

Tues 09 Knowledge Share and Instrumentation Donations for Developing World Outreach

Interest group organizers:

Giles Edwards, Technical Director/ Founder Trustee, Recycling Organisation for Research Opportunities (RORO), United Kingdom

Abraham Badu-Tawiah, PhD Assistant Professor, Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry, The Ohio State University.

Hendrik Kersten, University of Wuppertal, Department of Physical & Theoretical Chemistry, Wuppertal, Germany.

Workshop chair: Hendrik Kersten

Workshop support facilitator: Raymundo Daniel Páramo Galicia

The “Developing World: Supporting Research and Education” interest group convened on Tuesday June 4th 2024 at 5:45 pm. The workshop attracted an attendance of approximately 20 participants. A presentation was given to outline the genesis and the general idea of this group, the experience of group members with instrument donation and the planned knowledge share from interested ASMS members via online webinars. Furthermore, a comment from a last year’s workshop attendee was presented¹ and open for a serious, fundamental discussion on the driving motivation for this interest group. Is it in fact motivated by an “...*outdated ideal of generosity*”? A fruitful, lively and inspiring discussion evolved among the attendees. Experiences and concerns with regard to all facets of donating machines and sustainable operation were exchanged. Corruption, political situations, availability of spare parts, availability of clean gases and calibrants, fundamental training and teaching DIY-repair skills were just a few of the topics covered. With regard to the latter, advantages of “older” machines were emphasized, provided hard- and software are still running. Attendees agreed that particular care must be taken to avoid “...*sending outdated, old technology, essentially used and dumped equipment to other countries in a very dysfunctional and haphazard manner.*”

Furthermore, attendees were asked to sign up for this interest group in their ASMS online profile. In near future this should allow interest group organizers to automatically reach out to all signed up ASMS members.

The workshop officially ended at 7:00 pm, however, the lively discussion among the attendees continued until 7:20 pm.

¹ Attendee comment from the 2023 workshop: “*This session on diversity and science in developing nations is necessary and valuable (in fact, I would wish to see even more offerings on this topic at future conferences). I was rather dismayed by the approach the presenter was/is taking and that ASMS sanctioned special interest group selected this presentation to highlight this work which in my opinion perpetuates outdated ideal of generosity. As a citizen of and someone who grew up and spent my early career in a "developing nation" I do not agree with the notion of sending outdated, old technology, essentially used and dumped equipment to other countries in a very dysfunctional and haphazard manner. There's interest in expanding engagement and support in under-resourced labs and spaces in the developing world, and our focus should not be on sending outdated equipment, but rather sharing our expertise and equipment of equal capabilities and currently technology - not what was used 10+ years ago. I challenge ASMS to do better and not to promote this kind of "charity" through a sanctioned special interest group.*”