

SUMMARY FROM THE DAN-KENYA NETWORK MEETING HELD AT AFYA ANNEX, KENYATTA HOSPITAL GROUNDS ON 15TH FEB 2019.

Activity Type: Half day conference

Activity Theme: Workshop to strengthen ties between Danida alumni in academia and industry

Date: 02-15-2019

Venue: Afya Annex, Kenyatta Hospital Grounds, **NAIROBI**

Fund Applicant: Philip Visendi Lumwamu

Background

The workshop acted as a tracer study bringing together alumni from the academia, business/industry, government and strategic partnership in sharing their experiences. The event provided an opportunity for alumni to bring to realization the training programmes undertaken in Denmark. It also offered alumni a chance to demonstrate how they are impacting at their individual institutions/organizations and on the general development of Kenya - an integration of Danish knowledge into the Kenyan community.

This event hoped to strengthen the local alumni community so as to create a platform that brought members from academia and industry together. As such, members were able to know each other well and also get to know the various strategic partnerships involved within the network. Members were also involved in the discussion of future plans, thereby creating a sense of local ownership hence motivating members to actively participate in alumni activities.

Planning and participant mobilization

The organizing team was drawn from the DAN-Kenya Coordinating team:

- Philip V Lumwamu - Coordinator DAN-Kenya (Maseno University)
- Simon Ole Sikawa – Organizing Secretary (Kenya Dairy Board)
- Brenda Obura – Treasurer (Ministry of Health)
- Bernard Musembi- Director communication (Maseno University)

Participant mobilization

Members of the DAN-Kenya who attended included researchers and academic staff from research institutions and universities (PhDs attained from Danish universities), Masters-holders and undergraduate students and other graduates of short courses in strategic partnership and organizations.

Different channels were used to mobilize alumni including an e-mail invite for the alumni, utilization of social media such as: danida alumni network facebook, danida alumni-kenya network facebook and Danida Kenya WhatsApp platform. Using these channels led to many network members signing up for the event (28). However, a relatively good number (9) dropped out of the event at the last minutes citing emergence of other commitments.

Members Present

- | | | |
|----------------------|---------------------------------|------------------------|
| 1. Mr. Simon Sikawa | - KDB | - Organising secretary |
| 2. Philip Lumwamu | - Maseno University | - Chairman |
| 3. Brenda Obura | - MOH | - Treasurer |
| 4. Nicholas Okoth | - DVS | |
| 5. Michael Ojudi | - Research | |
| 6. Patricia Kimanthi | - KEBS | |
| 7. James Kanga | - RUBICOM | |
| 8. Lorraine Ochari | - AFA | |
| 9. Lucy Namu | - KEPHIS | |
| 10. Evans Muthuma | - DVS | |
| 11. Antony Wechuli | - PCPB | |
| 12. Mildred Kosgei | - KDB | |
| 13. Jeff Njagi | - MESP | |
| 14. Bernard Musembi | - Maseno University | - Publicity |
| 15. Alex Njugi | - KEPHIS | |
| 16. Beldine Omolo | - Treasury | |
| 17. Dorothy Ansgar | - Swedish Alumni representative | |
| 18. Maryanne Mwimali | - DVS | |
| 19. John Kariuki | - DVS | |

Agenda

1. Preliminaries
2. Brief on the 1st DANIDA/Denmark Alumni network.
3. Presentations
4. Group activities and Plenary
5. Closing remarks

Event outcomes

1. Development of future activities
2. Enhanced connections between members

DAN-Kenya Alumni Network Activity PROGRAMME

Venue: Afya Annex building at Kenyatta National Hospital grounds (NASCO offices)

4th floor Room 406

Date: 15th February 2019

Time	Activity	By Whom
8.30 – 9.00 A.M	Arrival and Registration	All
9.00 – 9.10 A.M	Opening Prayer and Introduction	Volunteer and All
9.10 – 9.20 A.M	Welcome Remarks	Phillip Lumwamu – The Dan- Kenya Alumni Network Coordinator
9.20 – 9.40 A.M	Danish Embassy Remarks	The Danish Embassy Representative
9.40 – 10.00 A.M	Danida Alumni representing Academia Remarks and Reactions	Bernard Musembi
10.00 – 10.30 A.M	Health Break	All
10.30 – 10.50 A.M	Danida Alumni Network representing Industry Remarks and Reactions	Brenda Sikolo
10.50 – 11.10 A.M	Swedish Alumni Network Representative’s Remarks and Reactions	Dorothy Ansgar
11.10 – 12.00 A.M	Group Activities	Simon Sikawa
12.00 – 1.00 P.M	Plenary – Joint Deliberations and way Forward/Future Plans	Phillip Lumwamu
1.00 – 1.15 P.M	Closing Remarks	James Kanga
1.15 – 1.30 P.M	Closing Prayer	Volunteer
1.30 – 2.30 P.M	Lunch and Departure at owns Pleasure	All

However The Danish Embassy representative did not attend the meeting but send his apology. His slot was given to Jeff Njagi to share his experiences about rural finance and collaborations with Denmark.

