

Danish Development Research Network  
(DDRN)

Work Plan 2008

*January, 2008*

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# Danish Development Research Network

## 0. Introduction

The work plan for 2008 outlined in this document builds on the main project document of 2006 and incorporates the experiences and lessons learnt from the network's first year of implementation. Compared to the work plan for 2007 some of the activities and approaches outlined in this work plan are new, whereas others are repeated and continuous. A few activities have been carried forward from 2007 due to changes in priorities and plans during the previous period of implementation<sup>1</sup>

By the end of 2007 DDRN has established itself with a well functioning and needs based information and communication system, a new fund for member driven activities and a database with more than 1000 registered members. The activities in the work plan for 2008 will focus on consolidating the information and communication system and finalising and implementing the recruitment and communication strategies. The activity level with regard to workshops and conferences in Denmark as well as in the South will increase. Member interaction N/S, N/N and S/S will be promoted through various activities. Previous experiences from participation in and organisation/co-organisation of events in developing countries and the recruitment strategy will be used as building blocks in developing a more coherent strategy for activities in the South. Against this background it is important that the work plan is regarded as a flexible tool to guide implementation, at the same time as allowing space for participation of N/S members and all relevant stakeholders. It should also be conducive to adaptation to local conditions and contexts.

Targets at output level for 2008 are indicated in the Logical Framework Analysis Matrix (Annex 1).

## 1. Objectives

The overall objective of DDRN is "increased contribution to and inclusion of research and knowledge in the design and implementation of development assistance in response to partner countries' needs". DDRN has the following immediate objectives:

- IO1 contributions made to the dissemination and exchange of information between development programmes and the research community within agriculture, environment and governance
- IO2 an engaged and committed network of members fostered
- IO3 the production and exchange of high-quality research and research-based knowledge relevant to development assistance within agriculture, environment and governance stimulated and promoted

## 2. Outputs and Activities

*Immediate Objective 1 (IO1): contributions made to the dissemination and exchange of information between development programmes and the research community within agriculture, environment and governance.*

### **Output 01.1 Development programmes and collaborating institutions better informed about existing relevant research results and researched based knowledge**

#### **i. Production and dissemination of catalogues of competence profiles, research overviews and thematic briefs**

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<sup>1</sup> These changes are reported on in the annual progress report submitted to Danida in beginning of 2008 and shall not be dealt with in this work plan.

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Targets in 2008: Produce at least 3 overviews of N/S research with Danish involvement, at least 2 catalogues of competence profiles and 3 thematic briefs on topics of relevance to development.

### *Comments on implementation plan:*

- By producing research overviews and catalogues with easily accessible research results and knowledge based information DDRN aims at informing development professionals about relevant research and expertises in the resource bases in Denmark and collaborating partner countries. The research overviews and competence catalogues are produced in dialogue with programmes, institutions and Danish embassies and can be subdivided according to the information needs of the recipients. The products from these activities will be disseminated to the relevant authorities and institutions in the South, and to staff and consultants involved in development programming. Recipients of and contributors to overviews and catalogues will be asked to provide feed-back with regards to format, content and utilisation of the overviews and catalogues. Country and sector specific overviews and reports produced before the merger of networks will be 'repackaged' to suit present-day needs where relevant.
- As something new DDRN members and research collaboration partners in the South will also be included in the catalogues of competence profiles. Whereas the contributors to overviews of results from research collaboration projects come from the relevant research communities in the South and in Denmark, competence profiles may also include non-researchers, e.g. advisers and NGOs, The overviews of research results already include researchers and research institutions in the South as these focus on results from N/S research collaboration projects with Danish involvement. It will be considered to hire resource persons to carry out reviews and other major desk work related to this activity.
- DDRN will finalise the elaboration of a model of thematic briefs which can make visible the existing relevant research results within the areas covered by DDRN and of relevance to development programme staff and policy makers. The secretariat will be proactive in proposing relevant themes and to identify research institutions, organisations and network members with a key knowledge on the themes to be covered in thematic briefs. When relevant, this will be done across disciplines and including both the North and the South. In addition, the secretariat will coordinate and assist the elaboration of briefs when relevant, including allocation of external writing expertise; proof-reading etc. the secretariat will also be proactive in dissemination of briefs, e.g. in workshops and other events, at the web and through news mails.

