

# **INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF AGRICULTURAL INFORMATION SPECIALISTS**

## **AFRICA CHAPTER**

### **DRAFT BY-LAWS**

#### **ARTICLE I: NAME**

**Section 1:** The name of the organization shall be the International Association of Agricultural Information Specialists (IAALD) Africa Chapter, hereafter referred to as The Chapter.

**Section 2:** The Chapter shall be a forum of individuals and organizations involved in creating, capturing, accessing, disseminating information and knowledge concerning agriculture and rural development in Africa.

#### **ARTICLE II: OBJECTIVES**

**Section 1:** The objectives of the Chapter shall be:

- i. To provide a forum for discussion of issues relating to creating, managing, disseminating information and knowledge concerning agriculture and rural development in Africa.
- ii. To promote cooperation and communication among its members in order to strengthen the agricultural information management profession in Africa.
- iii. To take a leadership role in advocating for implementation of sound agricultural information management strategies and policies in institutions.
- iv. To promote capacity building, for both individual and institutional, in agricultural information management.

#### **ARTICLE III: LANGUAGES OF BUSINESS**

**Section 1:** All communications or discussions at the meetings of the Chapter's Executive Committee meetings, Conference and General Council shall be conducted in English and French.

**Section 2:** Professional simultaneous interpretation services and facilities will be provided at the Chapter Conference and the General Council meetings as part of the conference arrangements. However, in the case of Executive Committee meetings and in the communication with the members, the Chapter will call upon its members to provide the required services at no cost to the Chapter.

**Section 3:** While the languages of the Chapter shall primarily be English and French, the Executive Committee shall make every effort to encourage the use of other languages as funds and expertise allow.

#### **ARTICLE VI: RULES OF PROCEDURE**

**Section 1:** The Chapter shall be guided in its procedures by the IAALD Constitution when no other rules have been specifically established in the Chapter's By-Laws.

**ARTICLE V: SECRETARIAT**

**Section 1:** The Secretariat for the Chapter shall be located in the office of the Secretary/Treasurer during the term of his/her office.

**ARTICLE VI: MEMBERSHIP**

**Section 1:** The membership of the Chapter shall consist of the following classes of members: Individual, Institutional, Associate, Student and Honorary. Any person or institution involved with creating, capturing, accessing, or disseminating information and knowledge concerning agriculture and rural development in Africa may become a member of the Chapter by complying with the provisions of the By-laws.

**Section 2:** Individual membership, Institutional membership and Student membership shall automatically be awarded to individual, institution and student members of IAALD who reside or are located or work in Africa.

**Section 3:** Associate membership shall be awarded, upon application and approval by the two thirds ( $\frac{2}{3}$ ) members of the Executive Committee, to any individual or organization with interest in agricultural information.

**Section 4:** Honorary membership shall be awarded to individuals and organizations that have made outstanding contributions to the Chapter or its purposes. Honorary members must be recommended by a voting member. The recommendation must be presented to the Executive Committee in writing six months prior to the General Council meeting. Detailed information concerning the contributions and achievements of the individual/organization must accompany the recommendation. Names of persons/organizations nominated for Honorary Membership shall be presented to the General Council and must receive a two-thirds majority of the votes cast at the General Council meeting to be adopted.

**ARTICLE VII: ADMINISTRATION OF THE CHAPTER**

**Section 1:** The affairs of the Chapter shall be governed by an elected Executive Committee consisting of a President, a Vice President, a Secretary/Treasurer, and five (5) Sub-regional Representatives.

**Section 2:** In order to provide continuity in the governance of the Chapter, the immediate Past President of the Chapter shall also serve on the Executive Committee, for a maximum period of three (3 years) from the day his/her term of office as President of the Chapter ends.

**Section 3:** Depending on the official language of communication of the President, the Vice President shall come from either a Francophone or Anglophone country.

**Section 4:** Sub-regional Representatives shall be from the following Chapter's sub-regions:

- i. *Central Africa Region:* Cameroon, Chad, Central Africa Republic, Congo Republic, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon and Sao Tomé e Príncipe.
- ii. *Eastern Africa Sub-Region:* Burundi, Comoros, Democratic Republic of Congo, Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Madagascar, Rwanda, Somalia, Sudan, Tanzania and Uganda.
- iii. *Northern Africa Sub-Region:* Egypt, Algeria, Tunisia, Morocco, Libya.
- iv. *Southern Africa Sub-Region:* Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Seychelles, South Africa, Swaziland, Zambia and Zimbabwe.
- v. *Western Africa Sub-Region:* Benin, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, Cote d'Ivoire, Equatorial Guinea, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Togo.