MIN. 1/MAR/2019: Preliminaries

The meeting was called to order by the organizing secretary at 9.30 a.m. and opened with a word of prayer. The Coordinator thanked members for finding time to attend the meeting at hand whose theme was “**Strengthening ties between professionals, Industry and Academia**”. He welcomed all members and urged them to participate actively through the exciting presentations planned for the meeting. The Coordinator emphasized professional diversity of the alumni which should be used to strengthen the network. He noted that in the 2nd call for activity grants, five applicants were submitted from Kenya of which, three, won the grants. These network activities are scheduled take place on 8th and 22nd of March in Kitui and Baringo counties respectively. Plans are also underway to organize a similar meeting in Kisumu so as to accommodate alumni in the western region of the country.

MIN. 2/MAR/2019: Brief on the 1stDanida/Denmark Alumni network

The chairman took the members through a summary of the proceedings of the first ever Joint Danida/Denmark alumni network workshop held in Copenhagen on the 10th -14th of December 2018 with representation from Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Vietnam, Ghana and Burkina Faso. The theme of meeting was “Sharing Ideas and Learning Lessons”. The key issues at the meeting were as follows:

a) Long term goal for Denmark Alumni Network

DFC will continue to recruit trainees from the Danida alumni network, who feel both professionally and emotionally attached to DFC and Danida. There was need to recruit and encourage any beneficiary from Denmark and incorporate them in the network to make it more attractive and inclusive. This is already being done by some countries like Vietnam and Indonesia. The alumni network is funded by the Ministry of Foreign affairs which is based at the Danish embassy and currently its main focus is on Alumni from Danida’s former and existing partner countries. However its long term goal is to develop an all-inclusive international strategy through partnerships with the Ministry of Education and Ministry of culture hence rename the network as “Denmark Alumni Network’ instead of ‘Danida Alumni Network’. The Network was to get a new contact person at the Embassy after Elizabeth Maina left. Contact persons at DFC are Lene Mossegard and Vibeke Quaade. Crucial information can be copied to the relevant contact persons for harmony. Danida Alumni Kenya Network will henceforth be DAN-Kenya.

b) Consolidating and expansion of the network

The network has to be consolidated so as to have key stakeholders from all over the country. There must be structures to encourage participation and coordination at regional levels. Synchronisation of activities is important so as to save on costs and encourage inclusivity. The local context and what works for the local population shall be considered when coming up with projects. There is need to stimulate active membership through continuously updating other members of the network through posting of engagements by members on the forum. Segmentation of members by interest areas will also target sub-groups of alumni in the most relevant way and thereby stimulate network engagement. The network can also be consolidated at individual level and on the social platforms.

c) Networking with Danish stakeholders

The network members should align their activities with the priorities of the Danish embassy so as to get the support. Maintaining an understanding of strategic sector partnership interests will also help alumni to design activities that support the Danish Embassy in achieving its goals. The network has to continuously update and involve the embassy on their planned activities ahead of time so as to allow for any potential contributions or feedback. Establishment of good working relations with in-country Danish stakeholders is important. This could be through voluntary service, knowledge and skills exchange, business marching events, visits etc.

Reactions

- Members were encouraged to sign up on the Danida alumni page.
- Members also encouraged to visit Danida webpage for information and updates.

- Contact e-mail addresses of new members were added to the alumni data bank.
- Establishment of cells or segments with similar interests and regional reach, hence the establishment of the Academic segment (contact: Maryanne Mwimali), Industry segment (contact: James Kanga) and Government segment (contact: Patricia Kimanthi).
- Establishment of regional segments for ease of coordination. The regional coordinators to be identified during the AGM later in the year:
 - Western region
 - Nairobi region
 - Coast region
- The importance of partnerships with Danida was emphasized.
- The country has a challenge in building capacity for the people and other skills they can utilize in life. This is a forum where contacts can be made and utilized for the benefit of the people for the rest of their lives.

