Centre for Rural Development (SLE)

SLE TRAINING

Ambassadors' Workshop Documentation

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Acknowledgments

Our great appreciation goes to all of the workshop participants! They travelled to Berlin – some of them long ways – gave their time, got involved in a lively and enthusiastic process and shared their creative and stimulating ideas amongst each other and with us. Thus, they made this workshop a most efficient and at the same time wonderful and inspiring event, which all of us consider as the starting point for a new level of collaboration. It was a real honour for SLE TRAINING that so many highly qualified and very occupied persons dedicated their time to make this happen.

Furthermore, our thanks go to the guest speakers Indra Musiol and Mike Bielski, who completed the workshop with their expertise and inputs on public relations and visual representation. Our thanks also go to Dariusch Tabib-Elahi for the video documentation of the day. Last, but not at all least, we would like to pass a big thank you to DAAD, who strongly supported this event by co-funding.

Best regards

Anja-Katrin Fleig, Annika Buchholz, Miriam Holländer, Alexes Flevotomas
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ANNEX
1 Background of the SLE TRAINING Ambassadors’ Workshop

SLE TRAINING is an international training programme for experts in development cooperation. Besides being a provider of capacity development, we consider ourselves as a part of an international network consisting of the growing number (about 700) of our international alumni.

2015 marks the 10th year anniversary of SLE TRAINING. This occasion is a great moment to reflect the past years, but also to look at future directions this training programme can take and the further development of the SLE TRAINING network and collaboration partnerships.

Following the SLE philosophy of working and learning together, it is evident that such a strategy workshop makes only sense, once the alumni are involved. The main idea is to plant seeds: To come up with ideas, wishes and strategies and a kick-off for future cooperation.

The term „ambassador“, i.e. what it means to be an „SLE TRAINING ambassador“, was left open purposefully at the beginning, as the idea was to have a free and open session and to define the term in a participatory manner.

Structure of the Workshop

The 6 hour workshop was structured in four phases, reflecting the logic of a funnel. Hence it started with a wide variety of rather general topics, which then were narrowed down to concrete aspects and action points.

The first phase „Introduction“ (colour code: purple) covered the presentation of the purpose, programme and the approach of this workshop. It also included an extended getting-to-know-each-other, as we considered good personal relations as one of the fundamental prerequisites for such a highly condensed process amongst this group of international experts who did not know each other before.
The next step was a fruitful brainstorming, conducted on „Ideas and Wishes“ (colour code: green) for future cooperation between SLE TRAINING and alumni. Emphasis was on the approach, that all ideas, even seemingly unrealistic or wild ones, were welcome! The upcoming topics and aspects were first clarified within the group, clustered and given an umbrella name.

The evolving four thematic clusters were then transferred into the next phase, called “Digging Deeper“ (colour code: light blue), which had the purpose of analysing the respective topics in more detail. Participants split into small groups, following the „World Café“- method: Each topic-cluster was represented by a workstation that consisted of a table and a brown board. Group after group rotated from one workstation to the next, meeting at a table to explore, discuss and extend various aspects of the topics and adding them onto the respective boards. One to two persons per table remained without rotating in order to transport and record the ideas and points brought in towards the next group arriving. The world café resulted in crystalizing relevant aspects and different perspectives of each topic-cluster.

The last phase, called „Road Map“ (colour code: dark blue), was designed to define future collaboration and the follow-up of the workshop. Again, small groups were created –this time according to expertise and interest in the respective topic - to come up with concrete ideas and melt next steps, responsibilities and time frame proposals into an action plan.
2 Documentation

2.1 Introduction
The focus of this part of the workshop was to present the proposed structure of the day, getting to know each other, learn about the participants’ expectations regarding the workshop and to have an overview of the expertise in the room.

Expectations
The participants presented their expectations of the SLE TRAINING Ambassadors’ Workshop with special regard to the “process”, the “content” and the “motivation”. With regard to the expectations on the process, many participants mentioned that they expected a participatory workshop in a good atmosphere. On the content level, expectations ranged from learning new things to the discussion of the outreach of SLE TRAINING as well as the necessity to talk about creating a sustainable network. The motivation to dedicate time and participate in this workshop was also multifaceted: From curiosity to enhancing the network.
Getting to know each other...

