

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

SUSTAINABLE HUMAN RESOURCE PLANNING FOR AN EFFECTIVE
ADMINISTRATION OF RURAL ROADS IN GHANA:
A CASE STUDY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF FEEDER ROADS

BY

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DECLARATION

Candidate's Declaration

I hereby declare that this dissertation is the result of my own original work and that no part of it has been presented for another degree in this university or elsewhere.

Candidate's Signature: Date:

Name:

Supervisor's Declaration

I hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of this dissertation were supervised in accordance with the guidelines on supervision of dissertation laid down by the University of Cape Coast.

Supervisor's Signature: Date:

Name:

ABSTRACT

The Department of Feeder Roads, like most Ghanaian organizations, does not give much attention to the human being as a vital resource. As a result of this no proper planning is made for human resource development. This is the issue that the study set to investigate, using the Department of Feeder Roads as a case. The objective was to find out the human resource situation in the Department of Feeder Roads, bringing out the shortcomings in human resource administration and proposing measures for developing sustainable human resource planning.

Data gathering instruments in the form of interviews and questionnaires were employed to gather information, which helped in proposing recommendations for sustainable human resource planning in the Department of Feeder Roads. The overall results from the study showed that human resource practice is not given much prominence and there is lack of a clearly defined organizational structure in the Department.

Conclusions and recommendations drawn from the results include the need for a review of the department's organizational structure, creating awareness of new concepts of interdependence of civil engineering with other disciplines, involving the human resource unit to make inputs into the drawing up of the Department's strategic plan, embarking on a coordination and harmonization exercise by making inputs into the curricula of tertiary institutions as well as contributing financially and otherwise into the general training of potential staff for the Department, providing quality and continuous training for staff and the use of performance management system to evaluate performance at the Department.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This is a relatively small work, even though a very important one. Yet, I cannot claim exclusive honour and glory for this work and wish to acknowledge other contributors as follows:

My sincerest thanks go to Professor A. M. Abane who accepted to supervise my work and gave me the appropriate professional direction to go through this study.

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my family, Regina Asiedu my dear wife for her great support and to the children: Richard Kofi Asiedu Jnr. and Gertrude Asiedu.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Background to the study

The Department of Feeder Roads (DFR) is one of the three road sub-sector agencies of the Ministry of Roads and Transport. The Department is a civil service organization operating directly under the Civil Service Law. It is responsible for the planning, development and maintenance of all feeder roads in Ghana.

According to the Policy Document of DFR (1978), the history of the Department of Feeder Roads dates back to the colonial times. The Colonial Government created the Public Works Department (PWD) to provide a wide range of public services. Through its Units, namely water, electricity, roads and maintenance of public buildings, public services were provided for effective administration of the country. However, with the increase in scope of works, the various units became unwieldy and ineffective.

The new independent nation of Ghana examined the functions of the Public Works Department with the view to separating units, which could stand on their own. Separate units, such as Water and Electricity became public corporations. These attempts at restructuring the PWD also affected the Roads Department. Road construction and

maintenance was variously placed under the Ghana National Construction Corporation (GNCC) and the State Construction Corporation (SCC) at different times. The Public Works Department was later given back responsibilities for roads. It was limited to the construction and maintenance of trunk roads and placed under the Ministry of Works. The Policy Document of DFR (1978), explain further that in the second half of the 1960s feeder roads construction was executed by the Department of Social Welfare and Community Development under the Ministry of Youth and Rural Development. The responsibilities for the maintenance of the roads were however vested in the hands of the Regional Administrations. Other organizations such as Cocoa Marketing Board (CMB), Volta River Authority (VRA) and timber companies also constructed roads to facilitate the performance of their assigned functions.

This was the state of affairs by the time that the Crown Agents for Overseas Governments of the United Kingdom were appointed in the mid-sixties to study and make recommendations to government on how best the Department of Feeder Roads can perform it rightful role. Their report which was published in 1972 had the ultimate objective of taking full responsibility for the Highway Systems-its laws, planning, design, finance, construction and maintenance.

When the Ghana Highway Authority (GHA) was created, roads maintained by the Public Works Department were handed over to it. All other agencies involved in the business of road construction and maintenance remained undisturbed. However, in 1977, the

construction and maintenance of feeder roads were transferred from the Department of Social Welfare and Community Development and the Regional Administrations to the Ghana Highway Authority.

The task was huge and the resources were minimal. Unfortunately, the focus of GHA was rather on trunk roads with very little attention given to feeder roads. The effect of this neglect led to the near collapse of the feeder roads network in the country by the beginning of the eighties. The government of the day came to the realization that the production of major export items such as gold and cocoa could be boosted with good feeder roads network. Therefore on 31st December, 1980, the then President of the Republic of Ghana, Dr. Hilla Limann announced that a new organization was to be created to take over feeder roads administration from the Ghana Highway Authority. Following the passing of the Legislative Instrument by Parliament, the Department of Feeder Roads was born on 1st July, 1981 with responsibility for the administration of some 14,000km network of rural roads.

Statement of the problem

The Department of Feeder Roads (DFR) was established to provide accessible roads in the rural areas to facilitate movement of goods and people to bring about economic development. However, it has been difficult to obtain the right number and calibre of staff, which the Department of Feeder Roads needs to achieve its objectives. This has arisen as a result of the Department of Feeder Road's lack of a

systematic and purposeful human resource planning, which has resulted in problems including inefficient operation, lack of coordination, duplication of resources and under-utilization of human resources (Dar-Al-Handasah, 1993).

The management of the human resource of the Department has not been without difficulties. This poses a problem which if not solved will adversely affect the performance of the staff as well as the standard and quality of Ghana's feeder roads. A study therefore needs to be conducted into the operations of the human resource function of the Department including the limitations of the system with a view to establishing sustainable human resource planning for the Department of Feeder Roads. This study sought to examine the various factors that have led to the absence of an effective human resource planning in the Department of Feeder Roads.

Objectives of the study

General objective

The general objective of the study was to examine sustainable human resource planning for effective administration of rural roads in Ghana.

Specific objectives

In order to achieve the broad objective, the following specific objectives were investigated:

- To examine the organizational structure of the Department of Feeder Roads and the place of the Human Resource function in the Department.
- To examine the effectiveness of the human resource functions in the Department of Feeder Road and identify areas of shortcomings.
- To identify human resource planning measures that can be put in place to ensure sustainable human resource effectiveness and efficiency in the Department.

Research questions

The following research questions were developed:

- How effective is the human resource function of the Department of Feeder Road?
- Is the organisational chart of the Department of Feeder Road well structured?
- Does the Department of Feeder Road have an effective human resource planning programme?

Significance of the study

The significance of this study is in its ability to identify the causes of the difficulty in having a sustainable human resource planning in the Department of Feeder Roads. The findings from the study will

allow for the application of the right measures to be put in place to improve human resource planning.

The recommendations from the study will also suggest measures to help in effective construction and maintenance of feeder or rural roads through effective functioning of staff. These roads create easy access for food and cash crops to be transported to market centres, provision of social amenities such as schools and hospitals and the general improvement of rural economies.

For policy development and implementation, it will contribute to the development of the culture of evaluating the technical performance of service providing institution such as: Ghana Private Road Transport Union (GPRTU), transport owners, public transport, and the Ministry of Road and Transport, and serve as a working document for the management of road and transport industry. Finally, a modest contribution would also be made towards the general literature on human resource planning for effective administration in the road and transport industry.

Scope of the study

The study focused on the Department of Feeder Roads and the management of its human resources. The study actually covered the whole period of the Department's existence but emphasis was placed on the period between 1990 and 2009. The study also focused on the Department's human resource function, the problems the system faced

and suggestions on how to achieve a sustainable human resource planning in the Department.

Organization of the study

The entire research study was divided into five chapters. Following the introduction is the second chapter which deals with a review of literature relating to the research problem. Chapter three outlines the research methodology which involves the study area, sampling, data gathering instruments used and the method of analysis of data. The fourth chapter presents the findings of the research and discussion of the findings. The study ends with chapter five which provides a summary, conclusions and recommendations for evolving a sustainable human resource planning for the Department of Feeder Roads (DFR).

The next chapter reviews literature related to human resource management practices with specific emphasis on human resource planning and how it operates.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

This chapter reviews literature related to human resource management practices with specific emphasis on human resource planning and how it operates. It also covers issues such as the organizational structure, current staffing position, mission statement, objectives and strategic plans of the Department of Feeder Roads.

Meaning and concept of human resource planning

Every organization relies on a number of resources to realize its stated objectives. The labour or the human resource of any organization is the most valuable resource. Its effective planning and utilization are very crucial in achieving the objectives of an organization. It is the inputs provided by the workforce of an organization that ensure its continued survival and existence. It is therefore the primary duty of every manager of an organization to ensure an effective management of the organization's human resource.

Vetter (1967) defines human resource planning as the process by which management determines how the organization should move from its current manpower position to its desired position. Through planning, management strives to have the right number and the right

kinds of people, at the right places, at the right time, doing things which result in both the organization and the individual receiving maximum long-run benefits. It involves forecasting the organization's future human resource needs and planning for how those needs will be met. It includes establishing objectives and then developing and implementing programmes (staffing, appraising, compensating, and training) to ensure that people are available with the appropriate characteristics and skills when and where the organization needs them. It may also involve developing and implementing programmes to improve employee performance or to increase employee satisfaction and involvement in order to boost organizational productivity, quality, or innovation (Mills, 1985).

Human resource planning involves forecasting the future needs of an organization in terms of skills and analyzing the availability of labour to meet the organization's needs. It is supposed to be a strategic planning exercise, which seeks to place an organization in an advantageous position in labour matters. In theory, it may look as if merely having enough staff in an organization is enough to ensure efficiency. However, that is not the case. It requires careful planning to harness the expertise of all the staff available to achieve efficiency.

