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HRK German Rectors' Conference
The Voice of the Universities

Report on DIES-Seminar

“Stakeholder Involvement in Higher Education in Germany and Jordan”

University of Jordan, Center for Strategic Studies

Amman, 17/18 November 2014

Introduction

In cooperation with the **Center for Strategic Studies (CSS)** at the University of Jordan, the **German Rectors' Conference (HRK)** held a seminar in Amman on Stakeholder Involvement in Higher Education. The seminar was organized in the context of the DIES-Programme (**D**ialogue on **I**nnovative **H**igher **E**ducation **S**trategies) and aimed to strengthen the cooperation between German and Jordanian universities in the field of higher education management. It is a platform for university presidents and higher education experts to give the opportunity to exchange experiences.

This event should be seen as the continuation of intensive dialogue between German and Jordanian university leadership which started two years ago with a first seminar on management of international cooperation and was continued with an information visit of university presidents and experts in Germany last year.

Summary of the presentations

Keynote speech: “Stakeholder Involvement in Higher Education”

- **Professor Dr Michael Pötzl**, President, Coburg University of Applied Sciences and Arts, Germany

Prof Pötzl opened his presentation with the statement that the global challenges can be solved only in cooperation with science. Universities are defined by their legal mandate and social role which changed towards a stronger involvement of students and professors, industry and external institutions and citizens in general. It was shown how a regional, small, application oriented university in teaching and research like the Coburg University is encouraging involvement of stakeholders. A number of examples of good practice were presented to underline the successful concept of an autonomous acting higher education institution.

Introduction: “Recent Developments in the Jordanian Labour Market”

- **Musa Shteivi, PhD**, Director, Centre for Strategic Studies, University of Jordan, Jordan

The presentation describes the distribution of Jordanians employed in the labour market according to their economic activity (1993-2013), the unemployment rate and its distribution in relation with their educational background. In addition, Dr Shteivi discussed the salaries of earners both in the public and private sectors by nationality, and showed the estimates of economic activity, employment and unemployment of Jordanians and Syrian refugees in four governorates in 2013.



Stakeholder Involvement: Research, Innovation and Technology Transfer

Key aspects

- **Preparing graduates for the job market**
- **Examples of good practice for cooperation**

➤ **“Proactive knowledge and technology transfer in universities”**

Professor Dr Utz Dornberger, Director, Small Enterprise Promotion and Training (SEPT), Leipzig University, Germany

This presentation explains mainly, the proactive knowledge transfer with the core function of the university for channelling inquiries from the private sector to the individual researchers. Moreover, Professor Dornberger indicated the need of entrepreneurial spirit by explaining the concrete steps and the challenges during the process of establishing a small enterprise.

➤ **“The German – Jordanian University A Successful cooperation in Higher Education”**

Mrs Britta Kähler, Director, Office for Industrial Links, German Jordanian University (GJU), Jordan

As an introduction, a short description of GJU main features and faculties was given. Main task of the Office for Industrial Links (OIL) at the GJU is to provide students going to Germany with a one semester internship at German companies. In addition, career services and cooperation projects with industry were presented.

➤ **“Stakeholder Involvement in Higher Education: Research, Innovation & Technology Transfer”**

Professor Hanan Malkawi, PhD, Yarmouk University, Jordan (currently sabbatical leave at Hamdan Bin Mohammad Smart University Dubai)

This presentation mainly gives an outline for definitions of research, innovation and technology transfer.

It describes technology development challenges, preparing graduates for jobs. Moreover, Dr Hana gives an overlook of the Yarmouk University faculties, research centres and the student numbers of the university. She explains research & technology transfer activities at Yarmouk University.

➤ **“Building Entrepreneurship and Management Skills among University Graduates in Egypt: learning from Germany? A Mutual learning approach!”**

Professor Dr Michael Stephan, Head of Department, Technology and Innovation Management, University of Marburg, Germany

This presentation sheds the light on the social background, problem setting and motivation of the project, describes the instructional background of project, as well as the concrete goals of the project. In addition, he discussed the main features for developing entrepreneurial skills among graduates, and interim experiences: lessons learned after one year.



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Stakeholder Involvement: Governance, Learning and Teaching

Key questions

- How is the university leadership dealing with different interests of internal and external stakeholders?
- Where do you see specific challenges and opportunities for private and public universities?

➤ **“The University of Jordan A Premier Institution of Higher Education”**
Professor Ekhleif Tarawneh, PhD, President, University of Jordan, Jordan

In his presentation, Prof Tarawneh explained the vision of the University, added more about the UJ branch in Amman as well gives a brief about the UJ in Aqaba. Then he added the number of degrees UJ offers (Bachelor, Master, PhD) and the student structure with specification on gender, nationality, and level. He gave also some basic remarks on stakeholder involvement focussing on learning and teaching and challenges UJ faces.

➤ **„Stakeholder Involvement: Teaching and Learning Experiences of Technische Universität Chemnitz”**
Professor Dr Heinrich Lang, Vice Rector, Technische Universität Chemnitz, Germany

Professor Lang presented some basic information on his university underlining the key characteristic of study programmes: interdisciplinary, internationality, practical approach and research based learning. The intensive cooperation with external stakeholders in industry is reflected also in curricula, internships, practical projects, bachelor and master thesis with practical topics and career services, just to mention some aspects. A range of examples of good practice was presented.

➤ **Professor Dr Anton Mangstl**, Vice President, German Jordanian University, Jordan

Professor Mangstl pointed out the good experiences, the German Jordanian University had with projects cooperating with industry. The challenges have to be seen in the lack of experience and tradition of cooperation with industry here in Jordan and difficulty to identify partners. Jordan could learn from German examples of good practice but not in copying but in adopting and transferring them to the Jordanian conditions and general environment.

