



Participants group photo

Contextualized Learning Resources In African Universities Comes A Step Closer

The well worn tradition of using handy but unfamiliar examples to explain local situations in Africa's classrooms is set to undergo a paradigm shift.

The African Network for Agriculture, Agroforestry and Natural Resources Education (ANAFE) has embarked on an exciting, demanding but more realistic exercise of working with university lecturers of Agriculture and related fields in Africa to develop high quality learning resources. These will draw from indigenous knowledge ensuring relevance in teaching material content in order to effectively address needs peculiar to the continent.

To make this work, ANAFE, a Pan African Network of 131 Universities and colleges teaching Agriculture, Agroforestry, and Natural Resources Management in Tertiary Education in 35 African countries, organized an intensive training workshop at the International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI) in Nairobi Kenya from 12th to 16th April 2010. This forum was attended by University Lecturers from across Africa with one mission, to lay the foundation for an initiative that will lead to the development of relevant learning

resources tailor made for Africa.

The objective of the workshop was to enable the lecturers to develop high quality contextualized educational resources for teaching these subjects based on related research and development. At the end of the workshop, participants were expected to identify appropriate learning theories and prioritize areas for the collaborative development of contextualized learning materials in support of existing and new curricula. They were also expected to develop a strategy and an approach for national institutions of higher education to collaboratively develop such resources in the future, identify and use the most appropriate ICT tools to collaboratively develop and make available contextualized learning resources.

ANAFE, whose mission includes improving agricultural education for impact on development through activities such as policy reform and advocacy, institutional reform, curriculum review, knowledge sharing and learning resources development,

realized through research that one of the main constraints to high quality teaching and learning in agriculture, agroforestry and natural resources management at Universities in Africa is the lack of contextualized learning resources.

To respond to the need to create an appropriate learning environment in Agriculture therefore, ANAFE and the World Agroforestry Centre (ICRAF)

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The Workshop

At A Glance

The training workshop was divided into five units each covering a series of topics aimed at achieving specified learning objectives.

Instructional methods were short and to the point, made through theoretical presentations by facilitators followed by discussions and exercises.

Resource persons were drawn from the organizing institutions and also from international quarters, national and local partners; bringing together a team with extensive experience and expertise in the development of learning resources for agriculture, agroforestry and natural resources management, as well as in the use of information and communications technology (ICT) in support of this programme.

Topics covered in the 5 days included:

- ✍ Sharing information about existing and future programmes and courses
- ✍ Identifying areas of interest for research and teaching specialization
- ✍ Identifying individual priority areas/subjects of interest
- ✍ Creating matrix of learning resources
- ✍ Analyzing the importance of contextualized learning resources for higher education provided by ANAFE member institutions
- ✍ Identifying relevant topics for joint collaboration
- ✍ Creating a course outline/syllabus
- ✍ The development of learning objectives
- ✍ Practicing the writing of learning objectives
- ✍ Searching Library catalogues
- ✍ Conducting specialized searches
- ✍ Using search engines
- ✍ Querying learning repositories
- ✍ Evaluation of learning resources
- ✍ Copyright and fair use
- ✍ Rubric for learning material assessment
- ✍ Media types and modes of production
- ✍ Collaborative production process model for ANAFE
- ✍ Draft outlines for learning
- ✍ Creating new learning resources
- ✍ Action Plan (Approach for completing project assignments)
- ✍ Learning resource development and dissemination strategy for ANAFE

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Contextualized Learning Resources

initiated two projects aimed at the collaborative development of high quality contextualized learning resources. The ANAFE project was funded through the Mobilization Regional Capacity Initiative (MRCI) of the Association of African Universities (AAU). Since the ultimate goals of both projects were similar, ANAFE and ICRAF decided to combine strengths

through the organization of this joint training workshop.

In order to build the momentum and to ensure action beyond the workshop, participants have already formed eight (8) working groups of between two (2) to four (4) team members with common interests in areas of specialization who will continue to work together to actualize the objectives of the workshop. This far, the teams which fall in groups under Agroforestry, Crop Production, Crop Protection, Milk Production, Climate Change, Soil Fertility, Natural Resources Management and Animal Nutrition have already developed subject outlines based on their identified priority areas laying

down the building blocks for the development of contextualized learning materials with ANAFE ensuring final compilation of this data and making it widely available. All materials produced by the working groups at the workshop have already been placed in the ANAFE moodle repository and can be accessed for learning purposes by members and other guests to the site.

