



Nordiska Afrikainstitutet
The Nordic Africa Institute

The Nordic Africa Research Network (NARN)

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Academic Background

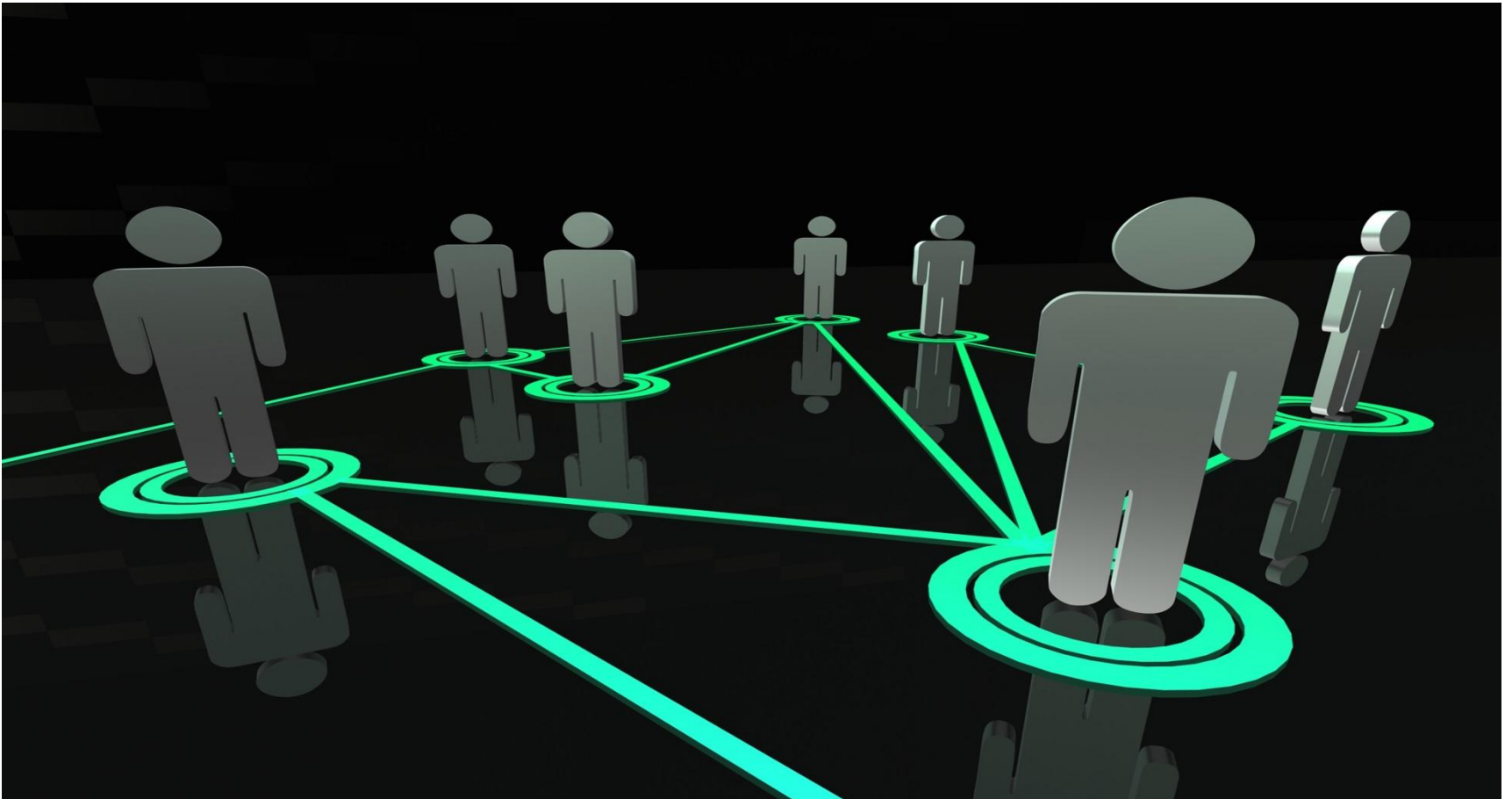
I am a Senior Lecturer at Södertörn University in Stockholm, Institute of History and Contemporary Studies.

Co-ordinator of the Nordic Africa Research Network since February, 2015.

Research Interests

- Information and its role in enhancing good governance and transparency in government institutions.
- Challenges of long-term preservation of electronic information.
- E-Government development and Information culture.
- Truth Commissions and their documentation processes.

Why Network?



Why Network? Cont'd...

Networking is a social communication process that promotes knowledge sharing among communities.

Why Network cont'd

The growth of networks is attributed to:

- The interconnectedness of the world.
- Information technologies that have brought societies possibilities to communicate, co-operate and share information and knowledge regardless of time and space.
- The complexity of the issues that we research.

Why Network? Cont'd

Networks are important to all aspects of life.

- They connect the local with the global, the private with the public.
- They strengthen relationships in society and promote social capital. Hence quite significant to researchers and the society as a whole.

Formation of Associations



Earlier Attempts

There have been earlier attempts to create a Nordic African studies research network;

- The Nordic Association of African Studies (NAAS) was founded in Uppsala, Sweden in 1991. The association targeted researchers working on African issues and this even led to the establishment of the Nordic Journal of African Studies .

Earlier Attempts cont'd

NAAS did not take off but it continued to host the Nordic Journal of African studies which became an online journal in 2008. Prof. Axel Fleisch of Helsinki University is currently in charge of the journal.

