



NeRA

**Advocating for Continuing Professional Engagement of Retired Academics
Active in the Silver Economy
Promoting Intergenerational Unity**

Minutes

**THE FIRST MEETING: INTRODUCTION TO NeRA & EXPRESSION OF INTEREST
HELD: 6 JAN 2024 | 1430HOURS
PLOT 427, LENGANENG TLOKWENG: ONSITE AND ONLINE**

Chairing: Prof. G. Tsayang

Recording: Prof. M. Mutepfa

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. A hybrid meeting was held to introduce the concept of Networking, that is, Network of Retired Academics (NeRA) of Botswana and soliciting support and interest from retirees to join the proposed (NeRA). Prior to the meeting, a concept paper was sent together with the Agenda to potential members.
- 1.2. The meeting was designed to be interactive, informative and to map out opportunities and ways for NeRA to start operating and grow, as well as to map ways to sustain it.
- 1.3. The meeting attracted participants not only from Botswana but also international audience from South Africa, Slovenia, and Croatia, who attended virtually.

2. PROCEEDINGS

- 2.1. The Purpose and Background of the meeting was shared by the convener who referred people to the Concept Paper. Among other things, Prof Lekoko emphasized the value

of benchmarking. The formulation of this network was inspired by best practices from Slovenia and Croatia. Prof Tsayang also spoke passionately on how academics are ignored after they retire and forced to engage in activities that do not align with their professional training and experiences. Thus, the meeting was used as a brainstorming session to engage retired academics on ways to keep them actively engaged in areas of their professional training and interests.

- 2.2. The keynote speaker Jože Gričar of Professors Emeriti Network Slovenia, Network of eCollaborating Retired eAcademics as well as Global Network of Associations & Networks: Retirees Developing Silver Economy and eSeniors 55+ Network indicated that it may not be easy to start seeing the value of NeRA but with e-collaboration with other networks, success is imminent. In demonstrating that seniors' needs in many countries are at the periphery, he mentioned that there were only 7 countries with Ministry of Seniors, and these were English speaking countries. He talked about the concept of the Silver economy (active involvement of seniors in their development and the economy) and indicated that best practices for how it is done well come from countries like Canada. He urged members to be senior centric and learn by doing. Participants were also urged to prepare for retirement rather than wait until retired to think about their engagements.
- 2.3. International participants like Kapler Urša of University of Ljubljana and Prof Sebi Lekalakala of South Africa indicated interest in collaborating with NeRA. Aleksadar of Faculty of Economics of J.J. Strossmayer University, Croatia shared a call with NeRA for members to contribute to a book entitled "THE ECONOMICS AND BUSINESS OF AGING".
- 2.4. Local participants also shared their ideas of how the NeRA can be beneficial not only to members but to the country as a whole. Contribution to quality education; ensuring that important skills of retired academics are not rendered obsolete and commitment to the goals and values of NeRA were said by respective participants. Some priorities were highlighted including (i) building a robust agenda on the contributions of the retired academics on the silver economy (ii) advocating for continuing professional engagements of retired academics (iii) promoting Age with Rights matters (iv) strengthening intergenerational unity and engagement in applied and impactful research. Some resolutions and action items were suggested as shown in Table 1.

3. SUGGESTIONS, RESOLUTIONS AND ACTION ITEMS

Table 1

Activity	Role	Deadlines	Suggested Names
To constitute a team of Advisors	- To advise on what can be done to grow NeRA as an inclusive network of committed retired people. - To lead structures, strategies and policies that can Regulate NeRA and sustain it	- Needing Immediate Action. - To report at the next meeting which may take place end of January or first week of February (TBA)	- Suggested names: Dr Selolwane, Prof Tsayang, Dr. Totolo, Dr Tidimane. These are NeRA members. - Those who had not indicated their interest during this meeting but have now, and would like to join this team, please indicate to the Chairperson (Prof Tsayang)
Stakeholder consultation to solicit support	- It was indicated that it may be necessary to approach people in - strategic position through whose support NeRA may be grounded to make an impact. - Names brainstormed included the following:	- Realizing that seeing some of these VIPs may be difficult, end of March was suggested as reasonable & accomplishing this; before March will be highly appreciated	HE - Prof Lekoko Public ETPs Chancellors Dr. Selolwane (UB) Dr O. Selolwane & Prof G. Ntseane (BOU) Prof Lekoko & Dr. Totolo (BUIST) Report to Chairperson Prof Tsayang at gabatsayang649@gmail.com +26771309568
ITEMS NEEDING IMMEDIATE ATTENTION			
Funding e.g. grant application to Spencer Foundations grants	- A link to Spencer call was shared. Participants were also informed of an interest to respond to a call with a proposed research on “Role of Retired Academics in Advancing Quality Education For Economic Transformation”	- Deadline was 24th January, a team comprised of Profs Lekoko, Tsayang and Dr. Tidimane. Other interested NeRA members were also asked to express interest and join the team..	

Government Tenders e.g. ETSSP	- Participants were encouraged to access Botswana e-tender documents. - The current noticeable one for NeRA was on review ETSSP	- ETSSP tender call deadline was 26th January. - A team showed interest and was to be led by Prof G. Ntseane	
Support for Network of Professor Emiriti of Slovenia's Statement of retention of Professors' email after retiring	- Prof Lekoko indicated that a statement has been shared by Network of Professor Emiriti of Slovenia needing to be supported. - After discussing it, those present agreed to support it and Prof Lekoko was requested to share it.	- Prof Lekoko was to share immediately	

4. FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Participants expressed the need for

- Developing a constitution for NeRA. This was appreciated and will be discussed at the next meet.
- Developing Strategic Plan. This was appreciated and will be discussed at the next meet.
- Use of technology and social media to communicate and share best practices. It was suggested that e-meetings should be considered for greater inclusion.

Chairperson: _____



Recording: _____



(Signature and Date)