



**Danish
Development
Research
Network**

*Bringing together
knowledge and
development*

Member Survey:

BENEFITS OF DDRN MEMBERSHIP



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The picture on the front page is downloaded from the DDRN website and indicates the distribution of visitors of the site (Free Cluster Map service).

1. Introduction

1.1 Objective

This survey aimed to collect feedback from members of DDRN as an input to evaluate the network's activities. Apart from the initial member needs assessment that was carried out when DDRN was established, the network has only targeted specific stakeholder groups or participants of specific events to assess activities. This survey intended to include members from all regions and stakeholder groups represented in the network, including part of the new members who have joined DDRN¹.

1.2 Methodology and structure of the report

A questionnaire survey was developed and sent out to all members of DDRN in November 2010, i.e. more than 2200 individuals and organisations. DDRN members had 10 days to complete the survey. 132 members submitted questionnaires. This report is thus based on feedback from about 6% of the members.²

Figure 1 shows the geographical distribution of respondents. This distribution differs from the overall geographical distribution of DDRN members as members from Denmark represent around half of the total number of DDRN members but only 27 % of the total amount of respondents. Thus, members from the global South are better represented here than in general.

Figure 1: Geographical regions of respondents

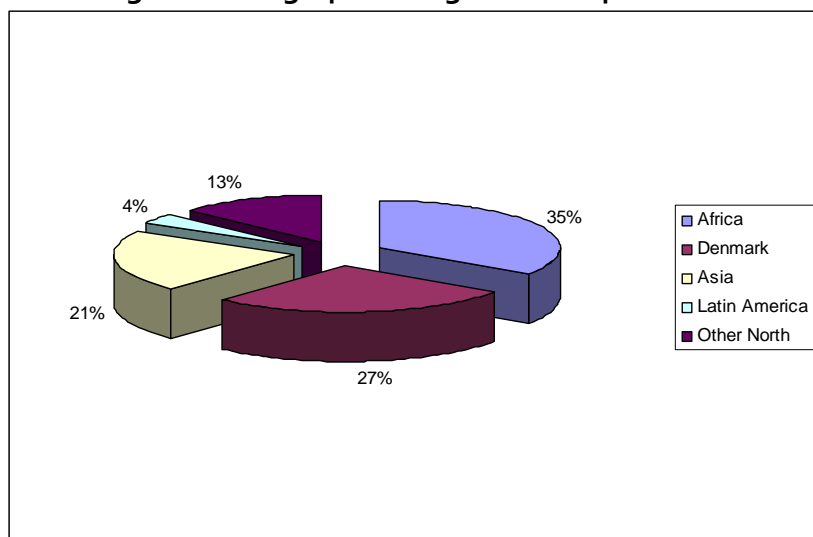
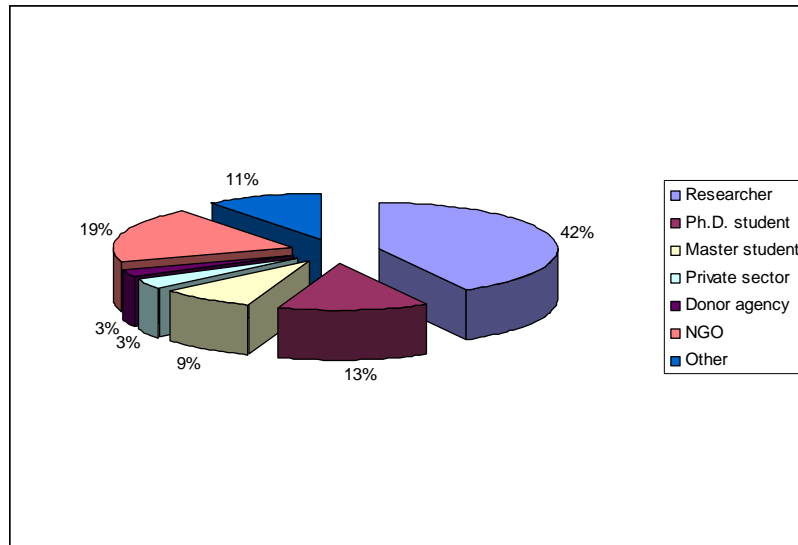


Figure 2 shows how different stakeholder groups are represented among the respondents. Stakeholders belonging to the research community constitute the majority of the respondent group. This corresponds with the overall picture among DDRN members.

¹ DDRN has experienced an increase in number of members of over 150% since it was established in 2007.

² It should be kept in mind that the respondents may represent the most positive section of members, which is a limitation common to most surveys.

