

PROGRESS OF THE CAREER DEVELOPMENT GROUP (CDG) PROJECT

The aim of the CDGs is to facilitate the development and integration of needs-specific career development support and training for researchers within the MCDC African partner institutions. The aim of using working groups is to build capacity within the institution so that the provision of researcher career development support and training becomes sustainable by being institution-led as opposed to programme-led.

This progress update is from the overall review undertaken by the CDGs at the 2nd Annual CDG meeting held in Uganda from 26 – 28 January 2015.

▪ Update on progress includes:

- CDGs now established, up and running and have institutional buy in
- Baseline assessment of existing career development training and support for researchers within the CDG institutions now completed
- CDG institutional plans developed and implemented with training programmes, workshops, seminars and meetings initiated
- Support and management systems set up: Career Development Centre, Career Development Committees, multidisciplinary and joint working with faculties and Research Support Centres
- Staffing: Appointment of co-ordinators: PGR, Training and Career Development Centre
- Training Needs Analysis in progress at institutional level to support the development of an annual researcher training programme
- Websites, electronic support and management systems, and resources established

▪ Some highlights of the CDG work so far:

- A positive reaction and engagement with the work of the CDGs
- Gaining institutional buy in and the support by senior management teams
- Getting on board the co-ordinators and administrators for the CDGs
- Setting up the support and management systems for researcher career development
- More integrated working with Research Support Centres and other faculties and department
- Revisiting and strengthening existing programmes

▪ Some of the challenges experienced by the CDGs so far:

- Bureaucratic delays in recruiting the co-ordinators and setting up some of the systems
- Minor pockets of resistance to the work of the CDGs, but these are being worked through
- Limited human resource capacity within the institutions to form working groups
- Changes in CDG composition due to movement of staff
- Limited timeframe of the programme creates pressure to work within a short deadline

▪ Some of the key learning gains of the CDGs so far:

- Using own experiences to understand the development and training needs for researchers
- An appreciation of the need for a structured and co-ordinated approach to researcher career development and for a planned annual researcher training programme of scheduled activities
- Learning from others and gaining a broader view of the career development needs for junior scientists

The project will close with a wrap-up meeting, facilitated by the CDGs, in June 2015