

Brief on outcomes: DDRN - RUFORUM workshop on Governance research in Uganda

1. Introduction

Uganda's leading policy frameworks such as the Poverty Eradication Action Plan (PEAP) and subsequent government policies stress the need to build Uganda's future on education and the application of science and technology (S&T). Uganda is the first of the Danish development programme countries, where DDRN has applied a more South focused approach in conducting its research for development related activities. On 19 October 2007 DDRN in collaboration with the Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture (RUFORUM) based in Kampala, organised a one-day workshop on Knowledge and research collaboration within the field of governance in Uganda. The main purpose of conducting this workshop was to contribute to creating a stronger Southern ownership to research conducted for donor funds through South-North research partnership projects; furthermore, to provide a platform for identifying the knowledge needs of development programmes and national initiatives within the governance sector, and a channel for Ugandan researchers to voice their research ideas and their knowledge and collaboration needs within governance and within the framework of national or regional priorities and policies.

2. Workshop on Governance research & knowledge in Uganda

The DDRN-RUFORUM workshop, which was held in Kampala on 19 October 2007, had 42 participants, mainly from Ugandan research institutions, but also from relevant Danida supported development programmes within Human Rights and Good Governance (HUGGO) and agriculture (ASPS) and other stakeholder groups, e.g. NGOs and parliament. Two Danish governance researchers and two staff members of the DDRN secretariat participated in the workshop. A number of research ideas and knowledge needs were presented and discussed and there was a lively exchange of ideas and needs across institutions, disciplines and stakeholder groups. Some broad research areas were also identified. However, these still need to be developed into researchable themes, within which partnerships can be formed and project proposals formulated and presented to donors for funding.

The role as knowledge intermediaries and 'brokers' played by RUFORUM and DDRN was highly appreciated by the participants, and DDRN was requested to continue its involvement in the process of providing information, links and contacts related to governance research collaboration between Ugandan and Danish researchers on Ugandan research priorities and collaboration needs.

3. The research "system" in Uganda

The following description of the support and funding mechanisms for research in Uganda is based on a presentation by Dr. Edward Kirumira (EK), Dean of the Faculty of Sociology, Makerere University, given at the DDRN-RUFORUM workshop held 19 October 2007. According to EK there is no such thing as *the research "system"* in Uganda. Support to research is comprised of four main layers.

The **first layer** is the [Ugandan National Council for Science and Technology](#) a semi-autonomous government agency mandated to develop and implement policies and strategies for integrating Science and Technology (S&T) into the national development policies. It also gives policy advice to Government and plays a coordinating and guiding role with regard to national research and development in Uganda. The Council makes use of expert panels, taskforces, consultants and other contracted capacity to execute certain specialized assignments. In addition, a number of specialized committees advise the Council on S&T policy matters in their respective sectors and focal areas. Many of these committees are not known to the research community in Uganda. The **second layer** comprises sectoral research systems, or sub-systems, such as the National Agricultural Research Organisation ([NARO](#)), Uganda National Health Research Organisation ([UNHRO](#)) and others. The **third layer** is the institutionally based bodies. Finally, the **fourth layer** is comprised of the collaborative research networks such as [RUFORUM](#) and the Network of Ugandan Researchers & Research Users ([NURRU](#)), and research partnership programmes funded by bilateral donors, e.g. Danida (the [ENRECA](#) programme), SAREC, DFID, and others; or co-financed by the Government of

Uganda and the World Bank, e.g. the Uganda Millennium Science Initiative ([MSI](#)) These are considered to be very strong.

There is need to invest in all layers and in building systems, e.g. by including a fixed percentage of the funds for each project as institutional overheads. Most of the funded research projects are individual research projects that are not responsible to the system. According to EK the best entry point for consultations on national research priorities in Uganda would be is the planning department of Makerere University.

Biomedical research and especially HIV/AIDS research is given a lot of attention and funding is easier to get within this area than in other areas, e.g. governance. Many researchers have become HIV/AIDS specialists, and this in turn has affected the whole system. Furthermore, big donors such as USAID seem to be setting the research agenda, rather than the Ugandans.