In order to learn each other’s names, we played the energiser game “Jeff jumps”. Participants get together in a circle and introduced themselves with their name and an adjective or verb, starting with the same letter as their name, for instance “Jeff jumps” or “Stephen has style”. As they say this, the action described by the verb or adjective is mimed. The difficulty is that each participant has to repeat the name, action and mime of all previous participants. This way, both cerebral hemispheres are used, which allows for faster learning.
Market and Wanted: Who is Who

The goal of this exercise was to create a visual gallery of all participating alumni with their professional background, country of origin, residence, SLE courses attended, area of expertise and a fun fact in order to get a first idea of the background of each participant in a relatively short time. Alumni had ten minutes to prepare their “wanted” posters. Afterwards all posters were pinned around the Seminar Room and alumni got about 20 minutes to walk around, become acquainted with the various participants’ backgrounds and start chatting with each other (for the complete market place see ANNEX).

2.2 “Ideas and Wishes” for future cooperation

The Brainstorming technique was used as a first step to collect ideas. This approach facilitates an open and a free process that encourages all ideas to flow. Guiding questions referred to ideas and wishes for future cooperation between SLE TRAINING and alumni and on how to develop the SLE TRAINING network further. The output of this phase were several clusters of ideas, which were given umbrella titles.

The four clusters identified were

1. Portfolio of SLE TRAINING
2. Local Approaches
3. Working/Career Opportunities
4. How to bring/keep the network alive
2.3 “Digging Deeper”: Further elaboration on the topic clusters

This phase of the workshop had the purpose of analysing more detailed the respective four thematic clusters. In the following, the outcome of each cluster will be presented.

Portfolio of SLE TRAINING

In the subgroup “SLE TRAINING Portfolio”, three main ideas/wishes were raised and discussed:

- the quality and portfolio of existing and follow-up courses;
- the development of e-learning and
- feedback to the idea of a SLE TRAINING Graduate School

1. Participants described the quality of the courses as high due to a number of factors such as for example the diversity of participants with regard to professional and cultural background and the opportunity to meet like-minded people. It was made clear that there is a continuous need for scholarships/ co-funding awards and a high interest in follow-up courses to the already existing courses, an example being an advanced “Management of Development Projects” course. Furthermore the idea of learning journeys, i.e. rotating trainings in different locations and the possible involvement of alumni in consultancy projects was mentioned.

2. The development of e-learning within SLE TRAINING was discussed. Examples of e-learning providers were mentioned from the University of Kopenhagen; Ed-X; SOAS and the UN. There is a wish to also introduce complementary courses through e-learning as well as webinars in different languages. The idea of the creation of a “learning hub” came up, where for instance extra learning materials like handbooks, papers, articles etc. could be provided and shared. At the same time the “learning hub” could serve as a platform for seminars, video-learning and video conferences.

3. The group furthermore discussed the idea of the SLE TRAINING Graduate School. It was mentioned that certification/qualification system would need to be recognized also at an international level. The wish for recognition at a Masters level and not “just” PhD was raised as well as to have learning paths, which are flexible and adaptable to professional interests. Moreover, the Graduate School should complement already existing programs and
therewith **partnerships** with e.g. other universities should be established. The critical question of what would be the **comparative advantage** of an SLE TRAINING Graduate School was raised as well: What would be the exposure? Would the approach still be able to follow the “Hands-On” philosophy?

**Local Approaches**

In the sub-group “Local Approaches” two main ideas/needs crystalized: On the one hand it became clear that in order to **respond to the need for local training**, partnerships will need to be established and on the other hand a possible **involvement of SLE TRAINING alumni** was suggested.