Figure 2: Groups of stakeholders of respondents



Chapter 2 of the report analyses the results of the survey questionnaire and is structured around the themes which the questions concern. Chapter 3 summarises the findings of the analysis of the survey results.

2. Survey results

2.1 Benefits of DDRN membership

The respondents are asked what they considered to be the main benefits of being a member of DDRN. They are also asked to provide one or two examples of how they had benefited from their DDRN membership. These questions reveal what respondents see as benefits of DDRN membership.

2.1.1 Receiving information through DDRN

The main benefit of DDRN membership indicated by respondents is the information received from DDRN via the newsletter and the website. 88 % of respondents indicate this, especially respondents from Denmark and Latin America, followed by respondents from Africa, other countries in the North, and lastly Asia.

Many of the respondents who answer the question about the main benefits of being a DDRN member specify which types of information they benefit from receiving. Publications as well as event and funding information are the most frequently cited types of information. There is no significant variation in the answers of respondents from different regions. Several respondents who answer this question also indicate receiving information about certain thematic areas as a benefit. It is interesting to note that those who mention this primarily belong to the research community, i.e. researchers, Ph.D. and Master students. Climate change, agriculture, energy, environment, and food security are often mentioned as areas for which it is beneficial to receive information.

Among the respondents who answer the question about examples of benefits of DDRN membership, 11 % indicate very precise examples of information received through DDRN, for example publications or information about events.

"I'm now planning to do a PhD degree, and I'm now working on the proposal, being a DDRN member I was able to get 2 important documents, "UNRISD" Combating Poverty and Inequality, and "UNIFEM" User Guide for measuring gender sensitive basic delivery."(Other stakeholder, Africa).

The respondents who answer this question also often specify what they use the information received through DDRN for:

- Applying for funding: 11 % of respondents provide examples related to applying for funding from sources that the respondents had learnt of via DDRN. Some of the examples concern prior applications for funding with both successful and unsuccessful outcomes. Other examples concerned applications which were currently being formulated.

"I applied for Danida Travel Fund for the field trip of my Master Thesis after knowing the application notification via DDRN weekly news and I was lucky to get it in December, 2009. It is impressive for me to see the abstract of my Master thesis work in the DDRN weekly news." (PhD student, Other North)

- Research: The examples indicated by 10 % of respondents concern the use of information received through DDRN in their research. Some respondents indicate that they have used publications posted on the DDRN website as references in their own work, for example working papers and reports. Others indicate that they use the information received through DDRN to stay updated on developments within their field of research.

"Recently, I wrote a conference paper on the MDGs in Uganda and I found the DDRN website an extremely useful source of information."(Researcher, Africa)

- Sharing information received through DDRN with others: 7 % of respondents indicate that they share the information they received through DDRN with others, either with colleagues or students. Some respondents also indicated that they use information received via DDRN in their own organisation's newsletters.

"Through numerous papers on Climate change, rural development and social aspects, I have contributed positively at my place of work."(Other stakeholder, Africa)

- Events: several respondents indicate that they have attended events thanks to information received through DDRN.

"I came to know about the international conference on Agriculture, Nutrition and Health to be held on February 2011 in New Delhi through DDRN News and I am planning to participate in the conference." (Researcher, Asia)

- Teaching/training: a few respondents indicate that they have used information received from DDRN for teaching or training purposes.

- Applying for higher education programs: a few respondents have used information from DDRN to apply to either Master's or PhD programs. It is interesting to note that these respondents resided in countries belonging to the global South.

2.1.2 Networking

Several respondents indicate elements such as the sharing of information between members and meeting with other researchers within ones field of specialisation as benefits of being a member of DDRN and networking. If one sees all answers of this kind as constituting one type of benefit related to networking, this can be considered to be the second most frequently indicated benefit indicated by 10 % of respondents.

2.1.3 Other benefits

Besides receiving information and networking, respondents indicate a number of other benefits of DDRN membership.

Respondents who answer the question about the main benefits of DDRN membership consider North-South cooperation and the organisation of task forces and working groups to be benefits.

Working groups are also seen as a benefit among the respondents who answer the question about examples of benefits of DDRN membership. One respondent indicates the climate task force as an example of how DDRN membership has benefited them. Respondents who answer this question also provide examples relating to the Development Science Shop and DDRN funding and thus see these as benefits.

2.2 Other sources of information

In the questionnaire the respondents are posed several questions which reveal which other sources providing similar information to that offered by DDRN they have access to.