Human resource planning is about getting the right number of people in the right place at the right time to deliver the organization's strategic plan. The Institute of Personnel and Development cited by Cole (1997) defines human resource planning as: "The systematic and continuing process of analyzing an organization's human resource

needs under changing conditions and developing personnel policies appropriate to the longer-term effectiveness of the organization. It is an integral part of corporate planning and budgeting procedures since human resource costs and forecasts both affect and are affected by longer-term corporate plans”.

According to Bartol and Martin (1990) human resource planning is the process of determining future human resource needs relative to an organization’s strategic plan and devising the steps necessary to meet those needs. In a similar vein, Milkovich and Boudreau (1990) define human resource planning as a process by which management determines how an organization should move from its current human resource position to its desired human resource conditions. This is not different from the definition proposed by Mathis and Jackson (1991) which sees human resource planning as a process of analyzing and identifying the need for an availability of employees. For the benefit of this study, however, human resource planning is technically seen as being concerned with forecasting the future needs of the organization in terms of skills, expertise and competencies, of analyzing the availability and supply of people, of drawing up plans to match supply with demand and of monitoring the implementation of the human resource plan (Armstrong, 1996).

The above definitions contain certain important basic elements of human resource planning. These are:

- It is a systematic and part of a conscious and planned process rather than being accidental.

- It is both short term and long term, even though there is always emphasis on long-term planning for purposes of growth.
- It is loosely related to the corporate planning process since the availability of human resource affects it.
- Future resource needs are forecast in terms of skills, expertise and competencies. These are then assessed in both qualitative and quantitative terms.
- Forecast should allow for a realistic plan to match supply with demand for people.
- The resources should be at the level required for organizational effectiveness.

The human resource planning process

Planning is always seen as an essential component in every management endeavour. In the context of human resource planning, the essence is to position an organization in such a way as to effectively meet its current and future needs of employees with the requisite skills. According to Burack (1988), the planning process involves four basic steps, namely;

- ❖ Determination of organizational objectives;
- ❖ Determination of the requisite skills and expertise;
- ❖ Determination of the additional human resource requirements through skills inventory and aggregation of workforce profiles;
and
- ❖ Development of action plans to meet the anticipated human resource needs.

According to Mathis & Jackson (2006) the steps in the human resource planning process as shown in figure 1 begins with considering the organisational objectives and strategies, then HR needs and supply sources must be analysed both internally and externally, and forecasts must be developed. Key to assessing the internal human resources is having solid information accessible through a human resource management system (HRMS).

Once the assessments are complete, forecasts must be developed to identify the relationship between supply and demand for human resource. Management then formulates human resource strategies and plans to address imbalances, both short term and long term.



Source: Mathis & Jackson, 2006

Figure 1: The human resource planning process

Factors that influence human resource planning process

The Human Resource Planning process is affected by a number of factors (Burack, 1988). These include the following:

- An organization's philosophy which determines whether to keep staffing levels high or low. For example, in a supermarket, the philosophy will determine whether more staffs are to be employed to keep queues shorter.
- Whether an organization is "Labour or Capital Intensive". Where labour cost is relatively low in proportion to other costs, a higher staffing level will not be discouraged.

A close view of the planning process and the steps involved would eventually lead to a realization that the whole process would centre on four categories of staff, namely:

- Existing Staff
- New Recruits
- Potential Staff
- Leavers

Factors underlying increased interest in human resource planning

Undoubtedly, there are many factors that account for the increased attention directed to human resource planning, but environmental forces, globalization, new technologies, economic conditions, and a changing work force seem particularly potent (Dumaine, 1989; Dyer & Heyer, 1984; Greenhalgh, McKersie, & Gilkey, 1986). These create complexity and uncertainty for organizations. Uncertainty can interfere with efficient

operations, so organizations typically attempt to reduce its impact such as adopting formal planning to buffer themselves from environmental uncertainty (Thompson, 1967).

The changing characteristics of the work force, which is but one important environmental factor, make the need for planning evident. Comparatively, the proportion of younger people (aged 16 to 24) and older people (aged 55 and over) in the work force will decline. People aged 25 to 54 will constitute a greater percentage of the labour force, increasing from 61 percent in 1975 to 73 percent in 1995. The number of mothers in the work force with children under one year old increased from 42 percent in 1980 to 55 percent in 1989. The ethnic mix of the labour force is also changing. All of these demographic projections have significant implications for managing human resources, thereby increasing the importance of human resource planning (Coates, 1987; Davis & Associates, 1986). The changing demographics mean there will be fewer entry-level employees, so competition among employers will increase. It also signals changes in the abilities, skills, interests, and values of tomorrow's work force.

Changes in the work force are just one aspect of the environment stimulating the need for human resource planning. The demographic changes are somewhat predictable, but when they are considered in combination with changing technology (see Davis & Associates, 1986) and many of the other external changes described elsewhere in this issue (Offermann & Gowing, pp. 95-108), they pose significant challenges for human resource planning and contribute to its changing status during the past two decades.

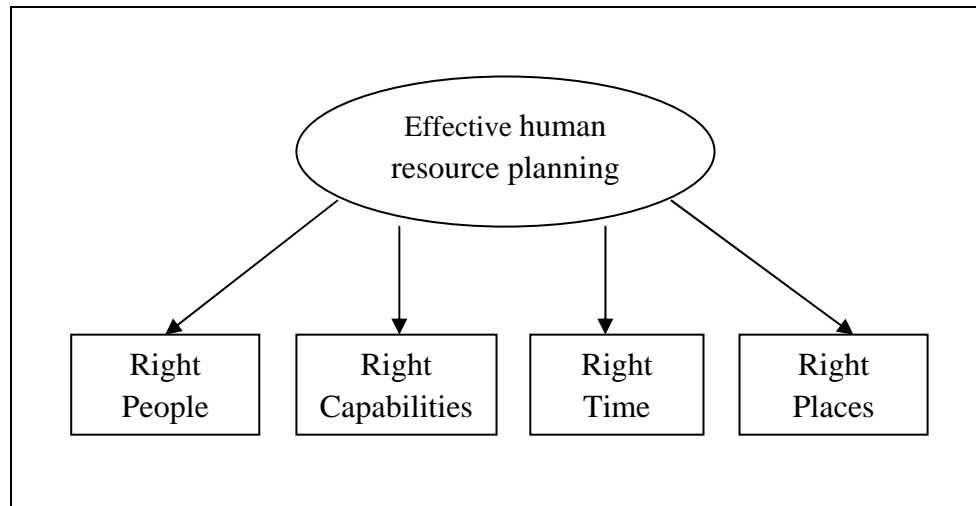
Purpose of human resource planning

According to Milkovich and Boudreau (1990), the purpose of human resource planning is to ensure that the human resource decisions that managers make are integrated and directed towards achieving organisational objectives. In their view, the main reasons for undertaking human resource planning are to ensure that the organization:

- Attracts and retains staff in sufficient numbers and with the appropriate skills to be able to operate effectively and achieve its corporate objectives.
- Fully utilizes the staff employed.
- Ensures that employees receive all the training and development necessary for effective performance in their current roles and develop the flexibility to be able to undertake other roles as the need arises.
- Anticipates and meet changes in the demand for its services or in the labour supply.
- Meets future human resource requirements from its own internal resources.
- Ensures that there is equity in opportunities for promotion and development for staff.
- Keeps control of its human resource costs and effectively anticipate the staffing costs of any new initiatives.

Mathis & Jackson (2006) also identified four main purpose of human resource planning. To them the purpose of human resource planning as shown in figure 2 is to have the right number of human resources, with the right

capabilities, at the right time, and in the right places. In human resource planning, an organisation must consider the availability of and allocation of people to jobs over long periods of time, not just for the next month or even the next year.



Source: Mathis & Jackson, 2006

Figure 2: Purpose of human resource planning

Components of human resource planning

According to Turner (2002), human resource planning is concerned with activities deliberately designed by organizations to ensure that their human resource needs in terms of numbers and skills, as well as their effective utilization, are catered for. The component activities of human resource planning are by themselves smaller planning programmes which are later brought together to form a complete human resource plan. The following are activities that go into the human resource plan:

- ❖ **Quantitative Human Resource Plan:** This activity involves a periodic or regular review of the current status of an organization's number of employees in terms of recruitment

levels, leavers, part-timers, full-timers, etc. The emphasis is on the supply, demand and the skills of human resource.

- ❖ **Organizational Design and Development:** This is another plan that looks at how human resource is perceived in the organization. It examines at the organization in terms of numbers, skills, quality of workers, etc. required by the organization to achieve its corporate objectives. The plan also looks at the organization's culture, made up of its "belief system" and how it will affect its human resource.
- ❖ **Resourcing Plan:** This plan covers four major activities of Recruitment, Retention, Redeployment and Removal of workers.
- ❖ **The Learning, Training and Development Plan:** This looks at both individual and Organization (or Occupational) learning needs and comes up with appropriate training/development programmes to meet the needs.
- ❖ **The Reward Plan:** The plan aims at "compensating" staff, and also seeks to keep them in the organization. Activities covered include Career Development, Succession Management and Pay issues.
- ❖ **Employee Plan:** This is the sixth and final component. It takes account of both external and internal factors that compose the

“make-up” and “diversity” of the modern workforce of an organization. It involves Industrial Relations and Employee Commitment issues (Turner 2002).

The role of human resource planning in the formulation of organizational strategies

Organizational strategy is essential if an organization is to achieve sustained competitive advantage or service success. In developing strategies, an organization relies on scenario-planning which is a means of avoiding surprises by addressing future possibilities. It also allows organizations to deal with anticipating changes in the external environment that are likely to impact on the organization’s goals.

In the development of organizational strategies, human resource function plays an interventional role. It is the responsibility of the human resource function to do “scenario-thinking” to bring about this scenario-planning. This activity starts from the top, possibly the Board level, and moves down the organizational structure (Cole, 1997).

Broadly, major decisions on finance, market share targets and the general business environment are taken and the human resource function is required to provide information and advice on the human-resource implications on the set targets. At the operational or functional level, strategies for the implementation of targets and policies set by the Board are made. Again, the human resource function deals with the people-implications of the business plan which often involves organizational design, human resource plans, communication and engagement, industrial relations, etc. The role of

human resource function is to provide information on both the internal and external environments that may help in the strategic decision-making of the organization.

