

# Danish Development Research Network

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## Minutes of DDRN Board Meeting - 2/2009

**June 9, 2009 - Institute of Geography and Geology, University of Copenhagen.**

Participants: Carl Erik Schou Larsen (CESL), Claus Jørgensen (CJ), Estelle Fanjaud (EF), Mogens Buch-Hansen (MBH), Niels Fold (NF) and Olav Jull Sørensen (OJS).

Secretariat staff: Anne Marie Sørensen (AMS), Bo Karlson (BK), Lone Frederiksen (LF), Marianne Forti (MF) and Kris Borring Prasada Rao (KPR).

Apologies from: Arne Wangel (AW), Helene Maria Kyed (HMK), Thomas Nielsen (TN) and John Christensen (JC).

LF and BK were rapporteurs.

### **Draft agenda:**

1. Approval of the agenda
2. Round of introduction
3. Approval of the minutes of last meetings (March 27 and May 25, 2009)
4. Briefing on progress of activities by the secretariat (information)
5. Evaluation of General Assembly 2009 and Conference on Strategic Collaboration on HE & R for Development
6. Outstanding issues in current grant period (info, discussion and decision)
  - a) Proposals for utilising unspent funds?
7. Status of application for second, new phase of DDRN (info and discussion)
8. Work plan and prioritization of activities in second half of 2009
9. Board meetings in second half of 2009
10. A.O.B

### **Ad. 1. Approval of the agenda**

The agenda was approved.

### **Ad. 2. Round of introduction**

As Kris and most of the board members had not met before, there was a short round of introduction.

### **Ad. 3. Approval of the minutes of last meetings (March 27 and May 25, 2009)**

AS was of the opinion that the first action point in the minutes from March 27 was incorrect. DDRN should not "come up with a proposal of application writing", but only assess the need and interest for the setting up of a course within the field of application writing during the workshops in Vietnam and Tanzania.

If a course should be necessary it would be more logical to involve the consultancy firms that have a higher expertise.

The board was of the same opinion.

<p><b>Action 1:</b> BK will make the agreed corrections in the minutes from the board meeting on March 27, 2009.</p>
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### **Ad. 4. Briefing on progress of activities by the secretariat (information)**

The secretariat added the following comments to the brief:

- The Proceedings from the conference in Aarhus will soon be ready.  
Concerning the communication Workshops mentioned under item 3, the secretariat will assess if there are some regional resource persons who can be teachers at the workshops. MF will participate in the annual meeting of EADI and EUFORIC on June 10

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to 12 and try to locate suitable persons during the meetings. It is necessary to find someone for the workshop in Tanzania within week 24.

- Many board members have difficulties understanding all abbreviations in the material sent out before the board meetings.

**Action 2:** A student will make a list of abbreviations. The list should contain a link to the homepage of the organizations.

- The Bolivian embassy has responded very positively to the list of Spanish-speaking resource persons in DDRN. AS noted that the positive relations to the Bolivian embassy provides a window of opportunity for more activities in Latin America.
- The report from the conference "Global Value Chains" is finally done. KPR will do the follow up.  
The conference "Food, Nutrition and Gender: Lessons learned and recommendations for future action" is a good example of links between gender, food security and other topics. As food security is one of our focus areas we should include some follow-up from the conference in our work plan.
- Concerning Travel Grants: LF explained that there have been an unusually big amount of applications that deserve to receive a grant. Therefore the applicants will only receive approximately 5.500 DDK each. This has made the DFC suggest that the criteria should be harder to pass. In their opinion each grant should rather be close to 15.000 DDK. However, the Board agreed that it would be unfair to the applicants if the criteria were changed within this application call.  
BK stated that from a student point of view it is preferable to be relatively certain of receiving a grant, even if it is a smaller amount. Students who are applying for a grant are already at a stage in the process where they go no matter what. And therefore it is more important that students wanting to go on a field study know that they can receive a help for the trip, if they meet a set of criteria, rather than having a small chance of receiving a big amount.  
MBH noted that it should be expressed to Danida that we have a positive problem; too many qualified students apply. We should try to push for an increase in the total amount of funds available for travel grants.

**Action 3:** LF will discuss some possible ways to raise the criteria for application with the DFC and ENRECA health. Afterwards she will send out the suggestions to the board.

**Action 4:** The board needs to find out who will be expressing to Danida that the amount for the travel grant should be considered, due to the higher the many qualified applicants.

## **Ad. 5. Evaluation of General Assembly (GA) 2009 and Conference on Strategic Collaboration on HE & R for Development**

GA: AS noted that it appears to be impossible to get elected for the board if one is not physically present at the GA. Before the next GA the secretariat will have to recommend that those members running for the board, who are not present at the GA, ensure sufficient votes from their network/institution in advance.

**Action 5:** LF will send out the information concerning the Danish involvement in ERA-ARD to the board members as an annex to the minutes from the GA.

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The conference: The board members were of the opinion that the conference was very successful and the speakers were of a high standard. However, the number of participants was too low. It was especially disappointing that only a few members/participants from Jutland showed up at the conference, the location taken into consideration.

