

# Danish Development Research Network

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## Minutes from 2nd DDRN General Assembly

Wednesday May 9, 2007, 13:00 – 15:00  
Danish Institute for International Studies  
Strandgade 71, 1401 Copenhagen K

### Agenda:

1. Election of chairperson and secretary
2. Approval of the agenda
3. Report by the board
4. Discussion and approval of revised Articles of Association
5. Proposals received to be discussed
6. Presentation of working plan and budget for 2007
7. Election of board members and substitutes
8. Any other business

### Ad 1: Election of chairperson and secretary

Christian Pilegaard Hansen, KU Life, was proposed as and elected chairperson of the general assembly.

Lone Frederiksen, DDRN, was proposed as and elected secretary.

Since everybody present understood Danish, it was agreed to use Danish or English freely throughout the assembly.

On proposal from the chair there was a brief round of introduction of all participants.

### Ad 2: Approval of the agenda

The agenda was approved without amendments.

### Ad 3: Report by the board

Marten Sørensen, chairman of the board, presented the report of activities carried out and results obtained since the previous general assembly in November 2006. The points mentioned were:

- The secretariat is now fully staffed with two coordinators, Anne Sørensen as head of the staff and Lluís Armangué, a communications officer, Marianne Forti, and an academic secretary, Lone Frederiksen.
- The contract with Activity Plan for 2007 has been sent to Danida.
- The incorporation of DDRN under Institute of Geography and Geology, University of Copenhagen, is agreed upon, although the question of overhead is still pending.
- Implementation of the activity plan has been initiated:
  - Workshop on networks on March 13, 2007, facilitated by Enrique Mendizabel from Overseas Development Institute, UK
  - Temporary website established, and the actual website to be launched soon
  - One monthly newsletter and five mails with news from DDRN and Danida sent to all DDRN members
  - Calls for member driven activities published on the website
  - Enquiries concerning 5 different workgroups

The report was approved without objections.

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## **Ad 4: Discussion and approval of revised Articles of Association**

Lluís Armangué (DDRN) presented the proposals for revised Articles of Association. There were two proposals suggesting that membership should be open not only to individuals, but also to institutions. A proposal from Flemming Frandsen, KU Life, suggested that § 4 was changed to "Any department, private firm or person...", whereas Alex Percy-Smith, Faculty of Agricultural Sciences, University of Aarhus, had a similar proposal with the wording: "Any person or institution..."

The discussion showed a general attitude in favour of including the option of institutional membership in the Articles. There was a concern of ensuring that not only educational institutions and private firms, but also NGOs could be members. Moreover, the contributions touched on the question of whether the board should also have institutional members.

Voting was carried out by show of hands.

The first voting confirmed that the assembly wanted a general revision of the Articles of Association permitting institutional membership.

Subsequent voting approved of the proposal from Alex Percy-Smith. Consequently, § 4 is to be changed as follows:

### *§ 4 Members*

1. Any person or institution who accepts the objective of the network can be registered as a member of the network.

The chairperson suggested that the proposal by Flemming Frandsen, regarding § 6 on institutional balance in the board, was transferred to item 5 (Proposals received to be discussed).

Finally, the secretariat had suggested an editorial change of § 6.3 on election of board members. The clause existing up to now was seen as unnecessarily historical, whereas a more forward-looking wording was suggested. The question of how to decide which board members were to be elected for one year and which of them for two years would be taken into account in the suggestions for election procedures.

Voting by show of hands approved of the revision suggested, changing § 6.3 into:

### *§ 6 Board*

3. Members of the board are elected at the annual general assembly for a period of two (2) years. Four (4) members are up for election one year and five (5) members the following year. Substitutes are elected each year. In addition, Danida may appoint two (2) observers, who are not vested with voting rights on the board.

## **Ad 5: Proposals received to be discussed**

Flemming Frandsen's proposal - "Instead of proposing a new clause, it is suggested to appoint a committee for the study of the institutional balance that the board should contemplate. The resulting proposal from the committee should be voted at the General Assembly of 2008." - resulted in a call for the new board to discuss the issue and make a proposal at the general assembly in 2008. Comments pointed out that

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board members' personal involvement was more important than institutional representativeness.

A consultative vote by show of hands indicated that nobody voting wanted seats in the board to be earmarked for institutions.

No other proposals had been put forward.