**Section 5:** The Chapter members serving on the IAALD Executive Committee will automatically serve as ex-officials on the Chapter's Executive Committee.

**Section 6:** Executive Committee members shall not receive any compensation for their services to the Chapter. Officers of the Chapter may reclaim an agreed portion of expenses incurred for attendance at Chapter Executive Committee meetings.

**Section 7:** At the meetings of the Executive Committee, a quorum shall be formed when four (4) or more of the Executive Committee members, inclusive of the President or Vice President, are present.

**Section 8:** Decisions of the Executive Committee shall be by simple majority of votes cast. The President shall have a casting vote.

**Section 9:** The Executive Committee shall meet at least once per year or as deemed necessary.

**Section 10:** The **Executive Committee** shall:

- i. Have the power and authority to manage the affairs of the Chapter;
- ii. Determine the policies for the Chapter, within the limits of the Chapter's By-laws and the IAALD Constitution;
- iii. Be responsible for fund-raising and the Chapter's fiscal affairs and budgeting;
- iv. Take such actions as it considers necessary to carry out the objectives of the Chapter;
- v. Convene General Council Meetings, Special Meetings and Events at appropriate times;
- vi. Perform such other functions as directed by the General Council.

## **ARTICLE VIII: DUTIES OF THE OFFICERS**

**Section 1:** The **President** shall:

- i. Have general supervision and control over the affairs of the Chapter;
- ii. Prepare and present the Chapter's report at the General Council meetings;
- iii. Set agendas for all Executive Committee meetings;
- iv. Chair the Executive Committee meetings and the General Council meetings;
- v. Liaise with IAALD Executive Committee.

**Section 2:** The **Vice President** shall:

- i. Assist the President in the performance of the duties of the office;
- ii. Perform such other duties as the President or Council may assign;
- iii. In the event of the President being unable to carry out his/her duties, the title and all duties and obligations shall be assumed by the Vice President until the next General Council meeting.

**Section 3:** The immediate **Past President** shall:

- i. Serve as advisor to the President on matters of policy (past, current and future);
- ii. Serve as Chair of the Conference and Programme Committee, if required or needed.

**Section 3:** The **Secretary/Treasurer** shall:

- i. Record and keep the minutes of all Executive Committee meetings and the General Council meetings;
- ii. Handle all official correspondence of the Chapter;
- iii. Maintain permanent files for all documents and records pertaining to the Chapter;
- iv. With the Treasurer, shall maintain accurate membership data bases of the Chapter.
- v. Receive and disburse all funds of the Chapter, keep records of dues received and funds expended;
- vi. Maintain the financial records of the Chapter;
- vii. Furnish such financial records as may be required by the Executive Committee;
- viii. Submit a statement of account of the Chapter's funds at each General Council meeting.

**Section 5:** The **Regional Representatives** shall:

- i. Be the liaison officer between the Chapter and members located in their region;
- ii. Promote the affairs of the Chapter in their region;
- iii. Represent the interests of Chapter at relevant meetings and forums (i.e. meetings of national or regional library and information associations) held in their regions.

**ARTICLE IX: ELECTION OF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

**Section 1:** The term of office for the Executive Committee shall be three (3) years and members of the Committee shall be elected at the General Council meeting. No person shall remain a member of the Executive Committee for longer than two terms (6 years).

**Section 2:** To be eligible for election to any of the posts on the Executive Committee, a candidate must:

- i. Be a paid up *individual* member of the Chapter;
- ii. Have been a member of IAALD for at least two (2) years at the close of the nominations;
- iii. Be supported by at least two paid up individual or institutional members.

**Section 3:** A call for nominations to stand for posts in the Executive Committee will be sent by the Secretary/Treasurer to the members and published on the Chapter's website six (6) months before the General Council meeting.

**Section 4:** In the event of more than one candidate for an elected office, the election shall be held by secret ballot, and the candidates receiving the largest number of votes for each office shall be declared elected. If there is only one candidate for an elected post at the close of nominations, that candidate shall be declared elected at the General Council meeting.

**Section 5:** In order to conform to *Article VII, Section 3* of the By-laws, nominations for the post of Vice President, depending on the outcomes of the results of the Presidential elections, may be re-opened during the General Council meeting and the elections be concluded before the closure of the meeting.

