



Studying in Denmark has been very helpful for Erick Otieno Nyambedha's career in Kenya.

I owe a lot to DFC and Danida

Exceptional circumstances lead to the encounter with Erick Otieno Nyambedha, a former fellow at the Danida Fellowship Centre (DFC), who has become Associate Professor and a leading Kenyan expert on the impact of HIV/AIDS on children.

Text and photos: Jan Kjær, Nairobi

Sometimes reality surpasses imagination. Meeting Erick is an excellent example of that.

I was waiting at the Terminal Hotel in Nairobi for an interview with a former fellowship student in Denmark, now a Kenyan VIP. After an entire day passes without getting in contact with the woman, I am getting desperate.

Opposite in the computer room of the hotel, a man has been working really hard all day. As my impatience grows, I start explaining my unfortunate situation to him.

"I have been studying with this woman in Denmark," he replies. "Danida Fellowship Centre."

What a coincidence! Same group, same years.

And he introduces himself as Erick Otieno Nyambedha, Associate Professor of Anthropology at Maseno University.

Erick is right now in Nairobi conducting a private consultancy for the EU on a Kenyan Rural Development Programme and that was why he was extremely busy, but he agreed to have dinner and to be interviewed.

"But only half an hour," he emphasises.

Deadline is approaching.

LEADING KENYAN EXPERT

Danida funded Eric's Master's Degree in Anthropology at University of Nairobi and later

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gave him the chance to pursue a PhD in Copenhagen on the vulnerability of children when it comes to HIV in sub-Saharan Africa. Erick finished his PhD at the University of Copenhagen in 2006.

Studying in Denmark has indeed been helpful for Erick's career in Kenya.

"I owe a lot to DFC and Danida," Erick says.

"What has propelled me up to where I am is the research I did at Master's and PhD level. My entire research background and everything I do as a researcher is attributed to that background."

Erick is Associate Professor and Director of Student Affairs at Maseno University in Kisumu, and a successful private consultant.

"If you talk about children affected by HIV/AIDS, I am the expert in Kenya," he stresses.

STUDYING IN DENMARK A GOOD EXPERIENCE

"It was a very good experience to study in Denmark," Erick recalls.

At the academic front he found very dedicated people. A study environment with a lot of interaction where PhD students from the universities of Odense, Aarhus and Copenhagen would come together and sharing their work.

The universities would also fly in experts from other learning institutions to conduct PhD courses.

"Once a well known professor from Harvard University came to teach Anthropological theory. His name was Michael Herzfeld. I even bought one of his books when I was still doing my PhD in Copenhagen. It was really enriching in terms of academics," Erick states.

"You are also publishing in peer review journals. That is very important."

Erick managed to publish two papers in Social Science and Medicine, one of the leading international journals in medical anthropology. One paper when he was a student and one after completing his PhD.

PRIVILEGED AT DFC

Erick was also happy about the DFC environment, making it possible for him to study hard.

"Living at DFC is quite open," he says and continues: "There was a lot of interaction

between Danish and African students, so I never felt isolated."

And compared to other Africans studying abroad he felt privileged. Erick especially likes the way DFC gives students time to organize social activities.

Generally, studying and living in Denmark was a nice experience, but ...

"I think one horrible thing about Denmark is the weather. Especially winter," Erick says with a big smile.

WIDESPREAD CORRUPTION

Returning to Kenya in 2006 was a shock for the young PhD graduate.

"I really had a hard time adjusting to the Kenyan situation. I was not comfortable with people demanding bribes for instances. It is hard to avoid. Otherwise you risk getting extinct."

Erick had got used to doing things the Danish way. He went straight to Denmark after his Masters and did the PhD there.

"In Denmark there is a high level of transparency, not a lot of bureaucracy, you see the processes moving. In Kenya there are a lot of underhand deals, especially when you are interacting with government."

At the universities this practice is less common, Erick thinks.

"Us academics are not exposed to that kind of underhand deals, what I could call corruption. You can get kind of shocked when you have to interact with people outside, especially in government ministries. Things can't move because someone wants money."

NAÏVE THE DANISH WAY

"For me it looks awkward, strange, that I should give money to someone for what he or she is supposed to do. For the majority of people here in Kenya they look at it as a right. It is a way of life. So if you don't do it, you will not be able to move. And you can loose a lot of consultancies," Erick says.

He is sure that he once lost a major consultancy funded by World Bank due to his hesitation to hand out bribes. He was told he was number one and he was acknowledged as the leading expert within his field but still, they did not consider him.