Generally, information provided by an Human Resource (HR) function for formulation of organizational strategies include succession management, remuneration, diversity, customer satisfaction, state of the labour market, legal or governmental framework, global or international trend for engaging people, best practice on government matters, best practice on people-strategies, an overview of pay (salary and wages) and other benefits and climate of industrial relations and unionism (Abdulai, 2002).

Problems of human resource planning

A very real need to see results makes planning seem wasteful of time, diverting efforts from doing. Impatience with planning is always a challenge. Public expectations may be unrealistic, looking for jobs as an immediate outcome. Careful assessment may turn up more human resource development needs than the projected or existing resources and funding can handle, and this may require excruciating choices. Like all plans, a human resource plan must struggle between the need to be systematic and well thought out over several years and the need to be flexible to meet changing circumstances. Human resource planning is a “people-centered” activity. The individuality, diversity and complexity of human nature is a potential source of difficulty in any human resource planning activity. According to Hennecke (1984), the following are some of the distinct problems likely to be encountered in human resource planning:

- ✓ People are unpredictable. They can easily upset plans through resignations, being sick, not being attracted by an ‘obviously good’ incentive package, etc.
- ✓ People are different. The “individuality” of people is better expressed by the saying that even identical twins are not the same. The difference in people therefore makes it difficult to produce policies and approaches that are equally appropriate to all.
- ✓ Human surpluses and deficits are more difficult to manage. Staff numbers cannot usually be reduced at the stroke of a pen, and acquiring more people can be time consuming and costly.
- ✓ An organization’s human resource requirement cannot be likened to an ordinary product. It involves bringing together different numbers of very specific types of people who are all “special” in their own right. It is therefore very difficult to achieve the “perfect-mix” of people an organization requires no matter how good the planning may be.

Though HRP is also beneficial to the organization, employees and trade unions, some problems crop up in the process of HRP. Important among them according to Hennecke (1984), are resistance by employers and employees, uncertainties, and inadequacies of information system.

- Resistance by Employers and Employees: Many employers resist HRP as they think that it increases cost of manpower as trade unions demand for employee based plans, more facilities and benefits

including training and development. Further, employers feel that HRP is not necessary as candidates are/will be available throughout the year because of unemployment cases in third world countries. Trade unions and employees also resist HRP as they view that it increases the work load of employees and prepares programme for securing the human resources mostly from outside. The other reason for their resistance is that HRP aims at controlling the employees' thorough productivity maximization.

- **Uncertainties:** Uncertainties are quite prominent in human resource practices due to absenteeism, seasonal employment, labor turnover, changing technologies, market conditions making HRP less reliable.
- **Inadequacies of Information System:** Information system regarding human resources has not yet fully been developed due to industries giving low status to personnel department and less importance given to HRP. Further the reliable data and information about the economy, other industries, labour market, and trends in human resources are not available.

Benefits of human resource planning

According to Dyer (1998), a clear human resource development plan can include benefits like:

- Highlighting opportunities for strategic partnerships that allow communities and other partners to share the benefits, risks and training costs

- Providing for the small successes that are encouraging and motivating for the community and can show funders, community members and others that the programme is on track
- Making it easier to evaluate progress (especially from feedback from clients) and to present funders, partners, and community members with effective information about that progress

Model for describing human resource planning

Human resource planning model has four phases: (a) gathering and analyzing data to forecast expected human resource demand, given business plans for the future, and to forecast future human resource supply; (b) establishing human resource objectives; (c) designing and implementing programmes that will enable the organization to achieve its human resource objectives; and (d) monitoring and evaluating these programmes (Burack, 1988; Odiome, 1981).

Activities related to the four phases of human resource planning are described for three different time horizons: short term (up to one year), intermediate term (two to three years), and long term (more than three years). These correspond to the typical time horizons for business planning. Using the same conventions that line managers use to distinguish between activities with differing time horizons is one step human resource planners can take to facilitate integration of their efforts with the needs of the business (Hennecke, 1984; Migliore, 1986; Walker, 1980). Although the four phases of human resource planning are conceptually the same regardless of the time horizon,

there are practical differences in the operationalization of the four phases as the time horizon is extended. Long-term planning almost always prompts the development of programmes that need to be implemented in the short term and intermediate term. In addition, the evaluation results obtained for shorter term programmes often lead to reevaluation of longer term projections about the availability of human resources, which in turn may prompt adjustments in programmes designed to meet longer term needs. The idea is to have full integration among all types of human resource planning activities as well as integration between human resource and business planning (Walker, 1980).

Approach to human resource planning

Walker, (1980) stated that most organizations are likely to want human resource planning systems:

- which are responsive to change,
- where assumptions can easily be modified,
- that recognize organizational fluidity around skills,
- that allow flexibility in supply to be included,
- that are simple to understand and use,
- which are not too time demanding.

He explained further that to operate such systems, organizations need: appropriate demand models; good monitoring and corrective action processes;

comprehensive data about current employees and the external labour market; an understanding how resourcing works in the organization.

To him if human resource planning techniques are ignored decisions will still be taken, but without the benefit of understanding their implications. For instance, graduate recruitment numbers will be set in ignorance of demand, or management succession problems will develop unnoticed. It is surely better if decision makers follow this maxim in the way they make and execute resourcing plans.

Managing an effective downsizing programme

This is an all too common issue for managers. How is the workforce to be cut painlessly, while at the same time protecting the long-term interests of the organisation? According to Bartol & Martin (1990), HRP helps by considering: the sort of workforce envisaged at the end of the exercise; the pros and cons of the different routes to get there; how the nature and extent of wastage will change during the run-down; the utility of retraining, redeployment and transfers; and what the appropriate recruitment levels might be. Such an analysis can be presented to senior managers so that the cost benefit of various methods of reduction can be assessed, and the time taken to meet targets established.

If instead the CEO announces on day one that there will be no compulsory redundancies and voluntary severance is open to all staff, the danger is that an unbalanced workforce will result, reflecting the take-up of

the severance offer. It is often difficult and expensive to replace lost quality and experience. Many senior managers are troubled by this issue of where will the next generation of managers come from? They have seen traditional career paths disappear. They have had to bring in senior staff from elsewhere. But they recognize that while this may have dealt with a short-term skills shortage, it has not solved the longer term question of managerial supply: what sort, how many, and where will they come from? To address these questions one needs to understand:

- The present career system (including patterns of promotion and movement, of recruitment and wastage).
- The characteristics of those who currently occupy senior positions.
- The organization's future supply of talent.

This then can be compared with future requirements, in number and type. These will of course be affected by internal structural changes and external business or political changes. Howe (1995) stated that comparing your current supply to this revised demand will show surpluses and shortages which will allow you to take corrective action such as:

- ❖ Recruiting to meet a shortage of those with senior management potential.
- ❖ Allowing faster promotion to fill immediate gaps.
- ❖ Developing cross functional transfers for high fliers.
- ❖ Hiring on fixed-term contracts to meet short-term skills/experience deficits.

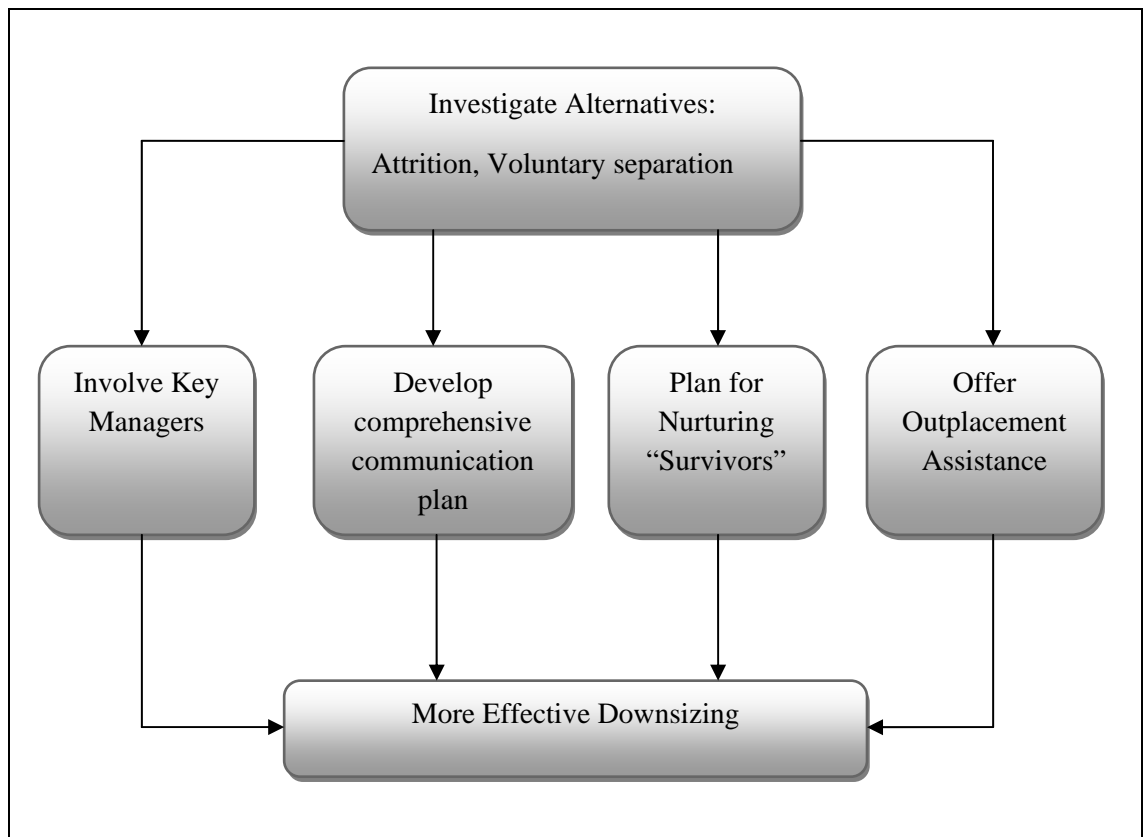
- ❖ Reducing staff numbers to remove blockages or forthcoming surpluses.

