



Dear readers,

A warm welcome to the April Newsflash!

Our focus this month is on the global economic recession that is threatening to deal a major blow to the African continent, already reeling under poverty and disease.

While Western governments are preparing packages to bail out distressed companies in their home countries, the state of affairs in Africa is rather gloomy as the continent relies heavily on foreign aid.

A recession can only worsen the situation for the already burdened continent hence the need for continued support from Western countries through the United Nations and the Bretton Woods institutions.

The G-20 summit recently allocated US\$19 billion from the US\$250 billion 'Special Drawing Rights' to the poorest, least developing countries. This aid will surely go a long way in alleviating the impact of the global economic recession on Africa.

Prior to the London summit, the International Monetary Fund Managing Director Dominique Strauss-Kahn was quoted appealing to the international community not to forget Africa.

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"Even though the crisis has been slow in reaching Africa's shores, we all know it is coming and its impact will be severe," he said.

"We must ensure that the voices of the poor are heard. We must ensure that Africa is not left out."

For a full debate on this topic I invited alumni from different parts of Africa to share their views on how the recession has impacted on their countries and personal lives (see page 11 for more).

However, all hope is not lost as InWEnt is still running programmes that will benefit alumni in different parts of Africa regardless of the recession. For more information on alumni offers (see page 10) and also visit the Alumni Portal at: <http://www.inwent.org/alumni>

Happy reading!

Chipo Musoko – Editor



Some of the guests who attended the alumni information evening held in Namibia late last year.

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Letters to the Editor

All letters to the Editor should be addressed to: musokoc@zol.co.zw

Your suggestions, opinions and recommendations are most welcome!



Alumni support alumni, co-tutors sought

Would you like to enhance your e-learning knowledge with tutoring skills? Then we have this grand offer for you: The InWEnt e-learning Centre is planning to extend the GC21 Management Academy and is looking for committed alumni who are interested in continuous collaboration.

Successful candidates will be invited to work with our regular tutor, Celina de Felice on our next online course on Implementing Gender Mainstreaming in Management Processes.

Our goal is to share our tutoring experience, and to help you in developing your own capacity as a tutor.

Tutoring in an international community and a virtual classroom is an adventure you will surely enjoy! But self-discipline and time management are a necessity.

We require tutors who will commit some time to the whole course and share responsibilities with the main tutor.

The objective of the online course is to help practitioners successfully implement gender mainstreaming in management processes.

As part of the course, participants from different cultural, social and professional backgrounds will learn about gender mainstreaming and how they can apply this methodology in their own organisations.

The course is designed for people who seriously consider implementing gender mainstreaming in management processes.

Participants will not only learn about how to implement gender mainstreaming but will also get a clear understanding of its targets.

In order to qualify for this assignment, basic knowledge of human resources development and at least two years working experience in any field within the public or private sector is required. Knowledge of gender issues is also a necessity.

The four-week course consists of four modules and will require approximately five hours of coursework per week.

If you are interested in this challenging task, complete an application form that can be obtained from the Alumni Portal at:
<http://www.inwent.org/alumni>

or contact:
alumni-postmaster@inwent.org

Deadline for applications is May 10, 2009.

However, if you do not wish to be trained as a tutor, we invite you to take part as a regular participant.

The next course will be available from 15 June to 10 July. You can send through your applications between 4 and 24 May 2009.

For more information contact Mrs Evgenia Paskova at:
managementskills@inwent.org

Highlights from the Alumni Portal

Taking the bull by the horns



InWEnt's capacity building programmes on gender would not be the same without the knowledge and experience of alumni.

To read more about the role of alumni as participants or trainers in gender mainstreaming programmes visit the Alumni Portal at:
<http://www.inwent.org/alumni>

"Gender equality is a human right"



Read about gender equality being a human right and how gender equality can withstand the test of time by visiting: <http://www.inwent.org/alumni>

Dealing with gender inequality at the workplace



Agricultural consultant and gender expert Gladys Ekwoke from Buea, Cameroon speaks about how she deals with gender inequality at work. For a full story visit:
<http://www.inwent.org/alumni>

Launch of a global online-network for Germany-alumni

The Alumniportal Deutschland (APD), a unique network for people around the world who once lived, worked, studied in Germany or participated in a German funded professional training will be launched soon in Tanzania.

The portal will be launched at a conference for alumni on May 11 and 12 at the Diamond Jubilee hall in Dar es Salaam.

Africa is the first continent, where the portal, which was initiated by the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), is being launched.

The first launch took place in Johannesburg, South Africa in October 2008. Asia and Latin America are set to follow suit soon. The portal will be accessible worldwide and thus link millions of people together.

The heart of the APD, which is non-profit making, is an online-community, where people with strong connections to Germany can find and establish interesting contacts, exchange information, knowledge and experience and discuss various topics in specific forums.

Furthermore, the APD advertises training, job and academic opportunities as well as knowledge exchange events, offers advice on how to access financial assistance and provides links to other specialised networks worldwide.

While Germany, through the portal, seeks to increase the impact of its investment abroad, registered alumni will benefit from a wide-reaching network of experts, professional associations, academic and cultural institutions as well as consultants and key players in politics and industry.