"I am so naïve. That naivety has something to do with the exposure to the Danish system. I lived in Denmark and interacted with people there. This has influenced me

and made me a bit naïve in terms of doing things "the Kenyan way". Some friends have even warned me that I cannot work in the Kenyan civil service given the way I look at things." ■

ERICK OTIENO NYAMBEDHA

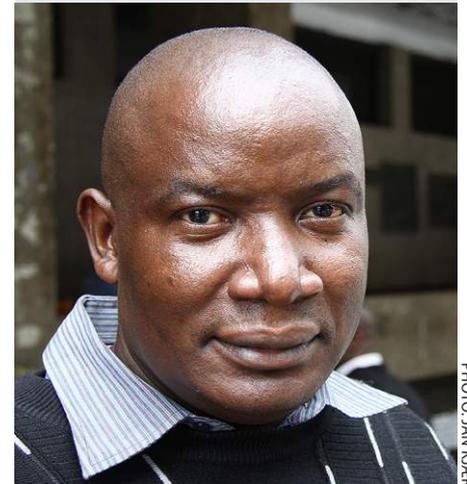


PHOTO: JAN KLÆR

- 42 years old. Married with 4 children.
- Master's Degree in Anthropology, University of Nairobi 2000.
- PhD, University of Copenhagen 2006.
- Associate Professor of Anthropology at Maseno University. Director of Student Affairs.
- www.maseno.ac.ke
- Private consultant.

Erick has secured funds for research in his fields HIV/AIDS, children and vulnerability from the former DBL-Centre for Health Research and Development which is now under Faculty of Life Sciences at Copenhagen University. He has continued having contact with the academic field in Denmark and is supervising PhD students working on HIV/AIDS thesis based on the Danish funding, although the project is closing down with the completion of the last PhD candidate who is about to submit his thesis at Maseno University.

New Danida Capacity Development Policy

Get used to the term Danida Capacity Development Support Programme and its acronym DCDSP.

That is the new broader framework under which the Danida Fellowship Centre's (DFC's) courses and studies programmes will be operating in the future.

In May 2014, a new policy was agreed naming the programme 'Danida Capacity Development Support Programme' for the first time.

The new policy paper stresses the influence of DFC: "The Programme will build on the many years of experience of the Danida Fellowship Programme, and its highly valued, high quality training offers in Denmark and abroad."

Although, many elements of the DCDSP will be similar to those of the Danida Fellowship Programme, the DCDSP will aim at providing a broader spectrum of capacity development support initiatives, including training, but also involving other learning approaches.

PROMOTION OF PRIORITIES AND FOUR PRINCIPLES

The mandate of the DCDSP is to offer capacity development support for the promotion of the Danish strategic priorities for development cooperation as well as promoting the principles of participation, accountability, non-discrimination and transparency.

In order to provide a broader spectrum of capacity development support initiatives and secure a better integration of DCDSP activities in the Global South partners' own capacity development plans and in them-



PHOTO: JAN KJÆR

DCDSP will aim at providing a broader spectrum of capacity development support initiatives, including training as this DFC course in Kampala, Uganda, but also involving other learning approaches.

tic programmes of Danida, the identification of the role of the DCDSP must be determined early on in the appraisal and programming phases of the Danish support.

The Policy outlines the guiding principles for the DCDSP and clarifies the roles the various stakeholders have in the implementation of the programme.

FOCUS ON ORGANISATIONAL AND INSTITUTIONAL LEARNING

The purpose of the DCDSP is to contribute to enhanced organisational performance and long-term organisational capacity development processes for development partners in the South. The DCDSP shall focus on providing organisational and institutional learning.

The finance bill has specially earmarked funds for capacity development support of Danida partners in the Global South within the strategic Danida priority areas through

BACKGROUND

In 2012 an evaluation of the Danida Fellowship Programme (DFP) was carried out by an independent evaluation team.

The evaluation recommended that Danida should have a proper policy for this programme.

The policy will be in force until the end of 2020 with a review in 2017.

The new policy is available on AMG: <http://amg.um.dk/en/policies-and-strategies/policy-for-danida-capacity-development-and-support-programme/>

the DCDSP. These earmarked funds are additional to what is funded through bilateral programmes and other development programmes.

AN INTEGRATED PART OF DAILY MANAGEMENT

Capacity development must be an integrated part of the daily management within partner institutions. DCDSP only supports initiatives that are a supplement to partners' own investment in capacity development, and the identification of a DCDSP funded activity shall to the extent possible be integrated into the formulation and design phases of new country programmes in Danida priority countries.

The DCDSP is a potential instrument in any capacity development process at partner level in development programmes funded by Danida. ■



PHOTO: JAN KJÆR

Matchmaking



Roundtable discussions on Indicators and Outputs in Ghana.

The story about how DFC and Danida acted as matchmakers – for the purpose of strengthening research capacity.

Text and photos: Lars Arne Jensen, DFC Research Project Administrator

The matchmaking has taken place during the recent months, and is still going on between universities in Denmark and universities in Ghana, Tanzania, Nepal and Uganda as you read these lines.

The background for these marriages/partnerships is that the second phase of the Building Stronger Universities programme (<http://dfcentre.com/research/building-stronger-universities-bsu/>) was launched this spring.

THE MATCHMAKING PROCESS

The initial activity for this has been a matchmaking process in which forming seven South-North partnerships between universities in the South and Danish partner consortia played a crucial role.

