Development of Actuarial Education /Profession in West Africa

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Introduction

- Over the decade, the relevance of the actuarial profession has been on the increase albeit at a slow pace in West Africa.
- Post 2005, IAA streamlined the route to being a fully qualified actuary through its Education Syllabus and Guidelines.
- However actuarial training in Anglophone and Francophone West Africa are different.
- Most Actuaries in Anglophone West Africa belong to the Institute of Actuaries.
- The number of actuaries are not just enough to meet the needs of the region.
- Currently there are 5 fellows of the Institute of actuaries in Nigeria, 4 associates and 1 fellow of the society of Actuaries in Ghana.
- In Francophone West Africa there are 22 actuaries in Cote d'Ivoire,3 in Benin,4 in Senegal,2 in Mali,1 in Togo.

Introduction

- Actuarial firms which could have helped in the development of the profession are few. For example in Nigeria there are just 2 main actuarial consultancies, 1 in Ghana and 3 in Cote d'Ivoire.
- Actuaries in West Africa are predominantly involved in area of:
 - Life Insurance
 - Pensions and Employee Benefits
 - Involvement in areas like General Insurance and Health Insurance is still at a very low level.
 - Hardly any involvement in investment or asset management consulting



Recent Developments

- Life Insurance Companies in Ghana and Nigeria required to carry out valuation every three years
- They are also required to have an Actuarial Department
- Valuation for non-life is not statutory
- There is a general move towards risk based supervision
- Major shift from defined benefits to defined contribution pension schemes.



Actuarial Associations

- There are a number of actuarial associations in the region whose aim is to help in developing the profession in their respective countries:
 - The Nigerian Actuarial Association is the umbrella body for actuaries in Nigeria
 - Actuarial Society of Ghana is responsible for actuaries in Ghana
 - In Côte d'Ivoire, Institut des Actuaires de Côte d'Ivoire coordinates the activities of actuaries
- These associations try to create awareness for the profession and also encourage young actuaries by organising:
 - Regular Meetings
 - Regular Symposia in Universities
 - Public Lectures
 - In Ghana, some members of the Actuarial Society provide support by teaching actuarial science courses at the universities.



Training/Education

- Educational Institutions offering Actuarial Science:
 - 3 in Nigeria, 2 in Ghana, 2 in Cote d'Ivoire and 1 in Benin
 - Students interested in the actuarial profession still do not have any exemptions from the Institute or Society of Actuaries exams.
 - Actuarial Companies in Nigeria usually give support to employees in terms of study leave, exam fees/subscription
 - This has encouraged a number of young aspiring actuaries as the education costs are covered by the company.



Slow Pace of Development

- Paucity of qualified actuarial resources
- Cost of requisite resources
- Lack of presence of global firms in the region
- Poor foundation in Mathematics





- The Universities should improve curriculum to meet Institute Standards
- Qualified Actuaries e.g. through Actuaries without Borders should be encouraged to come to the region to lecture in the Universities on a rotational basis
- Strengthening of mathematics at the Higher School Level
- Gifted students with potentials should be identified and assistance should be provided for education and training (e.g. Scholarships, exchange Programs etc.)
- Attract global actuarial firms to the region to upscale local skills and postings within the Group.



Prospects of the Profession in West Africa

- Large Population should deepen the life products which will in turn increase demand for life actuaries.
- Legislation shifting towards risk based supervision.
- Pool of Investment
- Increased demand and hence flow of actuaries into the region
- In Nigeria there are currently 5 practicing actuaries compared to 2 in 2009.



THANK YOU

