



Australian Government

AusAID

AUSTRALIAN SCHOLARSHIPS
FOR AFRICA PROGRAM

ALUMNI NEWS

An initiative of the Australian Government

Volume 6

MARCH 2009



Australian Foreign
Minister Stephen Smith

Africa can achieve its Millennium Development Goals

Australia is optimistic that Africa can achieve its Millennium Development Goals by 2015 – and is on board with a commitment to broadening and deepening its engagement with the continent.

Addressing the United Nations High Level Meeting on African Development in New York on 22 September 2008, Australian Foreign Minister Stephen Smith (left) said renewed international commitment is needed if the goals are to be met – but that progress made by countries in Africa is encouraging.

In the drive to boost this progress, Australia is drawing on its expertise in agriculture, healthcare, and water and sanitation, and is increasing its support of Australian NGOs active in Africa. But Smith stressed that while aid is important, it is just one of many factors contributing to sustainable growth and development.

While enhancing its support for peace and security issues, Australia sees the encouragement of trade and investment activity as critical for development success. The country wants to work with African states to achieve a more liberalised international trading system and national capacities to benefit from it. These developments would bring much needed growth to the continent.

He also spoke of Australia's growing commercial relationship with Africa. "Our companies are playing a leading role in the development of the continent's natural resources, particularly in mining. They have earned a reputation as good corporate citizens in supporting the development of local communities and boosting the skills of local personnel."

"As a prosperous nation, Australia is determined to play its part in tackling Africa's problems and helping to unlock its enormous potential."

More support for Africa's students

Australia will increase its support of students across Africa up to tenfold within four years. Up to 1 000 scholarships and fellowships per year will be made available to students – including in agriculture, mining, maternal and child healthcare, and water and sanitation. Minister Smith made the announcement while addressing the Executive Council of the African Union in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, on 29 January 2009.

● For a transcript of the speech, go to www.foreignminister.gov.au

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A word from our partnership professional

Dear Alumni,

I am pleased to take this opportunity to introduce myself as the new AusAID manager of the Australian Government's Scholarships program in Africa.



Prior to my current appointment, I was employed with the Australian High Commission in Nairobi from 1985 until December 2006, a period of some 21 years service. For the majority of that time, I served in various positions, including as the senior AusAID representative in Nairobi. I then migrated to Australia and upon taking Australian citizenship, briefly joined the Queensland Government's Department of Multicultural Affairs where I actively assisted in progressing the State Government's policy on multiculturalism. I rejoined the Nairobi AusAID office in mid-2008.

In my current role, I will be responsible for overseeing management of the Australian Scholarships for Africa (ASA) program. A key responsibility of this position will be engaging and maintaining effective relationships with our program partners, including you, our alumni. Assisting me in this new role is Ms Ilka Collinson, Regional Scholarships and Administration Officer, based in the AusAID office in Pretoria.

I am sure you will have made many friends and professional contacts during your student days and building a strong alumni network is an excellent way to foster these important links between Australia and Africa. In pursuit of strengthening those links, AusAID recently introduced the concept of providing our Alumni short professional development opportunities. I am pleased to note that this year we were able to offer short courses focusing on professional and leadership development. These courses were delivered in South Africa, Mozambique, Malawi, Kenya and Uganda by the University of Sydney and Curtin University of Technology.

While your studies might be over for the time being, I hope your relationship with Australia will continue in a mutually beneficial way. Congratulations on all your achievements to date and stay in touch, as your feedback is also important in helping us to assist newly departing students with the preparations of their settling in and cultural adjustment in Australia. AusAID is very proud to call you one of our Alumni!

Kind regards

Asif Khan

AusAID Scholarships & Partnerships Manager

Man with a mission

When Sam Omara Bhoi was offered an Australian Development Scholarship, he didn't expect the opportunity to lead to quite so many more. He's now based in Washington, DC.

