



ICART Project

in collaboration with

The University of the Free State



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ICART GRANTEEES MEETING - JHB 18-19/9/2008

ICART Project-UFS

Collaborative Masters Programme
Broad Based Agricultural Training in SADC



The project's aims are fourfold:

- Instill the basic tacit knowledge – Research training programme (balance: theory & practice)
- Develop core competencies in agriculture related disciplines through course work and research thesis 12 MSc
- Adapting and improving relevant course material, and
- Establish an alumni programme to keep candidates & partner institutions in contact



Target group

- The target groups was the agricultural research and training institutions, their staff with the ultimate beneficiaries being the students at the contract institutions in: Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Tanzania, Angola, Zambia and Namibia.



Disciplines

Specific objective of the programme:

To train 12 bcandidates from SADC countries in several of the following specific disciplines/areas:

- **Agricultural economics**
- **Soil-Plant/Crop-and Climate Sciences**
- **Animal/Wildlife-and Grassland Sciences**
- **Plant Sciences**



Scholarships

The following apply:

- Tuition fees
- Accommodation and living allowance
- Books and stationary
- Medical insurance
- Travel (from home country)
- Running costs for research project



2007

The activities to date can be summarized as follows:

Year 1 (2007)

- Advertise the MSc programme at contract institutions
- Prepare/adapt courses
- Evaluate all applications and select students
- Plan project execution.



Selection criteria and evaluation

- By panels from each of the study fields/departments
- Grants awarded on merit.
- Assessment on all evidence of ability and potential (academic records and recommendation letters)
- Previous academic/research performance
- The likelihood that the candidate would successfully complete a MSc was an important criterion.



challenges

- Not possible to visit all countries (i.e. Angola), but relevant institutions were contacted (Universities/DoA)
- MSc is not the most needed qualification in some institutions – (Poor interest-poor response)
- Some institutions recommended students and not staff – poor/uncertain access to infrastructure
- From Portuguese speaking countries – poor English
- ICART grants/scholarships not very attractive, one student declined scholarship/resigned



Selected students

Three students in each of the following:

- Agricultural Economics
- Plant Sciences
- Soil, Crop and Climate Sciences
- Animal, Wildlife and Grassland Sciences



List of selected students

Student	Country of origin
Mr OJ Mwenye	Malawi
Mr J Chimungu	Malawi
Ms P Mphundi	Malawi
Ms N Manosa	Lesotho
Ms CRB Mussane	Mozambique
Mr FJM King	Mozambique
Me KL Shiningawamwe	Namibia
Mr T Shiimi	Namibia
Ms IU Kavirindi	Namibia
Mr B Matshaba	Botswana
Mr M Lubinda	Zambia
Mr VJ Rwenyendela	Tanzania

7 male and 5 Female

2008

Year 2 (Current)

- End of January: Students arrived at UFS
- Beginning February: Course work started
- Students prepare and present research proposals
- Students and supervisors plan research project
- Beginning December: Courses are completed and most students will return to their home countries (ALL ????)



PROGRESS SO FAR

Year 2 (2008)

- In general good academic performance (course work)
- Most students have their research proposals in an advanced status of planning
- Beginning December: Most courses are completed (extra courses/failed courses???)



2009

Year 3 (Planned)

- Students conduct short research projects and return to SA for write-up
- Write-up must be completed and thesis handed in on 30 November.
- 1 December: Examination commences.
- Formalize alumni arrangements.



CHALLENGES

- 1- Time (2 years, only one for research)
- 2- Funding (limited research funds)
- 3- Infrastructure (and access) at partner institutions
- 4- Unforeseen circumstances (two ladies were pregnant; administrator passed away in an accident)
- 5- Only 3 months expenses in SA in 2009
- 6- Some research projects cannot be conducted at home country (labs, infrastructure, etc)
- 7- Very short time frame to show impact



THE WAY FORWARD?

- We hope to have some flexibility in the project:
 - Allow some students to conduct research in SA/UFS
 - Top up funding where needed
 - Consider extension for a few months for some students
 - Allow some funds to be used for more important activities
 - PhD programs? These are much needed



THANK YOU