“Discover the Benefits of Networking” will be the main topic of the May conference being organised under the auspices of InWEnt in collaboration with the Goethe-Institute, the DAAD and other German development agencies.

The conference offers participants an opportunity to interact with representatives of these organisations as well as with German trade and industry agents.

Debates and presentations will focus on the fair’s theme: “Germany-alumni within the global network: How can they benefit?”

Workshops and panel discussions will enlighten participants about the new portal and the different ways of professional networking.

Some of the topics for discussion will be German skills training, e-learning and exchange programmes, the role of the media in shaping and fighting prejudices and the importance of cultural exchange programmes for mutual enrichment.

A live music band and a Tanzania-German cultural group will offer entertainment on May 11.

For more information and a detailed programme contact Michael Winklmaier at: +255 754 788 413 or Balthazar Kitundu: +255 767 338 833 Email: alumni@inwent-tanzania.de

Zambia celebrates launch of Alumniportal Deutschland

by Machushi Nachilongo-Kauta - Zambia

The APD was launched in Lusaka in November last year as InWEnt spearheads plans to introduce the portal in selected countries in the SADC region.

In her welcoming remarks, the German Ambassador to Zambia Dr Irene Hinrichsen emphasized the importance of the network in sharing information among alumni.

Guest of honour, Governor of the Bank of Zambia Dr Caleb Fundanga who is also an alumnus expressed gratitude for the priceless training that Zambians continued to receive from German organisations. He said the portal would promote trust and genuine relationships worldwide.

APD project managers Gerd Hoenscheid-Gross and Raphaela Kuehn gave a presentation on opportunities being offered by APD to alumni. These include maintaining contacts among alumni, with Germany, German organisations and companies.

The presenters said APD was a global network that transcended cultural, professional and organisational boundaries while serving as a catalyst for skills and knowledge transfer.



Some of the guests at the APD launch in Lusaka last year

A number of German companies such as Jos Hansen, ABC and EFG were represented at the event. Representatives of these companies talked about the opportunities and challenges they faced in Zambia.

At least 220 alumni attended the event organised by the InWEnt country representative Machushi Nachilongo-Kauta with assistance from alumni - Mulambo Mukando, Michael Kabungo and James Lubemba.

For more information contact: Machushi at: inwent@iconnect.zm

About APD visit: www.alumniportal-deutschland.org

From knowledge banker to knowledge manager



Dr Sebastian Paust, a lawyer by profession succeeded Dr Ulrich Popp in February this year as InWEnt's Chief Executive Director.

He has vast experience in development cooperation at international level and has held various leadership positions.

Dr Paust had a stint in politics when he worked for the Christian Democratic party in the German Bundestag as an adviser on economic cooperation and development.

Tackling challenges and being result-oriented are skills he demonstrated in various professional capacities.

Paust also worked for the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) in Bonn where Carl-Dieter Spranger, the then development minister appointed him as his personal assistant.

In 1995, he moved to Geneva, Switzerland for three years, where he worked as Germany's First Secretary to the United Nations.

He also worked at the BMZ where he served first as an adviser in the evaluation unit from 1998 and later as head of department handling regional development banks and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), from 2004 to 2006.

Dr Paust worked for the Asian Development Bank (ADB) from 2006 to 2008 first as Deputy Executive Director, then as Executive Director for Germany (2007 to January 2009).

As a member of the board he made major contributions to turning the ADB into a knowledge bank, a bank that transfers knowledge as well as money.

Ranked second after the World Bank, the ADB is a key multilateral agency in promoting regional cooperation and fighting poverty.

Paust said InWEnt was well positioned in international development policy.

"InWEnt's capacity building programmes and, above all, many years of experience in cooperation with regional organisations makes it an important contributor to Germany's development cooperation," he said.

"InWEnt creates networks of knowledge to shape a globally just future that is worth living. We have the right approach to become a sought-after partner on international knowledge markets."

Article extracted from the Alumni Portal at:
<http://www.inwent.org/alumni>

An insight into InWEnt's breakfast meetings

Since 2008 the InWEnt regional office has been holding a series of individual and joint breakfast meetings with the Institute for Future Research (IFR) in Johannesburg to discuss topical issues affecting Africa in general and South Africa in particular.

Participants at these meetings often include alumni, the business community and partners of InWEnt.

Romey Chevallier an alumna of InWEnt shares her experiences.

"These meetings provide one with an opportunity to be at the forefront of interesting discussions on issues pertinent to South Africa and the region," says Chevallier.

"They attract a diverse audience and avail a platform to engage with a wide range of business people, academics,

government officials and representatives from the development community and civil society. The meetings are a perfect occasion to gain insight into the work of various organisations and to discuss potential areas of collaboration."

"It is thus an honour to be included in interesting conversations on pertinent issues. It is also an easy way to keep up to date and to establish contacts with relevant people.

"I have been privileged to be part of these forums which are not only a platform to engage with stakeholders outside of the alumni programmes, but also give people an opportunity to interact," she says.



