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African Nutrition Graduate Student Network



The African Nutrition Graduate Student Network (AGSNet) is a worldwide network of nutrition graduate students from Africa established in 2002 with a membership that now exceeds 300 <http://www.unu.edu/capacitybuilding/foodnutrition/agsnet/>. The network began with a handful of motivated Cornell University nutrition graduate students aiming to increase their worldwide contacts and share interests in combating nutrition problems in Africa. Through e-mail, a website hosted by the United Nations University, promotion of collaborative

activities among the network's members, and biennial meetings, the students have effectively created a knowledge sharing resource throughout the continent of Africa. This network holds the promise of nucleating inter-country collaboration among governments, research institutions and non-governmental organizations as these students leave the university and establish their academic and professional careers. Most members choose to remain in the network after leaving the university, which has resulted in the formation of critical linkages among tomorrow's leaders throughout the continent of Africa. Establishment of collegial linkages among African scholars is critical to reduce the persistent "brain drain", or outflow of highly educated Africans from their own country.

AGSNet members join the network for a minimal fee to share ideas on how best to promote nutritional standards throughout Africa and to establish links and collaborative discussions among African graduate students currently studying in African, Asian, European, and North American universities. Currently the network continues to be a platform for information sharing and discussions among members but most recently the steering committee has been focusing on streamlining membership and recruiting new members. Student members include graduate students and alumni in the field of nutrition from over 30 countries spanning three continents. Overall coordination is based at Cornell University.

Regional groups have been set in place with local representatives elected by members of the AGSNet to expand the network and collaborate on country-specific issues. This facilitates "in the field" and on the ground communication and support for members in Africa.

AGSNet is the most cost-effective, efficient method of supporting young nutritionists working in Africa, and creating a sustainable regional capacity in Africa to address its own public health nutrition needs.