

DANISH DEVELOPMENT RESEARCH NETWORK (DDRN)

Travel report

Reference: South Africa_2-6 April, 2008
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Travelling to: Pretoria, South Africa
Financial source: DDRN and FARA

1. Objectives for travel:

- a. To participate in the PAEPARD workshop for Eastern, Central and Southern Africa hosted by SADC and ASARECA and facilitated by FARA and EFARD Pretoria South Africa 3-4 April 2008
- b. To meet with the RDE in Pretoria

2. Background

In the field of Agricultural Research for Development (ARD), there is a long tradition of a range of international scientific and technical collaboration between Africa and Europe through bilateral and multi-lateral cooperation mechanisms. In 2006, to enhance these strategic partnerships, the European Commission under FP6 funding, approved a one-year project to build the platform for African-European partnership on ARD (PAEPARD 1) to enable mutual learning and knowledge sharing. In the preparatory phase of PAEPARD 1, an assessment was made on selected African – European partnerships in ARD with EC-funding complemented by an online survey of European and African stakeholders. In Africa 113 institutions responded on the questionnaire and in Europe 94 responses were received, mainly from universities, research institutes and private sector. Out of the total of 94 responses received from European countries 14 were from Danish institutions (PAEPARD report 2007). NETARD and later DDRN played a major role in mobilising the relevant Danish research institutions for the survey.

The results from the online survey indicate that partnerships are valued by the European and African partners as relevant and contribute to achieving their global institutional objectives. However, the findings also point to a number of major constraints to ensure continued success and inclusiveness of ARD partnerships i.e. there are limited EC-funded research projects focused on Africa and the ones that do exist involve a concentration of always the same African institutions from only 2-3 countries. Most of these partnerships are driven by the European partners with limited contribution by African partners in priority setting and management. Under FP7 – where the former INCO-DEV component has disappeared – potential scope for such collaborations has decreased rather than increased. To reverse this situation, it is necessary to look at lessons learnt on successful and failed partnerships. Additionally, practical support is urgently needed that will strengthen capacities and mechanisms to increase the participation rate of African institutions in collaborative projects. To realize this, a platform is proposed to facilitate the establishment of research partnerships that will be able to respond to the African priorities and contribute to the achievement of MDGs 1 and 7. The platform will facilitate increased awareness of opportunities for collaboration in ARD, as well as better understanding of funding mechanisms and procedures, with focus on the innovation systems approach to ARD in Africa. To develop a truly responsive and sustainable platform PAEPARD would like to organize two stakeholder consultations in Africa at the sub regional level, one for Central and Northern Africa and another one for Eastern, Central and Southern Africa.

AS was invited by PAEPARD to participate and assist in facilitation of the second of these workshops held in Pretoria South Africa 3 - 4 April 2008. She participated in her capacity as EFARD member of the PAEPARD steering committee. The PAEPARD facilitation unit had identified key participants of the workshop identified from the respondents of the PAEPARD survey who could be the major actors or catalysts of PAEPARD activities. The workshop had approximately 25, mainly drawn from Africa. In addition to AS the small group of European participants included one other Danish researcher, Henning Høgh Jensen from LIFE/University of Copenhagen, who participated in his capacity as member of the NATURA Board of Directors and researcher at the Faculty of Life Sciences, University of Copenhagen.

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In addition to participating in the PAEPARD workshop AS paid a visit to the Royal Danish Embassy to follow up on previous DDRN activities and brief staff on ongoing activities Danish development support in Southern Africa.

3. Outcomes and key messages

3.1 PAEPARD consultations workshop

During the two day workshop the participants gave many good inputs on how to build an effective and sustainable platform for African – European partnership on ARD that responds to the needs and challenges of the African region, and the Southern, Central and Eastern sub-region in particular. Discussions in plenary and groups were based on lessons learnt from previous partnerships and ongoing projects. Plenary sessions included presentations on the assessment report of past and ongoing African-European project supported by the European Commission; experiences of the sub-regional fora with competitive funding schemes within ARD (ASARECA); the findings of the online survey of African – European partnership; and the outcome of the transcontinental and sub regional (Western and Northern Africa) PAEPARD consultations previously held. AS made a presentation on the activities and challenges of EFARD. The PAEPARD I facilitation unit will produce a detailed report from the workshop which will later be made available on the DDRN website together with relevant power point presentations.