Romey Chevallier (in red) among participants at a breakfast meeting held in Johannesburg recently

Having attended three breakfast sessions, Chevallier says she had an opportunity to meet the IFS staff including the Deputy Director, Abel Sithole.

"He helped me frame the post-election political landscape in South Africa. He also challenged me to think beyond the current election cycle, and to consider more pertinent and profound issues within our society," she says.

"Besides the interesting topics that are useful for my general knowledge, a real highlight is bumping into other alumni again."

Romey Chevallier is a researcher at the South African Institute of International Affairs (SAIIA).

For more information on breakfast meetings contact the InWEnt Alumni Programme Coordinator for Southern Africa - Aneesha Vahle at:
aneesha.vahle@inwent.co.za

Quality management alumni hold discussion forum in Zimbabwe

by Thomas Bohwasi - Zimbabwe

At the beginning of February the Zimbabwe Quality Management Network (ZQMN) organised a discussion forum to unpack realities pertaining to quality management (QM).

The forum focused on various issues among them challenges facing QM, the quality culture and the future of quality management in the country.

The challenges facing QM identified were relaxed policies, prevailing economic hardships, high demand for goods and services versus low supply, foreign currency shortages, lack of quality promoters and the flight of skilled workers. Rampant corruption and failure to enforce quality policies were also cited as challenges. Most industries were said to be in a survival mode where a lot of shortcuts were used in the production of goods.



Participants at the quality management discussion forum pose for a photograph

It was noted that the culture of quality that was once prevalent in Zimbabwe was now dormant with participants citing cases to support their claim.

During the good old days, they said, milk and newspapers used to be delivered in homes.

"Early in the morning the milkman would place two bottles of milk right at the doorstep without any advance payment. The same applied to newspaper delivery where the deliveryman simply tucked the paper in the mailbox, participants said."

Participants argued that these providers used to offer personalised and quality services to clients. On the contrary, today if one wants a packet of milk he/she has to travel some distance to the shops. The same companies still exist and in most cases with the same old employees but one wonders why the service has changed.

"It seems companies are under some kind of pressure (economic and political) and if it were to be lifted, the same companies would revive their good old habits. The culture of quality is still inherent in them but external factors are forcing them to take shortcuts to cut costs at the expense of quality," they said.

Another scenario given by participants was that of the public transport sector which in the past used to be efficient to the extent that every 30 minutes a bus would ferry people from different destinations in urban areas to the city centre.

"The United Passenger Company, as it was known then, had such personalised service that a conductor was not even required as the driver doubled efficiently as a ticket-checker.

"Today, passengers have to jostle for a bus that is never on time. There is no schedule to know when a bus will be available and there is no effort from the bus company to explain delays," participants said.

"There is need to revitalise what lies dormant within a multitude of companies in Zimbabwe - the culture of quality.

"Industry should be self-regulatory in terms of service and product quality. Competition on the market should drive service providers and manufacturers to shape up to the dictates of quality. Quality is a culture that we have as a nation but there is need to revitalise it," they said.

Thomas Bohwasi is the Coordinator for the ZQMN. He can be contacted at: thomas@zoic.co.zw

QM training 2009 for SADC region

by Annamarie Grobler - South Africa

The Quality Management group held an introduction and selection workshop for 2009 at the end of February in South Africa.

The target group for this advanced six-month training in Germany were executives of QM-institutions such as bureaus of standard and chambers of commerce from SADC member states.

The major highlight at the end of the course will be an opportunity to reach the certificate of TUEV - quality manager, leading to a certificate of IRCA (International Register of Certified Auditors).

On completion of the programme, participants will be able to give SMEs support to plan and implement a quality management system adapted to their enterprises as well as identify relevant areas of quality management and give support.

With support from the SADC SQAM (Standardisation, Quality Assurance, Accreditation and Metrology), Gaborone, Botswana - 12 out of 35 applicants from Botswana, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe were invited to the selection workshop.



Candidates for the QM ILT

Thelma Bowers, a QM alumna cum facilitator together with Annamarie Grobler and Prof. Udo Venitz from HTW (Hochschule fuer Technik und Wirtschaft des Saarlands, Germany) introduced the training programme. At the end of the workshop and interviews, seven participants were selected.

For more information contact Annamarie Grobler at: annamarie.grobler@inwent.co.za

Poverty alleviation in rural communities through access to safe water

by Nasser Kigwangallah - Tanzania

“Better management of resources can lead to improved access to adequate and safe water, an essential prerequisite to alleviate poverty in rural communities,” said participants at a breakfast talk held in Dar es Salaam recently.

InWEnt in collaboration with alumni organised the talk whose theme was: “Poverty alleviation in rural communities through improved access to adequate and safe water.”

Participants said water should be made available to all people, particularly those in rural areas for sustainable development and for the country to achieve the United Nations’ Millennium Development Goals.



Front: Retired Dr Amos Mwakilasa (an alumnus), paying attention to proceedings during the breakfast talk

A ground water specialist, Majura Songo from the University of Dar es Salaam’s Department of Geology said education should go hand in hand with other measures such as improved access to water, reduction of transmission of vector-borne and other water borne diseases.