Thus appropriate recruitment, deployment and severance policies can be pursued to meet business needs. Otherwise processes are likely to be haphazard and inconsistent. The wrong sorts of staff are engaged at the wrong time on the wrong contract. It is expensive and embarrassing to put such matters right.

Issues about retention may not have been to the fore in recent years, but all it needs is for organizations to lose key staff to realize that an understanding of the pattern of resignation is needed (Armstrong, 1996). Thus, organizations should monitor the extent of resignation, discover the reasons for it, establish what it is costing the organization, and compare loss rates with other similar organizations. Without this understanding, management may be unaware of how many good quality staffs are being lost. This will cost the organization directly through the bill for separation, recruitment and induction, but also through a loss of long-term capability. Having understood the nature and extent of resignation, steps can be taken to rectify the situation. These may be relatively cheap and simple solutions once the reasons for the departure of employees have been identified. But it will depend on whether the problem is peculiar to your own organization, and whether it is concentrated in particular groups (for example by age, gender, grade or skill).

Downsizing focuses on trimming underperforming units or employees as part of a plan that is based on sound organisational strategies (Mathis &

Jackson, 2006). To make downsizing more effective the steps in figure 3 should be followed.



Source: Mathis & Jackson, 2006

Figure 3: Making downsizing more effective

Approaches for assessing the performance of organizations

There are several approaches to assess the performance of an organization. According to Thompson and Strickland (1989), five key elements can be identified in analyzing the overall performance of an organization. These are: assessing how well the present strategy is working; SWOT analysis which involves an appraisal of the organization's internal strengths, weaknesses, market opportunities and the external threats it faces; an examination of the organization's cost position relative to competing

companies; assessment of the organization's competitive position and competitive strength and how the firm matches up against rivals on each of the industry's key success factors; and determination of the particular strategic issues and problems which the organization needs to address

However, the best evidence of how well an organization is performing is by looking at its recent strategic performance. The most obvious indicators are: whether the company's market share is rising; whether the company's profit margins are increasing or decreasing and how big the profit margins are relative to rival companies; trends in the company's net profit and its policy on investment; whether the firm's sales are growing faster or slower than the market as a whole; and whether the firm's competitive position is improving or slipping.

Evaluating human resource development programmes

This is the final phase in the HRD process. It answers the question as to whether the HRD programme or effort was effective. Disemone and Harris (1998), indicate that the term effective raises certain concerns. For instance, what is effectiveness; how is effectiveness measured; and what is the purpose of determining effectiveness? They caution that since the term is relative, it is imperative that we determine HRD effectiveness having in mind the goals of the programme or programmes being examined. Goldstein (1980) defines HRD evaluation as a systematic collection of descriptive and judgmental information necessary to make effective training decisions related to the selection, adoption, value, and modification of various instructional activities.

Reasons for evaluating training programmes

Hargreaves & Harvis (2000) identified six reasons why training programmes should be evaluated. These are;

- ❖ To identify the programme's strengths and weaknesses including determining if the programme is meeting the learning objectives, the quality of learning environment, and if transfer of application of knowledge and skills to job is occurring;
- ❖ To assess whether the content, organization, and administration of the programme including the schedule, accommodations, trainers, and materials contribute to learning and the use of training content on the job;
- ❖ To identify which trainees benefited most from the programme; To gather data to assist in marketing programmes through collecting information from participants about whether they would recommend the programme to others, why they attended the programme, and their level of satisfaction with the programme;
- ❖ To determine the financial benefits of the programme;
- ❖ To compare the costs and benefits of training versus non training investments (such as work redesign or better employee selection system);
- ❖ To compare the costs and benefits of different training programmes to choose the best programme.

Zenger and Harris (1982) also identified four reasons for conducting HRD programme evaluation. They are: Training is functional and relevant only when it is evaluated; If HRD staff cannot substantiate its contribution to

the organization, its funding and programmes may be cut during the budgeting process, especially when the organization faces tough times; Evaluation can build credibility; and senior management often wants to know the benefits of HRD programmes.

Models of human resource development programme evaluation

There are several models of HRD programme evaluation. The most popular however is the one put forward by Kirkpatrick (1994). In this model, he argued that efforts could be evaluated based on four criteria:

- Reaction - what they thought and felt about the training.
- Learning - the resulting increase in knowledge or capability.
- Job behavior - extent of behaviour and capability improvement and implementation/application.
- Results - the effects on the business or environment resulting from the trainee's performance.

This model provides very useful insight into the possible consequences of training and reminds us that HRD efforts often have multiple objectives. Kirkpatrick's model though widely acknowledged and accepted is often criticized. Various experts for different reasons have modified it. Bushnell (1990) for instance pointed out that the model looks at what happens after training and not the entire training process. Hilton (1996) on the other hand, argues that the Kirkpatrick model failed to emphasize on the causal relationship between the elements of the model.

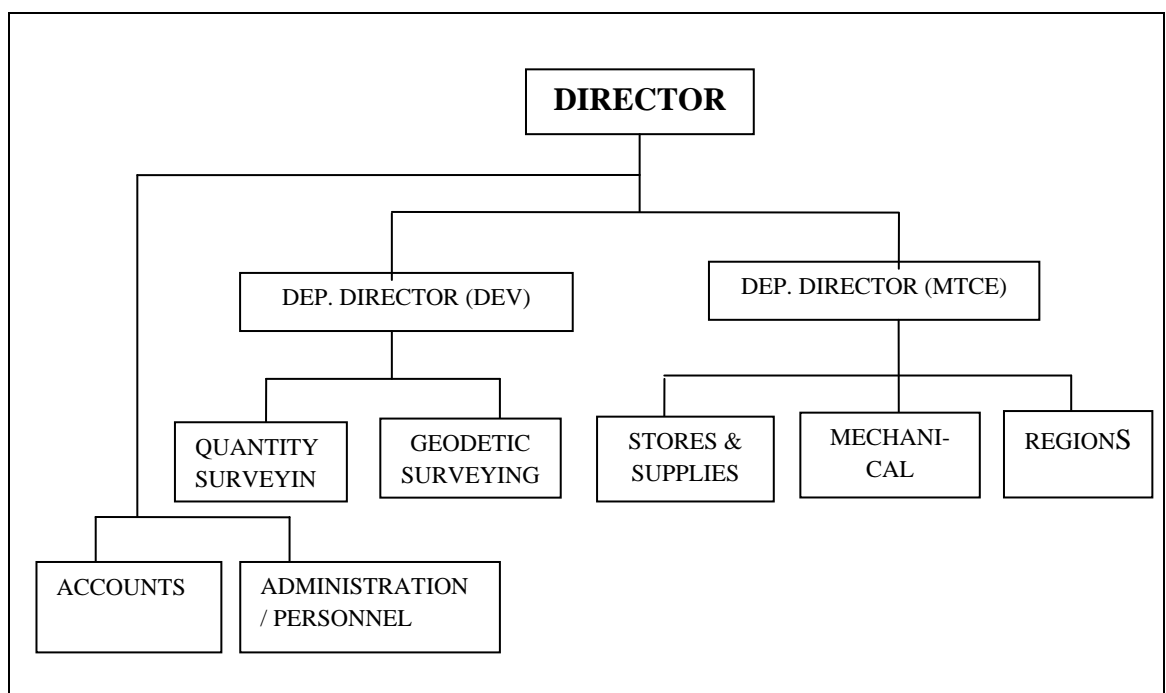
Other models that exist included elements like context, input, process, and product (Galvin, 1983). Brinkerhoff (1987), mentioned goal setting,

programme design, programme implementation, immediate outcomes, intermediate or usage outcomes, and impacts and worth as the key elements that constitute his six-stage model. Kirkpatrick's approach despite its criticism remains useful in the categorization of the criteria that HRD programme must satisfy. According to Campbell (1988), the simplest forming which we can look at evaluation of HRD programme is whether training has achieved its objectives. Therefore basing training objectives on needs assessment information and subsequently evaluating those objectives is the most appropriate way of summarizing what training evaluation is all about.

It can be surmised from the above discussions that HRD has as its central theme employee development on a continuous basis. The focus is on providing knowledge, skills and abilities that will ensure that the human resource of an organization performs current and future roles effectively. Therefore the organizational development, career development and training and development efforts focus on the human resource needs of the organization with regards to its ability to meet changing organizational expectations. These expectations change because of customer demands; new technology and typically the organizations desire to beat the competition in an increasingly competitive industry environment. In summary, employee development can be said to involve formal education, job experiences, assessment and interpersonal skills.

Organizational structure of the department

In 1992 the Department of Feeder Roads decided to undertake a study of the organization in view of its rapid growth and the attendant increase in the scope of its responsibilities (Dar-Al-Handasah, 1993). The study was the outcome of the realization of the need to review the organizational structure and management of the Department. From its establishment in 1981, the Department's organizational structure has remained the same.

