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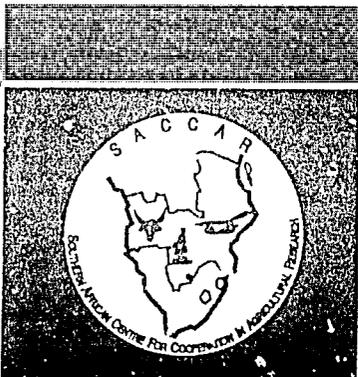
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TRAINING SERIES

Country Report: Lesotho

P.Q. Cweba, P. Lekhotla and T. Namane



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CABI Descriptors:

Agricultural Research; Lesotho; Management; Managers; Personnel Management; Research Workers; Scientists

AGROVOC Descriptors:

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COUNTRY REPORT LESOTHO

P. Q. Cweba, P. Lekhotla, and T. Namane

Introduction

Following the era when Lesotho exported food to the Union of South Africa, a period of food shortages occurred. This eventually led to the establishment of agricultural research in the country, starting in 1952 as a small unit in the department of crops. The unit primarily focused on research in field crops (wheat, maize, and sorghum), some range management, and later, limited horticultural crops. Research staff in these early days was comprised of expatriates (primarily British) and local staff (agricultural demonstrators), who were trained in the Cape Province. In 1955 the Lesotho Agricultural College was established to

train farm educators and researchers for the ministry of agriculture.

The division of agricultural research was established in 1979 with 10 research programs. Table 1 shows the staff in 1988, and table 2 shows the tentative staff-development plan for the division until the year 2000.

Human Resource Assessment

The organization does not have set guidelines for collecting and assessing information about its research scientists. However, some form of annual assessment is done on all public officers to determine their capabilities. The manager

Table 1. Staffing Situation in the Agricultural Research Division, by Current Research Programs, 1988

Discipline	Available Positions				In Training			
	PhD	MSc	BSc	Dipl	PhD	MSc	BSc	Dipl
Administration	1*	3	1	0	1	0	0	0
Agronomy	1*	0	0	2	1	0	2	0
Soils	1*	0	1	2	0	0	1	0
Seed Technology	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
Horticulture	1*	1	1	2	0	0	1	0
Plant Pathology	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0
Entomology	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0
Animal Science	1*	0**	1	0	1	0	1	0
Range	0	0	2	1	0	0	0	0
Human Nutrition	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0
Marketing	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0
Farm Management	1*	0	1	0	1	0	0	0
Rural Sociology	1*	1**	0	0	0	0	0	0
Agric. Engineering	0	1*	0	1	0	1	0	0
Extension	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0
Farm Foreman	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
Library	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
Total	7*	8	8	14	5	3	6	0

*Expatriates with projects.

**Qualified person resigned.

Table 2. Projected Staffing Situation at Agricultural Research Division, 1990 to 2000

Discipline	1990				1995				2000			
	PhD	MSc	BSc	Dipl	PhD	MSc	BSc	Dipl	PhD	MSc	BSc	Dipl
Administration	1	3	1	0	1	3(1)	0	0	2	2	0	0
Agronomy	1	(1)	1	1	1(1)	(1)	1	1	2(1)	(1)	(1)	1*
Soils	0	1(1)	1	2	1	1	1(1)	1	1	1(1)	1	1
Seed Technology	0	0	1	0	0	(1)	1*	0	1	1	0	1*
Horticulture	0	1(1)	1	0	1	1	1	1*	1(i)	(1)	1	0
Plant Pathology	1	0	(1)	0	1	(1)	0	1*	1	1	(1)	1*
Entomology	0	1	0	1	0	1	(1)	0	(1)	0	1	1*
Animal Science	(1)	(1)	1	0	1	1(1)	0	1*	1	2	(1)	0
Range	0	(1)	1(1)	0	(1)	1	1	0	(1)	(1)	1	1*
Human Nutrition	0	1	1*(1)	0	(1)	(1)	1	0	1	1(1)	0	1*
Marketing	0	2	0	0	0	2	0	1*	(1)	1	(1)	1*
Farm Management	1	0	1	0	1	(1)	0	0	1	1	0	1*
Rural Sociology	0	1	1*	0	0	1(1)	0	1*	0	2	(1)	0
Ag. Engineering	0	1	(1)	0	0	1(1)	0	2*	0	2	(1)	1
Extension	0	0	0	2	0	0	(1)	0	0	1(1)	(1)	2*
Farm Foreman	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Library	0	0	0	1(1)	0	0	(1)	1	0	0	1(1)	(1)
Total	4(1)	11(5)	10(4)	8(1)	7(3)	12(9)	6(4)	11	11(5)	15(6)	5(8)	13(1)

0 = On training for the indicated degree.

*To be recruited for new position.

of the organization will then make comments based on this assessment, both to provide feedback to the officers and for record-keeping purposes.