Partnerships and venues: **Partnerships** could be created with e.g. local training organisations and/or universities. In order to replicate similar courses the need for partnering with universities was stressed! The example of **SLE external offices** in cooperation with universities was mentioned. Further partners for the application of local trainings mentioned are the local DAAD offices and other German organisations such as e.g. CIM. But also **local organisations** could support the replication of local trainings and act as a “hook” in return for other services. Another idea which came up was **regional training centres and networks** following the example of the South Asia coordination centre (University of Heidelberg). Moreover, venues would not always have to be physically fixed to one place, instead there could be **shifting training venues**. This way, a learning journey could evolve.

In order to establish local approaches, the expertise of alumni is crucial. SLE TRAINING **ambassadors can act as a link between SLE and local structures**. Alumni know the local need for training best and could also help develop the course material in local languages. Furthermore, alumni could be involved as co-trainers.
and/or resource persons. In this line of thought, the wish for specialised **Training of Trainers courses** for local alumni to take over these functions came up.

**Working/Career/Publishing Opportunities**

The subgroup “Working, career and publishing opportunities” created in their discussion the “**Theory of Change**”. Suggesting several directions for development, the subgroup attempts to make the best out of the SLE alumni network, by involving them in various activities that would add value to the centre. On the one side it involves an **inventory of people and expertise**, and on the other, an inventory of possible **partners**. In this context, the subgroup would be responsible for harmonising the two above mentioned objectives by clustering them around various activities of mutual interest.

Possible partnerships could be established with the private sector as a resource provider or with a network of institutions. Both SLE and the possible partner would feed each other what the current demand/need is at any particular time and would hence share opportunities. Opportunities could be for example open positions and the need for specific consultancy, either by country and/or by theme.

Therefore one way in which this information will be made available to alumni is the creation of a **platform**, like e.g. Facebook, a Website, a Blog or the integration of this future platform into the alumni portal DE to be accessible to the specific target group of foreign alumni of German universities.

Furthermore SLE and partners could **share their research** and/or identify the need for research. In a first step SLE members could be clustered around a particular topic of interest. Members could for example offer trainings and/or on the job mentoring and coaching or could share publications (thematically, or regional). All this knowledge gained

“**It’s an honour for me to be an ambassador for SLE. I enjoyed myself. I feel like I can really bring my contribution to this network.**” (Lavinia Dragan, Romania)
through the research within the network would eventually feed back into SLE again, adding value to SLE through using the expertise of its alumni.

**How to bring/keep the Network alive**

The group “How to bring/keep the network alive” came up with several ideas. The wish for a *monthly newsletter* became aloud, ideas for such a newsletter could come for example from SLE contacts. Furthermore the group talked about the creation of an *innovation hub*, which would be a digital platform where ideas could be shared, it would be a place to communicate for example through a discussion board, it would be a place where material and job offers could be shared online and it would be whatever else the participants would want to make out of it. Furthermore, the network could be brought/kept alive at *conferences*: Alumni could for instance team up and write position papers on certain topics. The working together of alumni should be improved, be it on an academic level through exchange/training or research cooperations; having a kind of *“common view”* to represent the SLE TRAINING networks or the creation of *regional “innovation cohorts”*. The need for a *platform* became clear, it should contain specialised information on projects, conferences and funding opportunities. Besides an SLE TRAINING group should be activated in the DAAD Alumni Homepage.

**2.4 “Road Map” – Next steps for implementation**

**Portfolio of SLE TRAINING**

The working group „SLE TRAINING portfolio“ discussed three main action points.

1) With regard to follow-up courses several steps to be taken were identified:

- A *survey* should be sent to alumni with the goal to find out what are needs & interests, what was helpful in the training courses, what was used, worked and didn’t work...
• An **overall evaluation** of the last 10 year trainings should be conducted in order to examine how trainings could be up scaled and re-structured.

2) Concerning the e-learning approach a **pilot project** could be developed, where complementary curricula and materials could be offered.

3) The **development of new courses**

• a **survey of possible partners** can be conducted, including alumni, organisations, etc.

