



PHOTO: JAN KJÆR

A highly relevant programme

A recent evaluation of Danida Fellowship Programme is largely very positive. The programme is well-managed, course participants find the training relevant, and embassies acknowledge the positive contribution to Danish development cooperation. But there are still some governance weaknesses.

By Jan Kjær

Danida Fellowship Programme (DFP) is providing training which is assessed by course participants as highly relevant to their needs. And they are able to apply what they learn when they return to their workplace.

This is one of the main conclusions of a brand new evaluation initiated by Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the main funder of Danida Fellowship Centre.

WELL-MANAGED AND WELL-PREPARED

The evaluation is largely very positive.

The course participants value the programme very highly. Course materials are well-prepared and courses use appropriate training methodologies.

The programme is generally well-managed, particularly through course selection, design and implementation.

Furthermore, most Danish embassies believe that DFP is making an important and positive contribution to the objectives of Danish development cooperation.

ASSESSING ACTIVITIES AND RESULTS

The evaluation itself took place in 2012 and was carried out by a team of international consultants who were asked to document and assess the activities and results of the DFP.

The team assessed the contribution that the DFP has made to achieving results in terms of learning, behaviour change and capacity development. They have also looked into the management and gover-

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CONTACT DETAILS:

Danida Fellowship Centre
Hostrupsvej 22,
DK-1950 Frederiksberg C, Denmark
Tel. +45 3536 1322, Fax +45 3536 2095
E-mail: dfc@dfcentre.dk
or newsletter@dfcentre.dk
www.dfcentre.com

Editors:

Anne Christensen, Director
Lene Mosegaard, Programme and
Communications Coordinator
Jan Kjær, Journalist

nance arrangements to assess whether they are conducive for delivering high quality training.

The last strategic review of the programme took place in 2008. The new review includes the period 2008-12 in which some of the training courses have been transferred from Denmark to training institutes in developing countries.

Also, the development and implementation of the 2011-13 Strategy for the DFP forms part of the review.

REVIEW METHODOLOGY

The evaluation took place in 2012 and was carried out by a team of international consultants from Oxford Policy Management and SIPU International, the Swedish Institute for Public Administration.

They made country case studies in Ghana and Uganda, the two countries that have provided the most DFP course participants over the evaluation period.

In addition, the evaluation used information from the following data collections and analysis:

- analysis of DFP governance arrangements
- analysis of DFP management arrangements
- analysis of the DFP portfolio;
- comparative study of similar bilateral training programmes
- online surveys of course participants
- online surveys of Danish embassies
- online surveys of course providers
- assessment of the quality of course materials and training approaches
- a review of existing monitoring and evaluation information.

FACTS ABOUT DFC

The DFP has since 1990 been administered by the Danida Fellowship Centre (DFC) with the objective of supporting capacity development in developing countries through organising training activities ranging from short courses to longer-term postgraduate studies.

In 2011, the DFP provided 1,533 fellowship months of training to 1,260 fellows, with a budget of DKK 76.8 million.

The picture on the front page of the evaluation report is from training in Uganda, one of the two country case studies.

ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT

The embassies are generally satisfied with the shift towards more training in the developing countries which also seems to reduce the overall costs.

Progress has also been made in developing an enhanced monitoring and evaluation system for DFP although it is still not fully implemented.

But there is also room for improvement.

Previous evaluations have highlighted a lack of ownership of the DFP and weaknesses in governance. The new review indicates that the development of the strategic plan has overcome some of the problems, but embassies and Danida programmes still do not have enough influence on the courses.

