

A Welcome Address Delivered by Dr. Samuel Kolawole Olowe, Executive Secretary, West African Management Development Institutes Network (WAMDEVIN) at the Opening Ceremony of a 2-Week Train-The-Trainers' Course for Faculty Staff of WAMDEVIN MDIs in the West African Sub-region held at ASCON, Topo-Badagry, Lagos, Nigeria on 21st May–1st June, 2018

The 1st Vice President, WAMDEVIN &
The Director-General, ASCON
Directors of Studies & HODs Present
Director of Admin. & Human Resources (ASCON)
Directing Staff Here Present
Distinguished Resource Persons
Our Course Participants
Gentlemen of the Press
Ladies and Gentlemen

Let me begin this address by expressing gratitude to the Almighty God for allowing us witness the event of today. I am particularly happy to be part of this epoch-making event which marks the beginning of a new dawn in the history of the Network.

The Public Service of our different countries, as you are all aware, is expected to provide advisory support to the government and render quality services to the public. It, therefore, needs to be continuously strengthened in terms of its human and institutional capacity among others. The Service needs officers with strong analytic skills capable of responding promptly to macro-economic and administrative issues as well as providing practical solutions to those problems encountered in the different sectors of our national life. MDIs are central to any hope we have of using capability development strategies to transform the instruments of the state into effective, efficient, innovative and responsive agents for economic and social transformation.

This Train-The-Trainers' Course is therefore organised to charge the intellectual batteries of those who are engaged in the business of strengthening the human and institutional capacities of government of their countries. I would, therefore, like to stress that you have been carefully selected by your MDIs to ensure that you acquire relevant knowledge, skills and attitudes that will enable you to discharge your duties as trainers more efficiently and effectively.

In the year 2017, WAMDEVIN carried out a Training Needs Analysis (TNA) of its member institutions across the West African Sub-region. One Hundred and Fifty-Six (156) respondents from our member MDIs spread across five (5) out of the six countries of the member countries were sampled. The findings of the study clearly revealed the low level of training that the faculty staff has been exposed to. This therefore necessitated the urgent need for this TTT which we believe will help in the capacity development of our staff across the sub-region.

For the benefit of our participants who might not have known what WAMDEVIN stands for, I want to quickly say that, WAMDEVIN, an acronym for the West African Management Development Institutes Network is a sub-regional network of Management Development Institutes and Business Schools whose interests are human resource building, management consultancy, research and publications in Anglo-phone countries in West Africa with its Secretariat in ASCON, Nigeria.

Established in November, 1987, WAMDEVIN's mission is to harness the enormous potentials which member-institutions could derive from pooling and sharing of the limited expertise in management development, training, research and consultancy that are available in the sub-region, with a view to enhancing the socio-economic prosperity of member countries.

Objectives/Functions

Its main business is:

- (i) the promotion of collaboration in management training, research, consultancy and publication among member institutions in West Africa;
- (ii) the provision of a veritable platform for pooling and sharing the available limited management expertise and competence that reside in the sub-region with a view to enhancing sub-region self-reliance;
- (iii) to improve the practice of management and ultimately, enhance the socio-economic prosperity of member nations through training, research, consultancy and publications; and
- (iv) to promote the conduct of research into management and development problems facing the sub-region in the hope that by so doing, its member institutions can positively influence public policies by serving as think-tanks to their governments.

In pursuance of its objectives, the Network organizes various activities including workshops, seminars, management research, training and consultancy etc., for its member-countries which are in Nigeria, Ghana, Sierra Leone, Liberia, The Gambia and the Cameroun. The Network also prepares wide range of publications, distilled from research commissioned by member institutions and organisations, on topics which are relevant and important for capacity building and human resource development in the West African sub-region. WAMDEVIN also tries to stimulate private and public sector institutions/organisations investment in capacity building, human resource development, consultancy and management research where these are not in place. The Network also encourages good practices in corporate governance.

I wish to state that since inception of WAMDEVIN, it had enjoyed donor support from some international organisations including International Labour Organisation (ILO), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), especially Commonwealth Secretariat, London (COMSEC) sponsors of all our Training of Trainers' Course from 2007-2013 when sponsorship stopped.

When the Nigerian Government lobbied to relocate WAMDEVIN from its former Secretariat in Ghana, to Nigeria in 1990, it took up the responsibility of providing funding for the running of the Network. But over the years, the Network had suffered donor fatigue and the allocations from the Federal Government of Nigeria has also dwindled drastically and this situation has seriously affected the operations of the Network.

It is as a result of this limited funds available to the Network, that participants on this course were requested to pay for their accommodation and transportation since the Course was not sponsored but solely financed for the first time by WAMDEVIN Secretariat.

The Course has been designed to equip faculty staff of MDIs with the basic knowledge, skills and attitude which will assist them in discharging their responsibilities satisfactorily.

Specifically, at the end of the Course, participants will be able to:

- (i) analyse organisational and individual training needs;
 - (ii) prepare suitable training proposals based on request or perceived needs of clients;
 - (iii) design and implement training programmes;
 - (iv) evaluate the relevance and effectiveness of training programmes;
- and

- (v) apply modern training technology to their training programmes.

The organiser of this Course has carefully selected the contents and modern training techniques which include management films, syndicates and exercises to meet the demands and challenges of a trainer in the 21st century.

I need to stress at this juncture that for you to derive maximum benefits from this Course, it is expected that you give your individual attention to the lectures which the Resource Persons will be delivering during the period.

I want to use this opportunity to solicit for support from your organisations for the Network by regularly paying their annual subscription, to enhance service delivery to our member MDIs. This Course will be the first-run this year while the second-run will come up later in the year. In addition, very soon, a one-week course on Mainstreaming Gender into Training Courses of MDIs will be mounted for our member institutions. I hope all our organisations will equally take advantage of this.

I would like to end this welcome address by expressing WAMDEVIN's sincere appreciation to all the Chief Executives of the participating MDIs for releasing their officers to participate in this course. We are immensely grateful in particular to the Director-General of ASCON and 1st Vice President (WAMDEVIN) for the excellent facilities provided for the comfort of participants on the Course and for declaring the Course open.

I welcome the participants and wish them a fruitful and rewarding Course.

Thank you for your attention.

Dr. S. K. Olowe
Executive Secretary