“Water is considered a key factor in socio-economic development and in the fight against poverty. Therefore deliberate efforts are needed in the management of the resource to sustain the desired pattern of growth and consumption,” he said, adding that there was need to maximise socio-economic activities as articulated in Vision 2025.

This, he said, entailed integrated planning, development and river basin management in support of food security and poverty reduction as well as safeguarding the environment.

Songo said water scarcity was experienced in many areas due to unreliable rainfall, multiplicity of competing uses and degradation of sources, which threatened food security, energy production and environmental integrity.

He said the appropriate alternative was Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM), which was holistic in approach and focused on various uses of water at different levels.

Songo said water service coverage for rural water supply was currently about 50 percent while coverage in the provision of safe water was relatively low. As a result many areas of the dry central parts of the country suffered immensely because water was so scarce that even water for personal hygiene was not easily accessible. Women and children in particular had to walk long distances to fetch water, he said.

“The national economy suffers because of inadequate water supplies to both urban and rural population,” he said.

Based on the projected population growth of 59.8 million by year 2025 up from 33 million in 2001, annual average available water per capita would be reduced by 45 percent to about 1 500m³ per person per year. This, Songo said, was an indication that the country would face a water crisis considering that below 1 700 m³ per person per year signified water scarcity.

He said lack of access to clean water for drinking and other domestic uses could jeopardize lives of the poor.

German Development Service (DED) Coordinator for Water Sector Development Wolfgang Huetzen said it was important to give an opportunity to people at grassroots level to start their own water projects.

“NGOs and the private sector should be fully involved in the provision of water. Communities should also be involved in all programmes to do with provision of safe water in their respective areas,” he said.

Huetzen pledged that his organisation would complement government’s efforts to offer reliable, safe and clean water to its citizens for sustainable development.



Mathias Mulagwanda, an alumnus of InWEnt making a presentation during the breakfast talk

Chairperson of the People’s Voice for Development (PEVODE), Mathias Mulagwanda said in order to reduce gender related violence, water sources should be made available within a walking distance.

“This will create more time for women to focus on developmental programmes instead of concentrating on looking for water,” he said.

He called for the involvement of local communities in water projects for them to succeed.

Fifty-five alumni, partners and friends of InWEnt attended the breakfast talk, which was the first of its kind to be organised by the Tanzania office.

Nasser Kigwangallah is a senior correspondent with the Guardian newspaper in Dar es Salaam

For more information on the meeting contact: Balthazar Kitundu - Alumni Programme Coordinator; East, West and Central Africa at: alumni@inwent-tanzania.de

Workshop to develop ICT SMEs held in Kenya

by George Nyambuya - South Africa

Strathmore University in Nairobi was last month home to the Content Creation Community (3Cs) workshop aimed at building capacity of small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in Africa through use of Free and Open Source Software (FOSS).

FOSS is a computer software, which offers different opportunities and can be freely modified and distributed.

Twenty-one participants from over seven African countries attended the workshop organised through the InWEnt's ICT@innovation programme.

ICT@innovation encourages the growth of African ICT industries, particularly in Southern and Eastern Africa through spreading FOSS business models for enterprises, fostering FOSS certification and supporting innovative local FOSS applications for social and economic development.

Participants exploited and leveraged on regional best practices and compiled examples of adapted business models and marketing related skills in the field of FOSS.

They collaborated and shared knowledge and experience to create a modular FOSS curriculum, which ICT-based SMEs can benefit from and create innovative local businesses based on FOSS.

The 3Cs group will contribute towards the implementation of the ICT@innovation programme. They developed innovative and appropriate FOSS training materials, which will be used to conduct training for IT-based FOSS SMEs in East and Southern Africa.

Kenya's ICT Parliamentary Committee member Engineer James Rege in his speech at the workshop expressed his government's support for the project - ICT@innovation and for FOSS in general.

For more information on the workshop visit:

<http://www.strathmore.edu/News.php?NewsID=50>



Participants at the ICT workshop in Kenya

Meanwhile, developers of FOSS are able to customize and change it as well as join in global open production processes. This can help to stimulate local innovation and growth in the IT sector. With FOSS, SME IT businesses can create locally adapted IT solutions, independent of foreign software vendors.

Free and Open Source Software technologies are used all over the world. FOSS is often the technology of choice to run servers, networks, or content management systems, but also operating systems such as Linux, or business and office applications such as Open Office. As FOSS does not entail license fees, it is particularly useful when applications need to be adapted to a specific context.

Governments and businesses are increasingly employing FOSS hence the business market around FOSS solutions is growing. Local businesses, in particular IT-SMEs can benefit from FOSS as users, but more importantly they can generate business models using FOSS such as offering high-value IT services, software development, training and qualification.

About ICT@innovation

ICT@innovation is a partnership of FOSSFA (Free Software and Open Source Foundation for Africa) and InWEnt. The programme focuses on FOSS as a key technology to drive innovation, add value and create sustainable and affordable ICT-solutions.

The Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) in Germany and the Open Society Initiative for Southern Africa (OSISA) fund the programme.