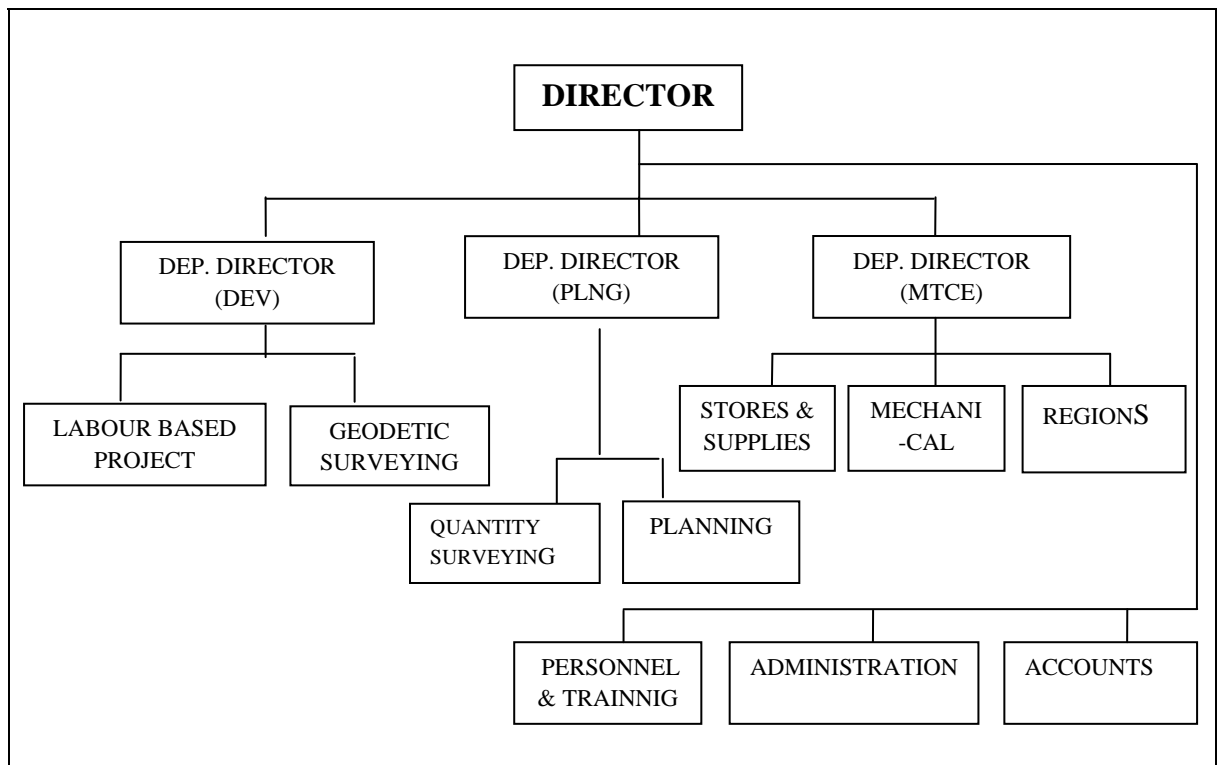


Source: Department of Feeder Roads, 2003

Figure 4: The Department's Organisational Chart (1982)

The Department is headed by a Director who is assisted by three Deputy Directors who in reality head the three main divisions of the Department-Planning, Development and Maintenance. The Planning Division was introduced in 1992 as the third Division of the Department. The same structure is found at the regional level but in an expanded form. The expanded form at the regional level involved providing detailed positions such as

District Engineers, Surveyors, Laboratory Technicians and Grader Operators are all included in the regional organizational chart.



Source: Department of Feeder Roads, 2003

Figure 5: The Department's Organisational Chart (1993)

The Department of Feeder Roads as a civil service organization

From its establishment in 1981, the Department of Feeder Roads was placed under the Ghana Civil Service as a Department. Initially, it was intended to be placed under the Ministry of Works and Housing. However, as part of the revolutionary changes of the day, a separate Ministry was created in February 1982 solely to be responsible for roads (DFR: Policy Document, 1978). That was the Ministry of Roads and Highways, which is now known as the Ministry of Roads and Transport. Both the Ghana Highway Authority and the Department of Feeder Roads were placed under this new Ministry. While the Ghana Highway Authority was accorded a semi-autonomous status, the

Department of Feeder Roads became a fully-fledged civil service department. As a Civil Service Department, the Department of Feeder Roads now has to rely on the Office of the Head of Civil Service for its human resource services such as recruitment and promotion of staff. The Department of Feeder Roads, like any other civil service organization therefore, had no direct influence in the recruitment and selection of its staff.

The department's current staffing position

The history (DFR: Policy Document, 1978) of the Department of Feeder Roads shows that at the time of its establishment, the Department had over 5,000 labourers, 3 Engineers and 74 non-engineering staff. The problem there was that of inadequate number of professionally qualified staff. A decision on the adoption of the use of the private sector as a matter of policy in the execution of works led to the down-sizing of this large number of workers. At the same time, efforts were made to recruit the necessary categories of workers needed to achieve the Department's objectives. The Department of Feeder Roads as a civil service department has to rely on the Office of the Head of Civil Service (OHCS) and the Public Service Commission (PSC) to bring in the required skilled workers it needed. As at the end of the year 2002, the Department had a staff strength of 627 comprising 85 professional staff and 542 non-professional staff (Department of Feeder Roads, 2003)..

The professional group is made up of Civil and Mechanical Engineers, Quantity Surveyors, Planners, Trainers, Human Resource Officers, Accountants, Administrators, Supply Officers and Geodetic Surveyors. The non-professional group is made up of clerks, and mostly labourers. It is quite

obvious that this is not the best staffing position the Department of Feeder Roads envisaged. Factors such as the Government of Ghana's freeze of employment into the Civil Service over a decade ago have systematically prevented any meaningful recruitment that would have allowed for the full labour complement for the achievement of the Department's objectives. Also, the decentralization programme, of which the Department of Feeder Roads is a part, has deprived the Department of a justification for further recruitment. The Department is rather expected to merge with other organizations to form the Works Department in the District Assemblies.

The mission statement and objectives of the Department of Feeder Roads

The Department of Feeder Roads' mission statement reads as follows:

“The Department of Feeder Roads exists to ensure the provision of safe all weather accessible feeder roads at optimum cost through the use of competent staff for effective planning, development, rehabilitation and maintenance to facilitate the movement of people, goods and services to promote socio-economic development, in particular agriculture” (Department of Feeder Roads: Strategic Plan, 2003).

Board objectives: The key objectives of the Department of Feeder Roads in pursuance of its Mission Statement are:

- To provide improved access roads for the movement of people and goods and services to facilitate the promotion of economic activities and access to social services in rural communities.

- To protect investments made on improved roads through adequate maintenance systems.
- To provide employment opportunities for the rural poor by encouraging a greater use of labour-based road construction technology.
- To use sound economic principles as decision criteria for feeder road investment for rehabilitation and construction activities.
- To improve the institutional capacity of the Department of Feeder Roads to sustain feeder road programmes.
- To engage experts to provide specialized technical services when required.
- To implement measures to mitigate the negative environmental impact of road schemes.
- To assist in the development of the technical capacity of District Assemblies to facilitate the decentralization process and for the effective supervision and maintenance of feeder roads.
- To assist the Municipal and District Assemblies in the prioritization and selection of roads for maintenance using the Road Prioritization Methodology (RPM).
- To assist in the expansion and enforcement of core labour standards.

The Department of Feeder Roads has over the years performed within its stated objectives even though some of the objectives have been better met

than others. The Department may be commended for expanding its road network, which is a clear achievement of the objective to provide access roads for movement of people, goods and services. In all these, training and capacity building objectives have been met. However, other objectives such as mitigation of the environment impact of the Department's operations; the use of Road Prioritization Methodology; Enforcement of Core Labour Standards and the Decentralization programme are yet to be met.

Department of Feeder Roads' strategic plans

Improved rural roads provide vital links for the marketing of agricultural produce and access to social facilities, which are essential for the economic development of the country. The Department of Feeder Roads administers a rural road network of some 32,600km, which account for 62 percent of the entire road network in Ghana (Department of Feeder Roads: Strategic Plan, 2003). It is also responsible for ensuring that these roads provide adequate access to serve the required purpose. To ensure maximum output from limited resources, strategic plans that define the Department's objectives for specific periods, and how they are to be achieved are designed at required time frames as operation guides.

In its 2003 – 2007 strategic plans, the department's objective was to improve feeder roads network in support of government's economic development programmes. It was expected that the size of the improved network would be increased from 44 percent in 2003 to 100 percent of the total feeder road network by the year 2007. This was to be done through upgrading of roads and the maintenance of existing roads, employing a number

of road maintenance activities like rehabilitation, spot improvement, surface dressing, regravelling and routine maintenance.

The technical capacity of the Department of Feeder Roads was also to be expanded and improved through training of its staff to support the programme. In view of the existing inadequate staffing position of the Department, external assistance in the form of consultants was to be engaged to provide specialized technical services.

Financial resources was to be provided by the Government of Ghana (GOG) and donor agencies like Danish International Development Agency (DANIDA), the Department for International Development (DFID), the European Union (EU), the World Bank, Japan International Co-operation Agency (JICA) and Alliance Francais Du Development (AFD). It was estimated that an amount of US\$654.82 million would be required to achieve set targets under the plan.

Human resource planning at the Department of Feeder Roads

From the literature review, the situation in the Department of Feeder Roads is made clear. Human resource planning has a lot of flaws. Although DFR has organizational objectives, they are unfortunately not tied to its human resource planning. This is because recruitment is made outside the Department by the Office of the Head of Civil Service (OHCS). The timing of recruitment does not suit the needs of the Department, as in most cases new officers came later than it would have been desired. As a result of the government's embargo on recruitment into the civil service as part of the Civil Service Reform Programme, Ministries, Departments and Agencies are

required to send requests for recruitment to OHCS. The requests are studied and may eventually receive approval. The OHCS approval is then submitted by the organization to the Ministry of Finance for “financial clearance”. This clearance when received, eventually allow the organization to commence recruitment (Dar-Al-Handasah, 1993). The duration from the time of submission of a request for approval to recruit to the time a financial clearance is received may last not less than one year. The recruitment difficulties also affect succession as “leavers” are not likely to be replaced on time.

In summary, this chapter reviewed relevant literature on human resource planning such as factors influencing human resource planning process, factors underlying increased interest in human resource planning, components of human resource planning, role of human resource planning in the formulation of organizational strategies, model for describing human resource planning, approach to human resource planning, managing an effective downsizing programme, approaches for assessing the performance of organizations, evaluation of human resource development programs, reasons for evaluating training programs, models of human resource development program evaluation, purpose, problems and benefits of human resource planning, organizational structure of the department of feeder roads, the department of feeder roads as a civil service organization, the department’s current staffing position, the mission statement and objectives of the department of feeder roads, department of feeder roads’ strategic plans and human resource planning at the department of feeder roads.