### **ii. Briefing of development programme staff and collaborating institutions**

Targets in 2008: Brief 50 - 100 programme advisers and staff at research institutions and other development relevant institutions on DDRN and research for development issues.

### *Comments on implementation plan:*

- Briefings of technical advisers, local staff and institutions involved in programme implementation about relevant research expertise and competences in the DDRN member base will mainly be carried out during members' and the secretariat's visits to developing countries, during meetings and seminars and in connection with dissemination of new overviews, competence catalogues and other information.
- In 2008 more emphasis will be put on 'in-field' briefings – Discussions with DCCD and DFC and assessments of previous briefing activity indicate that briefing of advisers and embassy staff on knowledge related issues and options are better understood and appreciated by the target groups when 'in the field' than during the pre-departure period. TAS plans two-three thematic/sector seminars for 2008 to be held in the programme countries and/or in Denmark and DDRN will be pro-active in terms of using such opportunities to reach a large number of advisers and embassy staff. Pre-departure briefing of groups of people on DDRN

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and briefing of individuals on technical issues will only be carried out upon requests or invitation from DCCD or TAS.

### **iii. Visits to selected Danida programme countries to facilitate North-South collaboration and explore national research systems and priorities in the South**

Targets in 2008: Visit at least 3 developing countries

#### *Comments on implementation plan:*

- Visits to development countries by DDRN members and the secretariat serve multiple purposes, including information collection on institutions, programmes, research priorities and policies; meetings and workshops on research collaboration; and branding of DDRN.
- It will be considered to include Vietnam and Tanzania among the countries visited in 2008 as FFU/Danida has decided to allocate considerable research funds for research collaboration with these two countries. The call for proposals will be announced in Vietnam and Tanzania in consultation between FFU and with leading research institutions in the respective countries.
- Previous contacts and unfinished business, e.g. related to visits to South Africa and Uganda in 2007, may require re-visits to specific countries and regions.

### **Output 01.2 Research and knowledge contributions to programme and strategy development within the areas covered by the network made and shared with development programme staff and partners**

### **iv. Provide comments and inputs to missions, hearings and development related policy papers, strategies and guidelines**

Targets in 2008: At least 4 contributions/inputs

#### *Comments on implementation plan:*

- DDRN will continue to play a constructive and critical role in the process of designing, implementing and evaluating Danish development cooperation. This is done by providing research and knowledge related inputs and comments to new Danida policies and strategies, to relevant research councils and funding bodies, and to the annual Danida Development Days 2008 in June 2008.
- DDRN contributions in 2008 will include inputs to relevant new Danida policies and strategies, e.g. on Human Rights and Democratisation and on Fragile States; the planned evaluation of Danish support to development research for development; and the preparations of the Climate Meeting for Heads of State to be held in Denmark in 2009. At the European level DDRN will continue to contribute to relevant Agricultural Research for Development networks and projects, e.g. through participation in the steering committee for the Platform for African-European Partnership on Agricultural Research for Development (PAEPARD), and by disseminating information about relevant Agricultural Research for Development projects funded by the European Commission or other sources.
- It will be considered to hire resource persons to carry out special assignments related to this activity.

*Immediate Objective 2 (IO2): foster an engaged and committed network of members.*

### **Output 02.1: Member driven platforms and working groups established and facilitated**

### **v Coordinate, facilitate and support member driven groups**

Targets in 2008: 3 member led workshops/seminars (funded in 2007), activity-related new working groups, 4 calls for member driven activities, at least 4 new member-led activities

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## *Comments on implementation plan:*

- DDRN will continue to facilitate working groups already established in 2007 and their respective activities, which are to be held in 2008.
- In 2008 the number of calls for member-led activities will be increased to four. Calls will be announced at least four times a year prior board meetings. The increment of calls is meant to give more flexibility and drive to member-led activities.
- DDRN will continue to facilitate the establishment of working groups and will encourage innovative member-led activities in addition to workshops and seminars.
- It will be considered to hire resource persons to carry out special assignments related to this activity.

