Developments, Dynamics and Internationalization in African Higher Education

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Outline of Presentation

- Development of HE in Africa
- Beginning of Revitalization & Areas for Revitalization of HE
- Sample Reform Activities in Selected Areas
- Effect of Internationalization on African HE & the Case for Regionalization
- Conclusions & Recommendations
Development of HE in Africa

- Modern public HE in Africa has its roots in university colleges created during European colonial period.
- After independence in 1960s, colleges became universities modelled on European ones – same academic structure, governance, curricula, methods of instruction, etc.
- 1960-1980: African universities thrived with generous support from their government & Europe.
- Several became centres of excellence, e.g. Makerere (Uganda), Ibadan (Nigeria), Khartoum (Sudan), Cheikh Anta Diop (Senegal).
Development of HE in Africa (2/2)

- 1970s & 1980s:
  - economic crisis
  - political upheavals, wars
  - military regimes, dictatorship, persecution
  - gross misuse of resources
- These inevitably had an impact on funding of HE
- 1990s: World Bank’s decision to support basic education in preference to higher education
- In spite of being cash-strapped, African universities continued to survive & to increase HE provision, vital for development; but Quality suffered
- 1998: the saving grace – UNESCO World Conference on Higher Education. HE recognised as vital for development
HE in Africa at End of 20th Century

- Very low national enrolment, yet institutional massification
- Reduced public funding, insufficient infrastructural development
- Lack of qualified academic staff – brain drain
- Disastrous effect of HIV/AIDS
- Poor governance, political interference
- Poor internal efficiency, hardly any PG teaching & research
- Mismatch between graduate output & employment
- Increasing presence of private HEIs and CBHE, often of dubious quality
- Wide consensus on importance of improving quality of HEIs in Africa for them to play greater development role
Beginning of Revitalization (1/2)

- Development assistance to post-secondary education in Africa increased significantly after UNESCO WCHE 1998:
  - 1990-1999 - $ 110m/year
  - 2000-2005 - $ 515m/year
- Revitalization really started as from 2005
- COMEDAF II, Algeria, April 2005. HE recognised as a priority area
- AU/NEPAD 1\textsuperscript{st} Meeting of HE Experts, South Africa, October 2005. Recommended a systems approach to reviving HE
- AU 2\textsuperscript{nd} Meeting of HE Experts, Ghana, February 2006. Agreed to set up a permanent expert group on HE, to be assisted by sub-groups in identified areas
Beginning of Revitalization (2/2)

- African Union’s Action Plan for the 2nd Decade of Education (2006-2015) identifies HE as one of 7 focus areas
- AUC’s harmonization strategy (2007): greater intra-regional mobility, benchmarking & QA in HE
- 2007 Africa-EU Strategic Partnership: triangular cooperation (A-A-E) for development; teacher education at all levels; Africa-EU cooperation in S&T research for development
- Regional Economic Communities (RECs) (SADC, EAC, ECOWAS, etc.) in Africa take the cue from AU and include HE in their respective plan of action
- UNESCO WCHE 2009 gave special attention to Africa. Noted progress made since WCHE 1998 but recognised that many challenges still existed in revitalisation of HE in Africa.
Identified Areas for Revitalizing HE in Africa

- Increase access & enrolment (ensure equity)
- More differentiation in HE institutions
- Review financing of HE
- Improve leadership/governance/management
- Infrastructural capacity building
- Harmonisation of HE systems
- Promote QA (at national & institutional levels)
- Curriculum reform for more relevance & employment
- Staff development (and recruitment of new staff)
- Undertake more postgraduate training & research
- Greater sub-regional/regional/international cooperation
- Greater & more effective use of ICT
Sample Reform Activities in Selected Areas

1. Harmonization of HE
   i. LMD reform
   ii. Tuning Africa Project
   iii. African HE & Research Space (AHERS)

2. Quality Assurance
   i. DAAD’s QA Activities in Africa
   ii. African Quality Rating Mechanism
   iii. Europe-Africa Quality Connect

3. R&D Networks & Centres of Excellence
   i. DAAD’s Centres of Excellence in Africa
   ii. NEPAD Water Centres of Excellence
   iii. AUC’s Pan African University
i) LMD reform

