

Danish Development Research Network

Minutes of DDRN Board Meeting

December 14, 2010 – IGG, University of Copenhagen

Participants: Arne Wangel (AW), Carl Erik Schou Larsen (CESL), Claus Jørgensen (CJ), John Christensen (JC), Niels Fold (NF), Olav Jull Sørensen (OJS).

Secretariat staff: Anne Sørensen (AS), Kris Borring Prasada Rao (KPR), Lone Frederiksen (LF), Marianne Forti (MF) and Karina Maria Gregersen (KMG).

Apologies from: Estelle Fanjaud (EF), Helene Ystanes Føyn (HYF), Mogens Buch-Hansen (MBH), Thomas Nielsen.

LF and KMG were rapporteurs.

Draft agenda:

1. Approval of the board meeting agenda
2. Approval of the minutes of last meeting (September 14, 2010)
3. Briefing on progress of activities by the secretariat (information and discussion)
4. Status and progress of DDRN integration and dialogue strategy vis-à-vis DU/BSU platforms and in relation to Danida
 - What have we achieved so far?
 - Challenges and opportunities
 - Way forward
5. DDRN work plan and budget for first half of 2011 reviewed and prioritized (discussion and decision)
 - Focus areas
 - Sustainability plan
6. A.O.B

Ad. 1. Approval of the board meeting agenda

It was decided that the document regarding a new Danish research portal under item three should be discussed under item five. The agenda was approved.

Ad. 2. Approval of the minutes of last meeting (September 14, 2010)

The minutes of the last meeting were approved with the comment that Action 8 (Production of proposals for fact sheets promoting DDRN) was still on-going and would be dealt with under item 4.

Ad. 3. Briefing on progress of activities by the secretariat (discussion and information)

- Regarding the Global Value Chains (GVC) working group's review of GVC methods, Kris Prasada Rao (KPR) informed the board that only one expression of interest had been received by the deadline on December 13. This would be communicated to the GVC core group on December 15 and the applicant would be informed on December 17, 2010.
- Regarding the report about the member survey on benefits of DDRN membership, Anne Sørensen (AS) noted that more than 60 pct. of the respondents do not receive similar information from other sources. It was remarked that it was a very small percentage of the total amount of members (approx. 5 pct.) who had answered the questionnaire survey and that these responses could theoretically reflect the most satisfied DDRN members. This fact should be stated in the report.

<p>Action 1: The fact that 5 pct. of the members have responded to the member survey questionnaire should be underlined in the report.</p>

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- The board was informed that the membership of the agriculture and development working group is growing, both BSU's (Building Strong Universities) Growth and Employment platform and Udviklingsfaglig Tjeneste (UFT) being represented. The secretariat is currently working on motivating the key members to take the group forward, only with support from the DDRN secretariat.
- The board was updated on the Ministerial Conference on Higher Education in Agriculture (CHEA) in Uganda. The conference was well attended; and one outcome was that African governments will take action as a result of the conference, increasing their funding for higher education.
- It was noted that Action 8 (Elaboration of proposals for fact sheets) from the last meeting was still on-going. The secretariat has not yet decided whether to produce fact sheets, a white paper or another appropriate document, according to the target receivers.
- Marianne Forti (MF) updated the board on the two meetings arranged by the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs (UM) on respectively evaluation of aid development and the launching of the new international research programme 'Research and communication of foreign aid'. MF noted that DDRN had offered to assist UM's evaluation department in starting up an informal network of evaluation of development and expressed that there could be a role for DDRN in relation to the new research programme. Niels Fold (NF) will take contact to Ole Winkler and DIIS concerning a programme on impact of development.
- John Christensen (JC) informed the board that the Climate Change Task Force's (CCTF) workshop in November had been well attended and well received. A policy brief is to be published in January.
- It was noted that Lene Jespersen from KU LIFE had participated in the ERA-ARD II launch workshop and that she will report on possibilities for DDRN and Danida/UFT under this initiative.
- AS was unable to attend the PAEPARD conference in Dakar, Senegal, as she was stranded in Paris because of bad weather. AS has received reports that many others had had similar problems so a number of important issues was not discussed at the conference. AS will send out any additional documentation she receives.
- It was noted that in the comments to DDRN's financial status, it was indicated that 80,000 DKK has been allocated to the research communication workshop in Bangladesh. The amount is in fact 55,000 DKK. This will be corrected.

Action 2: The brief on the secretariat's activities is corrected so that the amount allocated for the workshop on research communication in February 2010 will be 55,000 DKK.

- It was specified that the funds committed in 2010 for member-led activities only concern activities already approved in previous calls.
- Regarding funding applications for member-driven activities, it was decided that two applications in the category 'workshops', namely the GVC working group application and an application for a workshop in Peru, will be funded. Board members involved in the GVC working group application left the room when the board discussed this application. The board decided against funding any of the applications in the category 'other activities'. As to the question of issuing a call for applications early in 2011, it was decided not to have any call in 2011.