Unlike other partnerships in the world of research, these partnerships have been formed via a completely different approach.

In collaboration with Danida's Technical Advisory Services and process consultant Mr. Nils Boesen the seven South universities prepared and submitted an individual project outline to Danida, stating their own key areas of research in which they wish to strengthen the research capacity.

These project outlines all enclosed a wide range of different research disciplines (e.g. health care, water, and natural resource management, agri-business value chains, aquaculture, ICT in education, institutional capacity building). Therefore, the Danish universities had to join forces to be able to respond to the project outline of the South. And to do this within such a wide range of disciplines in one application is highly unusual compared to standard procedures for open calls for applications.

SIX PROPOSALS

The result of the matchmaking process is six incoming proposals, one for each South university project outline (except for Gulu University in Uganda, please see below). Most of the eight Danish Universities are represented in the proposals, with some universities represented in several proposals.

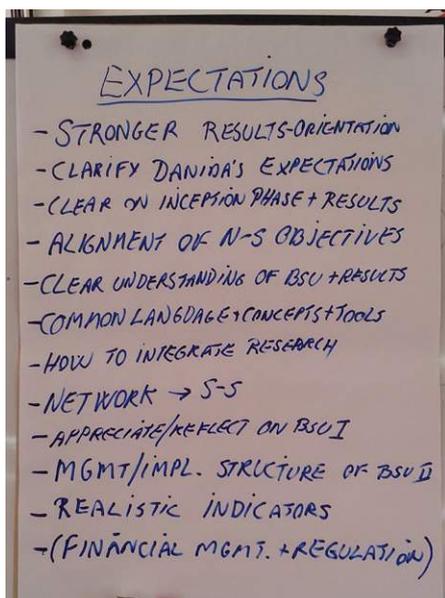
All of the six proposals have been approved by Danida as the basis for engaging into an inception phase, covering the period from June through August.

The process consultant has up to now facilitated this matchmaking process. During March, April and May the Danish consortia took their form, both via bi- and multilateral consultations amongst the interested parties – 'The Usual Suspects' you may call them – but also new actors entered the scene.

WORKSHOPS IN GHANA, TANZANIA AND NEPAL

As part of the process, monitoring/inception workshops have recently been carried out in Ghana, Tanzania and Nepal. These workshops have been very fruitful, especially in terms of giving the involved parties a chance to link up and adjust expectations as well as plan for the remainder of the inception phase.

At the workshop, Dr. Declare Mushi of Tanzania Kilimanjaro Christian Medical University College (KCMC) emphasized: "The workshop helped us to build network and team work spirit, and to develop common understanding of the project goals."



A list of keywords for the expectations of the workshop outcome from the participants in Tanzania.

As you can see from the keyword picture to the left, 'Realistic Indicators' and 'Common Language, Concept and Tools' were among the expected outcome, and indeed these keywords played a major role at all of the workshops.

As Dr. Elton Kisanga, KCMC BSU II Coordinator, expressed it: "The 'Theory of Change' and the log frame was a challenge to articulate at the beginning."

THE WAY FORWARD

The six consortia are now in the process of finalizing the inception reports, outlining in details the actual activity and indicator framework for the coming two years, as the BSU II will run up to the end of November 2016.

After participating in the monitoring/inceptions workshops, DFC and Danida are confident that the South-North partner-

ships will manage to justify the total BSU II budget of DKK 100 million. Furthermore, the research and institutional capacity within the involved South universities will be substantially enhanced by the end of the BSU II. As the results emerge along the way, hopefully the BSU II successfully can pave the way for a BSU III in the years to come.

NB: The careful reader might notice that both the numbers 'six' and 'seven' are used in this article – this is due to the fact that the situation for Gulu University in Uganda for a while was not clarified with regards to the Danish Government's decision on continuing research collaboration with state financed institutions. This has now been resolved, and the collaboration will continue. ■

THE SEVEN UNIVERSITIES

- University of Ghana & Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, Ghana
- Sokoine University of Agriculture & Kilimanjaro Christian Medical University College & State University of Zanzibar, Tanzania
- Gulu University, Uganda
- Kathmandu University, Nepal



New DFC brochure

Danida Fellowship Centre (DFC) is pleased to launch our new 2014 brochure in both an English and French version.

The brochure provides a brief introductory overview of our activities, services and organization. It includes the two main areas funded by the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs/ Danida, which is administration of support to development research and support to capacity development activities of Danida supported programmes. But also the wide range of ser-

vices within our specialist field of arranging study tours, seminars, conferences etc. for participants from developing countries.

Thanks to all who have contributed to our new brochure. Not least to Line Thornberg for the layout.

You can download the brochure in English (<http://kortlink.dk/dfcentre/es32>) and you will soon find a link to the French version on our homepage.

Contact DFC if you want some printed copies forwarded by mail. ■



Danida Fellowship Centre
- sustaining development through research and learning



- > We support development research
- > We offer courses & studies
- > We provide services