MIN. 3/MAR/2019: Presentations

1. Danida alumni representing Academia.

Bernard Musembi took the members through the process undertaken by prospective students when applying for a scholarship and even after proceeding from Kenya to Denmark. Our capacity can be enhanced through active search for funding through the available networks. There is a whole difference in terms of class size, facilities, ambience, networks established and the working relationships between industry and academia. There is need to sensitise our institutions for formation of close linkages between industry and regulatory bodies as well as academia so that trainees do not feel out of place upon placement and the findings from any research work are put into proper use. DAN-Kenya to organise induction meetings with alumni travelling to Denmark.

2. Danida alumni representing Industry

Lucy Namu took the members through the sector strategic cooperation where research being carried out should be relation to the need/problem at hand. Our small holder farmers have a challenge with compliance which has led to the country being listed among those countries misusing pesticides on some food crops. Cooperation between industry, research and academia would help alleviate this problem. There is need for forums such as exhibitions where researchers can bring out their findings in the simplest way possible that can be understood by the stakeholders. Similarly farmers also have a lot of information that can be shared with other stakeholders.

There is need for managing the market by carrying out problem oriented research where we target the problem and come up with solutions. Risk based approaches in managing risks within the food chain can be done hence carry out evidence based policy research. The country needs to move away from the alarmist kind of approach by proper communication of risks and reviewing of obsolete acts, rules and regulations. Food production should be segmented so as to improve production, characterise plants with medicinal value and encourage value addition for better market access and returns.

3. Swedish alumni network representative.

Dorothy Ansgar reiterated the main purpose of an alumni network which is mainly to bring the alumni together, share experiences as we strive to make things better here in Kenya after gaining knowledge, skill and even the power to change. Alumni networks need to create quality and value so as to benefit their

members, society, country and the partners they interact with. She reinforced the need for alumni members to meet prospective students before they proceed for their studies in Denmark. This can be arranged with the embassy as a pre-departure ceremony. This will strengthen the alumni as members get to meet each other, share their diversity as new members get oriented into the network. Members were encouraged to seek contacts of Danish industries to help alumni to grow. She also emphasized the need to reach out to specific members and inquire about their interests and intentions. In this way we recognize that each member is unique and brings out the best in them.

MIN. 4/MAR/2019: Group activities/Plenary

The members were divided three different groups to identify the problems facing industry, government, academia and research and below is a summary of their findings.

Industry

1. Bureaucracy when seeking for business licenses where the process is tedious, time consuming and costly.
2. Lack of self-regulation among members of industry, trade or sectors of the economy in adherence to legal, ethical, or safety standards.
3. Lack of trust between government and industry
4. Multiple taxation by different government departments which scares/discourages investment.
5. Lack of involvement of stakeholders in policy development leading to inappropriate/ineffective policies.
6. Lack of communication among stakeholders leading to mistrust.
7. Inadequate collaborations between government and research institutions so as to solve industrial challenges.

There is need to build a platform where academia, research, industry, government and other stakeholders can come together to foster collaborations and communication hence build trust. This can be achieved through conferences, workshops and institutional field days.

Academia and research

Academic and research institutions should engage in problem oriented research. Such an approach will break the disconnect between the research institutions and the actual problems facing society.

1. There should be linkages between industry and academia with key specializations.
2. The industry should be able to approach academia with specific needs.
3. Findings of research should be presented in conferences and workshops in a user-friendly mode.
4. There should be continuous /constant capacity building within industry.
5. Industry should be able to offer internships and attachments to trainees who will in turn identify problems that might form a basis of their researchwork.

Government

1. Research that is carried out is usually not industry driven hence involvement of the two is key.
2. Outdated laws and regulations should be reviewed with public participation.
3. There is inadequate data for decision making hence we need to improve on our data collection tools.

4. There is weak response to government initiatives and facilitation which calls again for involvement of stakeholders in policy making.

MIN. 5/MAR/2019: Closing Remarks

James Kanga briefed members on RUBICOM, (Ruaraka Business community) an organisation that advocates for a better, safer and friendly environment within the industrial area of Ruaraka in Nairobi. This is part of strategic sector collaboration between Kenya and Denmark. Ruaraka serves as a research zone for the Green and circular innovation for Kenyan companies (Gecko) project.

Finally Mr. Kanga thanked the Danish government for their continued support, the officials for successfully organising for the meeting and the alumni members for availing themselves for the meeting.

The chairman encouraged everyone to apply for the Danida grants that were posted on the Danida website and also noted the upcoming segmentation of the alumni both in terms of regions (Coast, Western and Nairobi) and interests (Academia, Industry and government).

There being no other business to discuss the meeting was closed with a word of prayer at 1.35pm.