The participants selected through a meticulous criterion came from: Malawi, Tanzania, Burkina Faso, Cote d'Ivoire, Botswana and Ghana. Others were from Zimbabwe, Mauritius, Rwanda, Zambia, Swaziland, Niger, Cameroon and Ethiopia.

Facilitators speak



AISSETOU YAYE

We did a study last year to check the availability of learning materials in Africa and there was a big gap. Lecturers were using materials not relevant to the African context.

We need to fill in the gaps. That is why we contacted the Association of African Universities (AAU) and linked with ICRAF to organize this workshop. We feel sure that the recommendations made at this

workshop will be actualized because we ensured that we got the right people to attend. Participants had the endorsement from their employing institutions and heads of departments. We also intend to create ownership of the material to be produced. The information produced will be endorsed and used as reference material. The obstacles hindering the adaptation of technology include lack of incentives and lack of knowledge of where to get relevant materials.

Lecturers in Africa do not know how to get relevant information from International research centres. We will widely share our website. This will be possible because we have 131 member institutions in 35 African countries. I am glad Africa is slowly catching up with technology. They started doing some good work but the divide is quite high between developing and developed countries. We hope that the lecturers, who have attended this course, will make good use of their materials.

We feel relevant learning materials should be produced. We should produce our own materials that reflect the needs of African people. Here people tend to use information from the web and other sources. Many students don't understand outside examples which are being used. We felt there wasn't enough contextualized learning material so we decided to create more local material through ANAFE.

We are developing a series of tools and markets that people can use in future. This is the first group and we have about 20 institutions in this workshop. There will be other groups and we hope there will be enough examples and hopefully other people will follow these examples. We need to be more technologically advanced. But I feel we are getting there. I have been at ICRAF for 20 years. That time, not many people had email addresses. When I asked participants if they had email addresses, none of them did. Today, they all do. In fact if you do not have it, you do not exist. Life in the 21st century is not possible without internet or ICT.



JAN BENIEST



THOMAS ZSCHOCKE

resources on the internet.

A repeat exercise might be necessary in other parts of the region to expose as many teachers and trainers as possible to the potential of ICT and the resources available online. African institutions should aim to put in place well structured strategic plans for Information Technology to be able to optimize IT resources.

Although many teaching institutions in Africa have embraced ICT as an essential aspect of the learning process, lack of specialized skills and poor infrastructure still hampers progress in this area. I have seen a lot of enthusiasm and interest with this group in learning and understanding the various ways to leverage learning

Many teaching staff in Africa continue to face challenges in getting relevant training materials. They use materials acquired from Europe which have no relevance in the African context. Lack of capacity, know how and the skills to develop learning materials could partly be blamed for this problem. There is a need to support teaching personnel through capacity building and other incentives to enable them to come up with relevant materials and to be able to share the same with others for the good of the region.

This forms a key reason for this workshop by ANAFE which is expected to yield an action plan for the development of contextualized learning materials. Africa is rich with indigenous knowledge which will serve the region better and we are here to deliberate on how best we can tap on this. Now that we have started the process, we plan to stay on track through continue collaboration and support to teachers until expected results are achieved. It is encouraging that ANAFE has already committed to give incentives for publishable learning materials developed by participants in this workshop, a key indicator of commitment and the will to take this project to the next level.



PROF. A. MATTEE

THE TEAM OF FACILITATORS CONSTITUTED:
Aissetou Yaye: Executive Secretary ANAFE
Jan Beniest: Training Unit Manager -
 Principal Training scientist at the World
 Agroforestry Centre

Prof Amon Mattee: Sokoine University of
 Agriculture and Technology, Tanzania
Thomas Zschocke: ICT expert
Tom Vandenbosh: ICT expert

Participants' Perspectives



Bougouma Valerie

*Animal Science /Animal Nutrition
Burkina Faso*

"I have gained new knowledge on developing course content which will go along way to enable me and my institution to improve tertiary education through improved course content. I have found my bearing in developing contextualized learning materials and this will significantly impact positively on my teaching".

Gatachew Alemayehu

*Bahir Dar University
Bahir Dar, Ethiopia*



"The training has exposed me to new ways and ideas in developing training materials. This will help me to prepare learning resources based on real conditions of Africa. It will also enable me to prepare lectures using new approach".



