, 2. Curriculum and Training. Supportive activities amongst others incorporate organising annual conferences, preparing a directory for MDIs, facilitating staff exchange and information, facilitating training and research partnerships, assessment of quality support, and acting as a voice and lobbying.

Given the common curriculum and training capacity challenges across many MDIs, there is an opportunity to respond to the challenge, through a supportive training of trainers programme under the auspices of AMDIN. Such a programme would seek to respond to the common capacity challenges confronting MDIs, by establishing a focused five-year **'training of trainers' programme**. The overall anticipated impact, the specific objectives, the focus areas, the outputs, activities and the estimated budget are spelt out below. Discussions on mobilising funding for this programme are at an advanced stage.

2.1 Programme Objectives and Impact

The central overriding objective of the 'training of trainers' programme will be to establish a network of capable trainers, with a focused curriculum and training material which is responsive to the needs of NEPAD. The choice of 'curriculum' and areas of focus for the training will be directed at establishing the participating MDIs as centres of excellence for high-level Public Administration training within five years. Whilst being responsive to the needs of NEPAD, the curriculum and material will be developed in a manner that will accommodate diversity of needs and contextual information. The central focus would however be to build a community of trainers, delivering a high level programme with common core elements of focus,

As the programme will be rolled out over a five-year period, it is anticipated that each of the participating MDIs will be able to deliver high-level training programme for 'Public Administrators'. Such a programme would be benchmarked with similar local and international training programmes and would thus serve to establish the MDIs as centres of excellence. This will contribute to the sustainability of African MDIs. The overriding intended impact is to ensure that Public Administrators at senior levels in all governments have the knowledge and skills to function in a global environment and can serve to establish capable public sector institutions to implement the programme of their governments and the programme of NEPAD and the AU.

2.2 Programme Outputs and Focus Areas

In line with the stated objective(s) and intended impact of the programme, the central output would be to establish a high level African training programme for senior managers in African public sector institutions within five years. The programme will constitute of a maximum of ten modules to be developed over the five-year period. Each module of the programme can be delivered as a self-standing module. The following captures the broad outputs for each module:

- i) Curriculum Content: High level peer-reviewed curriculum that includes a clear indication of the areas to be covered and the knowledge, skills and attitude changes that the curriculum responds to.
- ii) Training Material: High-level training material, with the relevant reading materials, teaching case studies, assessment material and a guidance for training delivery for the trainers.
- iii) MDI Trainers: Approximately 50 trainers (per module) from African MDIs who are able to understand and utilize the curriculum and training material for the delivery of the training modules to senior public sector officials.

The details of the overall curriculum for the Training of Trainers Programme will be completed in consultation with NEPAD and AMDIN. However, the following modules are anticipated to form part of the overall programme:

- Globalisation and Regional Integration
- Inter and Intra-Governmental Relations
- Strategic Thinking and Long Term Perspective
- Conflict and Post-Conflict Reconstruction
- Public Policy Development and Management
- Strategic Planning and Budgeting
- Leadership and Human Resource Development
- Public Sector Restructuring and Human Resource Management
- Public Finance, Budgeting and Financial Management
- Ethics and Anti-Corruption
- E-Government and Knowledge Management
- Public Participation and Service Delivery

Approximately 50 Trainers from participating MDIs will be trained each year, a total of 200 over 4 years (Year 1 of the intervention will be utilised for curriculum and materials development). We anticipate that the total training programme will be 15 days (per year), and the size of the group will necessitate 2 trainers per session. In order to accommodate the various languages spoken on the African continent, we envisage conducting whole sessions in either English, or French, or Portuguese.

3. AMDIN's relationship with Continental and Regional Initiatives

African Ministers of Public Service adopted the Stellenbosch Declaration and the capacity development programme on 'Governance and Public Administration'. These Ministers accepted the structure and broad orientation of the capacity development programme and recognized that the programme needs to be implemented as a segment of the entire NEPAD Programme. Furthermore, African Ministers of Public Administration also signed the Windhoek Declaration, which appreciates the significant role that MDIs may play in the economic development of Africa. These endorsements manifest that the establishment and operations of AMDIN have complete support of the African continental and regional initiatives. To this effect, regional economic communities (RECS) are invited to participate in the activities of AMDIN.

4. Conclusion

The Interim Management Committee and the facilitating institution (Development Policy Management Forum) requested SAMDI to assist with logistical, administrative as well as fundraising support for the launch scheduled for 25 and 26 August 2005.

It is planned that the Executive Management Committee that will be elected at the launch will present the outcome of the workshop to the preparatory meeting of the Pan African Ministers conference scheduled for 30 August 2005.