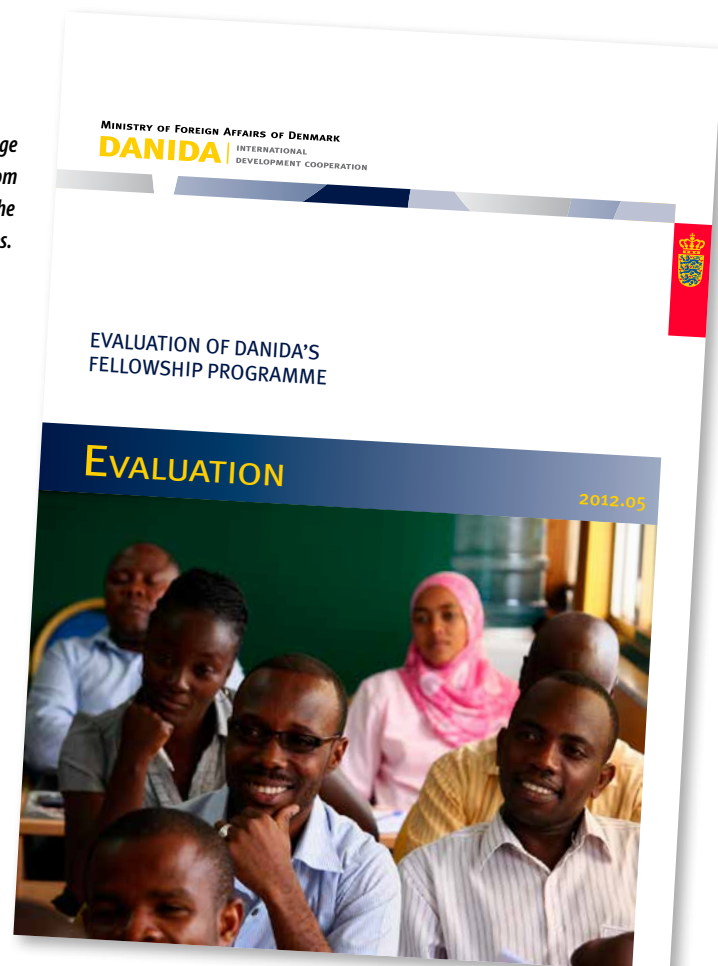
THE MISSING LINK

The review also calls for a results framework which should articulate what the programme should achieve and how it should be measured. Especially, what goes beyond self-assessment and learning outcomes, which DFC is already monitoring. But how does the programme help to change behavior and how does it help develop the capacity of the organizations? In the absence of such a framework it is not possible to link expenditure to results.

Although course participants generally are very content with the training, some were frustrated, because they were not able to apply what they had learned due to the organizational or political context at their workplace. Many suggestions made for improvement of DFP focused on strengthening the follow-up and networking process.

THE TEAM RECOMMENDATIONS

The team comes up with a wide variety of recommendations to both the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Danida Fellow Centre