• A demand-side benchmark study would be helpful

• Priority areas/emerging issues should be identified

• Possible topics: immigration, entrepreneurship, food security, gender and development

**Working/Career/Publishing Opportunities**

In order to bring the ideas on working/career/publishing opportunities developed during the subgroup to life, an **infrastructure** needs to be developed.

A first step done by SLE TRAINING would be to do an inventory, i.e. update the alumni database, create an **overview on existing SLE partnerships** and identify possible SLE partnerships. This should be concluded in March 2016.

A second step would be to **build an e-platform**, to be done by SLE TRAINING and alumni. Topics and areas of interests need to be put down in Terms of Reference. This should be completed by June 2016.

Whether such a platform could be integrated into the Alumni Portal remains to be decided.

The platform should be functional by June 2016 and should be moderated by SLE TRAINING, the SLE Network and partners.

“My wish is that you make a difference in other people’s lives, make it (the training) affordable – and the best is still to come.”

(Juan Gonzalo Jarmillo Mejia)
How to bring/keep the network alive

The working group „How to bring/keep the Network alive“ identified several concrete action points. The need for a communication strategy was identified, entailing several aspects:

- **On social media**: This should be coordinated by SLE TRAINING and be realised short term. Regional Ambassadors, supporting the process, could be selected.

- **SLE TRAINING Platform/Blog**: It could be coordinated by alumni on a medium term basis. The alumni coordinator responsible for the platform could rotate → possible role of an ambassador.

- The SLE TRAINING homepage as well as the SLE Group on the DAAD alumni homepage should contain links to alumni. Respective alumni to be found on the webpage could be alumni ambassadors, who would then disseminate training advertisement. This is to be realised long term.

- **A monthly newsletter** could be sent out to alumni. The newsletter would be coordinated by SLE, alumni could make contributions to the newsletter. The newsletter could e.g. contain specialised information on projects, conferences, funding opportunities, etc.
2.5 What does it mean to be an „SLE TRAINING Ambassador“?

As stated in the beginning, the term „SLE TRAINING Ambassador“ was defined in a participatory way during the workshop.

Proposals on possible roles and activities of an ambassador were:

- Be linked on the SLE TRAINING website and act as a **regional contact person**
- Disseminate SLE TRAINING advertisement
- Organise **regional alumni meetings**
- Establish **links to local organisations** (clear mandate needed)
- Help build and moderate an **e-platform**, i.e. a kind of virtual meeting space to share ideas on how to further develop the network, but also to share working opportunities, papers, conferences, etc.
- Contribute to the monthly newsletter
ANNEX

- List of Participants
- Self-Portrait of Participants
- Charts
### Participants’ List: SLE TRAINING alumni