## **Ad 6: Presentation of work plan and budget for 2007**

Anne Sørensen (AS) presented the work plan and budget for 2007 according to the three objectives of DDRN.

The principles behind the work of DDRN are that the activities are:

- Targeted to utilize existing knowledge and N-S partnerships
- Geared to utilize multiple entry points to development
- Flexible to accommodate new situations, new priorities and changes in the context
- Paying attention to modalities, strategies and mechanisms for motivating and involving members in Denmark and the South

Development objective:

To increase the contribution and inclusion of research & knowledge in the design and implementation of development assistance in response to partner countries' needs.

Objective 1 To link research and development

Outputs: Development better informed and knowledge inputs delivered and shared

Activities:

- Overviews of research results, briefs and competence profiles
- Input to development programming, e.g. DDDays, hearings, policy papers, strategies, workshops, missions a.o.
- Disseminate research priorities and knowledge needs from the South to the Danish resource base, Forsknings-Fagligt Udvalg (FFU) a.o.

Objective 2 To foster an engaged and committed network

Outputs: DDRN nurtured and expanded in DK and the South, communication and information system established

Activities:

- Formation of member groups on themes and for other purposes
- Develop member data base, website, newsletter and network promotion material
- Other types of network 'nurturing'
- Strategy development (communication, recruitment, vision, South focus)

Objective 3 To stimulate the establishment of knowledge & research platforms and partnerships for high quality knowledge production of relevance to development

Outputs: Multi-stakeholder & thematic platforms & links established N/S and participation of young segment of resource base enhanced.

Activities:

- Thematic workshops and conferences in North and South
- Interact & link with relevant national, regional and international organisations and networks
- Activities targeting students, e.g. inspiration seminars

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## Budget:

The budget approved by Danida was presented. The budget lines are not in much detail, which gives more scope for flexibility.

## Challenges and opportunities:

- Coping with the new aid agenda
- How to stimulate knowledge production for the benefit of the poor
- Research communication
- Policy support and investments in research and knowledge

The presentation gave rise to a number of comments and questions, among which:

- A wish for stronger representation from NGOs since many of them want more information on development research.
- A request to increase efforts to recruit young members.
- Calling attention to the importance of thematic workshops, also for non-academics, and of briefing policy makers in Denmark.
- Presentation of grievances regarding the impression of DDRN having too much consensus on aid, on the aim of assessing research needs from the South without South representation in the board, and on the comparatively high expenses for staff.
- A call for the future board of addressing the question of activating South members.
- A proposal of supporting and collaborating with South networks.

Replies from the secretariat and the board included:

- Intentions of increasing efforts for recruiting new members among NGOs and calls for NGOs and others to stand for election for the board.
- Aiming at a revival of the coordination group among the former five networks (now: DDRN, Health, and Water), and including NGO-networks.
- Carrying out inspiration seminars for young students, introducing them to DDRN and to Danida's travel grants.
- South-membership and participation will be focused on since it is also a demand from Danida, and DDRN's mandate is not limited to focusing on Danida, but includes development research broadly.
- The budget allows for shifting priorities within the scope of the objectives. However, DDRN can cooperate with, but not pay for workshops arranged by universities and others.
- All activities are facilitated by the secretariat, which means that staff expenses are high, whereas investments are extremely low.

## **Ad 7: Election of board members and substitutes**

Lluís Armangué presented the electoral register and the rules for voting. In order to decide who of the elected members would sit for two years and who for one year, the secretariat had suggested that this could depend on the number of votes received by the individual candidates. However, it was decided that the issue should be settled among the members of the new board.

16 members were standing for election, among whom the assembly was to elect 9 board members and 2 substitutes. Marianne Forti, Lluís Armangué, and chair of the assembly, Christian Pilegaard Hansen, counted the votes.

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The members elected were (in order of number of votes):

Ole Mertz

Mette Kjær

Peter Oksen

Bente Topsø-Jensen

Claus Jørgensen

Arne Wangel

Stefano Ponte

Henrik Egelyng

Olav Jull Sørensen

Deputy members elected were:

Alex Percy-Smith

Peter Lund-Thomsen

## **Ad 8: Any other business**

Since there were no contributions to this item, the general assembly was closed by the chairperson around 15 h.

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## Participants in the 2nd DDRN General Assembly

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