

Presentation Bonn 13.11.2008, Andrea Behrends  
Workshop on „Scientific Cooperation with Developing Countries – The Swiss Guidelines and their Implementation“

## **Introduction to Working Group I: Project development**

### *Introduction*

Brief Presentation of the Volkswagen Foundation funded cooperative project about which I will speak: ‘Travelling Models in Conflict Management’ within the Volkswagen initiative: ‘Violence, its impact, coping strategies and peace building’

- partners and their countries; situation in these countries (in relation to conflict management)
- speaker’s role (coordination) and what it involves
- sub-circles inside the project: country groups, PhD group, supervisor group
- time plan of the project

### *Contacting/Selection of Partners*

- started with cooperation of Halle-Wittenberg University and MPI for Social Anthropology in Halle – each German partner suggested an African counterpart out of previously existing research cooperations
- group discussion to establish general theme for application (short notice: roughly two months between first call for proposals and deadline)
- African partners suggested PhD candidates
- first concerted effort: timely handing in of proposal with all original signatures – developed into the first team building exercise

### *Decision on objectives*

- brief word on original and actual plan: from large scale international involvement to inner African cooperation with a link to Germany (mention here: *identification and inclusion of stakeholders*: outside stakeholders like international scientists and institutions were cut out of the original plan for lack of means; examples: teaching in Sierra Leone, invitation to meetings)
- primary objective: qualification of junior scientists; PhD programme
- scientific progress of individuals, the group and the dissemination of the idea of “travelling models”
- establishing personal links among all members of the project, in particular PhD candidates
- knowledge of each other’s situation by having meetings in all member countries (Chad, Sudan, Ethiopia, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Germany)
- training of junior scholars (training workshops and their focus)
- publication of results (current efforts)

### *Joint project planning*

#### a) Uniting group under one subject

- pre-proposal meeting in Addis to confer with all partners how they could relate to the theme: result: country specific approaches
- examples
- critique: Volkswagen Foundation meeting in Mali: opposing (mainly informal) reactions from independent scholars, development practitioners, Volkswagen partners and colleagues – positive comments (general theory combining all projects and giving them a “red thread”) and negative comments (theory “aloof”)
- brief excursion on the topic of “translation” in relation to each research project and the project group in general

#### b) Common decisions on members’ obligations and the use of funds

- ‘Memorandum of Agreement concerning the use of project funds’
- ‘Memorandum of Understanding concerning the obligations of all members of the project’
- why this was positive (point of reference for all members concerning use of funds, accounting, timelines, reporting)
- negative aspects (members without direct funding from within the project are less attached – mainly the German “country partners”)

### *Project monitoring*

- yearly project meetings and training workshops (South Africa, Mali, Germany, Sudan)
- half yearly reports connected to the payment of scholarship
- interim reports
- budget reports (supervision by university administration)

### *Identification and inclusion of stakeholders*

- although cut in original plans left the project in the beginning without outside stakeholders, this changed during the course of the project – why and how?
- African Studies Centre in Leiden (The Netherlands), Profs. Mirjam de Bruijn and Han van Dijk: possibility for Chadian PhD candidate to achieve a PhD in anthropology as a trained lawyer
- Invitation of project members and external speakers to panels at international conferences (African Studies Association, 2007: Prof. Stephen P. Reyna)
- Invitation of resource persons to four week training workshop in Halle, 2008 (from within Volkswagen Initiative: Profs. Klute, Kössler and Weiland; from German universities: Dr. Krämer, PD Dr. Zitelmann; from MPI in Halle: Dr. Görlich) – and their inclusion into planned publication
- founding of research institute in Chad (CRASH) with two members of Volkswagen project and joint MPI, ASC and other external funding