**Section 6:** Nomination and election of representatives from the Chapter's Sub-Regions shall be restricted to Chapter members belonging to the particular sub-region. Secret email voting by Chapter members unable to attend the General Council meeting shall be allowed in the election of Sub-regional Representatives.

**ARTICLE X: CONFERENCE AND PROGRAMME COMMITTEE**

**Section 1:** There shall be a Conference and Programme Committee (CPC) whose duties shall be to organize the Chapter's Conference.

**Section 2:** Members of the CPC shall not be more than five (5) and shall, on the basis of their ability to deliver, be appointed to the Committee by the Executive Committee.

**Section 3:** Members of the Executive Committee shall serve on the CPC as ex-officials.

**Section 4:** The immediate past President of the Chapter shall serve as the chairperson of CPC. In the event that the immediate Past President is not available to serve as the chairperson for the CPC, the Executive Committee shall appoint the Chairperson of the CPC.

## **ARTICLE XI: CHAPTER CONFERENCE**

- Section 1:** The Chapter shall organize its conference in a city or town and country and on the dates to be decided upon by the Executive Committee in consultation with the Conference and Programme Committee. The conference shall take place at least every three (3) years. The Executive Committee shall determine the process for selecting the conference site.
- Section 2:** Chapter Members in the country proposed to host the Conference shall appoint a National Organizing Committee (NOC) which shall perform the full functions of the Secretariat for the conference to be organized, and be responsible for providing all the necessary logistics and information regarding the conference to members.
- Section 3:** The National Organizing Committee shall work with the Conference & Programme Committee and the Executive Committee in organizing the Conference and selection of the theme for the conference.

## **ARTICLE XII: GENERAL COUNCIL**

- Section 1:** The General Council shall be the highest authority of the Chapter and shall consist of all the Chapter's paid up members at the time of the meeting.
- Section 2:** The General Council meetings shall be held on the last day of the Chapter's conference.
- Section 3:** Items for the agenda for the General Council meeting shall be sent to the members and published on the Chapter website at least three (3) months before the meeting.
- Section 4:** Non-members of the Chapter (institutions and individuals) shall be allowed to attend the General Council meetings as observers and shall be free to contribute to the deliberations of the meeting.
- Section 5:** Minutes of the General Council meeting shall be made available to fully-paid up Chapter members within three (3) months of the meeting. Distribution of the minutes to individual members shall be via the Chapter's Web site, electronic mail and other suitable and inexpensive modes of delivery convenient to the members.
- Section 6:** A quorum shall be reached when **50%** or more of paid Chapter's members are present.

## **ARTICLE XIII: SPECIAL MEETINGS**

- Section 1:** The Executive Committee may organize special meetings and events for the Chapter members in conjunction with conferences and meetings of other similar organizations.

**Section 2:** The agenda or business for special meetings shall be decided upon by the Executive Committee and communicated, via email and the website, to the members of the Chapter at least two (2) months before the meeting.

#### **ARTICLE XIV: VOTING**

**Section 1:** Only the Chapter's paid up individual and institutional members shall have the right to vote at the General Council meetings and each member (individual or institutional) shall have one vote.

**Section 2:** Voting on issues raised at the General Council Meeting shall be by a show of hands and shall be restricted to members who are present.

**Section 3:** Unless specifically indicated in these By-Laws, a motion passed shall be by a simple majority of the votes cast. In the event of a tie, the Chairperson of the General Council Meeting shall use the casting vote.

#### **ARTICLE XV: AMENDMENTS TO THE BY-LAWS**

**Section 1:** Amendments may be proposed by the Executive Committee or ten (10) voting members. If proposed by voting members, such proposals should be sent to the Secretary/Treasurer at least 6 months before the General Council meeting at which the proposals will be considered.

**Section 2:** Amendments proposed or received by the Executive Committee shall be distributed through electronic mail to the membership and posted on the Chapter's website at least one (1) month before the General Council meeting in which they shall be considered for adoption.

**Section 3:** To be adopted, an amendment must be approved by two-thirds ( $\frac{2}{3}$ ) of members in attendance.

#### **ARTICLE XVI: DISSOLUTION OF THE CHAPTER**

**Section 1:** Following a proposal by the Executive Committee, the membership may decide, in a secret e-mail or web-based vote requiring three quarters majority ( $\frac{3}{4}$ ) of all members voting, to dissolve the Chapter. Upon dissolution, the Executive Committee shall pay for all liabilities and the remaining assets of the Chapter shall be turned over to IAALD to be used for the development of/or support of agricultural information management activities in Africa.