Information on the expertise, skills, strengths, and weaknesses of each researcher is collected from reports made by immediate supervisors and from other relevant documents like certificates and testimonials. Generally, no regular review is conducted.

Strategic Human Resource Planning

Human resource planning helps the organization meet its goals and objectives. And in formulating a human resource plan, the organization must base its information on available financial resources and the quality and quantity its current staff.

The agricultural research division has specific research programs, such as agronomy, animal science, range management, soil science, etc., for which goals and objectives have been set. This, in turn, helps determine staffing requirements for each of these programs.

Human resource planning is affected by requests from researchers for additional staff or further training. It is also influenced by funds from donor agencies and training programs that are only available abroad. Other government ministries, such as finance and management services, assist by creating and funding positions for returning trainees.

The period required to formulate a strategic human resource plan is determined by the needs of the organization at that time, whether short-term or long-term. In short, it varies with each situation.

When the plan has been formulated, it is sent to the office of management and finance in the ministry of agriculture in the form of a proposal.

Recruitment/Selection

The director of research and all other section or department heads are made aware of vacant positions through the personnel office of the ministry. This is done in order to give the organization an opportunity to hire employees with the right skills, training, and motivation to satisfy the aspirations of both the organization and the individuals themselves.

When preparing to recruit a new employee, the director or head of the department writes up a job description outlining the skills required, educational qualifications, previous experience, salary grade, and associated benefits. All this information is sent to the personnel office. The position is then advertised locally and/or internationally, depending on the caliber of the candidate required.

Applications are examined, and a short list is made of the most promising applicants. These individuals are then invited to come in for an interview. Public service interviews are used to assess the level of knowledge and competence

of each applicants, and the successful candidate is then sent a letter of acceptance to his/her new job, stating when to assume duty.

Applicants are matched to positions based on academic qualifications, previous experience, and success in the interview.

Socialization

Socialization is a process by which new staff are assimilated into the organization. The aim is to improve their efficiency by getting them started in their new jobs with a solid base.

This is done by giving new employees a tour of the organization to familiarize them with the proper lines of communication, the equipment they will be working with, the operating procedures, the staff they are going to work with, and the general culture of the organization.

This may be done by the director himself or by other experienced staff members.

This should be done with staff returning from training as well as with new staff in order to get them back into the culture of the institute. It obviously takes less time to socialize returning staff than it does with new employees.

Training Development

Training is a formal activity aimed at improving the individual's skills. Training programs are based on projected re-

quirements and the objectives of the organization. The agricultural research division is expected to prepare annual training plans for both long- and short-term training, depending on projected staffing needs.

Employees are normally selected for long-term training based on their academic qualifications, subject to acceptance by the training institute. Usually only short-term training is available for nontechnical staff.

Most training programs that include long-term training are sponsored by donor agencies. This results in most of the training being conducted outside the country, making supervision difficult except through reports from the training institution. The impact of training is evaluated by the organization after the employee has returned to work by means of a performance evaluation, i.e., through his/her attitudes, performance, efficiency, and output.

Career Development

Career paths are not clearly delineated in the organizational structure anywhere but at the employee's entry point, where entry level is determined by academic qualifications (certificate, diploma, bachelor's, master's, or doctorate degree). Additional academic training is usually required for moving up the career path.

Performance Management

Performance management aims to provide incentives to employees for better performance. The organization evaluates performance through confidential report forms

Table 3. Summary of Professional Staff at Lesotho Agricultural College, by Department and Academic Qualifications

Department	Number	PhD	MSc	BSc	DIP	CERT
Agronomy	10	1*	3	3	3	0
Ag. Eng.	12	0	1	1	4	6
Animal science	8	0	2	2	4	0
Forestry Res. Cons.	7	1*	4	1	1	0
Home Economics	6	0	1	3	2	0
Sociology & Quantitative Studies	6	0	2	1	3	0
TOTAL	49	2	13	11	17	6

NOTE: This includes both national and expatriate staff.

*Expatriates with projects.

Table 4. Current Long-Term Training at Lesotho Agricultural College

Description	Degree	Sponsorship	Country of Training	Graduation Date
Home Economics	MSc	USAID	USA	1991
Irrigation	MSc	USAID	USA	1991
Agric. Eng.	BSc	USAID	USA	1991
Animal Science	BSc	USAID	USA	1990
Ag. Extension	BSc	USAID	USA	1990
Home Economics	BSc	USAID	USA	1990
Animal Science	BSc	USAID	USA	1990

prepared by supervising officers on their subordinates. These are reviewed and added to by the head of the department on up to senior administrators. However, this has not proven to be a fair way of performance assessment since it is subject to a great deal of bias.

Current Personnel at Lesotho Agricultural College (LAC)

LAC offers seven full, residential programs at the diploma and certificate levels. There are approximately 50 professional staff and eight administrative positions.