Outreach Activities

The ICT@innovation management team used the workshop in Kenya as an opportunity to conduct outreach activities for the programme. This was vital because the next task of the programme requires cooperation of different stakeholders in the ICT (FOSS) training institutions.

The team also met with different stakeholders namely Mullard Electronics, LPA Kenya, Open World, Skunks works, LAN Consulting and XXX - an NGO currently engaged in deploying FOSS to effectively reach out to its communities.

Further opportunities arising subsequent to the workshop are four regional Trainer of Trainers in the African FOSS Business Models tentatively set for 2009 as follows:

- South Africa: 13 - 24 July
- Uganda: 31 Aug. - 11 Sept.
- Tanzania: 14 Sept – October
- Mozambique: 19 - 30 October

For more information on the ICT@innovation programme, the Training of Trainers on African FOSS Business Models and further activities visit: www.ict-innovation.fossfa.net or contact: The Project Manager (Africa) Mr George Nyambuya at: george.nyambuya@fossfa.net or george@inwent.co.za

Centre for Statistics newsletter now out

The first InWEnt Centre for Statistics newsletter for 2009 is now out. You are welcome to read and download the English version from: http://gc21.inwent.org/ibt/GC21/area=module/main/en/modules/gc21/ws-statistikportal/ibt/PDFs/Newsletter_Inwent_engl_1_09.pdf

For updates on the centres activities visit the Statistics Portal at: <http://www.gc21.inwent.org/statistics-portal>

German ambassador hosts alumni in Zimbabwe

In February, the German Ambassador to Zimbabwe, Dr Albrecht Conze in collaboration with the Zimbabwe German Society hosted a group of alumni, business people and representatives from German organisations at his residence in Harare to revive contacts with alumni and to promote networking.

The informal reception sought to provide a platform for interaction, fostering and transferring knowledge.

It was his first meeting with alumni since assuming his new post in late 2008.

The event came at a time when Zimbabwe's main political parties Zanu PF and the two formations of the Movement for Democratic Change had entered into a coalition government paving way for improved relations with the West.

In his address the ambassador expressed optimism on the potential to improve bilateral relations between the German and Zimbabwean government.



Guests at the alumni reception held in February. Photo: ZGS

The Zimbabwe Germany Society's (ZGS) Head of Language Department Library and Information Centre, Eva Keller talked about the language courses that the society was offering in Shona, Ndebele and German in a bid to promote cultural relations between the two countries.

Three alumni Tsitsi Dangarembga - a renowned filmmaker and writer, Stewart Vambe - an entrepreneur

and Thomas Bohwasi the country coordinator for the Quality Management Network talked about their experiences during their training in Germany and how the programmes benefited them.

"For me the most important aspect of the scholarship was the international exposure, further quality management training, inter-cultural interaction with people from all over the world and putting the knowledge into practice," said Bohwasi.

Dangarembga, a filmmaker with films such as Neria, Everyone's Child, More Time, Flame, The Sharing Day and I want A Wedding Dress to her credit commended the German government and in particular DAAD for offering her a scholarship to study film in Germany.

She studied film directing at the Deutsche Film und Fernseh Akademie in Berlin where she produced several films, including a documentary for German television. "I do believe that Germany contributed to the success of my career," she said.

Stewart Vambe spent five years studying in Germany where he qualified with a Masters Degree in Economics from the Philipps University in Marburg. He later worked for the German Technical Corporation (GTZ) until 2002 before moving to South Africa in 2003 where he started his own company - GS Procurement Consultants.

He expressed gratitude to the German government for the opportunity to study abroad and pledged to use the knowledge gained to be of service to Zimbabwe.

ProNet ventures into Namibia

ProNet (Productivity Network) is a training programme for owners of formal small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) that want to grow their businesses and become more competitive.

The programme consists of eight modules, covering key skills areas in

managing and enhancing competitiveness of a manufacturing business.

The programme material was developed and offered in South Africa and later (2008) rolled out to Zambia and now Namibia. The material was adapted to the Namibian needs and standards last year. After the adaptation, a ProNet training of trainers took place in Windhoek in late 2008.



Participants at the training of trainers' workshop in Windhoek, February 2009

Six qualified consultants were certified as ProNet lead trainers. They will start to roll out the programme in Namibia in 2009. The first training for enterprises will be offered in the Coastal Area (Walvis Bay/Swakopmund) and in Windhoek.

For more information regarding ProNet contact Ruusa Shuuya at: ruusa-inwent@iway.na

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Our alumnus of the month is Professor Victor Chipofya (56).

He holds a BSc in Biology/Chemistry from the University of Malawi, an MSc in Analytical Chemistry and Instrumentation from Loughborough University of Technology in the United Kingdom and an MSc in Water and Waste Engineering from the same university. He is currently pursuing a PhD with the Lappeenranta University of Technology in Finland.

Prof Chipofya has been working for the University of Malawi's Polytechnic since 1993 as a professor in Water and Environmental Engineering.

In 1996 he benefited from a workshop in Ndola, Zambia funded by InWEnt (then CDG) that saw the launch of the association of academics and researchers in environmental management in universities and research institutions in the SADC region.