- Major reform in mostly Francophone HEIs in West Africa in transforming the academic structure and aligning it to the Bachelor-Master-Doctorate (LMD in French) qualifications to facilitate comparability and mobility
- The reform is almost a copy of what happened under the European Bologna Process
- Reform coordinated by UNESCO (Dakar regional office) and supported by UEMOA (West African Economic & Monetary Union)
ii) Tuning Africa Project

- Part of Africa-EU Strategic Partnership
- Uses an internationally established methodology used in over 60 countries of the world
- It is a collaborative, consultative process involving academics, employers & other stakeholders to improve curriculum & enhance student competences.
- The pilot project in Africa covered 5 subject areas (one in each 5 African regions) & involved staff from 55 African universities
- Pilot project started in 2011 & is about to be successfully completed
iii) African HE & Research Space (AHERS)

- Communique of 2009 UNESCO WCHE mentions creation of an African HE & Research Area as a strategic orientation for Africa
- Follow-up undertaken by ADEA, with AUC & AAU, to prepare an implementation framework for AHERS
- Several activities over period 2011-2012 resulted in a draft summary report for implementing AHERS
- Report has yet to be published & processed through various bodies in Africa (COMEDAF, AAU, RECs, etc)
- Proposed AHERS follows closely the development of EHEA in Europe but modified to African context
i) DAAD’s QA Activities in Africa

- In 2006 DAAD, with the German Rectors Conference (HRK), started cooperation with IUCEA to promote QA in East Africa
- Activities include: training of QA coordinators & external peers, evaluation of study programmes, creation of QA units in universities, preparation of a handbook on QA, etc.
- First phase ended 2011, next phase 2011-2015 started
- DAAD has initiated a similar programme in West & Central African countries
ii) African Quality Rating Mechanism (AQRM)

- AQRM forms part of AUC’s HE Harmonization Strategy. Also emphasized in Joint Africa-EU Strategy.
- Original aim was to assist AUC in selecting institutions for Nyerere scholarships & PAU networks.
- Pilot phase launched by AUC in 2010.
- Use of a self-rating Questionnaire in English by institutions being rated – no external reviewing.
- 32 institutions responded by returning Questionnaires, not all fully completed.
- Revised Questionnaire (in English & French) & methodology (to include external reviewers) launched in Oct. 2013 for next phase of AQRM.
- AQRM could complement other QA initiatives in HE.
iii) Europe-Africa Quality Connect

- Collaborative project between EUA & AAU, started in 2011 & supported by Erasmus Mundus of European Commission
- Involved replicating EUA’s well-established Institutional Evaluation Programme (IEP) to 5 pilot African universities
- Evaluation teams had joint members from Africa & Europe & visited each institution twice
- Project ended in Sept. 2012 & considered very successful by EUA, AAU & participating evaluators and universities
- AAU currently seeking funds to extend the evaluation to more African universities
- Again, IEP-type evaluation programme can be a useful complement to other QA initiatives in HE in Africa
i) DAAD’s Centres of Excellence in Africa

- Since 2009 DAAD has launched 5 Centres of Excellence across Africa (Health - Ghana; Microfinance - Congo; Law – Tanzania; Criminal Justice – South Africa; Logistics – Namibia)
- Each Centre is hosted by an African university, linked with a HEI in Germany and acting as a hub in Africa
- Objective is to train future leaders of Africa in Africa & reduce brain drain
- All Centres run Masters & PhD programmes & offer scholarships funded by DAAD & supported by the host universities
ii) NEPAD Water Centres of Excellence

- Since 2009 NEPAD has created 2 regional Networks of Centres of Excellence in Water Sciences: one in Southern Africa & one in West Africa
- Southern African Network is coordinated by Stellenbosch Uni and comprises 8 universities; West African Network is coordinated by Uni Cheikh Anta Diop and has 5 universities
- Special goals are for improving conservation, utilization & quality of Africa’s water resources & strengthen national & regional capacity for water resources management
- Initiative is in line with Africa’s S&T Consolidated Plan of Action & is supported by European Commission
iii) AUC’s Pan African University (PAU)