## **vi Further development of member database**

Targets in 2008: Member database extended to include new members and needs

### *Comments on implementation plan:*

- In order to meet the wish expressed by many members to use the website as a searching engine to identify experts within their area of works/research, special efforts will be made to urge as many members as possible to update their profile. This will be a way of strengthening interaction and cooperation among members.
- The member database will be adjusted on a continuous basis in accordance with needs arising when developing smooth communications mechanisms between the secretariat and the members as well as across members. Needs arising from the assessment carried out in 2007 will be a starting point for developing the member database.

## **vii Network and member nurturing and recruitment**

Targets in 2008: Recruitment strategy in place. Increase of 5% of members within stakeholder categories prioritised according to a recruitment strategy, 3 after work meetings, 4 seminars on research communication, responses to member enquiries within 3 working days

### *Comments on implementation plan:*

- The secretariat will develop a recruitment strategy which builds upon the needs assessment and experiences from activities in 2007 which resulted in recruitment of new members. The strategy will be ready in the first quarter of 2008.
- When developing a recruitment strategy, DDRN will have to consider which stakeholders categories are most relevant to focus on in order to achieve the network's objectives and prioritise a few categories (2-3) which will be specially targeted in 2008. Different communications will be considered for reaching the targeted groups with the purpose of increasing the number of members from the specific stakeholder category.
- In connection to the needs assessment regarding communication activities elaborated in 2007 DDRN members expressed a need for face-to-face contact with other members. As response to this demand, DDRN will hold a number of informal "after work" meetings. This will also be used as a way of disseminating knowledge of and discussing activities carried out by the secretariat and/or members.
- As a way of promoting the communications skills of network members and to promote research on public agenda as well as promote dissemination of research among development practitioners, DDRN will organise a series of seminars on research communication. Themes to be covered will be selected in accordance with priorities identified in the needs assessment and communication strategy.
- Answering enquiries for information and contacts from members and non-members has proven to be a time-consuming activity in 2007. Most enquiries are the first contact made to the secretariat and a quick response is important in order to give a positive first impression of a lively and well functioning network. Some requests require time to be

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answered, but the secretariat will at least confirm receipt of emails sent to [info@ddrn.dk](mailto:info@ddrn.dk) and other general requests sent directly to the secretariat (in general the communications officer) informing on when and from whom to expect further information within 3 working days from received.

### **Output 02.2: Thematic workshops and conferences conducted in the North and the South**

#### **viii Organise/co-organise thematic seminars and conferences**

Targets in 2008: at least 2 seminars/conferences

*Comments on implementation plan:*

- For workshops/seminars organised exclusively by DDRN, the decision on the theme will be made by the board on the basis of suggestions made by members, the board and the secretariat. The overall criteria for selection of a theme will be relevance to development and to the issues on the global agenda covered by the network.
- Themes for workshops and conferences in the North will also be established in consultation with donors and collaboration with international platforms and networks, and in connection with events or summits (e.g. conference on Rural Economic Development together with Danida, to be held in April 2008, or the Research Congress on Climate related to the Climate Meeting in 2009). DDRN will link workshops and conferences held in the North to themes, organisations and platforms relevant for current and potential members in the South. Finally, the strengthening of current and potential linkages to the South will also be pursued when inviting key-speakers to conferences in the North.
- DDRN will continue to develop and refine the approach in relation to the organisation of workshops and conferences in the South and will also develop a strategy for other types of activities in the South. Some of the criteria used in deciding on themes and geographic location of the workshops will be possible linkages to other events, e.g. Danida seminars, other networks' activities in specific developing countries, and links to the thematic priorities of relevant institutions/organisations and funding schemes.
- DDRN will continue to explore the possibility of linking up and contributing to the planned VTU/Danida/WB event to be held in Kenya in first half of 2008.
- The results of the workshops held in Uganda and South Africa in 2007 will be reviewed and monitored with a view to organising relevant follow-up activities at country and regional levels.
- It will be considered to hire resource persons to carry out special assignments related to this activity.