During the workshop, the Southern Africa Network for Training and Research on the Environment (SANTREN) was launched with Prof Chipofya becoming its inaugural chairperson.

After the workshop, InWEnt funded various capacity building workshops for network members between 1999 and 2001.

In 1999, Prof Chipofya was among a group of 10 SANTREN members who were sponsored by InWEnt to go on a two-week study tour of universities in Germany to learn about emerging technologies in e-learning.

Prof Chipofya, through the University of Malawi, is credited with coordinating and facilitating the development and running of short

courses in cleaner production and waste management.

Prof Chipofya says he benefited tremendously from the SANTREN programme.

"I mastered the process of training material development and delivery via e-learning. The programme also provided an excellent platform for professional interaction with colleagues from within the region and beyond," he says.

His areas of professional interest are teaching, research and outreach in the fields of water supply and sanitation, waste management and environmental control, wastewater treatment, disposal and integrated water resources management.

The Prof's achievements include spearheading the establishment of the Malawi Water Partnership launched in 2002 as a local chapter of the Global Water Partnership. He has been the national coordinator of the partnership since its inception and is credited with the development of a national Integrated Water Resources Management and Water Efficiency plan, under the Partnership for Africa's Water Development project with funding from CIDA.

He also championed the establishment of the Centre for Water, Sanitation, Health and Appropriate Technology Development (WASHTED) at the Malawi Polytechnic and was founding Director for the Centre from 2003 to 2008. One of the principle products and services offered by WASHTED, he says, is training, research and outreach in water supply and sanitation, hygiene and health.

Prof Chipofya has been married for 31 years to wife Irene. The couple has six children and a grandson.

In his spare time he enjoys listening to news and current affairs, watching television (only when Chelsea or the Malawi national football team is playing), driving to the countryside and admiring nature and exercising.

Prof Chipofya can be contacted at: vchipofya@poly.ac.mw

Kilimanjaro international marathon - run for life

by John Kessy - Tanzania

At the beginning of March, athletes from different parts of the world converged for the annual Kilimanjaro International Marathon in Moshi, Tanzania.

Participants at the seventh Kilimanjaro marathon ranged from professional athletes to those with disabilities.

The full marathon was 42km, half marathon (21km) and 5km run for fun.

As is the tradition, members of the White Orange Youth organisation not only participated in the race but also took advantage of the gathering to spread information about HIV and Aids prevention. Leaflets and t-shirts with the message: "Run for Life" were distributed.



Almost there – some of the participants at the Kilimanjaro marathon on the race course

The winners and runners-up of both the full and half marathon scooped cash prizes. There were special prizes for wheelchair runners.

Kenyan athletes dominated the event with Johnstone Kibet coming first while Tanzanian Patrick Nyangero came second. Tanzania foreign Minister Bernard Membe presided over the colorful prize presentation ceremony.

John Kessy is an alumnus of InWEnt.

He can be contacted at: johnkessy@gmail.com or whiteorangeyouth@gmail.com

“Africa can survive global recession”

Can Africa survive the global economic crisis? Yes according to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in a recent interview with Reuters.

The news agency quoted the IMF Deputy Director for African Development Mark Plant who urged African governments to continue their development spending plans and draw down foreign exchange reserves to bolster their economies.

Demand for African commodities has declined as the global economy has slowed, reducing export revenues and straining African balance of payments.

“They can weather a certain amount of the storm,” he said.

The question one would want to ask is whether the people on the ground are weathering the storm or things are getting out of control. Below is what our alumni from Zambia, Nigeria and Tanzania had to say about their own experiences of the recession.



Edmund Sunkutu from Zambia thinks the impact has hit Zambia the most as the country relies heavily on copper exports with mines starting to shut down and job cuts being the order of the day. He attributes this to the prices of minerals on the international markets that have dropped to levels where miners can no longer meet production costs.

“However, coming from the agro-export industry, the impact is very minimal. Food exports will always be there, as people need to feed,” says Sunkutu.

“Following the closure of mines, the local currency has lost value against the United States dollar.

This works to our advantage though on the other hand we cannot effect any price increases on our products on the international market.”

“The biggest impact of the recession is being felt in the procurement of packaging materials whose prices have sky rocketed,” says Sunkutu.

“It has got us on a beam balance. We are surviving, but certainly by the skin of our teeth. This global recession is a challenge to managers like me to practice all good management skills that entail cost reduction and correct attitude towards work. Our strength and the skills we acquired in Germany as alumni shall be put to test by how we are going to deal with this reality.”



In Nigeria, Nahgwa Rebecca Ogbimi says that as the global recession takes its toll on economic fortunes of developing countries, Nigeria is finally accepting that it is gradually igniting chains of reaction with multiplier effects.

“Generally, it is no longer business as usual from government, private businesses, companies, organisations, foreign investors to individuals.

“Revenue has contracted and capital inflows are on the decline. There is de-accumulation of foreign reserves and pressures on the exchange rate are imminent. Oil, the mainstay of the Nigerian economy is facing major challenges on the international market as the price of oil continues to tumble thus posing a major threat to the 2009 budget,” says Ogbimi.

