MOOCs4D: Potential at the Bottom of the Pyramid

April 10-11, 2014

Presentation by Nodumo Dhlamini
Information, Communication & Knowledge Management: Review of Progress

Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture

Presentation to the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation
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Role of Information, Communication & Knowledge Management

- **A Program for the Member Universities:** OER; eLearning; MOOC feasibility study; institutional repository & website

- **Communication Management:** Communication strategy; developing various communication products

- **Knowledge Management:** Managing the RUFORUM knowledge platforms – website, Institutional Repository, social media platforms and other e-platforms

- **Digitization at the Secretariat:** Management Information Systems design; the Intranet;
The Rationale for the ICT Program

- Tapping global, ICT innovations in university education
- eLearning to improve access to RUFORUM core programs
- Projecting RUFORUM through the website
- Managing agricultural knowledge in the region
- A targeted communications strategy
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Milestones</th>
<th>Achievements</th>
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<tr>
<td>Groundwork for effective ICT implementation at RUFORUM universities</td>
<td>Situation analysis of ICT capability &amp; infrastructure ; Review meetings; ICT Policy Briefs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Technology-mediated learning, teaching and research</td>
<td>30 e-courses as OER; 26 universities have access to TEEAL; IL and Web2.0 Training; 5 universities developed e-learning policies and strategies</td>
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<td>Better dissemination of agricultural research</td>
<td>+5000 community mailing list; +400 FB alumni group; Institutional Repository; Newsletters, case studies +50000 website hits</td>
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<td>Secretariat capacity to manage information needs of RUFORUM</td>
<td>General ICT related support; Secretariat-wide MIS requirements; MIS Phase I completed – Network databases and online reporting by PIs</td>
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# Phase II – ICT Program Components & Progress

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<th>Milestones</th>
<th>Progress</th>
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<tr>
<td>Additional RUFORUM MIS Modules developed and implemented</td>
<td>Online scholarship Application Module completed</td>
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<td>Online Grants Application Module ongoing</td>
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<td>RUFORUM Finance System implemented by month 9</td>
<td>Completed</td>
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<td>RUFORUM local area network installed by month 6</td>
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<td>RUFORUM Communication Strategy in place by month 6</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
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<td>RUFORUM Institutional Repository populated with 80% of the available</td>
<td>with technology sometimes everything takes longer than originally envisaged</td>
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<td>RUFORUM publications and related e-resources by end of first year</td>
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<td>Website improvements implemented by month 12</td>
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<td>Publications produced 6 newsletters, 10 research briefs / case studies</td>
<td>Planning meeting held in</td>
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<td>and 50 extended research abstracts by month 9</td>
<td>Kampala</td>
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<td>Stakeholders meeting in May 2014</td>
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<td>MOOC proposal for funding submitted to the Gates Foundation by month 6</td>
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Evidence that the ICT Program has delivered (I)

- 5 out of 7 universities that we interacted with have designed e-learning policies
- 16/26 universities have updated to the latest TEEAL version
  - CABRUFORUM collaboration
- Universities renewed Genstat after the 3-year license ended in March 2013
- Website page requests: 198 in August 2009
  - In Dec 2013 page requests increased to 51,075
- Virtual Community of Alumni did not exist in 2009.
  - In April 2014: 437 members
- Over 1000 resources being uploaded onto the Institutional Repository
Evidence that the ICT Program has delivered (II)

- +5,000 profiles in the web-based RUFORUM community database
- 50 online reports submitted by Principal Investigators
- 70 submitted scholarship applications online in response to the currently open research methods call
  - 300 created accounts in response to the call
- RUFORUM IR featured by the Agricultural Information Management Standards (http://aims.fao.org/community/agridrupal/blogs/ruforum-adopted-agridrupal-solution-their-institutional-repository)
Gaps and lessons

- To a large extent, gaps identified in the situation analysis of member universities remain today
- Demand for ICT related support is high
  - We cannot address all problems
- Sustainability of ICT interventions remains a challenge
- We need to organize ourselves better to support universities integrate ICT for teaching learning and research
  - Use of champions and ICT working group
ICT Program Value proposition: to Member Universities

- High expectations from new member universities
- New methods to meet these expectations
- Use ICT as a tool for outreach
- Established member universities
- Use ICT to create visibility of programs and research
ICT Program Value proposition: for the Secretariat

- A strong ICT platform at the secretariat and a program to support outreach to member universities

- A way of keeping the business plan balanced and focused
Value Proposition: ICT Community of Practice

- Convert ICT Working Group into a community of practice / cluster
  - Members must see it as attractive to be part of the RUFORUM ICT Working Group
  - Provide oversight to the implementation of ICT Program
  - Needs management support
  - Facilitate meetings and networking
- Sustain the CoPs – through use of ICT tools
Modeling Best Practices - Opportunities

*RUFORUM ICT Program: a Signature Program*

- Pilot Innovations (support capacities of member universities) in:
  - E-learning/OER - build on work done with e-learning champions
  - Track alumni, e-mentoring, research support and e-profiling
  - Virtual Communities of Practice
  - Systems for monitoring, evaluating, accountability and learning
- MOOC feasibility study
ICT Assessment: Issues and Lessons

Lynam et al (July 2013)

- Matching a small unit to a broad mandate
- Step-wise building of connectivity and systems
- Continuing assessment of member ICT capacities
- An ICT Community of Practice
- Continued improvement of website
- Communications and eLearning need to be prioritized
Future Directions

- Timing is appropriate to expand eLearning capacity
- Develop more regional grounding in OERs and e-based course materials – MOOCs feasibility
- Knowledge management in core thematic areas
- A communications strategy for a differentiated set of stakeholders
- Continue to improve MIS at the Secretariat
The RUFORUM Network Celebrates 10 years as a network of Universities and 22 years of addressing Higher Agricultural Education issues in Eastern, Central and Southern Africa.

Thank You