Output 02.2 is closely linked to output 01.1.

### **Output 02.3: Strategies and channels of communication and information established**

#### **ix Finalise communication strategy**

Targets in 2008: communication needs assessment report compiled, DDRN communication strategy formulated and implemented, 2-3 improved communication tools implemented

*Comments on implementation plan:*

- A report will be compiled to analyse the results of the questionnaire survey and qualitative interviews on communications needs carried out in 2007.
- A communications strategy will be compiled during first quarter 2008 based on relevant recommendations from the needs assessment report and experiences gathered during 2007, including results shown by monitoring features implemented on the website and newsletters.

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- The communications strategy will be developed in order to provide smooth, effective and transparent communication at several levels: between the network and external actors, within the network (member ⇔ member, secretariat ⇔ members, secretariat ⇔ board, staff member ⇔ staff member).
- The communications strategy will be developed as three documents: a policy, strategy and plan. While the specific communications strategy document will be used as an internal guideline for the secretariat, communications policy and plan will be made available on the website to promote a transparent communication in the network.
- DDRN will have to consider which communications channels are most relevant in order to achieve the network's objectives and prioritise a few tools (2-3) to be focussed on and improved in 2008.

### **x Continuous development of website, regular newsletter services and production of promotion material targeting different member groups and users**

Targets in 2008: an updated website which includes information shared by members, 12 monthly newsletters covering activities of DDRN, general news and thematic news, occasional news mail, new promotion material developed and disseminated to address different stakeholder within and outside the network, a complete set of templates used by the secretariat

#### *Comments on implementation plan:*

- The website will be updated continuously and monitored using statistics on visits and information on member's reading of newsletters.
- The secretariat will strive to strengthen the information level in areas of the website of great interest to network members, e.g. information on funding possibilities and links.
- Special effort will be made to promote information sharing among members by encouraging members to provide news items to be posted on the website and disseminated through newsletters. Upon request by many members, a page for posting 'member to member' enquiries will be developed.
- Posters and brochures will be developed to address specific target groups in connection to other activities of the network, e.g. workshop in the South. Special effort will be made to develop promotion material targeting stakeholders prioritised in the recruitment strategy.
- The secretariat will consider the development of other information material on DDRN than the website and newsletters to be disseminated in the South.
- Promotion material will be disseminated at relevant institutions in Denmark and in the South and distributed at all workshops and seminars organised by the network.
- To further strengthen the image of DDRN, templates will be developed to streamline information material disseminated by the secretariat, e.g. reports, briefs and letters.

*Immediate objective 3 (IO3): stimulate and promote the production and exchange of high-quality research and research-based knowledge relevant to development assistance within agriculture, environment and governance.*

### **Output 03.1: Links to national, regional and international research communities and networks established**

#### **xi Participation in other networks and organisations at national, regional and international levels**

Targets in 2008: At least 4 coordination meetings with Danish networks; 4 steering committee at international level; participation in at least 3 international research workshops/meetings; A report with updated lists of contacts to networks and institutions working within research for development; Funds allocated for DDRN members' participation in a number of international events.

#### *Comments on implementation plan:*

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- In addition to participation in coordination meetings, the DDRN secretariat will continue to be proactive in proposing concrete areas where the relevant organisations and networks working with research and knowledge for development can collaborate co-organise and coordinate their activities and share information.
- Relevant national networks include the Danida supported research and knowledge networks in Denmark; the Danida supported NGO networks, and relevant development units at Danish universities. At the regional and international level, DDRN will explore the possibilities of strengthening its linkages to European and international platforms and institutions within DDRN areas. This seems especially important within the area of governance. With regard to the South, existing linkages to organisations, networks and institutions will be maintained, and recently established contacts will be specifically nurtured and developed.
- As part of the involvement in DDRN/Water Forum Climate Task Force (given that this is approved by DDRN board in the board meeting in 12/12/07) DDRN will strengthen linkages to national organisations and research institutions within the area of climate, which also take part in the Task Force (e.g. Risø, DMI, Aarhus University, Geus). DDRN will contribute to the integration of a session on Consequences of Climate Change on developing countries under the Research Congress to be held in spring 2009 in relation to the Climate Meeting 2009. The above mentioned task force will act as the scientific committee of the session.
- A report containing an overview of prioritised development themes within the new university structure and an annotated updated list of key contacts, networks and institutions working with research for development within the three main areas covered by DDRN (Agriculture, Environment and Governance) will be produced. The list will be based on existing contacts within the DDRN member base and a review of Danish links of collaboration with national and international research institutions within the sectors covered by DDRN. The main part of the work in relation to this activity has been done in 2007 and will be finalised in 2008.
- The principles for information sharing and communication, and the establishment of new contacts and recruitment of new members among specific target groups and institutions/organisations will be outlined in the new communication and recruitment strategies

