
26 March 2015

Dear Friends,

Good governance. While it often gets ignored, organizations need it. Few organizations thrive without an effective board.

But the question is how to you build an effective board?

The truth is it is hard to describe. And there is no magic formula for how to get it right.

The US Council of Non-Profits suggests that good governance is like a recipe. It requires the right mix of ingredients [board members]; a chef to facilitate the work [Director]; careful mixing and stirring of thoughts, ideas [discussion and decision-making]; clear and transparent practices, and good instructions to guide how the board does it's work [policies].

But the exact proportions and ingredients must be specific to your organization's level of development, context and vision.

What are some of the key things needed to make Board effective?

The Board of directors:

- is actively engaged in its oversight role and knowledgeable about key issues that might affect the organization's success.
- focuses on policy development, strategic direction, and evaluation of the organization. It respects the staff's responsibility to implement policy directives.
- is apparent in suitable programs, well-managed operations, ample funding, and organizational sustainability and longevity.
- has established clear leadership roles to capably drive its activities and fosters the development of new leaders to fill future roles as needed.
- understands its fiduciary and legal responsibilities and actively manages the organization's risk exposure.
- understands the restrictions, if any, on the organization's grants and contracts

Sincerely,

The Firelight Team

*(Resource) Making Boards More Effective from Tearfund Roots Resources
(Scholarship Opportunity) 2015 Aga Khan Foundation Commonwealth Distance Learning Scholarships for East Africans
(Call for Nominations) 2015 Yara Prize for Agricultural Innovation in Africa - \$60,000 USD*

(Resource) Making Boards More Effective from Tearfund Roots Resources

The attached publication from Tearfund provides more insight on building board effectiveness. It covers some (but not all) critical topics, including, Meetings, Sharing Information, Decision, Making, Action Planning, and Board Development.

View the publication at: <http://bit.ly/1Ey3iM9>

(Scholarship Opportunity) 2015 Aga Khan Foundation Commonwealth Distance Learning Scholarships for East Africans

The Aga Khan Foundation, in collaboration with the UCL Institute of Education (IOE), is pleased to invite applications for the Commonwealth Distance Learning Scholarships, awarded by the Commonwealth Scholarship Commission in the United Kingdom.

The Scholarships are open to prospective students from Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda and Rwanda wishing to undertake the UCL Institute of Education's MA in Education and International Development, MA in Educational Planning, Economics and International Development, MA in Education, Health Promotion and International Development or MA in Education, Gender and International Development beginning in October 2015.

The Scholarship is for 2 years of part-time distance study. Students will spend the first year and one term studying on-line followed by a three-month period of study at the IOE in London (January to March 2017) and a period to complete their dissertations in their home countries. The scholarship will cover the cost of tuition fees for the course, travel and living expenses for the period of study in London.

Applicants must demonstrate how successful completion of the MA program will enhance their ability to contribute to social and educational development – across formal and informal educational settings, universities, government ministries, NGOs, donor agencies and with international bodies.

Applicants who are able to demonstrate existing experience of bringing about change internationally and nationally are encouraged to apply.

Applicants must be aware that access to the internet is fundamental to successful completion of the course.

The Aga Khan Foundation is a non-denominational, international development agency established in 1967. Its mission is to develop and promote creative solutions to problems that impede social development, primarily in Asia and Africa.

The IOE is an international centre of excellence in education and related social sciences. It is first in the world university rankings for education* and first in the UK for education research strength**, and offers an unrivalled range of teacher training, masters programmes and doctorates to challenge, inspire and support students' progress throughout their career in education.

Eligibility criteria

- A degree course from a recognised university in education, economics, development or related studies – minimum 2nd Upper Class
- Prospective students must be citizens and residents of Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda and Rwanda
- Relevant experience in a developing country context
- Experience in contributing to change at the national and/or international levels
- Must be proficient in English language (shortlisted applicants may be required to take an English language proficiency exam)

Contact information

For more information please contact:

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Email: scholarships@akfea.org

Deadline: The closing date for applications is **Wednesday 1 April 2015**

For more information and a link to apply, visit: <http://bit.ly/1DGyqhm>

(Call for Nominations) 2015 Yara Prize for Agricultural Innovation in Africa - \$60,000 USD

The mission of the Yara Prize is to contribute to the transformation of African agriculture and food and nutrition security, within a sustainable context, thereby helping to reduce hunger and poverty. The Yara Prize was established in 2005 as a direct response to the former UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan's call for a green revolution in Africa in 2004. It aims at celebrating significant achievements related to food and nutrition security and sustainable agriculture with a transformative power.

In 2015, the Yara Prize will have a special focus on youth, women and agribusiness in

Africa. The prize will also consider strongly those individuals who have contributed towards catalysing transformational change in support of an African Green Revolution.

Prize Objectives

- The Yara Prize shall recognize outstanding contributions to sustainable food production with socio-economic impact in the smallholder sector
- The Yara Prize shall recognize food and nutrition security and sustainable agricultural initiatives with a transformative power and serve as inspiration for action to scale up the African green revolution
- The Yara Prize shall increase awareness of social and environmental conditions in Africa and the prevailing dynamics affecting agriculture and food and nutrition security
- The Yara Prize shall provide inspirational example(s) of African leadership

Nomination Criteria

The Yara Prize can be awarded to any qualified candidate(s) recognized for their contributions to reducing hunger and poverty in Africa. The Yara Prize shall have a focus on food; the improvement of sustainable food production and availability and the development of local markets in Africa, as a contribution to reduce hunger and poverty.

In 2015, the Yara Prize will have a special focus on; youth, women and agribusiness in Africa. The prize will also consider strongly those individuals who have contributed towards catalyzing transformational change in support of an African Green Revolution.

The Prize recognizes such efforts and results in any field of work clearly related to combating hunger and reducing poverty in Africa, within every aspect of agriculture and food production supporting the development of both the input and the output market, particularly:

Food and nutrition security and sustainable agriculture

- Food production and availability
- Creation of agricultural value chains and local markets
- Sustainable intensification in the smallholder sector
- Human nutrition
- National policies and politics to enhance awareness of the importance of agricultural inputs and promote sustainable food production methods
- Soil and water management

Transformative change

- Well-proven leadership
- African owned and led

- Sustainability of the initiative
- Initiatives moving to scale or with potential to move to scale

Deadline: In order to be considered by the Prize Committee, all nominations and supporting documentation must be received by **19 June 2015**

For more information and nomination instructions, visit: <http://bit.ly/1C6BXmU>

As part of the Firelight Foundation's Capacity Building Program, Firelight provides "Newsflashes" to share relevant resources and information with our active grantee-partners via weekly emails and via post on a monthly basis. We hope that by facilitating access to information for grassroots, community-focused organizations, programming for children and families, as well as organizational development, is enhanced. Past editions of the Firelight Newsflash can be found on our website:

<http://www.firelightfoundation.org/resources/newsflash>

We welcome your comments, feedback and ideas for upcoming Newsflashes at newsletter@firelightfoundation.org

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