4. Main outcomes of DDRN workshop and meetings in Uganda

- ***Broad governance research areas of relevance to the Ugandan PEAP were identified based on research ideas presented by Ugandan researchers, including:***
 - **Land rights; the impact of the law and policy on investment in agriculture; and natural resource governance.** *Issues:* Poor people's (especially women's) land rights as part of a broader perspective, including economic rights; the land profile of Uganda today; changes in land claims, conflict and post-conflict settlement; Role of parliament and ministries, legal and policy framework affecting investment in productive sectors, especially agriculture; District level processes for participatory integrated natural resource governance.
 - **Political representation and good governance.** *Issues:* How the Ugandan state can better fulfil the requirements of poor people and support their rights to political presentation; elections and democracy, the different frameworks through which elections are held; the concept of citizenship; bottlenecks in legal and political process, the role of ministries and political leadership; The role of non-state actors in enhancing good governance in Uganda. The utility of the concept of civil society, people's rights in conflict & post-conflict situations, the role of ethnicity, religious groups etc.
 - **Peace negotiation, reconciliation and security sector reform.** *Issues:* How the military is used/misused to take forward issues of democracy, who makes security decisions, re-centralisation of power, the genesis of governance, police reforms, prison reform, paramilitary units, liberalisation of the state. The participants strongly advocated for the need to democratise research in sensitive areas and start focusing research on "the untouchable".
- ***Establishment of a Ugandan Process Steering Committee (PSC) to take the lead in organising the research and knowledge community within good governance research in Uganda.*** The PSC was mandated by the participants of the workshop to outline the next steps in the way forward towards developing research partnership proposals to be presented to donors for funding. The PSC comprise of representatives from institutions, which participated in the workshop, including Makerere University, Centre for Basic Research and others. Key institutions, which were not able to participate in the first workshop, e.g. Makerere Institute of Social Research (MISR) and Economic Policy Research Centre (EPRC) will be invited to contribute their research ideas and join the process.
- ***New opportunity of linking up with African universities and programmes for Danish master students under Danida travel grant scheme.*** RUFORUM which operates in a number of African countries will send a list of relevant study topics within agriculture with links to their regional contacts and affiliated universities.
- ***New contacts and information about knowledge needs, study areas and collaboration needs within good governance in Uganda.***
- ***Recruitment of new DDRN members in the South,*** including Ugandan researchers (mainly Ugandans) and Danida advisers and embassy staff within governance (world wide) recruited. The latter were recruited during the Danida seminar on Governance organised by TAS/BFT and held in Kampala 15-17 October 2007.

5. Follow-up actions (DDRN)

- DDRN will liaise with RUFORUM and the process steering committee on Ugandan governance research regarding the future role of the network in the process of strengthening the Ugandan governance research community in Uganda and facilitating the development research partnership proposals and projects.
- The study topics and contacts received from RUFORUM and advisers and programmes in the South will be announced on the web pages of DDRN and Danida travel grants for Danish master students. The possibility of linkages between Danish and African master students will be further be explored.
- Input and information on knowledge needs provided by Ugandan researchers, donors, embassy staff, advisers and other key actors within governance research for development during the DDRN visit to Uganda will be disseminated to DDRN members and made available on the DDRN webpage together with the Ugandan report from the DDRN-RUFORUM.
- New DDRN members entered into the member data-base.
- DDRN will extend the overview of individual Danish DDRN members' competences and knowledge within the focus areas of Danish support to good governance to include the profiles of Ugandan researchers and disseminate the overview to relevant actors within the governance and development field.

The full report of the workshop is available on http://www.ddrn.dk/index.php?side_id=172

Project Steering Committee contact: Ekwamu Adipala, eadipala@agric.mak.ac.ug or eadipala@yahoo.com

By Anne Sørensen, DDRN Network Coordinator, October 30, 2007.