### **Output 03.2: Flow of development-oriented students in DK facilitated and enhanced**

#### **xii Inspiration seminars**

Targets in 2008: 6 inspiration seminars for MSc students at different Danish universities

The objectives are to inspire students to work with themes relevant to Danish development aid and to facilitate their contacts to Danida supported activities in developing countries. The meetings will also supply information on Danida's travel grant scheme for MSc students.

#### **xiii Danida/FFU travel grant scheme**

Targets in 2008: New phase of travel grant scheme; 2 calls for applications and 10-15 new development relevant topics for master studies.

*Comments on implementation plan:*

- The present funding for the travel grants terminates by June 30, 2008. Therefore, a new application for a three year phase of the travel grants will be handed in to Danida in February 2008. The next call for applications will be with a deadline of May 2, 2008 with a total amount of DKK 310,000 for distribution.

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- Topics relevant for Master's theses will be gathered continuously from collaboration partners in the South, from Danish NGOs, and from presentations at the inspiration seminars. An overview of the themes will be published at the DDRN website.

### 3. Implementation Principles

The principles outlined in the 2007 work plan still apply, i.e. that the activities should be:

- Targeted to include the members of the network in Denmark and the South;
- Geared to utilise the resources available at the secretariat and the member base;
- Targeted to facilitate member involvement in planning and implementation.
- Able to capture both vertical and lateral linkages;
- Cost effective;
- Able to accommodate new priorities in research and development;
- Flexible to accommodate new situations brought about, for example, by changes in the institutional, economic and political environment for research for development.

An indicative timeframe for implementation is attached as Annex 2.

### 4. Administration, monitoring and reporting

The DDRN secretariat will continue to carry out the administrative tasks related to the network, including reporting and accounting to Danida. Monitoring and reporting is covered in the Project Application Document. In addition to the indicators for results achieved reflected in reports, publications, lists of members etc. the log frame also include indicators designed to ensure that the various activities are – where possible – “member driven”. Progress in implementation of the 2008 work plan is regularly reported on in brief written updates prepared by the Secretariat and submitted to the board prior to each board meeting and in the annual progress report submitted to Danida by the end of 2007 - beginning of 2008.

### 5. Budget

Financing the DDRN activities is achieved through a Danida grant of DKK 9.987 million covering the period January 2007 – June 2009. The overall budget of DDRN is summarised in Table 1 below. The proposed draft budget for 2008 is attached as Annex 3.

**Table 1: Summary budget DDRN 2007-2009**

Budget lines	Y2007	Y2008	Y2009	DKK Total	Grand
<b>Personnel costs, VIP</b>	1.543.700	1.605.448	834.833	3.983.981	
<b>Personnel costs, TAP</b>	569.600	592.384	308.040	1.470.024	
<b>Travel expenses</b>	370.000	370.000	185.000	925.000	
<b>Meeting costs</b>	525.000	525.000	262.500	1.312.500	
<b>Services &amp; equipment</b>	130.000	70.000	35.000	235.000	
<b>Grand total</b>	3.138.300	3.162.832	1.625.373	7.926.505	
Contingencies, 5%	156.915	158.142	81.269	396.325	
Overhead, 20%	659.043	664.195	341.328	1.664.566	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>3.954.258</b>	<b>3.985.168</b>	<b>2.047.970</b>	<b>9.987.396</b>	