In this report focus will be on highlighting summary conclusions and recommendations from the discussions at the workshop and key messages and issues of relevance to DDRN and European involvement in PAEPARD.

Summary of group discussions

- **Mechanics of initiating and sustaining partnerships.** In order for European-African partnerships to be successful the following guiding principles were highlighted:
 - √ Joint identification of problems and prioritization and joint ARD programming using central databases of member institutions/partners, discussion groups, sms alerts etc.
 - √ Roles and responsibilities must be well defined and based on the characteristics and strengths of partners some kind of parity of the organization should be followed
 - √ Indicators for measuring successful partnerships, incl. monitoring and evaluation mechanisms
 - √ Demand led and thematically based tools
 - √ Access/intelligence to and sharing information on donor needs
 - √ Enhance partners capacity and motivation to participate
 - √ Generic principles, guidelines, dissemination systems should be developed. Projects must have a communication strategy and communication should not be limited to dissemination of results
 - √ Information and knowledge tools should be matched to stakeholders' capacities.
- **Building PAEPARD.** The key *roles* of PAEPARD II were identified as *facilitation within African priorities, gestation support, capacity building and catalysing*. PAEPARD should bring experts together and play brokerage role. In order to integrate PAEPARD in platform partners' own institutes/institutional organization, it is important to give feedback to institution/organization *and* individuals. The platform should include benefits for EU partners. Attention should be paid to not leaving too many activities to the PAEPARD II secretariat. The *niche* of PAEPARD was defined as:
 - √ Value adding in being focused on African-European partnerships within ARD, including non-traditional stakeholders and building on complementing strengths

The *concept* of PAEPARD phase 2 and the three components (*facilitation, information and knowledge, and advocacy on alignment*) were endorsed. Given the time available it was not possible to have an in-depth discussion of all the activities outlined in the in the proposal or 'action fiche' for PAEPARD II submitted to EU. Generally the activities were found to be relevant and were endorsed with a few suggestions on additional activities and the comment that a deeper discussion on

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prioritization and rationalization of activities is necessary.

- **Conclusions of the workshop and recommendations/outstanding issues.** The conclusions of the PAEPARD workshop can be summarized in the following points:
 - √ PAEPARD as a platform to link Africa and Europe
 - √ PAEPARD as a community of practice
 - √ 3 components key elements to operationalize PAEPARD
 - √ Maintain commitment of participants - clear benefits from PAEPARD and how each member contributes

The following *outstanding issues* should be given special attention:

- How do we integrate the new approach of EC strict policies with more focus on CSO with limited administration and financial systems?
- Maintaining the momentum and interest of the members through constant communication or information exchange.

DDRN/EFARD issues arising from PAEPARD consultations workshop

- **Need to strengthen EFARD/European leadership and partnership in PAEPARD** From the group discussions it was clear that some of the African participants see PAEPARD as mainly a FARA project and it was necessary to explain and stress and explain the role of EFARD as counterpart to FARA in coordination and steering. There are good reasons for this as EFARD unlike in the case of FARA does not have a permanent secretariat but depends on committed steering committee members' voluntary inputs of labour time and own access to funds. Furthermore, EFARD is still in the process of redefining itself and developing a strategic plan, including funding after the 2007 review.
- **Need for EFARD/Europe to increase the involvement of non-traditional stakeholders (civil society and private sector).** Focus on African- European partnerships and involvement of non-traditional stakeholders (civil society and private sector) were confirmed at the workshop as the niche of PAEPARD. African sub regional fora (ASARECA and CORAF) and other stakeholders showed great commitment and ownership to the concept of PAEPARD. However, Africa seems to be far ahead of Europe with regard to involving non-traditional stakeholders in ARD. Both private sector and farmer organisations were represented at the workshop in Pretoria and made very useful contributions to defining the mechanics of the platform and multistakeholder partnerships. In order for EFARD to fulfil the role as coordinator and counterpart to FARA it is urgent to deal with this issue and incorporate PAEPARD in its strategic framework. In my view NATURA and ECART, being networks of research institutions mainly, are not in a position to take on this role and the linkages between traditional and non-traditional stakeholders at European level. EIARD as predominantly a policy oriented body with a great emphasis on CGIAR is no alternative either. FARA's counterpart should be a technical forum of multistakeholders within ARD. This could be *the* chance of EFARD to prove an added value to other European organisations and fora.
- **Bridging period between PAEPARD I and II:** How to keep momentum. EFARD's role?