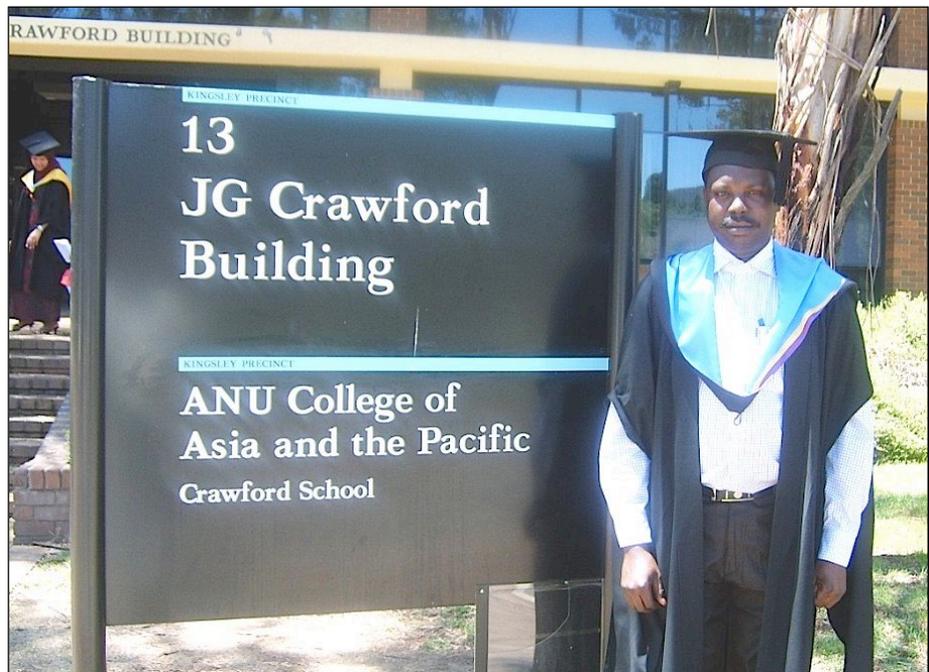
In 2006, the 37-year-old Ugandan national was accepted into the Crawford School of Economics and Government at the Australian National University for a Masters Degree in Public Policy and International Policy. He attained his Masters in December 2007.

"When I returned to my workplace in Uganda, I was offered a promotion," he says. "I began my new position in January 2008." Five months later, Bhoi was invited for a series of interesting interviews. They turned out to be successful, and he was posted to the African Union's Washington Mission. His mandate: to oversee and promote Uganda's relations with the government of the United States.

"This is a huge responsibility for me as an individual and as a civil servant," he says.

"I strongly believe that had it not been for the scholarship, I would never have achieved as much as I have. For that, I will be forever grateful."

Bhoi says he now appreciates, and echoes, what so many AusAID alumni say about earning a graduate degree from an Australian University: "You don't appreciate what it's worth until you have one."



THE WASHINGTON MISSION

The African Union launched its Washington Mission in July 2007. The role of the Mission differs to that of the AU's long-established New-York based United Nations Mission. The latter now concentrates on UN matters, while the office in Washington focuses on bilateral issues, working with organisations such as the World Bank and promoting Africa as an investment destination.

Hello!

Dear Alumni,

I'm very pleased to be able to introduce myself – my name is Matthew Pritchard, and I took over from Elsa-Marie van Schalkwyk as ADS Program Manager on 22 September 2008.

Elsa-Marie, for her part, has stepped into the new role of Senior Technical Consultant responsible for delivering specified technical inputs, including the provision of continuing operational and procedural advice to the Program. This role will extend through to 31 May 2009 on a part-time basis.

I have therefore assumed all relevant responsibilities relating to the implementation of the ADS Program, and am very excited to be steering the Program for this last phase of its current contract. It was certainly a busy time to start, but it was also great to get into the thick of things!

Just to tell you a bit about myself, I've been involved in management and technical roles on development projects since 1993, and joined GRM in 1995. I've taken on various roles since then, with the most recent being Team Leader and Senior Project Manager. As Team Leader, I managed the Philippines-Australia Governance Facility (PAGF) between 2003 and 2005. The PAGF managed a variety of short- and medium-term training and capacity-building initiatives, as well as study tours and other visits between Australia and the Philippines. With this experience, and the MSc in Development Management I achieved in 2006, I'm looking forward to the challenges of managing the ADS Program.

GRM would like to take this opportunity to thank Elsa-Marie for her hard work and dedication to the Program during her tenure as Program Manager, and welcomes her continued involvement in ADS while she develops other business opportunities through her company, Rutega Education Services.

Finally, please note that the transition between Elsa-Marie and me should not impact on your usual lines of communication with the ADS Program Coordinator and Assistants, with whom you should continue to liaise.

I was very pleased to meet some of you at the Alumni functions and workshops in November 2008, and look forward to meeting more of you in 2009.

Best regards,

Matthew Pritchard
ADS Program Manager



WELCOME

Temana Masekela is another newcomer to the ADS Africa team. She came on board on 3 September 2008 as ADS Program Assistant, responsible for processing scholarship applications from Mozambique and Swaziland. She also compiles and sub-edits the AusAID newsletter.



Memorable moments, invaluable insights

The trip of a lifetime

Spending three months in Australia studying infrastructure development and governance in the mining sector has been described as the opportunity of a lifetime by two groups of fellows.

July 2008 saw two fellowship groups, one from South Africa and the other from five African countries (Kenya, Tanzania, Mozambique, Malawi and Zambia), fly to Australia for a three month AusAID fellowship program.

Described as a short-term study, research and professional attachment program, the Australia-Africa Fellowship program aims to help build a cadre of leaders and professionals capable of advancing reform, development and governance in Africa.