Ad. 4. Status and progress of DDRN integration and dialogue strategy vis-à-vis DU/BSU platforms and in relation to Danida

The board was updated on the interactions of the secretariat and the task force with DU and the BSU platforms since the last board meeting. There was a meeting with BSU in mid

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November and have also attended different activities arranged by the platforms. Moreover, the task force and members of the secretariat met with Christian Pilegaard Hansen (CPH) and Flemming Konradsen (FK), the new head of BSU, on December 13. At this meeting a draft version of the contract between BSU and UM, which BSU shared with DDRN, revealed that BSU has been allocated two additional months (until April 30, 2011) to prepare the platform action plans and budgets. BSU and DDRN agreed that the two activities largely are complementary; and BSU expressed that over time it would be relevant to integrate many of DDRN's functions into BSU in a more mature phase, but not in this initial stage. (BSU's time frame collides with the planned closing of DDRN; BSU's current structure does not allow for integration). BSU and DU therefore discussed formulating a list of DDRN functions, which are not contained in the activities outlined for BSU, at least not in its current phase. This list could be sent to UM together with a joint DDRN-BSU letter proposing that a bridging arrangement/funding be worked out in order to continue relevant functions until the end of 2012 with the aim of gradually integrating them in the second phase of BSU from 2013. These functions include among others: Broad North-South networking on research; Research dissemination; Lobbying in the EU; Representation of Danish organisations at conferences; Services rendered to UM and other authorities. The aim of such a bridging arrangement would be to ensure integration of relevant competences and functions when BSU is up and running.

With regard to DDRN's future two parallel strategies will be pursued:

1. Continued focus on cooperation and coordination with BSU;
2. Focus on alternative possibilities of anchoring DDRN competences and functions in other institutional settings (e.g. incorporation in DIIS).

The board supported the idea of BSU and DDRN formulating the above-mentioned list and enclosing it in a letter to UM. Such a letter would highlight DDRN's contributions to development programmes in UM. It was suggested that the secretariat explores whether other opportunities exist in UM for funding research related activities like the ones performed by DDRN. According to LF, at FAU's recent annual meeting, Darriann Riber had stated that two million DKK of UFT's budget for 2011 were not yet allocated.

Several options for convincing UM to consider extending DDRN's funding period were suggested:

- To encourage UFT to lobby Danida's management to extend DDRN's funding period. At the latest meeting with BSU, Flemming Konradsen expressed that he does not think UM fully realises the extent of the network's activities and the value of its activities.

Regarding the part of the strategy that focuses on other possibilities for the transfer of resources and continuation of DDRN, the Danish Institute for International Studies (DIIS) and Danida Fellowship Centre (DFC) were mentioned as organisations with whom to pursue such a dialogue. DIIS is involved with UM's new international research programme; and DDRN might possibly play a role in herein, since it is focused on research and communication of foreign aid. DFC might be interested in continuing DDRN's dissemination platform and the courses in research dissemination and communication.

Action 3: DDRN and BSU will produce a joint list of DDRN functions and competences which are complementary to those of BSU and forward this with a cover letter proposing a bridging arrangement for continuation of relevant DDRN activities.

Action 4: DDRN explores alternative options for continuing its activities.

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Ad. 5. DDRN work plan and budget for first half of 2011 reviewed and prioritized (discussion and decision)

LF presented the budget for the first half of 2011 explaining that it was based on the budget for 2010, that the main budget lines remained unchanged in relation to the budget approved by UM and that the distribution within the main lines reflected the expected activities. She added that student pay does not have a separate line but is incorporated in the areas which the students contribute to.

DDRN has been approached by UFT, who wants us to facilitate and fund a workshop in Ghana in relation to the new pilot programme. The board agreed to support the activity with a maximum of 100,000 DKK. However, it was noted that it is difficult to engage in activities which one cannot fully follow up on and that this is a good example of the type of free services and assistance that DDRN provides to Danida.

MF noted that 60,000 of the 110,000 DKK allocated to research communication would go to cofunding a research dissemination workshop for people involved with Danida's research pilot projects in Vietnam. MF pointed to the interesting fact that previous workshops for the pilot projects had been fully financed by DDRN whereas the coming workshop is to be cofunded. This is a positive development, which it would be beneficial to emphasise in the future dialogue with UM.

LF noted that 70,000 DKK had been set aside in the budget for a feasibility study regarding the new Danish research portal. MF added that this might change if UM disagrees with this. A proposal has been sent to UFT suggesting a meeting in January 2011

The board approved the budget proposed by the secretariat.

Ad. 6. A.O.B.

A tentative date and venue for the next board meeting were agreed upon: February 9, 2010, 14.00 – 16.00, at DTU, Lyngby.

List of actions from 4th board meeting 2010

Reference	Action	By whom	Status
BM4/10 act 1	The fact that only 5 pct. of the members have responded to the member survey questionnaire should be underlined in the report	MF/ KMG	Done
BM4/10 act 2	The brief on the secretariat's activities is corrected so that the amount allocated for the workshop on research communication in February 2010 will be 55,000 DKK, not 80,000 DKK.	LF	Done
BM4/10 act 3	DDRN and BSU will produce a joint list of DDRN functions and competences which are complementary to those of BSU and forward this with a cover letter proposing a bridging arrangement for continuation of relevant DDRN activities.	AS	NA
BM4/10 act 4	DDRN explores alternative options for continuing its activities.	AS	On-going

Pending actions from former board meetings

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Reference	Action	By whom	Status
BM3/10 act 8	The secretariat produces proposals for fact sheets promoting DDRN.	Secretariat	Discontinued