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First Name</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Nationality</th>
<th>Field of Study</th>
<th>Employer</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mr.</td>
<td>S. Adesola</td>
<td>Nigeria</td>
<td>Agricultural Sciences</td>
<td>Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ms.</td>
<td>Ulpia Elena</td>
<td>Romania</td>
<td>Urban Management</td>
<td>European Institute for Risk, Security and Communication Mgt.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ms.</td>
<td>Mai</td>
<td>Palestine</td>
<td>Architecture and Urban Planning</td>
<td>NGO in Abu Dhabi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ms.</td>
<td>Lavinia Dragan</td>
<td>Romania</td>
<td>International Economic Relations</td>
<td>Freelancer</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mr.</td>
<td>Surendra Gautam</td>
<td>Nepal</td>
<td>Hydro Sciences and Engineering</td>
<td>Welthungerhilfe Nepal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr.</td>
<td>Juan Gonzalo</td>
<td>Colombia</td>
<td>Political Science and Government</td>
<td>FAO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr.</td>
<td>Mohamed Khamis</td>
<td>Sudan</td>
<td>Forestry</td>
<td>Al Fashir University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ms.</td>
<td>Maria Lopez Sandoval</td>
<td>Ecuador</td>
<td>Human Geography</td>
<td>Facultad Latinoamericana de Ciencias Sociales</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ms.</td>
<td>Theresa Madubuko</td>
<td>Nigeria</td>
<td>International Public Health</td>
<td>Center for Clinical Care and Clinical Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr.</td>
<td>Stephen Nfor Mbuli</td>
<td>Cameroon</td>
<td>Food Security &amp; Natural Resource Mgt.</td>
<td>Faith International Rescue Ministries (FIRM)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr.</td>
<td>Tesfaldet Okubayes</td>
<td>Eritrea</td>
<td>Public Management</td>
<td>Pastoral and Environmental Network in the Horn of Africa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr.</td>
<td>Stephen Caleb Opuni</td>
<td>Ghana</td>
<td>Food Security &amp; Natural Resource Mgt.</td>
<td>ActionAid International Ghana</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ms.</td>
<td>Florette Razafimeva</td>
<td>Madagascar</td>
<td>Agronomie</td>
<td>Ministry of Agriculture</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mr.</td>
<td>Harsh Sharma</td>
<td>India</td>
<td>Management</td>
<td>Administrative Staff College of India</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mr.</td>
<td>Jeff Wilkesman</td>
<td>Venezuela</td>
<td>Biochemistry</td>
<td>Universidad de Carabobo</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mr.</td>
<td>Michael Kwaku Yeboah</td>
<td>Ghana</td>
<td>Governance and Civil Society</td>
<td>Diaspora Affairs Bureau, Ministry of Foreign Affairs - Ghana</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Participants’ List: Guest Speaker, Facilitation and SLE TRAINING Team

- Guest Speaker: Ms Indra Musiol & Mr Mike Bielski
- Facilitation: Mr Alexes Flevotomas
- SLE TRAINING Team: Ms Anja-Katrin Fleig, Ms Annika Buchholz & Ms Miriam Holländer
Self-Portrait of Participants

S. Adesola Ajayi - Nigeria

Ulpia Elena Botezatu - Romania
Self-Portrait of Participants

Mai Daoud - Palestine

Lavinia Dragan - Romania
Self-Portrait of Participants

Surendra Gautam - Nepal

Juan Gonzalo Jaramillo - Colombia
Self-Portrait of Participants

Mohamed Khamis - Sudan

María López - Ecuador
Self-Portrait of Participants

Theresa Madubuko – Estonia/Nigeria

Stephen Nfor Mbuli - Cameroon
Self-Portrait of Participants

Trefaldet Okubayes - Eritrea

Stephen Caleb Opuni - Ghana
Self-Portrait of Participants

Florette Razafimeva - Madagascar

Harsh Sharma - India
Self-Portrait of Participants

Jeff Wilkesman - Venezuela

Michael Kwaku Yeboah - Ghana
Charts

[Image of a chart with sections labeled Introduction, Ideas and Wishes, and Digging Deeper, leading to Road Map]

[Image of a chart titled Expectations with notes on process, content, motivation, and some keywords like SUSTAINABLE, NETWORKING, CO-DEVELOPMENT, MOTIVATION, LEARNING, FORUM, and EXAMPLES]
### How to bring/keep the Network alive

<table>
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<th>WHAT</th>
<th>WHO</th>
<th>WHEN</th>
<th>REMARKS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SOCIAL MEDIA</td>
<td>SLE Platform Blog</td>
<td>Short-term</td>
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<td></td>
<td>LINK TO SLE HOME PAGE</td>
<td>Medium term</td>
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<td></td>
<td>ACTIVATE SLE GROUP IN DABD</td>
<td>Long term</td>
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<td>ALUMNI HOME PAGE</td>
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<td>SLE NEWSLETTER</td>
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<tr>
<td>WORKING PARTNERS</td>
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</table>

### Coordination Resource Collaboration for Fund

- Responsible Person: Coordinator SLE
- Responsible Person: Alumni Coordinator

- Alumni Ambassadors
- Selection of Key Ambassadors
- Rotation of Ambassadors
- Disseminate Training to Alumni
- Contribute to Newsletters
- Get Involved in Organizational Changes
- Organize Mandate
- Regional Alumni Meet