It also complements the Australian Development Scholarship (ADS) by providing opportunities to senior officials and mid-career professionals who can't vacate their positions for extended periods.

Feedback from the fellows has been exceptionally positive and they have expressed immense gratitude to AusAID.

They describe the program as an excellent initiative, and cite the sharing of experiences in their specific fields as invaluable. They are confident the experience will help them to make a difference in their home countries.



DID YOU KNOW

It takes 11 hours and 45 minutes to fly from Johannesburg to Sydney, but 14 hours to fly from Sydney to Johannesburg.

The reason for the two-and-a-half-hour difference is that a westerly component to the wind helps the flight out and hinders the flight back.

Infrastructure Development studies at the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology

The five fellows from South Africa studied project management in infrastructure development at the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (RMIT).

A lot of hard work was involved, and “total dedication and determination” required, yet the group can’t stop singing praises of their experience – from the warm reception they received at the hands of the Institute’s David Jellie (their co-ordinator in Australia) and the information they received and equipment they used, to visits to organisations in Brisbane and Sydney.

They attended lectures three times a week. These were interesting and informative, as well as stimulating – the classes featured students from different fields and countries, giving them exposure to diverse perspectives.

The program included interaction with organisations involved in infrastructure development in Australia, including the Australian government’s Department of Education and Public Works. These meetings gave the fellows a feel for the practical implementation of project management theory and insight into how public sector infrastructure development projects are undertaken in Australia. The fellows say this exposure provided principles and techniques they have taken back to their work places in South Africa.



The Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology’s David Jellie (centre) and Marsha Lamb (third from the right) with the South African Fellows – from left: Buhle Magaqa, Kamal Naidu, Zandile Pule, Lorraine Rademeyer and Thomas Boy Maswanganyi.

Extractive Industry Governance at Sydney University

The fellows from Kenya, Tanzania, Mozambique, Malawi and Zambia were based at Sydney University, where they studied extractive industry governance.

Managed by the University's Office of the Deputy Vice Chancellor (International) and hosted by the Faculty of Law together with the Graduate School of Governance in the Faculty of Economics and Business – where the fellows had computer facilities and Internet access for research purposes – the program was divided into three parts: tuition, a research project and attachments to a number of Australian organisations.

The tuition part consisted of issues management and tailored courses on public policy and mining taxation. It covered key areas and gave the fellows an opportunity to improve their capacity in developing and managing policies in the demanding area of extractive industry governance.

The welcome reception was attended by the Deputy Vice Chancellor, Professor John Hearn, the Dean of the Faculty of Law, Professor Gillian Triggs, as well as a number of senior public officials undertaking a Master of Public Administration and some international AusAID post-graduate students.

At the reception, the participants expressed their appreciation for the program. They noted that a number of Australian companies are involved in mining and mineral exploration in various parts of Africa and voiced their belief that the initiative would enhance multilateral and bilateral collaboration in the mining sector – and further strengthen the already good relationships between Australia and Africa.



International Development Manager Kristy Ward (right) with (from left): Moses Masibo from Kenya, Salim Said Salim from Tanzania, Chilandila Mbewe from Zambia, Candido Rangeiro from Mozambique and Charles Khapwiyo from Malawi.

Making headlines

The relationship between an Australian legislator and a senior official in the Rwandan government who is studying at the University of Sydney on an AusAID Development Scholarship was featured in a major Australian newspaper recently.

The Weekend Australian, the only national broadsheet newspaper published in Australia on the weekend, has a circulation of 307 000 and an estimated 868 000 readers. Its editorial values focus on 'leading and shaping public opinion' on the issues that affect the country.



The pairing of prominent professionals and students from other countries certainly qualifies. In an article titled 'Mentor brings reality check', Helen Bennett described how the mentorship program run by the University of Sydney's Graduate School of Government is drawing on the skills of experienced professionals to deliver real life knowledge to back up the theory taught at the school.

Student Alex Semarinyota, who holds a senior position with Rwanda's Ministry of Local Government, Good Governance, Community Development and Social Affairs, is completing a Master of Public Administration at the University of Sydney. His mentor is John Aquilina, House Leader in the New South Wales Government. Their story, complete with a photograph, was featured on page seven of the newspaper on 24 January 2009.

Semarinyota is working to help Rwanda recover from the violent upheaval of its 2004 war. Aquilina, who described the relocation of people back into Rwanda as a 'public administration nightmare', feels his protégé has gained a better understanding of the resources he has at his disposal.

Semarinyota said he feels better equipped to tackle such questions as what is preventing the system from performing better, and how poverty can be addressed. He appreciates the fact that Aquilina thinks 'outside the box', asks intriguing questions and challenges him.

