MHi Application for Phase III, 1999-2002

To NUFFIC

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Section about: Sustainability after Phase III

Moi University, MUSES and the UvA are well aware of the fact that Phase III might be the last substantial phase of NUFFIC’s MHO support for the School of Environmental Studies. In Phase III a lot of emphasis will be put on making the MHO investments sustainable. It is important to avoid a ‘post-project collapse’. During the preparations for this document for Phase III serious discussions have been organised at MUSES and central levels of Moi University, as well as with collaborators at the UvA about the issue of sustainability.

It is easy to write nice words about sustainability. However, a realistic assessment - as was for instance given in the NUFFIC evaluation report about MUSES (made by Professors Stigter and Nganga) in February 1998 - should give attention to the economic reality of current-day Kenya, the crisis of Kenyan government finances, and the difficulty of managing a university in these rather difficult circumstances.

MUSES will certainly need continued international and national non-GoK funding to sustain its activities after the year 2002. During Phase II MUSES staff - often together with UvA partners - successfully acquired research projects beyond MHO support, in which research costs, but also M.Phil and DPhil/PhD finances were included. MUSES also successfully acquired support from institutions in Kenya (see 7.2, for details). During Phase III, again with support from UvA and other Dutch partners, this will further be developed.

An important challenge during Phase III is to form a successful research and consultancy unit for:
- acquisition of financial support for MPhil and DPhil students;
- training students and staff to write good research proposals and acquire external research funds;
- acquisition of research funds for staff projects, including ‘overhead’ funds and specific funds for the MUSES Documentation Centre, the Laboratories, Field Research Stations and Vehicles/Vehicle maintenance
- organisation and monitoring of staff and student research time and research finances
- distribution of financial benefits between individual researchers, MUSES and Moi University as a whole
- marketing of research results through an adequate publications and distribution strategy. This should all be in line with forthcoming resolutions by the recently established Senate Committee on Income Generation (chaired by Prof. M. Odhiambo, an associate of MUSES).

The UvA is prepared to continue its support and research collaboration beyond the year 2002.

It is sincerely hoped that some MHO funds will be available for a winding-up Phase IV, but it is acknowledged that decision making will depend on the MHO Steering Committee and NUFFIC, during the year 2001-2002. It is important for MUSES to become as sustainable as possible by the year 2002.
Therefore it is useful to look at the reality of sustainability beyond 2002 for the various elements of MUSES.

**BUILDINGS**
Although in earlier phases it was a dream to have a fully equipped own MUSES building (and with UvA support in 1992 full plans were worked out), it is now regarded as a reality that the School will use its current buildings for some time to come, as funds are being sought for separate MUSES buildings. In the current building class rooms are available, staff facilities are still adequate, laboratories are equipped with basic necessities, and the Documentation Centre is connected to email and internet (at the end of Phase II) while a network will be in place to connect staff and student rooms as well. Two research stations have been equipped with core buildings: the Homa Hills Lake Victoria Research Station using MHO money (Phase II); the Coast Environmental Research Station using Moi University funds (in 1996-98). Maintenance of buildings and basic facilities will be a responsibility of Moi University and already mainly is. Moi University has also accepted the responsibility for maintenance of the two Research Stations.

**VEHICLES**
For a field-oriented research and training programme adequate transport facilities are a must. Vehicles of MUSES were all paid by projects (UNDP, DGIS/SV, MHO, IDRC) and some of the maintenance costs as well. Moi University also assists MUSES from the central transport pool that was recently much expanded, financed with World Bank funds. Moi University accepts the gradual take-over of all vehicle maintenance costs during Phase III, much assisted, it is hoped, by the MHO support for a Central Garage. However, new vehicles will, from time to time, be necessary, given the conditions of the Kenyan roads and the dangerous traffic situations. In Phase III a new minibus and a smaller vehicle will be added, replacing older vehicles. After that, vehicle additions will have to come from external research grants that allow new vehicles to be added to the transport pool at either MUSES or Moi University as a whole (central transport pool). For the time being it is not realistic to expect GoK funds for additions to the vehicle pool. MUSES will actively look for research grants that include additional vehicles.

**LABORATORIES**
After 2002 the School will have to maintain its five central and two field laboratories, which will, by then, be adequately equipped. An annual vote for laboratory materials from Moi University is already available. In addition, students and staff using facilities will be expected as much as possible to pay for making use of the laboratories using research project funds. External users will pay a consultancy fee that includes an overhead payment. New research projects with international sponsors will be expected to add to the existing pool of computers and software. Maintenance of laboratories will be a responsibility of Moi University technical staff, including those attached to MUSES. At the end of Phase III MUSES technical staff will be adequately trained to maintain the laboratory equipment.

