

ICDD Steering Committee Meeting and student workshop at University of Johannesburg, South Africa May 7-15, 2011

The Annual ICDD Steering Committee Meeting (SCM) took place at Uni of Johannesburg, South Africa on **May 7, 2011** from 10 am to 4:30 pm. Minutes of the previous meeting were presented which were approved as such. After a brief introduction of the participants, all Universities gave their input and reports on their ICDD chapters. I (Dr Muhammad Younas) conveyed the University of Agriculture, Faisalabad (UAF) sentiments and presented the activity report of ICDD Program at UAF. I also presented my report as Ela Bhatt Professor, at University of Kassel-Witzenhausen, Germany during my stay from Oct 2010 to March 2011. On behalf of my Vice Chancellor, the Director External Linkages and the ICDD Office at UAF, all Faculty & ICDD students and myself, I invited everybody to forthcoming **ATC** (Annual Thematic Conference) at UAF to be held on Oct 18-22, 2011.

The Sunday (**May 8, 2011**) was the first day of student workshop. There were five (5) presentations, two by Dr Christoph Sherrer (ICDD) Uni of Kassel, and one each by Christian Mollmann (Graduate School), Frank Hoffer (ILO) and Edward Webster (WITS). The topics of the two presentations by Dr Scherrer were (1) Introduction of ICDD and how it works and (2) How to conduct a Literature Review. While the topics of other speakers respectively were as: (3) Introduction to Graduate School, (4) The emergence and development of the decent work agenda, and (5) Decent work and development – the international agenda.

These lectures focused mainly to new PhD students for sensitizing them about the working of the ICDD, Graduate School, literature reviewing and thesis writing for a purpose to meet the success. The role of ILO and the emergence of the concept of decent work and development was highlighted.

May 9, 2011 (the day the Monday) was the third day of the activities. PhD workshop continued introducing them the basic concepts like writing the research proposals (by Ran Greenstein, from WITS), decent work and agricultural development [by Christian Hulsebusch (Uni of Kassel-WIZ), Javier Solorio (Mexico), and myself (Muhammad Younas, UAF)].

The second presentation was by Dr Beatrice Knerr on decent work agenda in ecological economics till 4:15 pm. After this I gathered the information on the workshop of the two ICDD Research Clusters on (i) "**Public Banks**" and (ii) "**Livelihood Strategies**". Later I learnt that second RC workshop was entitled as "**work, livelihoods and economic security in the 21st century**", attended by the participants from India, South Africa and Brazil with following two themes.

1. May 9, 2011 The struggle for work and livelihoods in the Global South.
2. May 10, 2011 Towards economic security in the Global South.

Today (the day the Tuesday, **May 10, 2011**) was the day of student presentations. All PhDs (Cohort 2011) in second badge presented their proposals. All proposals presented were pre-mature, half-baked and may be a first draft. After the each presentation, suggestions and discussions were followed, all candidates were advised to modify them, beef them up and present again on the next meeting may be UA Faisalabad (Oct 18-22, 2011) to get it approved by the ICDD officials. The other seven of eight (7 of 8) students presented their presentations. Followed by this was a talk by the present Ela Bhatt Professor at WIZ from Mexico on "Methodology of Participatory Research". The meetings of the both Research Clusters (RC) continued.

These two days **May 11-12, 2011** (Wed and Thu) were meant for presentation by different Faculty. They mostly presented **theory seminars** to the students. The quorum of PhD Cohort 2010 and Cohort 2011 was complete.

May 13, 2011 was an excursion day. The ICCD people wanted us to give a spin of SAB Miller Production Plant in the suburb of the Johannesburg. But we asked them to show us the **WITS** (University of The Witwatersrand, Johannesburg) also. All participants were divided into two groups right at the start of the journey from Reef Hotel. The visit between the WITS and SAB Miller was swapped between the two groups and convergence took place at the evening at Shebeen at Soweto, Johannesburg.

Next two days (**May 14-15, 2011**) were dedicated to the **PhD workshop** and to catch up. Before the start of the workshop everybody was asked to give his comments on yesterday's visit to all facilities particularly the **Shebeen**, the way they were run and correlating them with the element of sustainability and decency under these three questions, viz; (1) Self exploitation or successful enterprise, (2) Social upgrading and/or economic upgrading and (3) Linkage of SAB and to Shebeen.

Nutshell of this discussion was to correlate theories with the actual work. After lunch, it started with the **PhD student presentations** of the old group (Cohort 2010) and they mentioned at what stage they are at of their PhDs. Student presentation included were by Crispen (Kenya), Sadaat (India), Jane (Kenya), Risper (Kenya), and Asif Raza (Pakistan). This day ended with these presentation followed by the group discussions, Q/A sessions till 7 pm. The presentations continued on May 15, 2011 after breakfast. Among the presenters included were Luis (Mexico), Samiullah (Pakistan) and Prem (India).

Having done with students presentations, this was the time for **student workshop** with the Coordinator of the Graduate School (Mr Christian Mollmann). This workshop took place on the issues concerning the graduate students on the topics like: workshop evaluation (written as well as oral), money stuff and allowances, contact to whom and for what?, proposal evaluations, yearly reports, keeping in touch, e-mails and web portal, discussion groups, next PhD meeting, PhD presentations, participants list, workshop pictures and finally airport transfers. Also I had a session with Brazilian group regarding learning the **last year ATC experiences**.

One of the reason of **my presence in this workshop** was that on behalf of the worthy Vice Chancellor, the Director ICDD/External Linkages, UAF and myself, I wanted to invite them all to ATC at UAF (Oct 18-22, 2011), which I made them realize by virtue of my presence to this workshop and answering their many questions about the security situation of the country. I asked the Graduate School to forward our TAC program to all of them. I further elaborated the ATC program, answer the concerns of many, asked everybody to send their abstract and papers for Conference proceedings and to show up on the event. Having said goodbye to them all, I returned to my room to put my memories into words for you all.

Prof Dr Muhammad Younas

UAF, from South Africa

(May 15, 2011)