“The most alarming is the crash of the stock market as buoyant stocks become penny stocks resulting in liquidity and a credit crunch, both of which lead to confidence crisis; weak consumer demand; bankruptcy of some investment companies and

noticeable de-investment by foreign investors. A possible negative effect is on the balance sheets of banks that are increasing provisions for bad debt and decreasing profitability.

“Job insecurity is now dreaded as workers continue to be laid off. Prices of materials, commodities and even rentals have skyrocketed. Families have become prudent in their spending and are cutting down on some luxuries and holiday trips.”

In a bid to ensure that national development is not adversely affected by the recession, Ogbimi says President Umaru Musa Yar’Adua set up an economic team that will assess the impact of the recession and proffer advice accordingly.

“The President led by example by reviewing his salary and allowances downwards and also that of the Vice President, political appointees and civil servants. He called on all public office holders to exhibit honesty, dedication and commitment to selfless national service in the discharge of their duties.”

Martha Yeronimo an entrepreneur in Tanzania says she has had to cut down on expenditures for her company’s 10th anniversary.

“We had to cut down our promotional activities by almost 50 percent. Between August and November last year some of us had started to feel the pinch but were still optimistic that things might change,” she says.

“In Tanzania economists initially thought the crisis was only affecting Europe and America and would not hurt us that much. We hoped this would be true but as the days went by, the impact spread from companies to households.”

“One would go to the supermarket with the equivalent of US\$ 130 for a week’s shopping but return home with a half empty basket. This goes to show that even the value of our money has depreciated so much.

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"On the streets it is now common to hear people say: *hali ni ngumu* - meaning things are now tough.

"Very few people visit banks unlike in the past and even bank tellers can confirm that depositors no longer frequent the institutions like they did prior to the recession. Banks do not have money too and are reluctant to lend loans to small entrepreneurs. Instead they are demanding a lot more securities. This makes doing business difficult for an entrepreneur especially if one wants to expand.

"People do not spend anymore, during Christmas and Valentine's holidays. During the last festive holidays most people did not exchange presents like in the past," says Yeronimo.

"At our office we introduced new performance procedures and employees who were not ready to deal with change left the company. Workers are now more result-oriented and accountable. The company is also paying them performance-based bonuses and salaries to motivate and boost their morale. Continuous training will be offered to employees in order to improve their performance."

For companies to survive the storm of the recession, Yeronimo proposes that they get involved in direct and strategic marketing, cut down personal and unnecessary organisational costs, equip staff with skills to be multi-tasked, empower senior and executive staff, cut down on small jobs and employ part time employees.

She further proposes other remedies for individuals such as engaging in less expensive hobbies like fishing, reading, further studies and yoga.

Turning to what the Tanzanian government is doing to stem the tide of recession, Yeronimo said the government set up a taskforce to oversee sectors that were likely to be affected by the crisis and make recommendations on the way forward.

"Speaking in Dar es Salaam recently, Bank of Tanzania official Dr Joseph Massawe said the taskforce, to operate under the central bank governor, should ensure that all sectors of the economy performed well," Yeronimo said.



Martha Yeronimo

At the time of writing this piece, Yeronimo said the Tanzania National Business Council chaired by President Jakaya Mrisho Kikwete together with other stakeholders were holding a roundtable retreat to discuss and come up with measures to stimulate and boost the economy.

"It is my hope that the government will implement the outcome of recent meetings with the private sector as soon as possible for the benefit of our economy. Government should stay focused on improving the general business climate where there are still many difficulties, especially for small entrepreneurs, who are the motor of the economy," she said.

A fiction story on recession

by Nahgwa Rebecca Ogbimi - Nigeria

There was a man who used to sell hotdogs by the roadside.

He was illiterate and had hearing problems and so could neither read the newspaper nor listen to the radio. His eyes were weak, so he never watched television. But enthusiastically, he sold lots of hotdogs.

He was smart enough to offer some attractive schemes to increase sales and so his profits went up. He ordered more raw materials and sold more hotdogs. And he recruited a few more supporting staff to serve more customers.

The man started offering home deliveries and eventually got himself a bigger and better stove.

As his business was growing, his son, who had recently graduated from college, joined his father in the business.

Then something strange happened.

The son asked:

"Dad, are you aware of the great recession that is coming our way?"

The father replied:

"No, but tell me about it."

The son replied:

"The international situation is terrible. The domestic situation is even worse. We should be prepared for the coming bad times as the economic recession has hit on several countries' economies."

The man thought that since his son had been to college, read the papers, listened to the radio and watched TV, he ought to know better and his advice should be taken seriously.

So from that day onwards the father cut down his raw materials and took down the colourful signboard, removed all the special schemes he was offering to customers and was no longer as enthusiastic. He downsized his staff through lay-offs.

Fewer and fewer people bothered to stop at his hotdog stand and his sales started to plummet rapidly and so did the profits.

The father said to his son:

"Son, you were right. We are in the middle of a recession and crisis. I am glad you warned me ahead of time."

Moral of the story: It is all in your mind! And we actually fuel this recession much more than we think.

