Water is Life: Amazzi Bulamu

2nd Project Workshop

Royal Irish Academy, Dublin
8th November 2012

Dr Suzanne Linnane, Project Lead
Water is Life

• Funded by Irish Aid/HEA Programme for Strategic Co-operation

• Goal of this programme:
  - to build research capacity in Ireland and Africa in relation to safe and sustainable water provision in Africa

• 5 year programme - 2009 to 2014

• Large numbers of partners - both Southern and Northern
Key activities

Develop appropriate activities in the area of water resource sustainability & monitor its effects on community health, gender & poverty through a combination of 8 PhD research projects & community engagement

- Support research with a “water-centred” focus;
- Examine water sourcing, distribution & sanitation;
- Assess impact on community & health & gender;
- Engage community interest & support;
- Generation and provision of an appropriate GIS database; and,
- Ultimately inform a jointly developed taught Masters degree programme (Ireland/Uganda).
Key features

• Inter / Intra institutional
• Multi- / Trans-disciplinary
• Research “in the field”
• Multiple levels of engagement:
  - academic, state, community and policy influencers
• Top-down and bottom-up approach
• Focus on policy implementation - from practice to policy
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What exists</th>
<th>What should we do? How to do what we want to do?</th>
<th>What we want to do</th>
<th>What we are capable of doing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

*Water is Life embodies coordination across all levels of disciplines*  
(adapted from MaxNeef (2005))
WIL - tangible outcomes

- Doctoral training (collaborative approach)
  - 8 African researchers
- Production of joint N-S Masters
  - Cert. in Sustainable Water Management
- Publications
  - Journal articles (10-20 minimum)
  - Project book
- Spatial database
- Policy briefs
- International /national colloquia / conference presentations
- Ongoing public engagement / community training
# Learning to date

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Challenge</th>
<th>WIL response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ensuring partner and stakeholder ‘buy-in’</td>
<td>• Set the agenda <strong>together</strong> including defined roles and responsibilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(including supervisory arrangements)</td>
<td>• Determine most <strong>appropriate channels/methods of communication</strong> for each stakeholder group at an early stage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Monitor commitment (accountability)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Agree on an <strong>MOU</strong> and a <strong>strategic plan</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ensure mutual learning</td>
<td>• Acknowledge <strong>cultural</strong> backgrounds of all partners involved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• <strong>Shared</strong> ownership of all outcomes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Promote platforms for <strong>exchange</strong> of outcomes - appropriate to stakeholder groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Direct exposure of North and South participants to broad range of <strong>partner expertise</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PhD completion</td>
<td>• North and South supervisory arrangements (<strong>joint supervision</strong>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Frequent supervisory <strong>visits</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• <strong>Realistic</strong> stipends and travel allowances (rate per country)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• 4 year completion <strong>targets</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Learning to date

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Challenge</th>
<th>WIL response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Effective implementation of research results | • Ensure **societal relevance** (initial goal)  
• **Ongoing dialogue** - academic, community, policy level, etc.  
• **Speak the language** of the ‘end-user’                                                                                                                                 |
| Sustainability and legacy       | • Prevention of ‘**brain-drain**’  
• Enhanced visibility of Southern academic partners through impact **peer-reviewed publications**  
• **Creation and expansion** of networks within the network  
• Plan a **future** sequence of projects from these alliances  
• Provision of robust research findings that can **inform decision-making** for the future benefit of the end-users (rural Ugandan communities) |
Questions.....

• What do we actually mean by collaborative partnership?

• How does higher education feed into socio-economic development and poverty reduction in practice?

• Is the Water is Life model of higher education relevant/replicable in Sub Saharan Africa?

• Where do we go from here, i.e. our routes to progress?