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**AFRICA BUREAU  
DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT  
ASSISTANCE STRATEGY PAPER**

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**Africa Bureau  
Office of Technical Resources  
Education and Human Resources Development Division**

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>PAGE</u>
I. Introduction .....	1
II. Development Management Defined .....	1
III. The Need to Improve Development Management .....	2
IV. Evolution of AID Support to Development Management .....	5
V. Areas of Primary Concern .....	5
Policy Reform	
Alternative Service and Input Delivery Mechanisms	
Training	
Financial Management	
Resource Allocation	
VI. Application of Strategy to Africa Programs .....	8

- 1 -

**AFRICA BUREAU DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT  
ASSISTANCE STRATEGY PAPER**

**I. Introduction**

The purpose of this strategy paper is to provide guidance to Africa Bureau personnel, field missions, and regional offices in planning for and implementing improved development management for Africa. The paper seeks to assist USAID personnel in the field as well as AID/W in encouraging development management improvement in African countries and in determining opportunities for incorporating development management improvement components in new programs. The strategy deals with a pressing problem in development assistance, i.e., how to use scarce resources efficiently to produce development results. Experience and analysis have shown that improvement of development management is a key area for assistance. African institutions are increasingly cognizant of their needs in management improvement and in some countries eager to take advantage of opportunities to upgrade their development management capacity. The strategy recommends that development management assistance efforts be targetted in major sectors, particularly agriculture. Institutional development, a key area for development assistance provides the basic framework for carrying out development management improvement. Within institutional development, AID places particular emphasis upon agricultural research, extension and training institutions which provide a significant link between technology and improving the productivity in Africa (See Africa Bureau Food Sector Assistance Strategy).

Complementary to this strategy paper on Development Management Assistance, the Africa Bureau has completed a strategy paper for Basic Education and Technical Training, and is preparing strategy papers on Participant Training and Agricultural Education. All three provide guidance for planning, design and implementation of programs in the human resources sector.

**II. Development Management Defined**

Development management is a process by which resources available to developing countries are organized and used to achieve specific development objectives. As S&T/RD has characterized this process:

"Management supports the transfer of technology...to LDCs so as to maximize the technology's impact; and management is itself a technology to be transferred

and adapted to LDC needs. Management assistance helps LDCs to make effective and efficient use of scarce resources, to structure development tasks, and to find ways to accomplish them."<sup>1</sup>

Experience in implementing development programs has shown that good management is an essential element of economic development for host country implementing agencies as well as donors. Efficient and productive management of human and material resources requires the application of appropriate techniques to solving problems as well as the long-term institutionalization of these methods to ensure effective management after external support has ended. U.S. assistance efforts must be sensitive to social, cultural, and economic conditions in prescribing long or short-term management techniques. This applies to effective project management as well as to increasing the capacity of organizations and groups which are called on to manage development assistance in Africa.

### III. The Need to Improve Development Management

Development planners have become increasingly aware that inefficient management contributes in no small measure to project implementation failures. The problems caused by inadequate management of resources and activities contribute to the maintenance of a static system which does not allow for organizational change and institutional adaptation to developing country needs. Inadequately trained managers and inability to meet general requirements for good management have resulted in delays in project implementation, poor accountability for funds, short-falls in anticipated project impact, cost over-runs, communication and logistical breakdowns, inability to sustain benefits after project completion and other failures associated with programming for economic development.

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<sup>1</sup> "Essential Elements of Development Administration: Considerations for Program Design and Implementation", AID, Bureau for Science and Technology, Office of Rural and Institutional Development, 1983

**The World Bank in its 1981 report on accelerated development in sub-Saharan Africa, states:**

**Economic progress in any society requires that resources be used efficiently by organizational units in both public and private spheres....**

**It goes on to say that this also requires that "organizational structures and the important role of management be continuously examined."**

**AID's focus within the range of possible development management improvement targets is to strengthen indigenous development institutions and foster improved productivity through building self-sustaining capacity in organizations and groups. Two basic needs are thus addressed: improved organizational performance for specific project results and long-term capacity building.<sup>2</sup> These two aspects are closely related and coincide with AID's institutional development strategy which requires careful attention to long-term needs as well as immediate project performance improvement.**

**Institutional development includes strengthening the sustainability of key sectoral institutions in agriculture, health, and education. The ability of such institutions to provide basic services in areas such as primary education, family planning, and agricultural extension requires building the capability to manage effectively in all sectoral projects, especially those which provide services or technology to rural producers.**

**In promoting development management assistance, AID and other donors have the advantage of a changing climate in Africa where governments have become more aware of the need for management improvement. With greater frequency, LDCs are requesting workshops, seminars, participant training, and other types of assistance to improve their management capacity. The difficulties encountered in project implementation and instances of project failure coupled with the need to manage scarce resources more effectively have helped to increase interest in management improvement.**

**There are a variety of conceptual and technical approaches which lend themselves to development management improvement. Choices of techniques should be governed by mutually identified program and institution building needs. Program planners**

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**2. Ibid.**

should look for opportunities to enhance development management capacity in design, implementation, and evaluation so that attention to this area becomes a continuous process. An appropriate mix of capacity-building in development management should include long and short-term technical assistance in specific management areas, a maximum of in-country training, short and long-term training, and collaborative research with indigenous organizations such as management institutes.