The proceeding chapter discusses the research methodology used in the study. Issues discussed in the chapter include study area, design of the study,

population, sampling and sample size, source and type of data collection, data gathering instruments and methods of analysis.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Study area

The Department of Feeder Roads was established as a Civil Service Department in 1981. It was carved out of the Ghana Highway Authority to administer a network of rural roads in the country. The size of the Department at the time of its establishment did not allow certain vital units such as the Human Resource Unit to function. This created a problem as there was no proper link with human resource function administered by OHCS on its behalf. The right calibres of staff were also not available for human resource functions and that affected any meaningful planning for human resources in the Department. The unit was billed to link the major roads to trunk roads or highways, undertake services from one community to another, open up roads to enable farmers and fishermen convey their produce and catch to market centres and performs the functions of urban roads and highways where they are not present in a district or a municipality. The Department undertakes works in the areas of construction and rehabilitation, spot improvement, reshaping and emergency works such as wash out of culverts and roads. The Department is however faced with the problems of finances and logistics constraints in the performance of its duty.

Design of the study

A qualitative case study design was used for this study. This design was considered suitable because it has the ability to give a comprehensive analysis of Department of Feeder Roads as an institution and its human resource planning strategies for effective administration of rural roads in Ghana. It also has the tendency to give relevant information to describe situations in the Department of Feeder Roads. A case study design is concerned with studying social units in details analysis. The study is designed to first take a look at the Department of Feeder Roads as an organization and also examine its human resource function. The purpose here is to identify the problems that concern its human resource planning.

Population

The population for the study consists of all officers of the Department of Feeder Roads, Ministry of Roads and Transport, Office of the Head of Civil Service and Association of Road Contractors.

Sampling and sample size

The study was conducted in the Department of Feeder Roads which had a total staff population of about 700. The random sampling was used. As part of the study, contacts were made at the Ministry of Roads and Transport, Office of the Head of Civil Service and Association of Road Contractors. An estimated additional 100 persons from these organizations were added to the number from the Department of Feeder Roads.

The researcher used the lottery approach random sampling technique to select 50 respondents from diverse group of officers. The lists of all

staff/officers in their respective categories were obtained from the appropriate sources. These were serially numbered and their numbers written on pieces of paper which were folded and placed in a box. The box was vigorously shaken and papers were picked one at a time after every thorough shaking until required numbers from each category of respondents were picked. In order to ensure fairness and representativeness, every officer was given an equal chance of being selected. This was done by putting back the papers as they were being picked before subsequent selections.

From the pool, a sample for the study was obtained as follows:-

Department of Feeder Roads Head Office	- 5 Officers
Department of Feeder Roads regional office, Cape Coast	- 10 Officers
Department of Feeder Roads (2 districts offices, Central Region)	- 10 Officers
Ministry of Roads and Transport	- 5 Officers
Office of Head of Civil Service	- 10 Officers
Road Construction Firms (MDs)	- 10 Officers
Total	- 50 Officers

The basis for the use of 50 as sample size had to do with the fact that this study was time bound. Thus, within the limit of time and financial constraints, the research found it necessary to use a sample size that would be easy to deal with to accomplish the objectives of the study.

Also this sample was considered to be representative enough as all the officers in the sample were either directly involved in the operation of human resource activities or had encounters with staff of the Department of Feeder Roads and are therefore in a position to comment on human resource issues. Furthermore, the composition of the sample was to ensure a wider spread to

enable the collection of divergent views. The Department of Feeder Roads composition covered officers in management positions who were presumably conversant with human resource management issues. The officers from Ministry of Roads and Transport (MRT) and Office of the Head of the Civil Service (OHCS) were selected to give what was considered as external professional views on human resource matters in Department of Feeder Roads. Those from Association of Road Contractors (ASROC) and Contracting Companies were considered as equally important. Their views represent an external non-professional perception of how the Department of Feeder Roads handled human resource matters.

Source and type of data collection

Data for the study were collected from both primary and secondary sources. Cross-sectional information was obtained from selected officers through administration of questionnaires and interview schedules. Secondary data were collected from textbooks, journals and annual reports of the Department of Feeder Roads, publications, seminar papers and course manuals.

Data gathering instruments

Instruments used to collect primary data were questionnaires and interviews. Interviews are referred to as “a face to face” verbal interchange in which one person, the interviewer, attempts to elicit information from another person. This was exactly what happened.

Secondary instruments such as textbooks, journals and annual reports of the Department of Feeder Roads, publications, seminar papers and course

manuals were also used to assist in data collection. Three different questionnaires were prepared to elicit responses from the sample identified relating to the problem of the study. The first questionnaire was given out to Contractors and Consultants working with Department of Feeder Roads and Office of the Head of Civil Services staff, they were given a period of time to respond to the questionnaire. Responses were collated and carefully analyzed and issues arising out of these were noted.

Both structured and unstructured questions were included in the interview schedule to enable the desired responses to be received. Structured topics were designed to serve as a guide in the interview sessions administered on only staff of the Department of Feeder Roads and Office of the Head of Civil Service.

Methods of analysis

The identified data gathering instruments were used to collect quite a reasonable amount of data. The data were analyzed, using both qualitative and quantitative techniques. The analysis brought out details on responses received. Quantitatively, it determined the number of responses that emphasized on the issue and the general opinion about the subject. Similarly, qualitative issues were determined from the responses.

The next chapter presents analyses and discusses the data that were collected from the field with the aid of the questionnaires and interview guide.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Introduction

This chapter presents the results and related discussions of the study. Among the issues that emerged are human resource planning in the Civil Service, human resource function in Department of Feeder Roads, external assessment of human resource planning practices, and the position of human resource planning at the Department of Feeder Roads.

Characteristics of the targeted sample

- **Response rate**

Table 1: Category of respondent, sample and responses rates

Category of Respondent	Sample	Response
DFR- Head office	5	5
DFR -Cape Coast regional office	10	10
DFR - Districts offices	10	8
Ministry of Roads and Transport	5	5
Office of Head of Civil Service	10	10
Road Constructors	10	7
Total	50	45

Source: Fieldwork, 2010

As indicated in Table 1 all the five (5) officers from Department of Feeder Roads head office surveyed in the sample successfully

completed and returned the questionnaires, resulting in a response rate of 100 percent. A sample of ten (10) officers from regional office, Cape Coast was targeted and all the questionnaires were completed and returned, resulting in a response rate of 100 percent. Out of the 10 questionnaires sent to the two (2) districts offices of DFR in central region, eight (8) was received, resulting in a response rate of 80 percent. All the five (5) officers from the Ministry of Roads and Transport surveyed in the sample successfully completed and returned the questionnaires, resulting in a response rate of 100 percent. The sample of ten (10) officers from the Office of Head of Civil Service, all completed and returned the questionnaires, resulting in a response rate of 100 percent. Seven (7) out of the ten (10) Road Constructors surveyed in the sample completed and returned the questionnaires, resulting in a response rate of 70 percent. Finally, the total sample size, including the Department of Feeder Roads officers, Ministry of Roads and Transport, Office of Head of Civil Service and Road Constructors equals 45 respondents, amounting to a total response rate of approximately 90 percent.

- **Demographic data**

Demographic data was collected in various aspects and Table 2 presents the summary of the results. These statistics revealed that 72 percent of the participants were males and 70 percent were married. The average period of employment was 11½ years.

Table 2: Demographic data

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	32	72
Female	13	28
Marital Status	Frequency	Percentage
Married	31	70
Single	10	22
Other	4	8
Age	Frequency	Percentage
21 to 30	11	24.5
31 to 40	17	38
41 to 50	11	24.5
51 to 60	5	12
61 or older	1	1
Years of Work	Frequency	Percentage
3 to 5	15	34
6 to 10	9	20
11 to 15	8	18
16 to 20	7	16
21 and above	6	14

Source: Fieldwork, 2010

Human resource planning in the civil service

The Department of Feeder Roads (DFR) is a Civil Service Department under the Ministry of Roads and Transport (MRT). The Office of the Head of Civil Service (OHCS) serves as the coordinating agency for all Ministries, Departments and Agencies of Government. The Civil Service serves as a wheel of the Government's machinery. This has been the position since

colonial time and in recent times, the Head of the Civil Service's position is seen as being an equivalent of a cabinet minister.

There is no uniform human resource planning strategy that is pursued in the Ghana Civil Service. This is because the various Ministries, Department and Agencies (MDAs) operate independent strategies that are geared towards the achievement of their set objectives. The OHCS, the coordinating agency of the Civil Service, formulates rules and regulations set out as human resource planning policies. The Office of the Head of the Civil Service (OHCS) used to have a unit, the Manpower Development Unit, responsible for human resource management in the Civil Service. This unit is now known as the Human Resource Division and its functions include the following:

- Recruitment and Selection of Staff
- Posting of Staff
- Promotions/Up-grading
- Determination of Grades and Salary Levels
- Transfers
- Training
- Retirement

The Human Resource Division sets policy guidelines which are expected to be followed by MDA's. A recent history of performance of this Division shows the effective human resource planning role of the division. It has moved from the years of "staff ceilings" to a more systematic approach in human resource planning, requiring a justification of the request made of every single new staff. In spite of reforms and improvements made in the OHCS' Human Resource Division, there is a lack of continuity in the planning

of human resource. The two agencies seem to have separate timetables for their functions.

Human resource function in Department of Feeder Roads

The Department of Feeder Roads did not have a clearly identified human resource system. The Department's organizational structure for 1982 (appendix 1), had administration and personnel as a single function. However, the Department's organizational structure for 1993 made provision for personnel and training functions (appendix 2). By definition, therefore, the absence of a well structured human resource management system meant that there were a wide range of services, which the personnel and training activities did not cover. They only performed limited human resource activities such as payment of salaries and training for career development.

A very serious short-fall was observed in the study occurred in the human resource functions within the Department. It was very obvious that a new and more dynamic organizational structure needed to be built to take care of the ever-growing size and functions of the Department. Secondly, it is important to have human resource considerations built into the strategic plan of the Department. Finally, sustainable human resource planning must be initiated to cater for all the human resource needs of the Department for the achievement of its corporate goals. Staff of the Department of Feeder Roads (twenty three) sampled for the interviews expressed the need for the Department to seriously address the need for human resource planning in the regional offices of the Department. Two issues that emerged from the responses are summarized below.