## **Ad. 6. Outstanding issues in current grant period (info, discussion and decision)**

### **Ad. 5a Proposals for utilising unspent funds?**

- Application by Universities Denmark: This application is from the call in May and was postponed with a view to utilize the unspent funds in the DDRN budget. However, it was unclear to the board what the commitment of DDRN would be. It was noted that the secretariat will not be able to have a big responsibility, due to the existing workload.

**Action 6:** AS will contact Danida and OJS Laurits B. Holm-Nielsen from Universities Denmark to clarify possible DDRN funding.

- The application from SANORD: The board decided to support the application. However, the amount to cover travel expenses from Denmark is too low. It needs to be adjusted.

**Action 7:** LF finds out how advance payments are made to foreign countries.

**Action 8:** LF finds out to what extent DDRN can use the present grant to finance activities that take place after June 30.  
(The response from UM is, that it is not possible, except for agreed activities such as the workshops in Vietnam and Tanzania).

## **Ad. 7. Status of application for second, new phase of DDRN (info and discussion)**

Danida has still not given an official approval of the next grant period. But it will not take long.

## **Ad. 8. Work plan and prioritization of activities in second half of 2009**

For the next board meeting there will be a one-hour session where ideas for the work plan are formed and discussed.

What was decided this board meeting was that the three objectives are fixed.

AS Suggested that in the next grand period the budget will follow the calendar year.

**Action 9:** AS contacts the board members one by one to discuss new ideas for the work plan with them on an informal level before, to kickstart the brainstorm and ensure that board members get a chance to contribute.

**Action 10:** LF sends around a list to find out when the different board members are on vacation.

Apart from that, a few ideas for the work plan were brought up. These are to be discussed at the next board meeting.

- OJS noted that we need to bring the election procedures up to date. The concept of institutional members needs to be discussed.

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- OJS also suggested that DDRN should arrange a seminar where researchers and consultants can meet. It is important that data collected by researchers actually get utilized by the consultancy business.
- AS asked the board to consider when the focus areas are to be revised.
- CJ suggested that DDRN should consider how to strengthen the collaboration with ENRECA health. A seminar about collaboration between the two networks could be an option.
- The guidelines of the Africa commission were also discussed. OJS noted that our role in the Africa Commission depends on the focus of the commission – whether it will be research, development of curriculum or management of Universities. However, it was widely agreed in the board that research, curricula, education and administration of universities can not be separated and therefore there is no mismatch between the focus of the DDRN and the guidelines in the Africa Commission. AS and CESL will participate in a meeting with FARA.

**Action 11:** CESL sends out a brief summary of the FARA meeting to the board members.

## **Ad. 9. Board meetings in second half of 2009**

The board agreed on two provisional dates for the last two board meetings of 2009: Tuesday the 15.09.09 and Tuesday 15.12.09

## **Ad. 10. A.O.B**

Nobody had any final remarks.

## **List of actions from 3<sup>rd</sup> board meeting 2009**

Reference	Action	By whom?	Status
BM3/09 act 1	BK will make the agreed corrections in the minutes from the board meeting on March 27, 2009.	BK	Done
BM3/09 act 2	A student will make a list of abbreviations. The list should contain a link to the homepage of the organizations.	BK/IE (Iona Eberle)	Pending
BM3/09 act 3	LF will discuss some possible ways to raise the criteria for application with the DFC and ENRECA health. Afterwards she will send out the suggestions to the board.	LF	Meeting held recently. Suggestions included in the brief for 15.9.09
BM3/09 act 4	The board needs to find out who will be expressing to Danida that the amount for the travel grant should be considered, due to the higher number of qualified applicants.	?	Issue discussed at the above meeting (LF)
BM3/09 act 5	LF will send out the information concerning the Danish involvement in ERA-ARD to the board members as an annex to the minutes from the GA.	LF	Done
BM3/09 act 6	AS will contact Danida and OJS Laurits B. Holm-Nielsen from Universities Denmark to clarify possible DDRN funding.	AS and OJS	Done
BM3/09 act 7	LF finds out how advance payments are made to foreign countries.	LF	Done
BM3/09	LF finds out to what extent DDRN can use the	LF	Done, but final

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act 8	present grant to finance activities that take place after June 30. (The response from UM is, that it is not possible, except for agreed activities such as the workshops in Vietnam.		arrangements still pending
BM3/09 act 9	AS contacts the board members one by one to discuss new ideas for the work plan with them on an informal level before, to kickstart the brainstorm and ensure that board members get a chance to contribute.	AS	AS has sent out a draft work plan to all board members in stead of contacting them individually.
BM3/09 act 10	LF sends around a list to find out when the different board members are on vacation.	LF	Done
BM3/09 act 11	CESL sends out a brief summary of the FARA meeting to the board members.	CESL	Done

## **List of pending actions from previous board meetings**

Reference	Action	By whom	Status
BM3/08: Act.4	The secretariat will take contact to communications departments and international offices at the Danish Universities in view of increased collaboration.	MF	On-going
BM3/08: Act.7	The secretariat will make a proposal on visits to Danish institutions before the next board meeting	AS and MF	Pending