➤ **“Stakeholder Involvement regarding governance”**
Professor Walid Salameh, PhD, Vice President of Academic Affairs, Princess Sumaya University of Technology, Jordan

This presentation gives a short review on the governance and stakeholder's relation to higher education, it presents the main models of HEI's governance, the corporatized model (Private universities) of HEI's governance has engendered a real crisis in higher education through different perspectives. He concluded with different NATIONAL STRATEGIC POLICIES FOR HIGHER EDUCATION.



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Information Corner

Association of Arab Universities

- **Sultan Abu-Orabi, PhD**, Secretary General, Association of Arab Universities, Amman, Jordan

In his presentation, Dr Sultan outlined the development of higher education institutions in the Arab world since the early centuries of Islam and the heritage in science and knowledge European universities are benefiting until today. Dialogue and mutual respect are also now the crucial elements for successful cooperation between Arab and German, respectively European universities. Examples of exchange on institutional level are the Arab –European Conferences on Higher Education in Barcelona and Amman and the German-Arab networking meetings which will be continued during 2015, hopefully.

German Programmes

DIES-Programmes and DAAD-Programmes:

- **“The DAAD & The DIES Joint Higher Education Management Programme”**
Mr Andreas Wutz, Director, DAAD Information Center, Amman, Jordan

The DIES-Programme for funding Higher Education Management mainly offers four programme lines: Dialogue (DIES-seminars and information visits); Partnerships (strategic development planning); Projects; Training courses (proposal writing course in **Jordan 2015!!** and management courses for internationalisation).

Other DAAD-scholarship programmes were presented, the **German-Arab Transformation Partnership** including also Jordanian universities, in particular.

Conclusions

- A reform of universities in Jordan towards more autonomy and self governance is needed to master crucial challenges of higher education in the 21st century. This includes questions of student admission.
- Transparency and good governance help to encourage academic and administrative staff to create new projects and ideas in cooperation.
- The cooperation between universities and the private sector in Jordan is very limited. It should be intensified in a constructive way which is built on trust, in particular in fields relevant to employability.
- Information, communication and exchange of experience on examples of good practice will help to bridge the gap between universities and the private sector and to lay a solid foundation of mutual trust and understanding.
- Regional networks with universities, industry and other partners create a strong basis for a country's own “higher education eco system”.



- Cooperation and exchange with German higher education partners is growing, yet not fully fledged.
- Mutual exchange of experience between German and Jordanian universities and academic staff on a regular basis create synergies and is fundamental in sustaining cooperation between the universities of both countries.
- German and Jordanian universities have much to give and gain from intensifying their cooperation. We should continue on our way.

Recommendations and practical steps

- Information on the seminar, the examples of good practice and the activities in the context of the DIES-programme should be shared with all participants and other interested experts and relevant partners. HRK and CSS will put a documentation of the seminar online and inform on the results of the seminar. HRK and CSS will also write a report on the seminar.
- Internal governance structures have to be used to support – among others - new interdisciplinary programmes and research projects.
- Cooperation with private companies should be established in a constructive way based on trust, in particular in fields which are relevant to employability. Bachelor or master thesis projects could be developed in consultation with the private sector. Cooperation could be extended to curricula development.
- Existing funds have to be used in a more efficient way. Apart from funds by the DAAD (individual scholarship programmes, business based partnership programme) and DIES (Dies-Partnership, Proposal Writing etc.), the European Union Erasmus+ programme offers financial support to Public Private Partnership. HRK, in Bonn, DAAD Office in Amman and the regional Erasmus+ Office should be contacted for detailed information. In addition there is funding by regional chambers of commerce and industry.
- Capacity building should not only be supported by individual funding but by structured programmes on bachelor, master and doctoral levels. A joint graduate school in natural sciences or dual degree programmes could be important steps forward. Legal, academic, financial and organisational aspects have to be clarified.
- Establishing comparable quality control and accreditation schemes and comparable credit systems would support the institutional capacity building. Workshops and/or agreements could foster human resource development.
- Additional information on German-Jordanian cooperation in higher education projects should be spread. HRK will collect some examples of good practice and inform about them.
- The cooperation between German and Jordanian universities which is supported by HRK, AArU and DAAD should be continued and deepened. Future events could be focussed on the exchange of experience in cooperation with the private sector in various fields.



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German Rectors' Conference (HRK)

The German Rectors' Conference is the voluntary association of state and state-recognised universities in Germany. It currently has 268 member institutions at which more than 96 per cent of all students in Germany are enrolled. The HRK is the political and public voice of the universities and the forum for the higher education institutions' joint opinion-forming process.

Center for Strategic Studies (CSS)

The **Center for Strategic Studies (CSS)** was established in 1984 as an academic unit of the **University of Jordan** concerned mainly with research in the fields of regional conflicts, international relations and security. With the initiation of the country's democratization process in 1989, the center expanded its scope of activities to include planning and research in such new fields as democracy, political pluralism, the economy and the environment. Over the past few years, the CSS has organized numerous conferences, seminars and workshops, and has conducted several opinion polls aimed at providing researchers and decision-makers with valuable material and data.

DIES stands for "**Dialogue on Innovative Higher Education Strategies**". DIES supports higher education institutions in developing countries to develop strategies, which improve the university management as well as the quality and relevance of study programmes. The DIES Programme is jointly conducted by the German Rectors' Conference (HRK) and the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) and was established 2001. It is funded by the German Federal Ministry of Development and Cooperation.