- Human Resource Planning (HRP) was not fully practiced in the regional offices of the Department because the regions did not have control over procedures for the engagement, posting of staff and retirement
- Staff development was not sustained through training, yet this was an important component of planning.

Out of the twenty three DFR staff in the sample, twenty of them who were from the Central Regional office and 2 districts in the region gave responses which suggested that the effects of the absence of HR planning on the general performance of the Departments were enormous. Among these effects were:

- Difficulties associated with administering the regional and district offices such as inadequate staff and frequent transfers;
- Inadequate field supervision due mainly to the low number of available technical staff;
- Delays in project preparation;
- Slow processing of payment certificates for work done by contractors;
- Under-achievements of set targets; and
- Frustration due to promotion difficulties

External assessment of human resource planning practices

Two separate questionnaires were administered to determine the opinion of external assessors on human resource planning in the Department of Feeder Roads. Two groups of external assessors made up of twenty two (22) individuals were identified. They were (a) the Professional Group which

was made up of five (5) officers from MRT and ten (10) officers from the Office of the Head of Civil Service (OHCS); and (b) The non-Professional Group which consisted of seven (7) road contractors.

In the professional front, five (5) officers from the office of the Head of the Civil Service saw the human resource unit of the Feeder Roads as nonexistent whilst the rest of the five (5) employees saw the unit as too either small or insignificant to talk about. Respondents from the Ministry of Roads and Transport (5 officers) shared the same view like the latter, thus the unit was small. However, they were quick to add that the Department did very well with training. Two (2) respondents from the MRT were of the view that the Department should identify and elaborate human resource roles in its strategic plan. This view was however not supported by the respondents of the OHCS (ten officers) since most of the human resource activities were undertaken by them.

The respondents from the road contractors' front were also divided on a lot of issues. While five (5) out of the seven (7) were of the view that the Department was not adequately staffed because it did not have the immediate opportunity to employ, and normally employment delayed unnecessarily because of bureaucracies in requesting personnel through the OHCS, the other two were of the view that, the Department has adequate staff, but that most of them do not match with their roles and responsibilities because of the lack of collaboration between the unit and tertiary institutions, especially the polytechnic where the unit got a chunk of its workers from.

Four (4) respondents were also of the view that there was rampant transfer of staff which affected the workers output. The new staff spent a lot of time adapting to the new system or office. The other three (3) were silent

(quiet) on this discussion because they were new in the field (construction). On the issue of effectiveness of staff, almost all the respondents, except one, were of the view that due to intermittent training of their staff, the Department had competent staff.

The effects of the above analysis from both the professional and non-professional viewpoints is that inadequate staffing slowed down the pace for work and also affected its quality. Inadequate supervision, lack of proper coordination and inefficient operations were also issues raised.

Position of human resource planning

The observation was that, the human resource function in the Department of Feeder Roads was not well established. Aspects of the responsibilities of a human resource function were undertaken by the Personnel and Training sections. Also, the structure of the Civil Service was such that part of the human resource responsibilities was overseen by the OHCS. The absence of a strongly established relation between OHCS and the MDAs in the area of human resource made it difficult for effective planning to take place. No wonder that the crucial role that human resource planning plays in organizations was missing. Only aspects of the overall activities covered by human resource planning were taken care of by the Department's two sections, Personnel and Training.

Challenges of human resource planning

Results of the interviews, discussions and questionnaires administered to people inside and outside the Department identified a list of challenges associated with implementing human resource planning. Table 3 gives a

summary of the challenges of implementing human resource planning at the Department of Feeder Roads.

Table 3: Challenges of human resource planning

Challenge	Frequency	Percentage
HRP not given prominence	4	9
Lack of coordination	8	18
A high rate of attrition	6	13
Lack of effective appraisal system	4	9
Absence of a well defined job description	3	7
Financial constraints	14	31
Lack of succession plan	6	13
Total	45	100.0

Source: Fieldwork, 2010

These difficulties were identified as issues affecting successful human resource planning in the Department of Feeder Roads, and were also found to be equally relevant to all other Ministries, Departments and Agencies of the Civil Service. These challenges are examined subsequently:

✚ Human resource planning not given prominence.

Nine percent of the respondents expressed views relating to prominence given to human resource planning as challenge faced by the Department. It was generally believed that there were many policy and decision-makers who did not recognize the strategic importance of the HRM function. This lack of recognition for the unit as a core resource in the development of the competencies of the Department underlies the

lackadaisical approach of management towards human resource planning. The Human Resource or Personnel Unit is a small unit within the organization. Taking such major strategic decisions and implementing them by officers of the Human Resource Unit are often resisted by decision-makers. Secondly, it was realized from the study that the HR unit was not only small but also lacks the requisite capacity to undertake any effective human resource planning.

✚ Lack of coordination between educational institutions and the Department.

About 18 percent of the respondents emphasized the issue of improper co-ordination and collaboration between educational institutions and the department in terms of training of labour that possessed the requisite skills and qualifications. Bartol & Martin (1990) indicates that the Human Resource practitioner has to examine the labour market for the supply of skilled persons. However, in this case there appeared to exist no proper co-ordination between educational and training institutions on one hand, and the Department of Feeder Roads as a consumer of labour, on the other. As a result, there was an emerging situation where graduates from tertiary institutions were sometimes ill-suited to meet the requirements of prospective employers. The Department of Feeder Roads received graduate civil engineers and other technical staff from Universities. They received in-house training before being

posted to projects. However, the majority of these technical staff did not specialize on roads. In most, cases they had to be given thorough training to enable them fit into the Department's job demands.

A high rate of attrition

As a result of the lack of a sustainable human resource planning scheme, the department was unable to implement a clearly defined career development plan. The effect of this was a high rate of attrition as a result of frustration. This lapse by itself also affected any meaningful human resource planning in the Department.

Lack of effective appraisal system

Another challenge observed was the presence of an ineffective appraisal system. Appraisal system targets both the workers and the job itself. It identifies areas of strengths and weaknesses thereby making it possible for improvement to take place. The improvement may take the form of training or promotion for the workers or provision of facility to bring about efficiency. In the Department of Feeder Roads, even though an appraisal system was in place, it was not effectively managed and that affected opportunities for officers to undergo training resulting in attrition, which affects human resource planning.

Absence of a well defined job description

The Department of Feeder Roads has rapidly grown over the years and this has seriously distorted its organizational structure. This has also affected jobs and their requirement. There is therefore an urgent need for a fresh job inventory as a way of creating new job descriptions to prevent workers from finding themselves wrongly placed and frustrated and resulting in low productivity. It is only by re-creating jobs and giving new meaning to job descriptions, that the Department of Feeder Roads will be able to achieve its objectives.

Financial constraints

The Department has been known to commit only a small fraction of its resource to issues pertaining to the planning and development of its human resource. In the Civil Service, there is always the “no money” syndrome and the Department was no exception. As a result of insufficient funding, the Department of Feeder Roads was limited in its effort to implement its human resource plans. The Department had competitions in industry but did not have the financial resource to recruit the best staff and train them.

The effects of lack of succession plan

In organizations where there is no focus on developing the capacity of subordinates for succession, human resource planning becomes difficult. The organization is unable to secure the cycle in the event of a sudden change in

management. It would take time, and at a higher cost to fill a vacancy, to the frustration of serving employees. This was the case in the Department of Feeder Roads. Regular transfers and lack of a clear policy on succession had on many occasions created human resource difficulties. For example, two out of the three District Engineers had been transferred to more than two stations in the last five years. The remaining one District engineer had also been transferred once in the last three years. These key officers were therefore not made to stay long enough at one post to even allow for a sustained programme of developing a succession plan.

The next and final chapter of this research work discusses the summary of the study, conclusions drawn and recommendations to the Department of Feeder Roads.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

This final chapter presents summary of the main findings, conclusions drawn from the research and recommendations that will help improve the human resource planning activities of the Department of Feeder Roads.

Summary of the main findings

The Department of Feeder Roads is an agency under the Ministry of Roads and Transport with the responsibility for the administration of a nationwide rural road network of 31,600 km. The study sought to establish how sustainable human resource planning can be instituted by the Department for the administration of the country's rural road network. Since different categories of professionals are needed by the Department to carry out its operations effectively, there was the need for an effective human resource planning to ensure success for the Department. The study highlighted the present status of human resource functions in the Department and the relationship between the Office of the Head of Civil Service (OHCS) and the Department in terms of human resource planning. A critical evaluation of the human resource function in the Department was carried out using

questionnaires and interviews. The findings showed areas of challenges in human resource planning, improper organizational culture, lack of well defined successive plan, mission statement not fused into strategic plan, improper collaboration between educational institutions and the Department, performance management systems not properly implemented, and no clear co-ordination between the Department and the OHCS. The study finally examined these challenges, putting forward several possible activities that could be done to bring about a sustainable human resource planning in the Department of Feeder Roads.

Conclusions

The study led to the following conclusions:

- ❖ The Department of Feeder Roads has not been able to put in place an appropriate human resource structure that will assist the Department in achieving its objectives.
- ❖ It has also not been able to properly link its human resource activities with that of the Office of the Head of Civil Service. This has adversely affected any meaningful human resource planning.
- ❖ The Department of Feeder Roads can achieve a sustainable human resource planning only if it puts the necessary structures and strategies, stated below in the recommendations, in place.

Recommendations

After the study of the existing structures in the Department of Feeder Roads in relation to the human resource function, its effectiveness, difficulties and challenges, this section contains proposed strategies by which a sustainable human resource planning can be developed in the Department. Strategies towards this end will involve activities, which are presented in the following recommendations:

1. As a first major recommendation, it will be necessary to create the awareness of new concepts of interdependence of civil engineering with other disciplines such as Economics, Sociology, Environmental Issues and Human Resource Management. This will create a positive organizational climate and culture that would allow human resource planning to be accepted as an important aspect of the Department's operations. This should be a collective effort with Management showing more commitment.
2. Organizational structures are created to promote corporate interest and also reflect managerial intentions and values. In spite of several internal and external changes that have affected the Department of Feeder Roads, the organizational structure of the Department has remained unchanged except some few adjustments since its establishment. The need for a review of its organizational structure is therefore long overdue and hereby recommended.