**DOCUMENTATION CENTRE**
The Doc. Centre is the pearl in the crown of MUSES. During Phase III it will experiment with its automated functions and staff will be trained (partly using MHO funds, partly with support from a.o.UvA, party using M.U. funds) to make full use of the facilities, so that by the end of Phase III it will indeed be a clearing house for environmental literature for the East African
Region. Non-MUSES users will be expected to pay for the facilities and the services while the Head of the M.U. Library is currently designing a strategy to get access to part of the student fees for Library/Doc. Centre usage. Moi University has accepted to take over all financial responsibilities for book acquisitions (in 1996 this already started successfully; in 1999 all responsibilities will be taken over by Moi University). The financial responsibility for paying Journals will gradually be taken over by Moi University during Phase III and this will be fully operational in 2002.

ACADEMIC STAFF
At the start of the MHO programme a very ambitious goal was formulated for the School to have 81 academic positions by the year 2005. This is now regarded as too ambitious. Recently the academic staff positions were declared to be 53 full time equivalents. At the moment there are 17 academic staff positions and there are nine Junior Research Fellows in training (PhD), of whom eight in the MHO programme. In addition 13 local DPhil students are currently being trained and three associated PhD students. Recently 13 new vacancies were declared for which recruitment will start soon. It is the intention that the School will have at least 39 academic staff positions in the year 2002 (including nine MHO PhD graduates; they are bonded to Moi University for three years upon reporting after PhD graduation; there will be legal steps taken against them in case of abduction). Those DPhil and Associated PhD students who excel will be serious candidates for new vacancies.

NON-ACADEMIC STAFF, Main Campus
In addition to twenty non-academic staff positions twelve additional vacancies were recently declared, for chief technician, senior technician, technicians, laboratory assistants, computer operator, administrative assistant, clerk and office assistant. Recruitment will start soon. This is now regarded as quite adequate for the situation at the Main Campus, with, at the end of Phase III enough trained staff available for the academic divisions, the central laboratories and the documentation centre.

RESEARCH STATIONS: STAFF AND RUNNING COSTS
Moi University has agreed to provide each of the two existing Research Stations with at least one administrator, one secretary, one driver and adequate security staff. In addition the Library will provide part time services to the small documentation centres at CERS and Homa Hills Research Station. Moi University accepts to pay for running costs of the two research stations. Despite more ambitious plans in the past, for the time being the focus will be on these two research stations, with addition of new Research Stations postponed to after 2002. During Phase III it will be discussed how other Faculties/Schools of Moi University and visiting members of staff and students from elsewhere could make proper use of the two Research Stations, if possible paying fees for services rendered. The research stations will also be focal points for the acquisition of new external research grants dealing with research at the Kenya Coast and the Lake Victoria area respectively.

PART-TIME STAFF
MUSES will continue to be dependent on part time staff from other Faculties/Schools within Moi University and from elsewhere in Kenya. Some M.U. funds are and will be available to enable part-time lecturers and external examiners from elsewhere to come to Eldoret and teach at MUSES. As in the past, part-time lecturers will be attracted by co-operating in MUSES research projects, and in joint research supervision and by making free use of MUSES facilities (e.g. the Doc. Centre). With the recent opening of Eldoret International
Airport it is expected that the rather isolated location of Eldoret - at least five hours travel by road from Nairobi - will become less of a (psychological) problem.

**MPHIL AND DPHIL STUDENTS**

From 1996 onwards many MPhil and DPhil students studying at MUSES sponsor themselves for their cost of living expenses and their books. Moi University gives them a partial scholarship (a waiver for supervision fee, administration fee and examination fee) and some students acquire Moi University research funds, while others also pay those themselves. This new system of financing attracted a surprisingly high number of students, although their financial sacrifices are considerable. With the economic situation as bad as it is, MUSES will continue to seriously look for (international and national) scholarships and financial support for research costs. More than in the past students (and staff) will be trained to acquire funds. Especially for the continuation of field trips, fieldwork/research costs and fieldwork supervision (at the current high rates for night-out allowances for all university staff, that was borrowed from the MHO rates) external sponsors will be needed. The Graduate School of Moi University, under the directive of the M.U. Senate, is seriously looking for ways and means to get fieldwork supervision funds for postgraduate students, including those at MUSES.

**EIA COURSE**

One of the most successful elements of the curriculum, the course on Environmental Impact Assessment (three weeks at the end of the first year of the MPhil programme), is also one of the most expensive ones. Its importance can hardly be overestimated. MUSES will try to increase the number of students/participants from elsewhere, who - by paying a consultancy fee - will also finance costs of the MUSES staff and students.

**DIPLOMA AND CERTIFICATE COURSES**

MUSES will try to start marketing its diploma and certificate courses against consultancy fees, after they have been accepted by the Senate of Moi University (the curriculum was developed during Phase II, financed by MHO).