- PAU is a major initiative for continental networking for promoting PG training & research in identified priority areas for Africa
- PAU comprises 5 Institutes, in 5 thematic areas, in 5 African regions, each Institute serving as a hub networking with 10 African institutions in the same area
- Areas & countries are: a) Basic S, T & I (Kenya); b) Governance, Humanities & Social Sc (Cameroon); c) Earth & Life Sc (Nigeria); d) Water & Energy Sc (Algeria); e) Space Sc (Mauritius)
- First 3 Institutes will be supported by AfDB, the 4th one by Germany
Because of the way African universities were set up and of continued close ties with European universities, African HEIs have always been highly international.

However, in the 21st century, internationalization of HE is being driven by globalization and is led mainly by universities in the North, having as objectives, to:

- attract maximum number of foreign students to generate income, going beyond national boundaries if necessary
- consider HE as a commodity, governed by market forces
- recruit best faculty from anywhere, attract research funds, excel in research, be globally ranked & become world class

The driving forces behind internationalization are now competitiveness & commercialization, not collaboration.

How have African HEIs fared under this new approach? Should they follow the same trend?
Effect of Internationalization on African HE (2/4)

i) Student Mobility

- 5% of total students enrolled in Africa study outside their country, the highest mobility rate in the world. African students represent 10% of total students in mobility in the world.
- In 2010, 316,525 students left Africa to study abroad:
  - France: 35% (mostly from North Africa)
  - UK: 12%
  - USA: 12%
- Insignificant number of students from outside Africa study in Africa
- Africa is a clear loser in student mobility & this has implications on brain drain & foreign exchange drain
ii) Brain Drain

- Reliable, updated figures not available but significant number of highly qualified academics, especially those gone for postgrad studies, have emigrated to work in universities abroad
- In 2009 IAU Global Survey, African HEIs identified brain drain as the first of 3 most significant risks of internationalization for the region

iii) Cross Border Higher Education (CBHE)

- Because of unmet demand for HE in Africa, there has been an invasion of CBHE institutions, mainly from the North
- Large number of them are of poor quality, driven by commercial and profit motives
iv) Global University Rankings

- Ranking criteria heavily biased towards research, which is a weakness in African HEIs
- No account taken of teaching or community engagement – vital for Africa’s development
- Globally ranked unis represent no more than 2% of world’s HEIs. Except for a couple of unis in South Africa & Egypt, Africa’s unis do not appear in any global rankings
- Is global ranking relevant for African unis? For majority of them – No!
- Attempts at being globally ranked could lead to inappropriate use of limited resources and hardly any impact on development
The Case for Regionalization of HE in Africa

- Clearly, the current internationalization approach used by mainly HEIs in the North is not appropriate for African HEIs at the present stage of their development.
- In the IAU Global Survey, the African HEIs identified Africa as the top priority region for internationalization activities, indicating their preference for regionalization.
- No other region of the world identified Africa as one of its 3 geographic priorities for international collaboration.
- Regionalization – a sub-set of internationalization – must therefore be the preferred approach for African HEIs.
- Most donor and development agencies support regionalization of HE in Africa, as it has greater impact on development.
Conclusions/Recommendations (1/2)

- Revitalization of HE in Africa is well under way since 2005; a lot has been achieved but much more remains to be done.
- There is need for mapping revitalization activities (funding sources, challenges, progress, etc.) for sharing across Africa.
- Sustainability of all revitalization activities must be a priority. African HEIs cannot for ever depend on external support.
- African Diaspora can play an effective role in the revitalization process – they have so far not been involved.
- African HEIs should give priority to regional cooperation and avoid the global ranking race.
• Data recording at institutional & national levels is generally poor – yet these data are vital for policy making. Need to emphasise this in all revitalization activities.

• There is need to establish HE policy units in different parts of Africa to undertake research on African HE as most of the research is currently done outside Africa. Europe should encourage such initiatives.

• Because of the historical background, Europe has been a preferred partner for supporting African HE. Europe must continue its support for the mutual benefit of both continents.
THANK YOU