Regardless of the mix of techniques used to improve development management, careful attention should be paid to cultural and social factors in transferring management technology particularly at the local level. Using locally available management consultants as much as possible will help to ensure applicability and acceptability of the ideas and methods being developed. New adaptations of existing methods may evolve from a collaborative approach which can greatly enhance both host country and donor understanding of the crucial elements involved in building successful programs and long-term institutional capacity. It is important that the local population participate in decisions with respect to the transfer of management technology. Those responsible for planning and implementing projects should have knowledge of local political structures and encourage community participation. Local authorities are likely to maintain interaction with local groups which may be translatable into support for a program or pilot project.

The Africa Bureau Strategic Plan places primary emphasis upon the agriculture sector to improve food production capacity and augment the income of rural producers. To this end, program priorities focus upon "the building of self-sustaining African institutions that provide appropriate technology, in-puts, and services at the time and in the quantity necessary for effective production and distribution of food products; and support for institutional and human resource development programs that provide for greater participation of farmers in the development process."<sup>3</sup>

Development management improvement components in agricultural projects should test new ways to manage programs and create effective systems for service or input delivery. Involvement of local institutions, research organizations and management institutes helps to build in-country capacity over the long term. In this context, strengthening agricultural private and public institutions is of particular significance for stimulating long-term growth in the agricultural sector.

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3. Africa Bureau Strategic Plan, 4 January, 1984

#### IV. Evolution of AID Support to Development Management

AID has been concerned with improving development administration in foreign assistance programs for over twenty years. Earlier programs focussed on building public administration organization skills in major ministries and Public Administration training institutions through long-term technical assistance and training. In some areas of the world, linkages still exist between U.S. institutions and organizations and the public organizations with which they collaborated. This has not been so for Africa where on the whole AID programs were on a much smaller scale during the same period.

More recently, emphasis has shifted to a broader application of institutional development which takes into account the socio-cultural context of technology transfer as well as the need to involve a multiplicity of institutions and organizations in both public and private sector management improvement. Along with this shift of focus has emerged an appreciation of the complexities of management in the development setting at all levels. As set forth in AID's paper, "Essential Elements of Development Administration: Considerations for Program Design and Implementation," development administration is concerned with sector-specific institutional development, local initiatives, managing programs at the national level and management service institutions.

Development management improvement efforts are a critical dimension of institution building activities (see AID Policy Paper on Institutional Development). They relate to basic issues for most African institutions, i.e., how to use limited resources effectively to administer and implement donor-funded programs and how to build long-term capability to manage development activities.

#### V. Areas of Primary Concern

##### A. Policy Reform

Management improvement in Africa must deal with structural constraints to economic development. We must find ways to help LDC's make appropriate changes in the organizational structures inherited from European colonization which have proved

inadequate for current administrative tasks. Administrative reform is essential if improved management practices are to take hold. Organizations need encouragement to institute less top-heavy and centralized models whenever possible.

Decentralization which is a policy choice in terms of resource allocation also has important implications in terms of structural change. The improvement of service delivery through institutions may well depend on how the organization is set up. The movement toward decentralization in some African countries reflects the understanding that delegation of authority by the central government has a decided bearing on popular participation in programs designed to promote economic development. Successful development programs depend on the widest possible base of support as close to the beneficiaries as possible. Recent trends toward decentralization in some African countries can be encouraged by providing training for management skills at the local level. The identification of new groups and organizations outside government also requires special management improvement efforts to help these groups implement their own development programs. Projects which provide management skills training for entrepreneurs and private voluntary organizations can help to encourage decentralization and local participation.

#### B. Alternative Service and Input Delivery Mechanisms

Choices made by users between competing service delivery mechanisms have led some African governments to give serious consideration to private sector service and input delivery mechanisms for the rural areas. These may include non-profit local groups controlled by the beneficiaries as well as informal trade sources or formal entrepreneurial arrangements. The movement away from parastatals as ineffective providers of services is based on a perception of their weak managerial skills and ineffective programs. As private sector services develop, they will require special skills in financial management and program management to ensure successful operation of development activities. Entrepreneurs are increasingly important in rural development activities and will need management training to carry out their responsibilities. The switch of service procurement on the part of users from public to private means will depend on improved service delivery.

Services still being provided through government agencies, such as health care, will need to upgrade managerial skills to meet users' needs more regularly and effectively.