David C. Munthali

*Botswana College of Agriculture
P/Bag 0027
Gaborone.*

"This workshop has provided relevant training and learning material for use by undergraduates as well as graduate level students. It will enable me to develop contextualized training materials for the courses which I am teaching. There are many useful electronic sources of information in my field which I will be able to use during the development of my contextualized training materials".



Fonteh Florence Anyangwe

University of Dschang, Cameroon

"We have as a group identified gaps and explored priority areas where restructuring of course outlines is necessary to fill some of the gaps in order to deliver more effective learning programmes".

Francis Makasa

*Crop Production/Agroforestry
ZAMBIA*

"I will transfer acquired knowledge to my College and colleagues to facilitate the development of suitable learning materials for Africa. All Agricultural colleges in the Ministry of Agriculture stand to gain hugely from the outcome of this initiative. Effective use of ICT is crucial to the success of this project and I am happy I have learnt a lot on accessing learning materials on the internet".



Weston Mwase

*University of Malawi
Bunda College*

"This will lead to an understanding of programme/curriculum development; improve efficiency of teaching and assessment and planning of course content. It will also make searching for information easier and help with the review of course material and the adaptation of local situations in learning. It has made me discover better ways of searching for information using google and ways to access massive resources available for use in teaching in the web".



Makarius C. S. Lalika

Sokoine University of Agriculture, Tanzania

"The expertise and new ideas will be useful in building the capacity of my institution. The new knowledge gained will be translated and passed on to my students. I am now able to search materials on climate change using different search engines".

Tidjani Adamou Didier

*Universite Abdou Moumouni de Niamey,
Niger*

"I wish to be involved with ANAFE as a resource person for my institution. The workshop will improve my teaching and learning material. Access to the internet is more interesting as I have learnt new methods of research".



Nozipho Motsa

University of Swaziland

"I feel better equipped to deliver sensible, objective and focused courses tailor made for specific needs of students. I have learnt about the latest technologies in information search and this will improve my teaching skills and techniques. I now know there are many free search engines out there with more information than I had imagined until today. I have discovered the importance of repository resources like the ANAFE moodle in storing and accessing information online thus

reducing the baggage of books and papers. This forum has also given us the opportunity to form working groups through which we will network and exchange information among colleges from different countries adding value to the process of development of relevant learning materials for Africa".

Joyce Lepetu

*Botswana College of Agriculture
P/Bag 0027
Botswana*

"This course will assist a lot in searching for information on the internet. I will share it with students. It will enable me to access various relevant information that I can use in my teaching. These will include case studies, books and manuals. I now know where and how I can access relevant information and how this can assist me in my field especially when I can seek information from CGIAR Library and other sites".



Participants' Perspectives

Kamleshwar Boodhoo

University of Mauritius

"The insights on ICT especially on developing e-learning materials, searching the internet, utilizing available repository resources and the use of library data base will enhance my ability to prepare students to face real life work situations".



G.H. Laswai

Sokoine University of Agriculture, Tanzania

"This will enhance my capability in delivering appropriate information to learners and it will yield learning resources to be shared with other trainers. It has imparted clearer perspectives to the process of formulating learning outputs besides exposing me to new techniques of searching for specific relevant information on the internet. It has created a critical link for trainers across the continent".



Trinitas Senganimalunje

Malawi College of Forestry and Wildlife



"I have learnt how to access appropriate reference materials faster from the internet; a good time management factor which will save time for other duties. Access to the ANAFE repository moodle website will be of great benefit to me and my college and will boost our capacity to develop contextualized training materials. I feel better placed to identify and select specific areas of interest which I will focus on for

excellent results".

Munashe Shoko

*Africa University, Zimbabwe
Soils Science and Agroforestry*

"The outcome of this workshop will definitely facilitate development and provision of learning materials and effective internet search for reference materials and use of Virtual Libraries".



Christiana Amoatey

University of Ghana

"Opportunity to share skills acquired during the workshop should help reduce difficulties/challenges associated with finding useful material for teaching. This new experience will enable students to be better trained for the job market. I now have more knowledge of already available learning repositories and how to efficiently use search tools on the internet. I will have more pertinent information for research areas as well. And I will be able to network with colleagues from other tertiary institutions. I will also have more efficient ways of preparing teaching material based on available information/literature"..



Cherif Mamadou

*Cocody University
Abidjan
Cote d'Ivoire*

"This workshop is very important for my institution and will be useful to my colleagues as well. It will help me to improve my courses and contextualize them taking into account the socio-economic environment of my students.