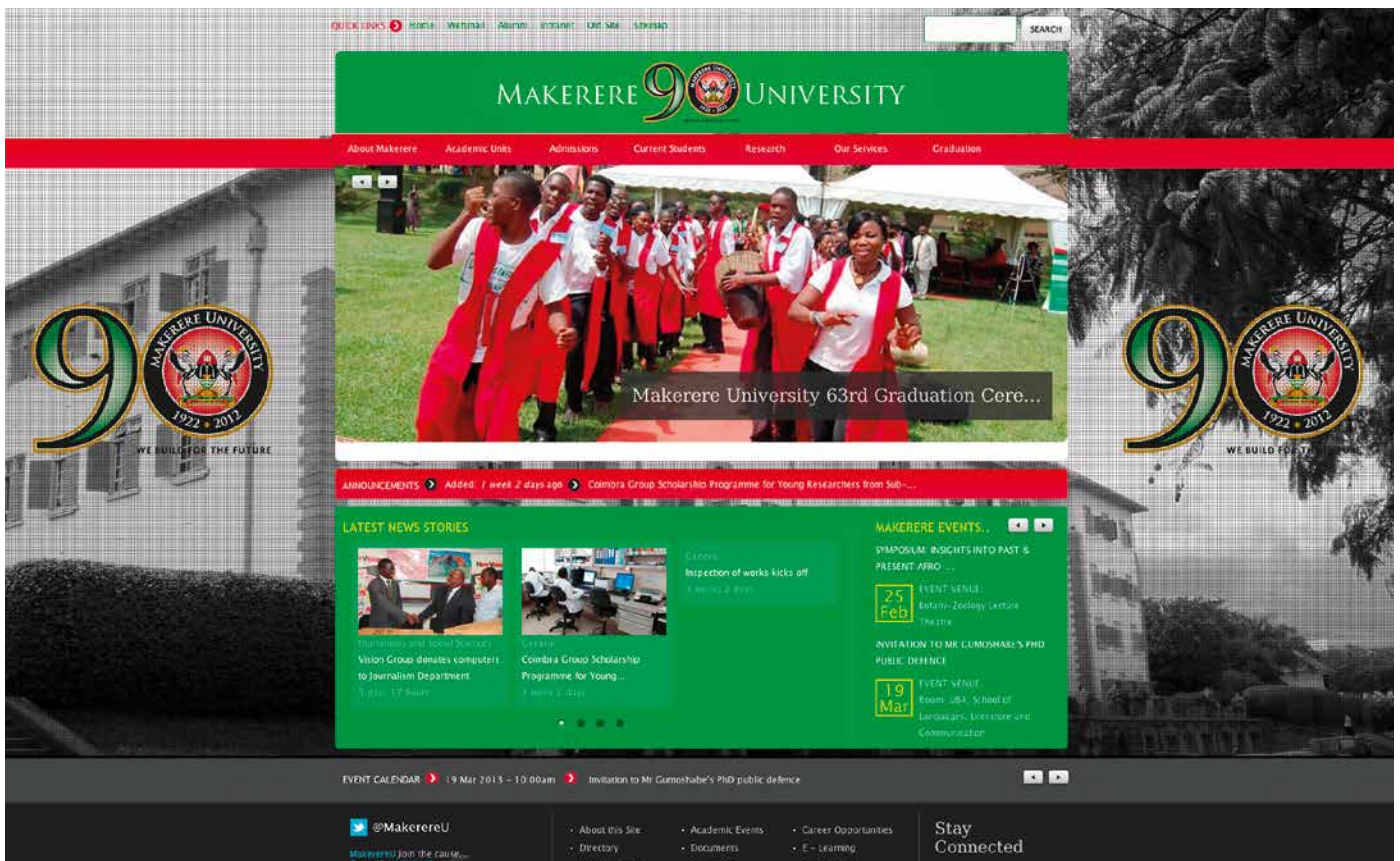
in order to enhance the programme further.

The Ministry should formulate a policy to guide the preparation of the next DFP strategy clarifying the relationship of the programme with Danida's policies and objectives for capacity development. In addition, the roles and responsibilities between DFC, Danish embassies and programmes and Ministry departments need clarification. So do the resources that are required to carry out DFP.

The Ministry and DFC should together develop a results framework for the DFP. Implementation of the DFP monitoring and evaluation system should form the basis for the future reporting of results, focusing in particular on behavior change measurement and evidence of organisational capacity building.

DFC should engage more directly in the follow-up process of its training activities and in this respect consider how the cooperation with Danish embassies and Danida programme staff can be strengthened. ■

This review report can be obtained free of charge in hard copy by ordering from www.evaluation.dk. Here you can also download a digital version.



Makerere University in Uganda is one of the selected universities to take part in the new scholarship programme.

New pilot scholarship programme

Danida Fellowship Centre (DFC) administers a new pilot scholarship programme, which will ensure that more students from developing countries will be able to take a part of their education in Denmark.

By Lene Mosegaard

In September 2012, Christian Friis Bach, Minister for Development Cooperation, initiated a new scholarship programme in collaboration with Morten Østergaard, Minister for Science, Innovation and Higher Education.

The aim is to ensure that talented students from Danida's priority countries can take a part of their education in Denmark at existing graduate or master's degree programs taught in English.

20 million DKK have been allocated for the pilot phase which runs from July 2013 to July 2015.

The final goal is a scholarship programme with 50 students annually, but in the two-year pilot phase approximately 30 students will be enrolled.

DFC AND DANISH UNIVERSITIES (DU) COLLABORATE

The scholarship programme will be anchored in the Danish Universities' initiative 'Building Stronger Universities in Developing Countries (BSU)'.

BSU is a partnership between universities in Denmark and selected universities in Ghana, Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, and Nepal, initiated in 2010.

The advantage of embedding the new scholarship programme in BSU is that the students originate from institutions already known to BSU through their existing cooperation. This helps to ensure that the students have the prerequisites needed to get maximum value out of the stay in Denmark.

The BSU programme focuses on support for institutional capacity building, including PhD educations, a strengthening of research activities and research dissemination, and composing research-based education.

FOUR RESEARCH PLATFORMS

The BSU initiative covers four research platforms:

1. Environment and Climate
2. Growth and Employment
3. Health
4. Stability, Democracy and Rights.

The scholarship programme complements the BSU programme by providing grants within the same four thematic areas.

Danish Universities and DFC have divided the responsibilities.



PHOTO: BIANKE ØRSTED



PHOTO: NICKY BONNE

"The Danish students will also get a global network by sitting next to students from developing countries in the class rooms," says Christian Friis Bach, Minister for Development Cooperation.

Morten Østergaard, Minister for Science, Innovation and Higher Education, is also supporting the new scholarship programme.

WHAT THE UNIVERSITIES WILL DO

Danish Universities will ensure:

- that the scholar programme is limited to master's degree programs of relevance to the four thematic areas
- that the scholarships will be announced via the partner universities that will also receive applications from students
- that the selection criteria are established between the DU and BSU partners
- the examination of the applications and selection of qualified students
- the quality of the offered training and facilitation of the integration of the students in the Danish educational environment
- that the working group of DU is also the steering committee for the scholarship programme.

WHAT DFC WILL DO

DFC will ensure:

- the administration of the scholarship programme, including payment of per diem/allowance, travel, residence permits, accommodation, and payment of tuition fees to the universities
- in cooperation with DU, the arrangement of an introductory course for the students with a duration of approximately two weeks, during which students are prepared academically, culturally and socially to a study at a Danish university. ■

WHAT THE MINISTER SAYS

Following are excerpts from newspaper interviews with the Minister for Development Cooperation, Christian Friis Bach.

"Many students do not get the education they dream of. Some of these students we can offer to come to Denmark, so that they after their studies can return home and help build up their own community", says Christian Friis Bach, who believes that it, among other things, should be done with educations in agriculture, water, and energy.

"These are areas we are good at in Denmark, and the poor countries have a great need to create solutions in these areas", says the Minister, who expects that the scholarships will also be beneficial for Denmark, as Danish students and companies can get a network in the developing countries.

"The Danish students will also get a global network by sitting next to students from developing countries in the class rooms. The network they developed will be beneficial for Danish companies. Many of these countries have big growth rates. This applies, for example, for Ghana, where the growth rate is 15 per cent", said Christian Friis Bach to the Danish daily Jyllands-Posten, September 3rd, 2012.

"It is no coincidence that countries like the UK, the US and Germany have a significant focus on scholarships. Through their scholarship programs they get access to talented students from all over the world which means that contacts to companies can be developed and that contributes to new innovation and access to new markets. The students return home and obtain top positions in ministries or businesses. This contributes to mutual understanding, new contacts, and global influence".

*(Danish daily Jyllands-Posten, September 3rd, 2012 by Christian Friis Bach).
Translation by DFC.*

**For further information please contact:
Lene C. Mosegaard/Programme and Communications Coordinator**

Why reinvent the wheel?



PHOTO: DHI

Participants at a course at DHI, a specialist in water solutions.

The research and development organization DHI is making use of the commercial services of Danida Fellowship Centre. Professionalism and cultural understanding are some of the main reasons.

By Jan Kjær

What Danida Fellowship Centre does for me, they couldn't possibly do better."

Secretary Susanne Kallemsø is one of the employees at DHI who regularly makes use of the DFC expertise for handling study tours or professionals visiting Denmark.

DHI is a global research and development organization specialized in water solutions. The head office is situated in Hørsholm just outside Copenhagen.

In January, seven engineers from Bangladesh were in Denmark to attend training in the renowned MIKE computer software developed by DHI. DFC was asked to take care of all the practical arrangements: Buying air tickets, picking the guests up in the airport, payment of per diem, and accommodating them in the hostel at Hostrupvej in Frederiksberg in central Copenhagen.

HIGHLY PROFESSIONAL

Susanne Kallemsø is very satisfied with co-operating with DFC: "It's great to have DFC at the other end. They know what they're doing. You feel very safe. They are highly

professional people who are doing this all the time."

"If it were me, I would have to reinvent the wheel all the time. At DFC they keep it rolling," Susanne Kallemsø adds.

"DFC also made an 'Introduction to Denmark on arrival,' a welcome meeting, where they are introduced to everything from buying bus tickets to the cultural aspects," Susanne Kallemsø explains.



PHOTO: JAN KJÆR

DHI course and software catalogues.



"DFC understands what training takes to be successful," says Jacob Høst, Director of DHI Solutions.

She likes to deal with the DFC.

"The Danida Fellowship Centre staff is so service-minded and nice," says Susanne Kallemose.

UNDERSTANDING CULTURE

Jacob Høst, director of DHI Solutions, is also very confident when using the expertise of DFC.

"First of all DFC understands what training takes to be successful," he says.

"They know how to make training with an impact in the developing country where the participants come from."

As a former DFC board member and with many years of cooperation in designing and implementing courses, he is fully aware that DFC understands the

professional and technical part of the training.

"But DFC is also good at dealing with the social and cultural aspects, which are also very important for the training to be successful," he explains.

This does not only apply when the guests are in Denmark attending the courses.

"DFC makes sure, that the guests will return home with something important after their stay in Denmark - a certain culture, a certain way of living. DFC has employees who are very good at handling that," the director says.

A DANIDA SUCCESS STORY

To Jacob Høst it is not a coincidence that the seven course participants are from Bangladesh.

Since the 80'ies, Danida has been involved in training activities to bolster the capacity of Bangladesh to deal with the devastating effects of flooding.

"It is one of the great success stories of Danida. Many engineers and professionals still come to Denmark to attend courses, not least at DHI."

Bangladesh and Denmark have special ties when it comes to water. Also very personal ties, says secretary Sanne Kallemose with a smile.

"Some of those, who came as young students many years ago, are now bosses and send new students to us." ■

Jan Kjær is a journalist and consultant and owner of Better-World.dk

DFC COMMERCIAL SERVICES

Danida Fellowship Centre provides a wide range of services within our specialist field of arranging study tours, seminars and conferences for participants from developing countries.

The customers are mainly the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, NGOs and other organisations working with development assistance.

DFC continues to assist an increasing number of people. The extent of services provided by DFC on commercial basis has tripled during 2012.

For more information contact Anne Engkøbølle at DFC.

WHAT IS DHI?

DHI is a global, independent research and development organization working within the fields of water, environment and health. DHI provides a wide range of consulting, research and policy services.

DHI has 1100 employees worldwide. 350 are based in Denmark.

Every year, DHI receives a large number of students and professionals from all over the world. They attend courses. Many of them are not linked to Danida programmes.

Read more about DHI on www.dhigroup.com

New DFC staff members

On the 15th of January 2013, Hanne Kongsgaard took up her position as administrative officer in the research department where she will handle the administration of the projects.

On the very first day of this year Sophie Ullerup was employed as junior staff. ■



Hanne Kongsgaard



Sophie Ullerup