3. As has been mentioned elsewhere in this study, the Office of the Head of Civil Service (OHCS) performs several of the human resource planning activities on behalf of the various Ministries, Departments and Agencies. One such major activity is the recruitment of staff. Although it is the Department of Feeder Roads that declares its human resource requirements, the actual recruitment procedure is implemented by OHCS on behalf of the Department. It has also been observed that since the Department has no control over the recruitment procedure, its staff requirement is often met later than desired. Such situations do not augur well for human resource planning. The Department of Feeder Roads stands a better chance of achieving a sustainable human resource planning if a closer working relationship can be developed between it and the Office of the Head of Civil Service. The Office of Head of Civil Service should put together a uniform human resource policy with a clear set of procedures and guidelines on the practice of human resource activities for agencies such as the Department of Feeder Roads. This in turn, will guide functional officers involved with human resource planning in the Department in their handling of human resource matters.
4. The mission statement of any organization like the Department of Feeder Roads sets out the purpose of that organization and the path towards the achievement of that purpose. Just as

corporate objectives are derived from mission statements an organization's strategic plan shows how the objectives would be pursued with competitive advantage in the short and long terms. In both the mission statement and strategic plan, the human resource of the organization plays a vital role in achieving the intended purpose. The Department of Feeder Roads would therefore need to give serious consideration to the role of human resource in its mission statement and strategic plan. The Human Resource unit needs to make inputs into the drawing up of the Department's strategic plan and management should ensure that this takes place.

5. The Department of Feeder Roads is dependent upon the universities and the polytechnics for its major labour requirements. However, it was observed that there was no proper coordination between educational and training institutions on one hand and the general business community on the other regarding labour resources and appropriate level of training required. As a result of this, the Department had been faced with a situation where products from the educational institutions in particular had been found to be ill-suited for its employment needs. The effect of this is that newly recruited staff spent a long period undergoing induction and training programmes. To achieve a more sustainable human resource planning, the Department of Feeder Roads can embark on a coordination and harmonization exercise by making inputs into

the curricula of tertiary institutions as well as contributing financially and otherwise into the general training of potential staff for the Department.

6. Quality and continuous training for staff, aimed at providing needed skills for their work as well as career development is necessary. The Department of Feeder Roads should therefore put in place a training policy that will guide the administration in terms of training of both in-coming and existing staff.
7. One aspect of human resource planning which was clearly missing in the Department of Feeder Roads was the use of a performance management system. This is a system that sets performance targets and is meant to evaluate their individual, group or corporate performance. Information is gathered through monitoring of performance and this is used generally to assess the organization. Then the use of rewards comes in as a re-enforcing tool for the achievement of performance targets. This is recommended as a system to be used by management to evaluate performance at the Department.
8. An effective human resource planning revolves around the four categories of staff which include the “leavers”. This is one area the Department of Feeder Roads can ensure proper planning to take care of “leavers” who may be staff on retirement, transfer, promotion and resignation. In order not to create a “skill and competence” vacuum, a proper succession scheme should be

put in place to ensure that knowledge and skills are sufficiently spread among staff through coaching and mentoring as part of the training among staff and career development programmes of the Department. This ensures continuity generally and avoids cost in terms of loss in productivity. It also ensures a sustainable human resource planning.

Recommendations for further research

As far as the samples are concerned, replication (and possible enlargement of the sample) of the study in all the other regions of Ghana would be highly desirable. In this regard, similar studies at the other Department of Feeder Roads offices (regional and district offices) throughout the country would seem appropriate.

An attempt should also be made to determine the overall human resource planning practice by the Department of Feeder Roads nationwide for an effective administration of rural roads in Ghana.

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GLOSSARY

ASROC.....	Association of Road Contractors
CMB.....	Cocoa Marketing Board
DANIDA.....	Danish International Development Agency
DFR.....	Department of Feeder Roads
E.U.....	European
G.H.A.....	Ghana Highway Authority
G.N.C.C.....	Ghana National Construction Corporation
G.O.G.....	Government of Ghana
H.R.....	Human Resource
H.R.P.....	Human Resource Planning
JICA.....	Japan International Co-operation Agency
M.D's.....	Managing Directors
MDA's.....	Ministries, Departments and Agencies
MRT.....	Ministry of Roads and Transport
OHCS.....	Office of the Head of the Civil Service
PSC.....	Public Service Commission
PWD.....	Public Works Department
PRM.....	Road Prioritization Methodology
SCC.....	State Construction Corporation
VRA.....	Volta River Authority

APPENDIX 1

TOWARDS A SUSTAINABLE HUMAN RESOURCE PLANNING

QUESTIONNAIRE TO DETERMINE HUMAN RESOURCE ISSUES IN
DEPARTMENT OF FEEDER ROAD OFFICES

(Road Contractors)

1. Gender: Male Female
2. Marital status: Married Single Other
3. Age: 21 to 30 31 to 40
41 to 50 51 to 60
61 or older
4. How long have you been associated with the Department of Feeder Road (DFR)?
.....
5. Briefly explain what your association with DFR entails.
.....
.....
6. Does your involvement with DFR take you to any of the following offices?
Head Office Regional Office Both
7. Do you have an encounter with a lot of the staff at any of the offices earlier mentioned? Yes / No
8. Do you think there are enough staff at the offices to handle your work?

Yes / No

9. Is the quality of work produced by the staff satisfactory? Yes / No
10. Is your work accomplished in a reasonable good time? Yes / No
11. Do you think additional numbers of staff would influence the quality of your work? Yes / No
12. Do you think additional number of staff would have improved the time spent on your work? Yes / No
13. Do you think an additional number of staff would have had effect on both the quality and speed of your work? Yes / No
14. Do you think the staffs are well trained for their jobs? Yes / No

APPENDIX 2

**TOWARDS A SUSTAINABLE HUMAN RESOURCE PLANNING IN
THE DEPARTMENT OF FEEDER ROADS**

**QUESTIONNAIRE TO EVALUATE THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE
HUMAN RESOURCE FUNCTION**

(Department of Feeder Road: Regional and District offices)

1. Gender: Male Female
2. Marital status: Married Single Other
3. Age: 21 to 30 31 to 40
41 to 50 51 to 60
61 or older
4. Years working in the organisation: 3 to 5
6 to 10 11 to 15
16 to 20 21 and above

5. What is your present position?

.....

6. How long have you been in this position?

.....

7. How many staff members do you have under you?

.....

8. Do you have in place a human resource outfit in your regional office?

Yes / No

9. If your answer is yes to number 5 then state the Human Resource functions performed in your region?

.....

10. Do the Human Resource functions satisfy the human resource requirements in your region? Yes / No

11. Which other Human Resource activities are not handled in your region?

.....

12. Is there any kind of planning for human resource in your region?

.....

13. Do you have sufficient numbers of all categories of staff needed to meet set target for your region? Yes / No

14. If your answer is No, give a brief description of staff in your region.

.....
.....

15. Do you think the organizational structure at the regional level is appropriate and relevant to your operations?

.....

16. Do your staffs have enough training programmes? Yes / No

17. What else can be done to improve training?

.....
.....

18. How successful is the administration of the performance appraisal system in your region?

.....
.....

19. What is your opinion about Succession Planning?

.....
.....

20. What is the official position on Succession Planning in your region.

.....
.....

21. What is the rate of attrition among engineering and other Technical Staff?

.....

22. Does the rate of attrition affect Succession planning?

.....

23. Comment on how financial resources availability affects human resource planning in the Department.

.....
.....
.....

APPENDIX 3

**TOWARDS A SUSTAINABLE HUMAN RESOURCE PLANNING IN
THE DEPARTMENT OF FEEDER ROADS**

**QUESTIONNAIRE TO APPRAISE THE HUMAN RESOURCE
PLANNING IN THE CIVIL SERVICE**

**(Ministry of Roads and Transport and Office of the Head of the Civil
Service)**

1. Gender: Male Female
2. Marital status: Married Single Other
3. Age: 21 to 30 31 to 40
41 to 50 51 to 60
61 or older
4. Years working in the organisation: 3 to 5
6 to 10 11 to 15
16 to 20 21 and above
5. Which organization do you work for?
.....
6. In which division or Section do you work?
.....
7. What is your position in the division?
.....
8. Do you think the OHCS satisfactorily performs its human resource

planning responsibilities to the various Ministries, Departments and Agencies?

.....

9. What areas of improvement do you think should be considered?

.....

.....

10. How do you assess DFR's human resource performance?

.....

11. How can DFR improve its human resource planning?

.....

.....

12. Is the HR policy necessary? Explain

.....

.....

APPENDIX 4

TOWARDS A SUSTAINABLE HUMAN RESOURCE PLANNING IN THE DEPARTMENT OF FEEDER ROADS

STRUCTURED TOPICS FOR INTERVIEWS AND DISCUSSIONS

(Department of Feeder Roads)

1. Organizational Structure

- How effective is it?
- Is it relevant or needs to be amended?

2. Job Description

- Is it available for all staff?
- Who determines it?
- Has there ever been a review?

3. Training

- How are needs determined?
- How are officers selected?
- Do selection of officers meet laid down criteria?
- Is training effective?

4. Appraisal

- Who initiates appraisal of staff and at what times?
- Are the necessary procedures followed during appraisal?
- Are appraising officers trained to carry out this function?

- What shortcomings are evident in this exercise?

5. Succession Planning

- What is involved in succession planning?
- In your opinion, what can be done to improve this HR activity?

6. Recruitment

- How effective has this exercise been?
- How skilled are the people in the labour market?
- What is the rate of attrition of staff?
- What are the causes of this attrition?

7. Human Resource in DFR

- What is your general opinion of HR in the DFR?
- What suggestions would you like to make for improvements in
- HR functions, considering the challenges facing the DFR?