The journal originally focused on linguistics but has opened up for other disciplines.

Earlier Investments in Databases

Investments have earlier been made in the creation of databases to facilitate access to interdisciplinary expertise.

- In Sweden the Swedish International Development Co-operation Agency (Sida) and the Foreign Ministry invested in a database called “Researchers for Development Analysis” (REDA) that was launched in 2011. The objective was to increase the impact of research on Swedish development co-operation.

Earlier Investments in Databases cont'd...

- The Nordic Africa Institute in Uppsala, Sweden also created and operated an Africanists' database.
- Africa Network Norway had a database with about 300 members.

Different National Networks

- The defunct Africa Network Norway
- FAU - The Association of Development Researchers in Denmark
- Danish Development Research Network (DDRN)
- Finnish Society for Development Research
- The Norwegian Association for Development Research (NFU).

Formation of NARN

In June 2011 inspired by the defunct Africa Network Norway, that was established in 2005, the former Director of the Nordic Africa Institute, Carin Norberg called for a meeting to revitalize the inactive NAAS. This meeting took place in Uppsala in conjunction with the European Conference on African Studies (ECAS).

Formation of NARN cont'd

- Discussions were held with a group of Nordic Researchers.
- Following these discussions and based on a review of the situation in each individual country an agreement was reached to create a new network.

Formation of NARN

Since the 17th of March, 2015 NARN is registered with the Swedish Tax Authorities as an independent association.

NARN was launched on the 13th of May, 2005 at the Nordic Africa Institute, Uppsala.

AIM of NARN

Is to build a community of Nordic researchers and scholars with a keen interest in studying and producing knowledge about Africa. NARN will work to facilitate and enhance communication and cooperation between individual researchers and institutions in the Nordic countries.

AIM of NARN Cont'd...

It will bring together Nordic people who engage with Africans and will therefore be a relevant platform for communicating information on all aspects of life in Africa.

Why NARN?

Nordic countries have much in common when it comes to their economic, social and political relations to Africa today. This privileged position can be fruitfully made use of through collaboration.

Why NARN?

Nordic cooperation can furthermore support network building and contacts between researchers in the Nordic countries and researchers in Africa.

Why NARN?

It can also play an important role within the European Union and thereby complement and strengthen cooperation with organisations such as Africa Europe Group of Interdisciplinary Studies (AEGIS).

NARN – a Legal Entity

NARN is a member-based association that will closely work with the Nordic Africa Institute to foster Nordic researchers' co-operation.

NARN is currently funded and domiciled at NAI which is providing a take-off grant for the a initial period of twelve months for the network.

The Objective

The objective of the cooperation is to promote the study of Africa, its languages, cultures, and societies. The cooperation shall also further the dissemination of research about Africa. NARN will in all these aspects co-operate with the Nordic Africa Institute in Uppsala.

How will NARN achieve its objectives?

Building of strong connections and conversations between Nordic and African colleagues. In this regard, NARN will establish a website that will present information about the network's activities and relevant links with information on African institutions and developments.

How will NARN achieve its objectives?

Build a database on Nordic Africanists.

Organizing a set of activities including; exhibitions, conferences, meetings, lectures, seminars and training courses by individual researchers or co-operating researchers.

How will NARN achieve its objectives?

The publication of the *Nordic Journal of African Studies* (This Journal is already in existence: <http://www.njas.helsinki.fi/>).

The journal has mainly focused on linguistics but it has broadened its scope and now publishes inter-disciplinary research of researchers at Nordic Institutions. The journal hence gives exposure to the Nordic research and disseminates it beyond the Nordic boundaries.

How will NARN achieve its objectives?

NARN will collaborate with the Nordic Africa Institute (NAI) in arranging the Nordic Africa Days. This is a bi-annual event that brings together researchers from all walks of the globe. It is a forum that promotes the dissemination of research, networking and knowledge sharing.

How will NARN achieve its objectives?

NARN will deal with any other project as decided by the General Meeting.

The NARN Board

Its board constitutes eight members who represent; Iceland, Norway, Sweden, Finland and Denmark.

Do we need NARN?

I believe so because earlier attempts demonstrate the need for long-term investments in a network like NARN.

Why become a NARN Member?

- A multidisciplinary platform where you can further develop your research ideas, share knowledge, get new insights, engage others, enhance innovative research and achieve visibility through the word of mouth publicity. This will be achieved through workshops, conferences, training sessions and lectures.

Why become a NARN Member? cont'd

- Access to a research database listing Nordic Africanists.
- Links with relevant information on African research and developments.
- Up-to-date information for work-related topics and access to people you might not be able to reach on your own.

Why become a NARN Member? Cont'd

- For younger scholars, NARN will give you an opportunity to meet mentors through Scholar-Mentor-Scholar seminars.
- Creating ambassadors who will tell about you and connect you with the right prospects.
- The multidisciplinary nature of the NARN offers researchers a possibility to reach out to scholars in different disciplines.

Who can become a Member?

A person who is conducting research or in other ways is promoting the study of Africa.

This person must be a resident of a Nordic country.

To become a member one has to pay an annual membership fee.

Research institutions/departments can in a similar way become associated members.

The Fees

Students – 100SEK or the equivalent in DKK/NOK/ISK/EURO

Researchers – 200SEK or the Equivalent in DKK/NOK/ISK/EURO

Institutions/Universities – 5000SEK or the equivalent in
DKK/NOK/ISK/EURO

Dissemination Channels

- The Broschure
- The Website: www.narn.se

Thank you for Listening!