DISCLAIMER

Any views or opinions presented in the Open Forum column are solely those of the author and do not necessarily represent those of InWEnt, which does not accept legal responsibility for the contents of this article.

New members of staff at the regional office



Susanne Scholle (29) from Munich, Germany joined the InWEnt Centre for World Cup Initiative in Tshwane, South Africa in February this year to work on the 2010 project as a Programme Assistant.

The project promotes cooperation and exchange of knowledge between the German and South African Host Cities.

Her work involves among others organising workshops and visits for experts from Germany.

Susanne holds a postgraduate diploma in social sciences from the University of Goettingen in Germany.

On completion of her studies she spent almost a year in South America, during which she worked in a home for street children in La Paz, Bolivia.

After her return to Germany Susanne participated in a six months training in Project Management in International Development Cooperation before enrolling at InWEnt's head office in Bonn for a two months internship. She worked there for six months organising international conferences and training before moving to South Africa.

Her hobbies are travelling, sports, meeting new people and photography.

Susanne can be contacted at:
susanne.scholle@inwent.co.za



Betty Madingwaneng (25) joined the regional office in March as a Financial Administrator.

She holds a National Diploma in Cost and Management Accounting. And is currently pursuing a Bachelor of Technology Degree in Cost and Management Accounting.

Prior to joining InWEnt Betty worked for the South African Social Security Agency (SASSA) and the Department of Minerals and Energy (DME) doing administration related work.

Betty, who is still single, enjoys spending time with her mother, brother and niece.

Her hobbies are going for walks, attending Church activities, playing volleyball and puzzles.

Betty can be contacted at:
betty.madingwaneng@inwent.co.za



Patrick Madden (25) joined the InWEnt Tshwane office in February this year as a Projects and Administrative Assistant.

He holds a Business Science Degree in Economics from the University of Cape Town.

Previously he managed a cafe and restaurant in California, United States.

In his spare time Patrick enjoys reading, spending time in nature (hiking, camping), playing soccer and travelling.

Patrick can be contacted at:
patrick.madden@inwent.co.za



Jens Heilshorn (33) joined InWEnt/DED in Tshwane in January to work for the InWEnt Centre for World Cup Initiative as the Network Relations Officer.

His work involves maintaining relations with a network of German experts and disseminating information to the network and head office respectively.

He holds a Masters of Arts Degree in History from the University of York in the United Kingdom.

Prior to joining the Tshwane office Jens worked for two years (as a freelance) at the InWEnt's head office in Bonn on the World Cup 2010 project.

From 2005 - 2007 he did some freelance work for InWEnt on the Tsunami relief project.

Jens is married to a medical practitioner, Dr Hanna Heilshorn and the couple has a 6-month old son, Justus.

His hobbies are watching movies, travelling, running, diving and fitness training.

Jens can be contacted at:
jens.heilshorn@inwent.co.za

Training Programmes

InWEnt conducts training activities on behalf of the Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development. These activities are planned and developed with partner organisations in respective countries under Development Cooperation.

In order to increase the impact of these activities, InWEnt engages participation of suitable partners within Development Cooperation. From time to time opportunities for courses and conferences arise. Our programmes also target people active in the field of Development Cooperation. For further information refer to our contact details.

Environmental reporting
Berlin, Germany
June 26 - August 21, 2009
Deadline: 20 April 2009

Target group: Environmental journalists (print and online media) from Bangladesh, China, India, Indonesia, Jordan, Kenya, Mozambique, Nigeria, Tanzania and Vietnam.

For further information visit:
www.inwent.org/ijj

Reporting politics: good governance and elections
Berlin, Germany
September 4 - October 2, 2009

Target group: Journalists from print and online media from Asia, Africa and Middle East.

For further information visit:
www.inwent.org/ijj

Multimedia and online journalism
Berlin, June 8 - August 7, 2009

The course aims at strengthening professional and ethical standards of multimedia journalists.

It also seeks to assist publishing and media houses in partner countries of German development cooperation that have started or are about to start online editions of their newspapers.

The course targets journalists working for online editions of print media and pure online media from Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Ghana, India, Indonesia, Jordan, Kenya, Nigeria, Pakistan, Philippines, Tanzania, Uganda, Vietnam and Zimbabwe.

For more information contact:
Mrs Britta Scholtys - Senior Project Manager at:
britta.scholtys@inwent.org

or Mrs Melanie Bolik - Project Manager at:
melanie.bolik@inwent.org

Summer Academy
Hamburg, Germany
July 26 - August 21, 2009
Deadline: May 28, 2009

The Summer Academy aims at promoting media freedom and journalistic ethics by empowering young, up and coming journalists to make ethical decisions in their daily work routines as well as under difficult circumstances.

In addition, it will offer professional insights into the German media industry.

The course targets young journalists from all over the world.

For more information write to:
summer_academy@inwent.org

or contact Mrs Britta Scholtys - Senior Project Manager at:
britta.scholtys@inwent.org

Media in conflict
Accra, Ghana
May 4-15, 2009

The course targets journalists/reporters (print and online) from ECOWAS countries.

For more information visit:
www.inwent.org/ijj

Consultancy services on offer

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