Table 1: Are you member of any networks similar to DDRN?		
Overall	Yes	No
Total	43%	57 %
Africa	43 %	57 %
Asia	30 %	70 %
Latin America	40 %	60 %
Denmark	46 %	54 %
Other North	53 %	47 %

Respondents are asked whether they are members of any networks similar to DDRN. As table 1 shows, 43 % of the respondents who answer this question indicate that they were members of networks similar to DDRN. For respondents from Africa, Asia and Denmark, there is no significant variation in the distribution of answers among respondents compared to the overall distribution of answers among respondents. However, the data indicates that this is not the case for respondents from Asia, where only 30 % of respondent are members of other networks similar to DDRN, and for respondents from other countries belonging to the global North, where 53 % are members of other similar networks.

The respondents who indicate that they were members of other similar networks are also asked to name these. 54 respondents answer this question indicating a wide variety of international and national networks. Interestingly, most of the networks mentioned are used by DDRN as sources of information.

Answer options	Yes	No
Overall	37 %	63 %
Africa	47 %	53 %
Asia	25 %	75 %
Latin America	40 %	60 %
Denmark	39 %	61 %
Other North	30 %	70 %

Moreover, respondents were asked whether they have access to similar information from other sources. Table 2 shows that 37 % of respondents who answer this question have access to similar information from other sources. The percentage of respondents with access to similar information from other sources varies depending on which geographical region respondents are from. The percentage of respondents from Denmark (39 %) and from Latin America (40 %) with access roughly corresponds with the overall percentage. However, only 30 % of respondents from other countries belonging to the global North have access to similar information from other sources. Most strikingly, among African respondents, 47 % have access to similar information from other sources, and among Asian respondents, only 25 % have access.

The respondents with access to similar information from other sources are also asked to specify these. The respondents indicate many different types of sources they have access to: newsletters, websites, journals, and contact with other researchers and colleagues. Several well-known organisations offering similar information are also indicated by respondents. Some of these organisations are used as sources of information by DDRN.

2.3 Comments and suggestions from respondents

Respondents are given the possibility to enter any additional comments they may have at the end of the questionnaire.

20 % of respondents express their appreciation of DDRN. The importance of DDRN's information-sharing function is once again highlighted as 7 % of respondents specifically express their appreciation of the information received through DDRN:

"In my opinion, the DDRN is the best-organized of several information sources that I follow. The information is current, effectively transmitted, and helpful".

"DDRN is a very important way of learning more about new ideas from research, conferences, workshops, new funding opportunities for which one cannot get elsewhere."

The importance of funding provided by DDRN is also highlighted as several respondents express their appreciation of this function. However, the answers of some respondents give the

impression that the scope of DDRN funding has been misunderstood. These respondents indicate that they plan to send research proposals to DDRN and hope to receive funding from the network, although DDRN does not fund this type of activity.

"We hope to, in the next six months or so begin writing research projects for funding from the DDRN. As a research centre in a developing country... [...]... we appreciate the fact that the DDRN exists and can assist us in meeting our goals and objectives of developing research in our country." (NGO, Africa)

Several respondents encourage DDRN to keep up the good work and express that they hope that DDRN will continue.

"Hope that DDRN will continue under some form as funds are directed to support Danske Universiteter." (Researcher, Denmark)

"DDRN is a good network and should be continued for people in the developing countries where information access is difficult." (PhD student, Africa)

10 % of respondents make suggestions for improvements in their final comments. Firstly, several respondents make suggestions related to funding: for instance, it is recommended that one post more information on research and funding opportunities in the Danish university system and more scholarship information related to areas such as finance and administration. Moreover, it is suggested that news on areas such as climate change, education, and cultural development and on regions such as Asia and America be given higher priority. Additionally, several respondents suggest that one redesign the website in order to have easier access to information and to make it more attractive and interactive. Furthermore, suggestions are made concerning the newsletters: it could be substituted with more frequent e-mails or be reorganised for a better overview of information. Finally, respondents have suggestions for new activities for DDRN and state that there is still a need to develop better networking between researchers, especially between the North and the South.

3. Conclusion

The aim of the questionnaire survey was to collect feedback from all DDRN members to evaluate network activities. The analysis of the survey results clearly indicate that respondents see the information received through DDRN as the most important benefit of being a member, although networking is also seen as an important benefit. Respondents also indicate other benefits of DDRN membership such as working groups, the Development Science Shop and DDRN funding. Moreover, the survey results also reveal that while a significant percentage of DDRN members are members of networks similar to DDRN and have access to similar information from other sources, DDRN still constitutes the primary source of information for many members. Finally, the comments made by members at the end of the questionnaire indicate that many members are appreciative of DDRN and affirm the importance of the network's information-sharing and funding functions. The comments also indicate that there are elements which DDRN can continue to work on developing.