3.2 Revisit to the Danish Embassy in Pretoria

AS met with Carsten Laursen (CL), counsellor environment on 4th April 2008. The purpose of the meeting was to update the embassy on DDRN activities within the area of environment and exchange information on possible areas of collaboration. CL informed that he has taken over the responsibility for the urban environmental programme, including its knowledge component. In consultation with the municipalities and implementing local partners it has now been decided that the 11 million for UEM research will use a step-by-step approach be allocated to four main areas, namely energy, solid waste, air pollution and planning. The

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plan is to start with allocating 3-4 million to energy at the end of April. Around November 2009 another 3-4 million will be allocated to research on 'solid waste' etc. The idea of an advisory committee to assist in identification of priorities and management has been dropped and CL will be in charge of formulating the research strategy and organisation.

As gave a background for DDRN involvement in UEM activities in South Africa and this was followed by a discussion of possible linkages between DDRN activities and Danish development programme support in South Africa within a regional context. The initiative pool application on UEM, which CL had been asked to make comments on, and the reports from the SANORD workshop and the UEM consultancy were briefly discussed. AS informed that Torben Birch Thomsen (TBT) probably travels to SA in May 2008 and could pass by the Embassy to follow up on the issues discussed at this meeting. CL supported this idea.

. The outcomes and key messages of the meeting are summarised below:

- **From UEM to environment and research on four sub themes**

Danida in SA is moving away from broad UEM programmes and towards support to more concrete themes within the environmental area. The 11 million DKK allocated to UEM research allocated to the following areas: energy, solid waste, air pollution and planning.

- **Regional support** (Southern African region). CA informed that the Africa office in Copenhagen has the responsibilities and the funds for regional development activities and not the Embassy in Pretoria. CL suggested that DDRN contacts this office in order to explore the possibilities of funding for research and knowledge related activities in the Southern Africa initiated by DDRN. The person to contact is Anne Melgård. Asked about possible support for South African partners' participation in the planned UEM research workshops in Tanzania and Mozambique he said that this would be difficult. Contacts and linkages between the Embassy/UEM programme and the DDRN/the regional initiative could be further explored during TBT's visit to SA in May and using e-mail communication.

- **New Danida country strategy for SA**

The strategy is still in the process of being developed and is not yet ready.

- **Clean Development Mechanisms (CDM)**

The Embassy has CDM funds which might be spent on research on adaption and programmatic CDM. CL mentioned that DK-SA cooperation within this area might be interesting and could be explored. He promised to return to this later after having given it some more thought.

- **Moving towards budget support and writing checks to municipalities**

CL confirmed the development trend towards budget support and leaving decisions and prioritisation to the local partners at national and districts/municipalities levels

5. Conclusions

The workshop organised by PAEPARD was very beneficial in terms of conceptualising and developing the African-European platform matched to the needs and challenges of the Eastern, Central and Southern African region. It was very useful source of information and knowledge on the opportunities and challenges currently facing African agriculture.

EFARD's presence at the workshop turned out to be very important and contributed to an increased understanding of PAEPARD as a platform for Africa *and* Europe among the African participants. The workshop was also a unique opportunity to establish new contacts and links for through informal networking and for introducing DDRN to potential partners and members. The re-visit to the Danish embassy in Pretoria has contributed to strengthening the links between DDRN and the Embassy, establish contact to new staff, exchange information and get updates on the current status and priorities of the Danish support to UEM in South Africa.