Several health projects in Africa such as the Rural Health Services project in Mauritania, for example, are now providing management skills training as a means of improving service delivery. The regional project, Strengthening Health Delivery Systems (SHDS), is also helping to build institutional capacity in 20 participating African countries. In Zimbabwe, the Child Spacing and Fertility (CSFA) project provides for expansion of CPFA's capability to manage its program. Opportunities should be identified in all types of service delivery projects to improve both project performance and long-term benefits to beneficiaries after the life of the project.

### C. Training

The improvement of development management in Africa will require increasingly the inclusion of special management components in new as well as existing projects.

In relation to this, specialized training is a basic need but by no means the sole requirement. Changes must also be made in institutions, systems, and procedures through collaborative experimentation. Training must be carried out in a broad spectrum of skills applied across all sectors, in a variety of cultural and political settings. These needs must be carefully defined to meet both project and long-term institutional requirements in management improvement. The use of long-term, third country, and in-service training should be carefully assessed so that the training component of each project includes appropriate management skills building. Currently in Africa, one regional training project requires at least two courses in management for all long-term participants regardless of specialization (Sahel Manpower Development Project II). Every opportunity should be used to increase institutional capability through the use of African training institutions and personnel.

### D. Financial Management

Attention to financial management and accountability, revenue and tax systems as well as structural administrative performance issues is crucial. The Sahel Regional Financial Management project provides for accountability and financial management training in a cross section of projects with local currency accounts. In this way skills are acquired by project personnel in several sectors and with anticipated long-term results. Since AID portfolios for African countries are largely concentrated in the agricultural sector, some residual capacity building in financial management should persist in these institutions after project completion.

### E. Resource Allocation

Changes in government policy and structure of institutions to improve development management will of necessity bring about resource allocation implications both for African governments and AID. New program components to reinforce management improvement efforts will require additional funding.

It is important to encourage reforms which facilitate change and lead to management improvement. Institutions which try to improve management and service delivery must have access to sufficient funds to sustain improvements over time and to serve as models.

### VI. Application of Strategy to Africa Programs

Management improvement must be encouraged in all sectors, but particularly in agriculture. Development management is a dynamic and not a static activity and it must be carried out on a continuing basis adapting to changes as the process evolves. This applies to development management components of AID projects and activities entirely devoted to institution building as well as to programs for management training. Management improvement comes about as a gradual process which includes learning by doing, introduction and adaptation of technology and the provision of relevant training. It is also a long-term process. Periodic evaluation and assessment are essential to expanding and efficient development management activities. Finally, there is a need to establish sound management practices so that after outside assistance has ended, host countries will have the capacity to continue programs utilizing their own resources. The Africa Bureau Strategic Plan reinforces these themes by underlining the need to create incentives for alternative institutions to manage development activities. This requires management skills improvement in the new areas of emphasis: local organizations and private entrepreneurs. The Strategic Plan calls for innovation to interact with such organizations to meet basic donor requirements and build in-country capacity. The PVO Community and Small Enterprise Development Project being implemented in Senegal is attempting to define new resource transfer and capacity building mechanisms for working directly with rural producer groups.

Africa Bureau will continue to carry out development management improvement in its programs through (1) project components related to management; (2) management development projects and activities within sectors, particularly agriculture; (3) support to indigenous management training and research institutions; and (4) revenue and financial management

projects. Such programs in the private and public sectors require special attention to management improvement as well as a conscious effort to recognize organizational weaknesses and take steps through program development to build long-term capability. Otherwise, attempts to upgrade agricultural and other institutions are likely to fail.

The areas of primary concern in management as set forth above, are not necessarily separate and distinct. Moreover, various management improvement techniques may be applied to one or more of those areas. Strategies for management improvement, therefore, are adaptable and applicable to almost all development projects which involve resource management and the need to build in-country capacity.

Some current Africa Bureau projects are targetting special aspects of development management improvement. The Development Leadership Training project in Mali provides for 60 participants and emphasizes management skills development. The Training for Rural Development project in Tanzania has focussed on training and capacity building at the local, regional, and national level. The Rural Management Training project in Senegal provides program management training through a national management institute for practioners working in rural areas.

Training in development management is a prime, although not the only, requirement for improving the manpower capacity of developing countries. Africa Bureau has provided and will continue to provide both long and short-term management training for African participants. Training is important not only for sector specific institution building, but also for the development of private enterprise. Much of such training takes place in the United States, but some is carried out in African institutions (such as ESAMI in Tanzania or PAID in Cameroon). The Africa Bureau has provided and will continue to provide support for training to strengthen local management institutions (faculty and research) as well as to encourage the development of host country technical assistance capacity.

In addition to management improvement for host country individuals, Africa Bureau must also take into consideration its own need for a cadre of technical officers qualified in development management. It will (a) encourage training for selected officers who have some background in public administration/development management; and (b) urge the assignment of one officer qualified in public administration/development management in each of the REDSOs.

**Opportunities for training in development management should be made available to qualified AID officers through short-term courses in-house, as well as at U.S. institutions. Such training would help to build up expertise in AID's own ranks and improve AID capacity to manage development programs.**