To see the article, contact the Copyright Agency Limited (info@copyright.com.au or www.copyright.com.au) and quote 'Ref 46358548'.

DID YOU KNOW

Each week, every Australian puts in around \$2,40 (about the cost of a loaf of bread) to pay for the country's aid program. The program is managed by the Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID), and will provide \$3,7 billion worth of development assistance in 2008-2009. The bulk of this is focused on its neighbours in the Asia Pacific region, but Africa and the Middle East also benefit. Australia's assistance is increasingly linked to broader development efforts in order to achieve long-term gains.

Activity highlights

Make sure you catch the next issue of ALUMNI NEWS

It was a whirlwind of activity for AusAID in Africa in the last quarter of 2008, and our next issue will feature feedback and photographs from the events listed below.

PRE-DEPARTURE BRIEFINGS

The sense of anticipation made for an electric atmosphere at these events

November 3 Students from South Africa, Swaziland, Lesotho, Botswana and Namibia were briefed at the Southern Sun Hotel in Arcadia, Pretoria

November 6 Students in Mozambique were briefed at the Polana Serena Hotel

November 24 Tanzanian students were briefed at the Mövinpick Royal Palm Hotel in Dar es Salaam

November 19 Students from Malawi and Zambia were briefed Held at the Sunbird Capital Hotel in Lilongwe, Malawi

November 25 Students in Uganda were briefed at the Kampala Serena Hotel

November 27 Kenyan participants were briefed at the Holiday Inn in Nairobi.

ALUMNI WORKSHOPS

Strategic Management in Government

Presented by Dr Geoff Gallop, former Western Australian Premier and current Director of the Graduate School of Government (Scenario Planning & Change Mangement in Government), University of Sydney

South Africa – Held at the Southern Sun Hotel in Arcadia on Monday & Tuesday, November 3 & 4, with a cocktail function at the Australian High Commission Residency on Monday evening

Mozambique – Held at the Polana Serena Hotel in Maputo on Thursday & Friday, November 6 & 7, with a cocktail function at the hotel on Thursday evening

Leadership Development

Presented by the Graduate School of Business of Curtin University of Technology, Australia

Malawi – Held at the Sunbird Capital Hotel in Lilongwe on Wednesday & Thursday, November 19 & 20, with a cocktail function at the hotel on Wednesday evening

Uganda – Held at the Kampala Serena Hotel on Tuesday & Wednesday, November 25 & 26, with a cocktail function at the hotel on Tuesday evening

Nairobi, Kenya – Held at the Holiday Inn in Nairobi on Thursday & Friday, November 27 & 28, with a cocktail function at the Australian High Commission Residency on Thursday evening.

Knowledge is great; now how about some success?

People often have the mistaken belief that hard work will take them to the next level. So says Johannesburg-based Helen Nicholson.

“I saw this very clearly when I worked at a renowned business school,” says Nicholson. “I had taken on a job that had a backlog of several months’ work and decided to prove myself by catching up as quickly as possible. I spent every waking moment behind my PC and didn’t join the academics who met for tea at 10.30am every morning.”

Because she reported directly to the director and didn’t discuss her projects with other staff at tea-time, people were soon asking, ‘What does Helen do?’

Nicholson is now an expert on the subject of networking. Realising that this ‘unwritten rule of business’ wasn’t being taught at educational institutions, she became a specialist consultant on the subject. Her talks and workshops found such a receptive audience that people began suggesting she write a book. A living powerhouse of just the right information, the project didn’t take her long. ‘Networking: The Unwritten Rule of Business You Need To Know’ is full of interesting insights and anecdotes, and can be bought online at www.helennicholson.co.za.

Nicholson mentions another mistaken belief: that extroverts are good networkers. “Some of the best networkers I know are introverts,” she says. “They have the ability to actively listen to where the possible business synergy may be.”

Taking time to ‘disconnect’ from your work could be the best thing for your career. Smokers often have well developed personal brands and good networks, says Nicholson. “Outside on the balcony, they’re finding out exactly what’s going on across the organisation”.

When spider webs unite, they can tie up a lion.
Ethiopian Proverb

ITCHING TO GET GOING?

Extend your network by joining the ADS Forum

“The Forum is the ideal place to ask questions, find answers, network, and generally stay in touch with what’s happening,” says ADS Program Manager Matt Pritchard, adding that the technical issues that were affecting the facility have been fixed.

The Forum allows ADS students, prospective students and alumni to chat with like-minded people in real time. You will be able to ask questions, share insights, even create discussion groups with those active in similar fields.

Simply go to the ADS website (www.adsafrica.com.au), click on **FORUM**, and join by registering with a username and password.

ALUMNI NEWS

Official newsletter for Alumni of the Australian Development Scholarship Program for Southern and Eastern Africa (ADS Africa)

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