It will also enable me to improve my knowledge on how to search the existing information in the data base".



Hassan B. Nacro

*University of Bobo-Dioulasso
Rural Development Institute
Burkina Faso*

"The workshop equips me with plenty of information to find learning resources and to organize courses well. I will share this knowledge with my colleagues. My teaching will change a lot because I will be able to identify learning objectives and outcomes. I will also be able to use google better and search in other websites and to share experiences with contemporaries from other regions of Africa".



Luther Lulandala

*Sokoine University of
Agriculture, Tanzania*

"This workshop will help in focusing our course outlines and lecture delivery in a contextualized way. The course will help with formulations of objectives that are outcome oriented with individual students and personal activities. I have learnt the use of search engines in focused literature search".



John Mupangwa

*Ulimatara Polytechnic
Rwanda*

"This has exposed me to a variety repository sites on the internet where I can access learning materials and share experiences and information with peers. It has boosted my teaching capacity".



Emanuel E. Chingonikaya

Tanzania Development studies Institute

"This workshop will improve tertiary education in learning institutions. It will also improve writing skills and material researching from various sources. The repositories that we have been exposed to will be very useful too".



Pictorial



Jan Beniast gathers views from the lecturers.



Prof Hassan B. Nacro, Lecturer, Social Scientist University of Bobo addresses his colleagues.



Prof. G.H. Laswai of Sokoine University (L) and ANAFE's Executive Secretary Aissetou Yaye share a light moment during tea break.



Nozipho Motsa of Swaziland and Trinitas Senganimalunje of Malawi compare notes.



Participants had a lot to share.



The training was intense: Participants go through the process of selecting priority areas.



There was plenty of material to sample at the seminar.

Pictorial



James Aucha, ANAFE Consultant assists Prof. Bougouma Valerie to pin up her selected priority topics.



Part of the Francophone team keenly follow the proceedings of the workshop.



Participants chat during tea break.



Kamleshwar Boodhoo from Mauritius makes his presentation.



Participants had a lot to share.



Putting newly acquired knowledge into use.

Parting Note

“Developing Contextualized Learning Materials in Tertiary Agriculture, Agroforestry and Natural Resources Management Education” Workshop, 12th-16th April, 2010, Nairobi, Kenya.



This workshop was developed following the observation that lecturers throughout sub-Saharan Africa were not developing contextualized learning materials to enrich student learning experience. Funding support was obtained from the Association of African Universities, United Nations University and the Belgian government through the Agrolor project.

Over 20 participants attended the workshop which ran from the 12th to 16th of April, 2010. The participants were drawn from Swaziland, Botswana, Zimbabwe, Malawi, Zambia, Rwanda, Tanzania, Ethiopia, Kenya, Cameroon, Ghana, Benin, Ivory Coast, Burkina Faso, Mauritius and Niger. Putting heads together, yielded a rich experience for sharing in current aspects of tertiary agriculture, agroforestry and natural resources education. We have moved a step higher in realizing the goal of the work, I can say with confidence. The training process provided an excellent mixture of presentations, plenary discussions, individual and group exercises. Five modules were put together: Module 1, Higher Education within the context of

ANAFE member institutions; Module 2, Discovering existing learning resources; Module 3, Selecting and assessing learning resources; Module 4, Creating new learning resources and Module 5, action plan development.

Eight working groups have been established based on individual teaching and research areas of interest and priority, to champion the writing of contextualized learning materials under the broad topics of:

Agroforestry, Soil fertility, Milk production, Animal Nutrition, Crop protection, Natural resource management and climate change. A group action plan has been agreed upon and their materials will be available in three months from.

I must commend participants, for the energies expended in this initiative; they were very active and all agreed that the issue of developing contextualized teaching materials for use in tertiary agriculture, agroforestry and natural resources in sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) needs urgent attention. The enthusiasm to get the project underway was evidenced by the group developing the following philosophy concerning contextualized learning materials development: “Partnering in Contextualized Learning Material Development for tertiary agriculture, agroforestry and natural resources capacity building in sub-Saharan Africa”. We anxiously await production of the learning materials which will be widely shared throughout SSA.

This workshop is just a pilot phase in promoting contextualized learning materials development in SSA. Bigger groups with a wider geographical coverage and more topics in agriculture, agroforestry and natural resource management being tackled are envisaged. Watch this space for further details!

Dr Aissetou Yaye
Executive Secretary, ANAFE

Thank you Collaborators
and Funding partners:

