



# 10 Years of Dialogue on Innovative Higher Education Strategies (DIES)

**Strengthening Universities, Enhancing Capacities  
- Higher Education Management for Development**

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Ahrstraße 39, 53175 Bonn, Germany  
[www.hrk.de](http://www.hrk.de)

**Editorial Staff:**

Trio Medien: Katja Spross, Marta Schuman  
DAAD: Marc Wilde, Felix Wagenfeld  
HRK: Marijke Wahlers, Thomas Böhm

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# DIES – 10 Years Dialogue on Innovative Higher Education Strategies

## Contents

### **Two Organisations – One Goal** 6

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#### **Good Practice**

- Learning from One Another 10
  - Leveraging the “Sandwich Position” 11
  - Building Regional Approaches 12
- 

### **Higher Education Management – Where Do We Go from Here?** 14

---

#### **Future Challenges**

- Research Management in Higher Education 18
  - Good Governance in Higher Education 19
  - E-Learning and Mobile Learning 20
  - Working with Alumni in Higher Education Management 21
- 

### **The “Entrepreneurial University” – How to Educate Entrepreneurial Minds and Manage Links between Higher Education and the Private Sector** 22

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### **The Global Reach of DIES** 26

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“Despite national and institutional differences, we have observed that universities are challenged by similar global trends. We also see how inter-regional cooperation helps to learn from one another. It is to the credit of DIES that innovative strategies in higher education management cross national borders and stimulate reforms in various directions – at universities abroad and at their German counterparts as well.”

**Dr Dorothea Rüland**  
**Secretary General**  
**German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD)**



“The professional management of universities continues to gain in importance worldwide as roles and responsibilities of university leaders and other key players in higher education change. Higher education management strategies, however, must reflect the specific mission and organisational culture of each university.”

**Dr Thomas Kathöfer**  
**Secretary General**  
**German Rectors' Conference (HRK)**



“DIES caters to universities, which come in all shapes and sizes – autonomous, regulated or state controlled; financed through public taxes, tuitions, or other sources. Each university must define its mission itself. This is not just about choosing a philosophical approach, however – it’s about having university managers in place who are firmly anchored within their institution and the community of researchers, instructors and learners to make it happen. This is why programmes such as DIES are important.”

**Dr Roger Fischer**  
**Deputy Head of Division on Education**  
**Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation**  
**and Development (BMZ)**

# Interview

## Two Organisations – One Goal



■ **Marijke Wahlers**  
Head, International Department,  
German Rectors' Conference  
(HRK)

■ **Marc Wilde**  
Head of Section, Joint Higher  
Education Management  
Programmes (DIES),  
German Academic Exchange  
Service (DAAD)



### Why was the Dialogue on Innovative Higher Education Strategies (DIES) created in 2001?

**Wahlers:** In 2001, universities not only in Germany and Europe, but also in other world regions, were slowly moving away from traditional state-controlled systems of quality control to systems based on concepts of university autonomy, accountability and peer-based quality assurance. DIES was established in reaction to this development.

We felt that projects and partnerships with universities in the South should not only deal with teaching, learning and research, but also with university management as this is an equally important part of a university's day-to-day business. DIES stands for Dialogue on Innovative Higher Education Strategies – and we take the term “dialogue” seriously. German universities are themselves part of a continuous learning process. Thus, DIES provides a platform for joint capacity building and international debate among partners from the North and the South.

*We felt that projects and partnerships with universities in the South should not only deal with teaching, learning and research, but also with university management as this is an equally important part of a university's day-to-day business.*

### The HRK and DAAD developed DIES together and have jointly supported the programme for ten years now. In what ways do the two organisations complement each other?

**Wilde:** Next to the specific expertise in the field of university management of our German member universities, the DAAD brings its strengths into play by involving its worldwide network of branch offices and information centres. Our colleagues and partners at the various foreign universities are important contact points for DIES in many ways. They support us in selecting qualified participants, ensuring the commitment of the university leadership and in effectively carrying out DIES activities abroad. Another key resource is our large network of DAAD alumni. On one hand they are direct beneficiaries of DIES training courses. On the other hand, they are counterparts for establishing partnerships or

## 10 Years of DIES

Agreement on DIES cooperation between DAAD and HRK

DIES Conference “South-North-Dialogue on Innovative Strategies in International Post-Graduate Education” (Berlin, 25 February - 1 March)

2001

2002

joint projects. After returning home, many of our former scholarship holders have taken over leadership positions at their universities or are working at the Ministry of Education, making them important partners for our activities.

**Wahlers:** The HRK and DAAD complement each other perfectly in the DIES context. As the representative body of German universities, the HRK has long-standing expertise in policy issues on the management and development of higher education institutions. Moreover, the HRK is the sounding body for German university leaders. In this function, we keep abreast of current trends and are able to anticipate which topics are of importance to university leaders in Germany and worldwide. The direct access to university leaders also enables us to actively involve German university managers in our DIES activities.

### **DIES is active in many different parts of the world – in Africa, Southeast Asia, Latin America and the Middle East. How does DIES account for culture differences?**

**Wilde:** Different backgrounds require different approaches to university management. As our preparatory workshops have shown, the question of how change is most adequately managed within a university depends largely on the particular higher education context as well as underlying cultural and social values. This is why some of our training courses,

such as the International Deans' Course, target only one region. At the same time, inter-regional formats such as UNILEAD, which brings together university managers from all four target regions of DIES, are also working very well. For the participants it is always eye-opening to realise that management problems in different regions of the world are similar, and that Latin Americans, for example, can learn a lot from solutions developed by Africans and vice versa.

*For the participants it is always eye-opening to realise that management problems in different regions of the world are similar, and that Latin Americans, for example, can learn a lot from solutions developed by Africans and vice versa.*

### **Partnerships between higher education institutions in Germany and in developing countries are a relatively new way to enhance university management processes. How do these partnerships work?**

**Wahlers:** The challenges universities are facing worldwide are often very similar, even though framework conditions may greatly vary. The idea behind DIES university partnerships is that two – or more – universities work together and mutually stimulate and support each other in solving

First call for DIES Partnerships

First DIES training course UNISTAFF

2003

# Interview

## Two Organisations – One Goal

the day-to-day challenges of university management and development. Universities identify a topic of common interest and then establish an action plan on how to tackle the management challenge in question. Impressive examples of what DIES partnerships can achieve were presented at our 10th anniversary conference in November 2011.

### **What motivates German higher education institutions to participate in DIES?**

**Wahlers:** Many individuals at German universities are motivated to contribute to projects and partnerships with universities in the South. The reasons for their enthusiasm vary – from an interest in international activities or specific research interests to a general wish to contribute to the development of the Global South.

At the same time, due to increasing pressures on financial and staff resources and the competition for excellence in teaching, learning and research, German universities have become less ready to commit to projects. Policymakers in the field of development cooperation must acknowledge the need for a clearly defined added value also on the part of the German university and are called upon to provide adequate framework conditions that allow for win-win-situations for all partners involved.

### **Many higher education institutions in developing countries are interested in advancing their research outputs, which means seeking third-party funding. What kind of support does DIES offer?**

*The figures are amazing: we saw courses where 70% of the proposals submitted to national or international donor organisations were successful.*

**Wilde:** DIES Proposal Writing Courses have been conducted with great success over the last couple of years. The increasing number of applicants demonstrates the high demand in this area. The aim of these courses is to equip participants with the skills they need to successfully apply for third-party funding. Our methodology, which combines theoretical input with work on real cases, has proved effective. After receiving feedback and guidance by the trainers as well as from their course peers, each participant walks out of the programme with a finished and honed proposal. The figures are amazing: we saw courses where 70% of the proposals submitted to national or international donor organisations were successful. This segment of DIES will be expanded in the coming years, which also means going beyond strengthening the capacities of individual research-

Launch of the DIES Quality Assurance Project with the Central American Association of University Rectors (CSUCA)

DIES Conference "Achieving the Millennium Development Goals: A Challenge for Global Higher Education" (Berlin, 3-4 November)

DIES Conference "Cross-border Education and Development Cooperation" (Bonn, 30 June - 1 July)

2004

2005

ers and focusing on institutional strategies for managing research within the university. We would like to enable our beneficiaries to implement strategies that create an environment for innovation transfer and to establish links to industry for the benefit of both the university and the labour market.

**DIES offers a wide range of development opportunities. Which have proved the most effective?**

**Wilde:** The effects are difficult to compare. Two-day dialogue events have a different scope than long-term partnerships that run over a period of many years.

The various DIES formats are designed together with our university partners with the goal of achieving sustainable results. This means establishing demand-based training courses that are highly practice-oriented. It also means providing follow-up activities that ideally lead to the creation of national and regional alumni networks.

**Looking towards the future: What are the next steps forward for DIES?**

*During the anniversary conference we identified several topics that we want to explore further in the coming years, such as university-business partnerships, good governance, and internationalisation.*

**Wahlers:** We are committed to continuing the good work and ensuring the sustainability of what has been achieved in the past ten years in the different DIES partner regions. Nevertheless, higher education management is continuously changing, and DIES has to adapt to these changes. During the anniversary conference we identified several topics that we want to explore further in the coming years, such as university-business partnerships, good governance, and internationalisation.

**Wilde:** We also need innovative formats for delivering training, such as e-learning courses, which would allow us to reach a wider target group. We also need to continue our cooperation with the existing DIES alumni networks already established in different regions of the world. It is important to stay in contact with our alumni – they are highly motivated and qualified managers committed to DIES, making them ideal change agents in their home countries. Utilizing them as trainers on site spreads their knowledge and increases the impact of DIES. Another priority of DIES in the future will be to tap into new regions, to identify suitable training formats for the top management level and to intensify the search for additional co-funding for well-established training courses.

Launch of the DIES Quality Assurance Project with the Inter-University Council for East Africa (IUCEA)

First Proposal Writing Course in Mexico and Central America

DIES Seminar "Higher Education Reform and its Impact on Higher Education Development Cooperation" (Bonn, 25-26 April)

2006

# DIES Good Practice

## Learning from One Another

### DIES Partnerships on Higher Education Management

The aim of DIES partnerships between German higher education institutions and higher education institutions in developing countries is to enhance international competitiveness by strengthening institutional management. One example is the cooperation between Leibniz Universität Hannover (LUH) and VIT University in Vellore, one of the leading private technical institutions in India. The project was expanded in its second phase to include two additional Indian universities – University of Madras and Symbiosis International University.

“With support from Hannover we’ve expanded our international office and developed a university-wide internationalisation strategy,” explains Ramachandra Srinivasan, Assistant Director International Relations, VIT University. The intense exchange with its partners from India also inspired LUH to reconsider and improve its own structures. “We redistributed

responsibilities within our international office and created new positions with regional responsibility and focus, for India and the US, for example,” says Dr Birgit Barden from the LUH International Office. “Learning from one another” is not an empty slogan for the cooperation partners. As Srinivasan points out, the partnership was instrumental in fostering deeper intercultural understanding.

“The project provided a true intercultural learning experience in that we, the Indian participants, got to understand and appreciate the German perspective while the Germans also learned about the Indian cultural aspects.”

The DIES partnership has also helped intensify relations between LUH and all three of the higher education institutions in India, with student and faculty exchanges expanding to include an ever increasing number of faculties. The Indian universities also strengthened communications among themselves and are now supporting one another. “Apart from bringing Indian and German institutions closer, the project was useful in making the Indian partners understand the uniqueness of the other Indian partner’s internationalisation strategies, processes and tasks,” says Srinivasan. Overall, the project’s success has hinged on the willingness and desire on the part of all partner institutions to make real changes and improvements. Support from the universities’ leaders also played a vital role. “As diverse as the institutional and policy issues in the different countries might be, the problems are often similar,” says Birgit Barden. “Exchanging ideas and experience makes it easier to solve them.”

*“The success of the project lies in finding home-grown solutions to issues and not merely imitating the partner institution’s successful experiences.”*

Ramachandra Srinivasan, Assistant Director International Relations, VIT University

→ [www.daad.de/dies-partnerships](http://www.daad.de/dies-partnerships)

First DIES International Deans’ Course – Africa

DIES Conference “Enhancing Quality Across Borders – Regional Cooperation in Quality Assurance in Higher Education” (Bonn, 18-20 June )

2007

2008



## Leveraging the “Sandwich Position”

### International Deans’ Course

The DIES International Deans’ Course (IDC) offers training in higher education management in an international context. Designed for newly appointed deans, vice-deans and heads of departments from Southeast Asia and Africa, the programme supports these decision-makers who carry enormous responsibilities in the administration and management of faculties. The course is offered to a group of 30 participants from each region in yearly rotation. Along with the DAAD and HRK, IDC partners include the University of Applied Sciences Osnabrück, the Centre for Higher Education (CHE), and the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation (AvH).

“University deans find themselves in a tough ‘sandwich position’ between the faculty and the university administration. We offer them management training for the sciences,” says Professor Frank Ziegele, Managing Director of the CHE, who is one of the German experts in the programme. Financing, staffing, quality assurance, research management and social skills are all part of the didactic plan for the university managers. IDC participants also identify an issue they wish to work on at their home institutions and develop a “personal action plan”, allowing them to apply newly acquired knowledge and skills in their own environment.

First DIES International Deans’ Course – Southeast Asia

Regional Conference of the DIES Alumni Network in Eastern Africa REAL (Nairobi, 15-18 June)

First UNILEAD training course

DIES Seminar “Improving the Management of Quality Assurance in the Arab Region” (Cairo, 17-19 October)

2009

# DIES Good Practice

The programme has already generated some 150 IDC alumni; one of them is Professor Bassey Antia. The linguist from Nigeria took part in the first IDC in 2007 and has been part of the bi-regional programme's trainer team since 2010. "The huge benefit of the programme is its long-term effects. The management skills can be applied to so many areas," says Antia. As a newly appointed dean, he reformed his faculty's exam structure. "It took seven weeks before the results were available – that was simply too long," he explains. Exams are now taken electronically in multiple choice format. While professors might have to invest a little more time in preparation, the exam results are available immediately following examinations.

*"In my region generations of academics have held fast to the belief that the state, and the state alone, is responsible for the success – or failure – of university systems. IDC teaches us that we determine the system and that small changes can yield big results."*

Professor Bassey Antia, University of the Western Cape, South Africa and IDC Trainer

"As a trainer, I need to continually hone my skills and know-how," says the linguist, who is currently teaching and conducting research as a visiting professor in South Africa.

"Finance management or research management are not my usual fare," he says. But he is delving into these issues nonetheless and notices how helpful it is, even in his own work. He enthusiastically imparts his insights to the new IDC participants and teaches them the value of small reforms.

Nigeria's burgeoning number of students has led to a growing number of newly established universities. Well-trained deans are the backbone of all areas of academe – from teaching, research and internationalisation strategies to quality assurance and human resources development. "IDC makes people curious about the dean's job. It's unique and plays a vital role in the success of our higher education institutions," says Bassey Antia, summing it up.

Due to the high demand from other regions, the International Deans' Course will also be offered for university managers from Latin America. To this end, the Saarland University (Germany) and the University of Alicante (Spain) have teamed up to carry out the first training course in 2012.

→ [www.international-deans-course.org](http://www.international-deans-course.org)

Regional Capacity Building Project of the DIES Alumni Network in Latin America (GUCAL)

Launch of the DIES Quality Assurance Project in Southeast Asian (ASEAN-QA)

First DIES training course UNITRACE

2010

2011

## Building Regional Approaches

### Quality Assurance Training and Networking

DIES supports three regionally-focused projects on quality assurance (QA) in Central America, East Africa and Southeast Asia.

The first project was launched in Central America in 2004 to support the Central American University Council (CSUCA) in consolidating a regional accreditation and quality system for higher education in Central America. A second project quickly followed in 2006 to build capacities for the creation of a quality assurance framework in East Africa, and the third QA project – ASEAN-QA – was launched just last year to promote regional quality structures in Southeast Asia. Each of the three capacity-building projects from DIES has made use of a wide range of measures to achieve its goal of building sustainable transnational quality assurance systems – from dialogue seminars and intensive training courses to follow-up conferences and site visits.

*“DIES gave us just-in-time support, providing the right training to the right people at the right time.”*

Francisco Alarcón, Deputy Secretary General of the CSUCA

For Francisco Alarcón, Deputy Secretary General of the CSUCA, the DIES project assisted in two crucial areas when setting up the Central American Accreditation System. “One of the first things we needed to do was build up consensus on key elements of the regional system. DIES provided us with just the right dialogue formats, such as regional forums and pro-tempore committees, to achieve this.” As Alarcón

points out, however, for dialogue to bear fruit the main players must be versed in the issues at stake. “Again, DIES gave us just-in-time support, providing the right training to the right people at the right time. With the help of our partners in Germany, we organised workshops and training courses to reach key stakeholders and universities in seven Central American countries.” Although just 5% of all study programmes in Central America have been evaluated so far using the regional quality assurance system, nearly 30% of the region’s higher education institutions are already taking part in the quality evaluation and accreditation processes. For Alarcón, this is encouraging. As he points out, the assessments have already yielded enough data to identify the region’s most acute quality issues, opening up important improvement opportunities in areas such as curriculum design and development and research competencies.

Thanks to the growing number of universities participating in the regional quality assurance processes, there are now new challenges facing the Central American Quality Assurance System. “It’s now about keeping the system together by strengthening the leadership of the region’s central accreditation council and building trust between regional and national agencies,” says Alarcón.

→ [www.daad.de/dies-projects](http://www.daad.de/dies-projects)

DIES Tenth Anniversary Conference  
“Strengthening Universities – Enhancing Capacities.  
Higher Education Management for Development”  
(Bonn, 28-29 November)

First DIES International  
Deans Course – Latin  
America

# Higher Education Management –

## Where Do We Go from Here?

### PANEL DISCUSSION

■ **Professor Philip G. Altbach, PhD**

Director of Academic Affairs, Center for International Higher Education, Boston College, USA

■ **Professor Dr Le Quang Minh**

Vice President, Vietnam National University Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam

■ **Professor Dr Mayunga Nkunya**

Executive Secretary, The Inter-University Council for East Africa (IUCEA), Uganda

■ **Professor Patricia Pol**

Former Vice President, International Development, Université Paris-Est, France

■ **Professor Francisco Telémaco Talavera Siles**

Rector, Universidad Nacional Agraria, Nicaragua

■ **Chair: Jan-Martin Wiarda**

Education Editor, Die Zeit

### ON CHALLENGES

**Wiarda:** I'd like to begin by hearing about the specific challenges at each one of our experts' universities.

**Altbach:** While the senior administration might disagree, I believe one of our biggest challenges at Boston College in the United States is internationalisation. We simply haven't found the best strategies for constructively engaging with the rest of the world.

**Minh:** The largest problem for any university in Vietnam is autonomy. I moved from a regional university where I was required to report to the Ministry of Education, to a university with the highest level of autonomy. Although I no longer report to anyone, autonomy remains elusive. Like in every country, we must abide by the law. In Vietnam we exist under an unwieldy mass of conflicting laws. One law gives you a right, and the next law takes it away. At the end of the day, we are not only confused but bound.

**Nkunya:** The biggest challenge for East Africa is the high demand for higher education. The gross enrolment ratio in East Africa, for example, has risen from 0.5% to 7% in just five years – this translates into an increase from 100,000 to 340,000 students. In Kenya, for example, the number of universities has risen from just 22 to over 60. The educational systems were expanded to meet the demand, but with expansion come other challenges. Financial resources are needed, as are human resources and infrastructures. The public sector is unable to address this challenge, so the onus has fallen upon the private sector. Once the demand has been met, the next challenge arises, namely quality assurance.

**Talavera:** Nicaragua is currently in the throes of university reform, and the biggest question is how to translate reform from the seminar setting into



**Professor  
Philip G. Altbach,  
PhD**

everyday practice within the universities. What concerns me far more than the lack of economic resources is the lack of a real desire for change.

**Pol:** My university, located in the suburbs of Paris, is perhaps one of the poorest in France. One of our biggest problems right now is answering the excellence initiative of the French government. Funding is awarded to just five universities per funding round and we already know that we cannot compete. A critical mass of scientific production is required to be elected and we simply do not have the size or the resources. Without strategic alliances in place, we have no chance.



**Professor Dr  
Le Quang Minh**

## ON COMPETITION

**Wiarda:** Given the new competitive environment for universities in many countries, do you believe competition between universities is the best way to promote growth and development?



**Professor Dr  
Mayunga Nkunya**

**Pol:** I really question whether increasing the competition between universities is the best strategy. Because of the excellence initiative, nearly half of all researchers spend their time filling out forms and searching for projects. They no longer conduct research. This said, the competition for excellence forces us to define our objectives and state our long-term goals.

**Altbach:** It is important to choose your competitors wisely, based on the existing diversification. Our university is located just a few kilometres from Harvard University. While this might seem like tough luck to some, we simply do not waste our time worrying about competing with Harvard. We are realistic; we know we cannot compete. What universities need to do is find out who their real competitors are and compete and collaborate with these institutions with similar foci.



**Professor  
Patricia Pol**

**Nkunya:** If you don't want to compete, then there is a problem. Comparing yourself to your peers, i.e. other universities, is a way to maintain credibility and institutional integrity. All of us have come here to gain insights from one another. When we return to our home countries, we implement new solutions inspired by the exchange to improve our systems and processes. We collaborate in order to stay competitive.



**Professor  
Francisco Telémaco  
Talavera Siles**

**Minh:** Ten years ago, the word 'competition' wasn't even in our vocabulary. This changed, however, when private universities entered our higher education landscape. In Vietnam, private universities function under investment law, not education law. Vietnam also has what it calls "world-class universities", which are established in partnership with various countries. The German-Vietnam University, for example, functions under German law. They have complete freedom – it's an autonomy we can only dream of! Whether we are talking about salaries, resources or talent, we simply cannot compete. It is like entering a running race with your feet bound – this kind of competition is not fair because the playing field is not even.



**Jan-Martin Wiarda**



**Talavera:** If we are competing to have the biggest impact on our societies, then it is good and healthy competition. If competition is driven by rankings, then it is misguided. Years ago the Chilean model of education was imposed upon us – the world community told us it was necessary in order to compete. We fought hard against this mandate and it nearly cost lives. Now the Chilean educational system is in utter crisis. So a caveat is in order: We need to be competitive in line with our own realities, our own cultures and our own needs.

**Altbach:** You mentioned rankings as a basis for competition, Francisco. And this is a reason for yet another caveat: The global rankings are all biased towards rich, English-speaking systems. They measure one valid thing (research) and one invalid thing (reputation). This methodology is deeply flawed and puts most of the higher education institutions in this room at a disadvantage.

## ON COMMON STANDARDS

**Wiarda:** Perhaps we can agree that if we do compete, there should be common standards and rules governing competition. In the EU we have the “Bologna Process”. Does it enhance cooperation or intensify competition? And to what extent are other world regions looking towards Europe and its Bologna Process for ways to reform their educational programmes?

**Pol:** The goal of the Bologna Process back in 1998 was to create a common framework for greater transparency within Europe. The process aimed to increase student mobility, to increase student competencies and to increase the employability of the students on the EU labour market. All of the stakeholders were involved – university leaders, student representatives, and quality agencies. They negotiated at regular intervals and achieved this in a spirit of true cooperation. There was plenty of constructive exchange and dialogue in the process. With transparency comes liberalism, of course, meaning competition. Competition is not pure and perfect.

**Altbach:** The Bologna Process is on our radar only as a matter of concern. We wonder about access to this European system and what kinds of barriers non-EU countries face. Many of our students do travel to the EU for study, so we regard Bologna as an impediment, not as a benefit.

**Nkunya:** We use the Bologna Process as a model for increasing the relevance of higher education. For regions like East Africa, universities must produce graduates who are highly relevant to society. To achieve this, you need well-structured, efficient systems and this is what the Bologna Process is about. We consider it as a framework only. The details must remain African.

**Minh:** Our delegates sent over to observe the Bologna Process are absolutely taken by it, but they have missed the most important objective of the initiative: student mobility. Student mobility does not exist in



Vietnam. Students cannot move from one programme to another, even if they are in the same faculty. Moving within the university is impossible and moving from one university to another borders on the unthinkable!

## ON DIES

**Wiarda:** You mentioned the challenge of translating big ideas into everyday practice. How does DIES and its various programmes promote this process?

**Talavera:** Its name says it all: Dialogue on Innovative Higher Education Strategies. Dialogue is the key component in supporting colleagues to do their best, increase their impact and improve society. Through DIES, we have been able to increase capacities in key areas such as resources, management and quality assurance. This puts us in a position to enter into dialogue with others in an increasingly constructive way.

**Minh:** I have been especially active in the DIES International Deans' Course. Coming from a country that functions very top-down, I think we should expand the Deans' programme upward in the power chain. This could help rectors not only to impose but also to lead the change. And if we want to get to the root cause of many of our administrative problems, we can take it even further and extend it to the ministries.

**Nkunya:** I have been participating in the DIES programme for quite some time now and I can attest to its transformative power. It teaches people to think outside the box on issues of higher education. Whether we are from Africa, Europe, Asia or the Americas, our destiny is the same. Our destiny is to produce citizens who will have the education and knowledge to be relevant participants of our future world. We need harmonised – not standardised – systems to achieve this. DIES provides the platform to exchange experiences on this issue.

**Altbach:** Myopia is common in our world – we often do not look up from our immediate day-to-day concerns to consider what is going on at other institutes of higher learning around the world. The DIES dialogues allow us to see how other countries are solving problems similar to our own.



# Future Challenges

## Research Management in Higher Education

The status of research varies from country to country. As Professor Hamadi Boga from Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology in Kenya points out, many universities in his region are still establishing research profiles for themselves. “Though some of them have set-up research entities, they have failed to entrench a true research culture into the institution,” says Boga. “This leaves research the preserve of a few self-driven scientists.” Boga points out that one way to encourage greater participation, increase quality and stimulate output is to provide competitive funding mechanisms.

### Articulating the value of research

This predicated the existence of what Professor Rasha Sharaf, Director of the Strategic Planning Unit at the Ministry of Higher Education in Egypt, calls an “enlightened leadership”, i.e. university leaders that are able to articulate the value of research through appropriate strategies, mechanisms and sufficient funding. In Egypt, for example, quotas regulating young researcher involvement (min. 40%) have been set to ensure the transfer of knowledge and expertise to the younger generation. “Sound communications are also a must to disseminate outputs to the research community and beyond,” says Sharaf. “This is the essence of the knowledge economy.”

*“The biggest challenge is the lack of qualified researchers. DIES has already helped Egyptian higher education institutions gain ground in this area – we need to keep this momentum going.”*

Professor Rasha Sharaf,  
Ministry of Higher Education in Egypt

“The biggest challenge is the lack of qualified researchers. By qualified I mean that researchers are not only highly qualified in their fields but also able to manage projects, lead teams, acquire the necessary funding and navigate administrative requirements,” continues Sharaf. “DIES has already helped Egyptian higher education institutions gain ground in this area – we need to keep this momentum going.”

### Building capacity across the board

The scope of research management clearly cuts across all institutional levels – from the individual researcher, of whom not only quality outputs but proposal writing and project management skills are expected, and middle-management, who require fundraising savvy and benchmarking know-how, all the way up to university leadership, the seat of strategic vision and as such, the principal agent in developing and sustaining an institution’s research culture.

DIES Proposal Writing Courses meet demands primarily on the individual level as they equip researchers with skills and techniques for effective proposal writing. DIES is now planning to broaden its reach to include capacity building activities for those higher up in the research management chain, namely research chairs, deans and institutional heads.

## Good Governance in Higher Education

Good governance in higher education is a relatively new paradigm with a multi-dimensional trail of definitions and must-haves. Governance becomes “good governance”, for example, when, as Professor Peter Mayer from the University of Applied Sciences in Osnabrück says, “a system allows stakeholders to make their views heard and decision-makers act responsibly.” In addition to responsiveness and accountable leadership, good governance means transparent and relevant decision-making mechanisms, clearly defined roles and responsibilities, efficient management and consistency.

*“Higher education institutions are continuously re-engineering themselves in the race to make it in the international rankings and align with emerging trends.”*

Professor Naomi Shitemi,  
Moi University in Kenya

### Building awareness

In some countries universities are being exposed to the internal dimension of good governance for the first time. As Professor Naomi Shitemi from Moi University in Kenya points out, strategic plans, for example, are a new phenomenon among Kenya’s higher education institutions and buy-in is not always a given. Shitemi’s own university implemented its first strategic plan in 2005. “Building the awareness of strategic planning as the foundation for institutional identity, educational quality, competitiveness and good governance is a challenge,” says Shitemi. “Getting the key actors to consciously live by the plans, ensure collective accountability and monitor implementation is an even bigger challenge.”

Shitemi also notes that the emergence of democratisation processes such as staff unions, per se positive developments, keep institutional cultures and lines of power in constant flux. Global pressures challenge consistency even further. “Higher education institutions are continuously re-engineering themselves in the race to make it in the international rankings and align with emerging trends,” says Shitemi. A strong and clear compass within the institution is needed to weigh and check these external factors.



Peter Mayer makes it clear that there is no golden formula for good governance. Instead, “higher education institutions should look at both effective and not-so effective models, gain a sound understanding of the range of possible institutional arrangements, and find what’s right for them.” Exposure programmes, best practice exchange among leadership peers, continued training for middle and top-level university management and international university partnerships are potential ways to do this. A clear case for DIES.

# Future Challenges

## E-Learning and Mobile Learning

Higher education institutions in developing countries struggle to keep pace with the ever-growing demand for university places. One way to open up access to education is the use of advanced communication technologies in open and distance learning opportunities. With the number of mobile phone users in developing countries on the rise, even in rural areas, mobile learning has proven to be a particularly promising alternative. Professor Tolly S. A. Mbwette, Vice Chancellor of the Open University Tanzania and President of the African Council for Distance Education, spoke about the advantages of using new technologies at the DIES conference in Bonn, noting the range of possibilities: “The electronic materials can combine a variety of sources including DVDs, CDs, You-Tube, blogspots, video clips as well as linkage to a host of social networks.”

### Ensuring accessibility and acceptance

Solutions for PC-based e-learning and mobile learning using mobile devices developed in the industrialised world are not entirely transferable, however. “Lower threshold technologies have to be used if knowledge is to be made truly accessible, both globally and socially,” says Dr Suleiman Ramon-Yusuf, Director of the National Universities Commission in Nigeria and responsible for e-learning and mobile learning. “Video clips, for example, are a less suitable medium.”

*“At present the only way to offer e-learning and mobile learning is as part of locally offered blended learning courses – this means that students receive course materials and feedback electronically in addition to attending actual classes.”*

Dr Ari Asnani,  
Jenderal Soedirman University

Dr Ari Asnani from Jenderal Soedirman University and DIES UNISTAFF alumna is responsible for setting up e-learning structures in Indonesia. “E-learning is being advanced through the Global Development Learning Network and is supported by the government. With the infrastructure well in place, we are now working on the actual content,” she says. “At present the only way to offer e-learning and mobile learning is as part of locally offered blended learning courses – this means that students receive course materials and feedback electronically in addition to attending actual classes.”

Ramon-Yusuf and Ari Asnani both agree that for e-learning to take off, it must be possible for students to earn officially recognized degrees through such channels. Professors also have to be convinced to provide their teaching materials online and prepare them accordingly. As they see it, academic staff needs professional development in the area of e-learning and mobile learning and DIES courses could be a way to fill this need.

## Working with Alumni in the Field of Higher Education

DIES alumni often hold key positions within university management, as researchers or lecturers, in higher education institutions or ministries, and as such, are perfectly placed to drive the development of higher education in their home countries. Four networks exist to foster collaboration and exchange among them – GUCAL in Central America and Mexico, REAL in Eastern Africa, INDOSTAFF in Indonesia, and UniFELD in the Philippines.

### Catalysts for advancing education and research policy

“The alumni take their role as multipliers seriously,” says Professor Michael Fremerey. “For them, DIES training translates directly into an obligation to share their knowledge with others.” Over the years the DAAD has provided various kinds of support to former participants of DIES training courses to enable them to carry out workshops and seminars on higher education management issues in their home countries. This support also covers opportunities for regional networking and exchange.

“We alumni function as a think tank for higher education management issues,” says Dr Abraham Simatupang, President of INDOSTAFF and member of the Faculty of Medicine at the Christian University of Indonesia. Together with fellow DIES alumni, Abraham Simatupang developed

*“We alumni function as a think tank for higher education management issues.”*

Dr Abraham Simatupang,  
President of INDOSTAFF

the Higher Education Management Master’s programme and advised the universities on curriculum development matters. The Master’s programme is now being offered at three universities in Indonesia.

The Latin American network GUCAL is yet another success story. It is officially recognised by the Central American University Council (CSUCA) and has been engaged to advance capacity development in the region. “The network members are also active

at their own universities developing projects that cover everything from examination organisation and curriculum development to procedural rules for faculty meetings,” explains Professor Alicia Vargas Porrás from Costa Rica. “Peer coaching helps us make the initiatives more efficient and effective.”

### Recharging is important

Although the alumni come from different DIES programmes, they have successfully united to create networks in all four regions – a fact, as Michael Fremerey points out, that speaks to the success of DIES. This was made possible in part by DIES’ train-the-trainer approach, which gave alumni the methodological and technical tools they needed to prepare for their role as multipliers. “As the networks continue they will require expert input along the way, and DIES will be there for them. Recharging is important for alumni,” says Professor Gabriel Katana, Coordinator of REAL (East Africa). Equally important is the international exchange among them. When alumni from Latin America, Southeast Asia and Africa connect it is empowering for everyone – after all, it is the alumni themselves that run and breathe life into the networks.

# The “Entrepreneurial University” –

## How to Educate Entrepreneurial Minds and Manage

### PANEL DISCUSSION

■ **Professor Dr Intan Ahmad**

School of Life Sciences and Technology,  
Bandung Institute of Technology, Indonesia

■ **Professor Dr Ulrich Braukmann**

Director of the Institute for Research in Entrepreneurship and  
Innovation (IGIF), University of Wuppertal, Germany

■ **Werner Wasmuth**

Senior Advisor Higher Education, Deutsche Gesellschaft für  
Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), Germany

■ **Dr Lydia Raesfeld**

Vice-Rector of Research and Postgraduate Studies,  
Universidad Autónoma del Estado de Hidalgo (UAEH), Mexico

■ **Chair: Jan-Martin Wiarda**

Education Editor, Die Zeit

### ON DEFINITIONS

**Wiarda:** What does the term “entrepreneurial university” mean in the context of your institution?

**Raesfeld:** While traditionally oriented towards teaching and basic research, Mexican universities are becoming increasingly “entrepreneurial” as they start looking outward. They are interested in seeking links to society and business and in developing schemes for technology and knowledge transfer. Our scientists are now asking deeper questions about the relevance of their research and how it serves the wider aims of society. Being entrepreneurial is a matter of mindset, not a business-driven activity.

**Ahmad:** An “entrepreneurial university” is a university that is enterprising in the way it thinks and acts – from its administration to its faculty members and students. Implementing change is entrepreneurial, as is making improvements and being creative. Entrepreneurial behaviour also ensures competitiveness – and for public universities like my own, where only 30% of our budget is government funded, being “entrepreneurial” means creatively securing the funding we need to uphold our academic mission.

**Braukmann:** In Germany there are two working concepts of the “entrepreneurial university”. The first definition is a university charged with driving economic development by assisting in the creation of new businesses and companies. The second definition and perhaps the most important in terms of its dimension is cultural in nature and denotes a university’s openness to entrepreneurial thinking and behaviour. The programme-heavy and well-funded push towards greater entrepreneurship in Germany’s higher education sector is not welcomed by all, however, as it is considered a direct threat to the freedom of scientific research.



## Links between Higher Education and the Private Sector



Professor Dr  
Intan Ahmad

**Werner Wasmuth:** My definition of an “entrepreneurial university” is an institution that applies its expertise for the greater good. The question of higher education’s obligation to social change and sustainable development was not always well-received in academia, but this has changed. Society expects solutions from us. And in order to deliver innovative solutions, a new way of thinking is required.



Professor Dr  
Ulrich Braukmann

### ON CHALLENGES

**Wiarda:** What obstacles stand in the way of establishing an entrepreneurial mindset within the university landscape?

**Raesfeld:** With basic research funded by the government, many researchers do not see the need to reach out to companies and offer their services. And again, basic research assures them freedom. It therefore becomes a matter of pro-actively communicating the benefits of linking with the outside sectors. Considerable challenges also exist on the administrative level. Once a project has been initiated and paid for, the outside partner expects a relatively quick return on investment. With our university system operating at a much slower pace, this expectation often remains unmet due to bottlenecks in cash flow.



Werner Wasmuth

**Braukmann:** Innovation remains a second-tier obligation in Germany’s higher education institutions, which is not only embedded culturally but constitutionally. In addition to this, professors think in terms of an academic career, not an entrepreneurial one. This makes them less interested in knowledge transfer. There is also a certain degree of peer pressure to keep the expertise within the university. Those who turn their attention to the latter are still criticised by colleagues for “selling out”. I am confident that this can be turned around, but it is a slow process that must happen organically.



Dr Lydia Raesfeld

### ON CREATING ENTREPRENEURS

**Wiarda:** Can we turn professors into entrepreneurs?

**Raesfeld:** Yes, and this is the aim of our most recent DIES Partnership with the University of Applied Sciences in Münster. We are using science marketing strategies to integrating a more market-oriented attitude within the university. Scientists must regard their research as a service and pro-actively look for market demand. It means learning to communicate what it is they offer in a language the business sector understands. To drive this cultural change, we have established mechanisms such as a centre for spin-offs, a science marketing office, and entrepreneurial fairs where university students present joint private-sector projects. Incentives are also key. Professors need to realise what they stand to benefit from partnering with the private sector. Benefits might include funds for new laboratory equipment, a bigger office or more PhD students.



Jan-Martin Wiarda



**Ahmad:** The university community has a place for everyone – for those who are keen on entrepreneurial activities and for those who are not. I agree that as a dean it is important to encourage and facilitate those who wish to work with the private sector by providing incentives.

**Wiarda:** If responsible for driving growth through dynamic and enterprising graduates, what skills must entrepreneurial universities impart to their students?

**Raesfeld:** Graduates must be open to multi-disciplinary, collaborative research. They must have intercultural competencies, strong problem-solving skills and know how to network.

**Ahmad:** Many of our students still equate high grades with job security. The result is highly qualified academics who lack the necessary entrepreneurial competencies. We cannot expect our professors, who might have a strong theoretical background in entrepreneurship, to convey these skills. Students must seek practical experience in the private sector in the form of internships. You need to produce graduates who can innovate, not just become an employee of a company.

**Wasmuth:** One way to create enterprising graduates is through career development centres, which are designed to bring information to the students about the world that awaits them. Students must be exposed to entrepreneurial modes of behaviour early on so they know what is expected of them once they graduate.

**From the audience – Professor Dr Johannes Wildt, TU Dortmund:** We must apply the same distinctions that are made in research – between traditional, inner-disciplinary research and problem-focused, inter-disciplinary research and teaching. Moving from traditional teaching concepts to project and problem-based teaching is a key component in developing entrepreneurial competencies.

## ON LINKAGES

**Wiarda:** What formal and informal mechanisms within the university are in place for interfacing with the private sector?

**Raesfeld:** Our transfer office assists in linking the university to the private sector. One of the challenges we face is convincing the small and medium enterprise (SME) segment, our primary partner, of their need for our services.

**Ahmad:** Similarly, we have found profound differences between linking with multi-national corporations (MNCs) and working with the SME segment. MNCs understand that it takes time before research findings prove themselves on the factory floor. SMEs, on the other hand, want quick-yield projects. Offices for technological transfer, in this case, not only offer researchers with perspectives on how to commercialise their findings, but provide them with segment-specific strategies.



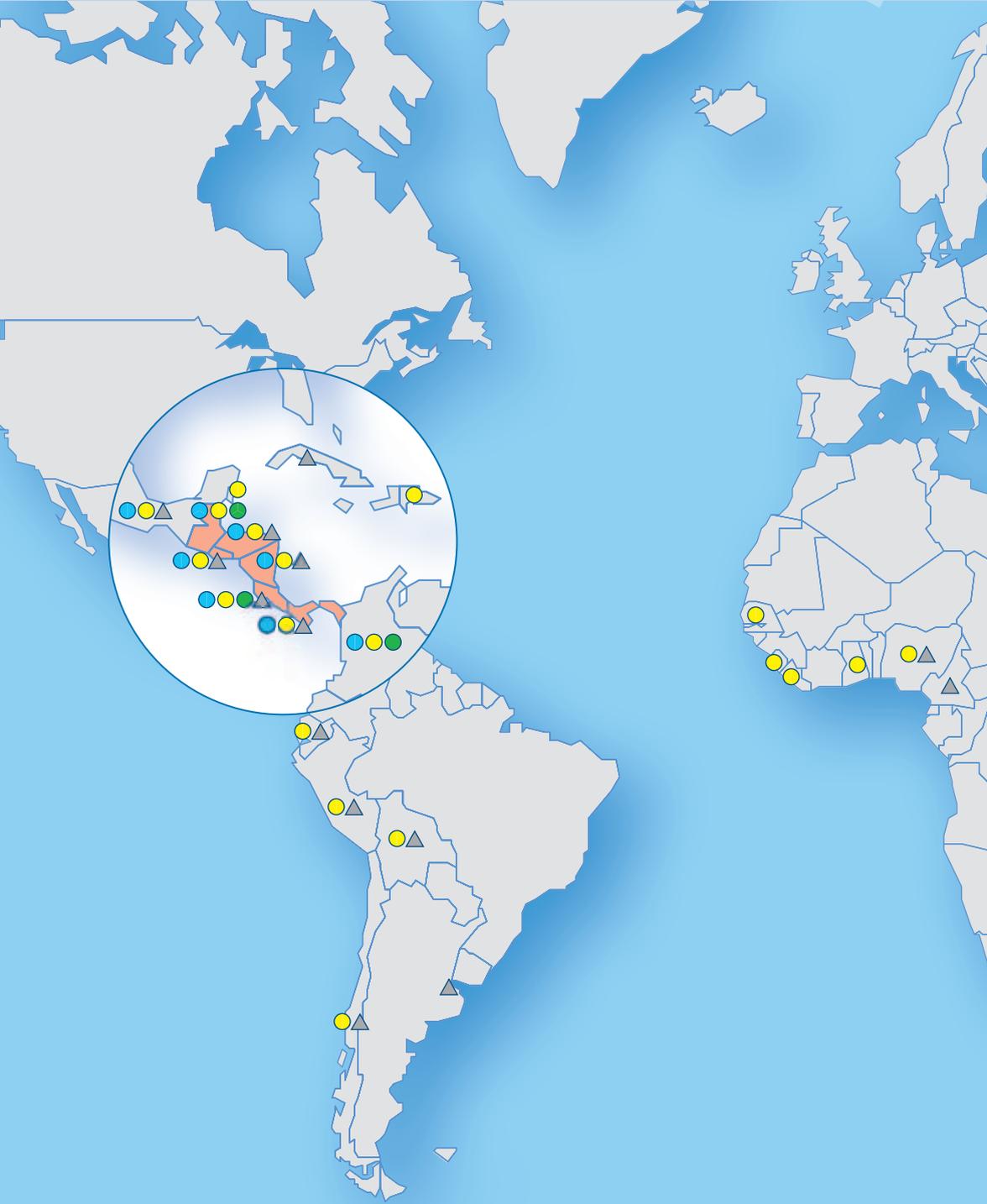
## INSIGHTS FROM THE AUDIENCE

**Christoph Hansert, DAAD Office in Nairobi, Kenya:** We recently met with key members of the Kenyan business community, the Ministry of Higher Education and some of Kenya's top university officials. This meeting was enlightening on many levels. The enterprises were far less interested in applied research findings, citing a lack in quality, and more interested in a strong graduate pool, which they defined as individuals who are willing to challenge seniority and bring innovation into their companies. Given the costs of re-educating new hires, businesses are willing to fund the development of practice-oriented curricula that teach the skills businesses require. The lesson learned: Universities must develop informal relationships with key regional entrepreneurs and enterprises, with the goal of understanding each other's needs and capacities.

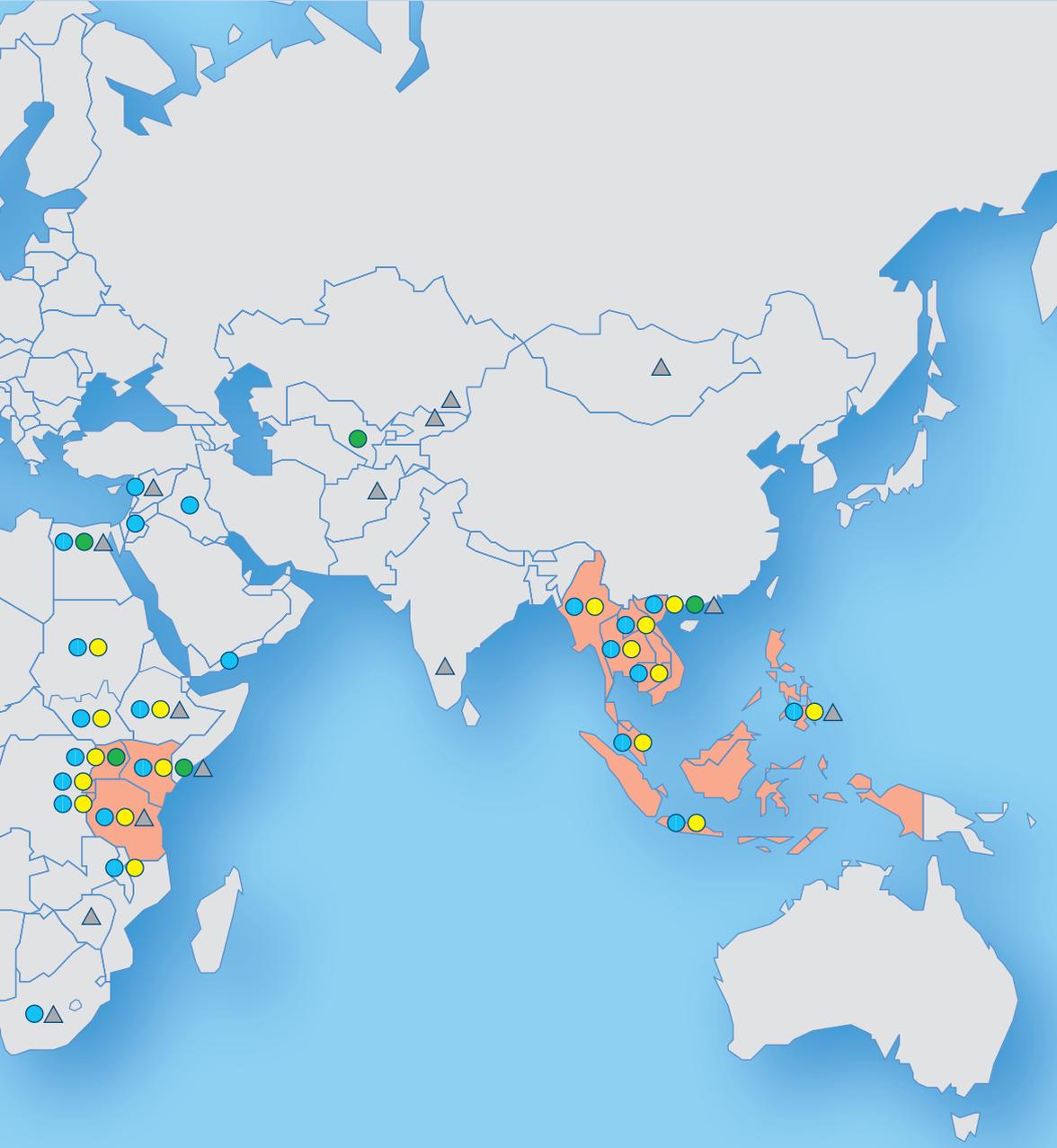
**Prof. Dr Florence Lengua, Commission for Higher Education, Kenya:** I was looking for an all-encompassing definition of the entrepreneurial university and the link between the research that is done, the learning and teaching that goes on in the classroom and the outcome, which is the graduates. On the latter, we are talking about producing job creators, i.e. people who can use their skills and competencies to create jobs and meet the needs of society. On the level of governance, it means running universities effectively and efficiently. For researchers, it's about engaging in private-public partnerships driven by regional and national needs.



# The Global Reach of DIES



As of: June 2012



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Dialogue on Innovative Higher Education Strategies

## DIES – a Joint Programme of the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) and the German Rectors' Conference (HRK)

### DAAD

The German Academic Exchange Service is the world's largest organisation for the funding of international student and scholar exchange. It is a registered organisation with the German institutions of higher education and student bodies as members. The DAAD awards scholarships, supports the internationalisation of German universities, promotes German studies and the German language abroad, assists developing countries in establishing more effective higher education systems and advises decision-makers on cultural, educational, and development policy issues.

### HRK

The German Rectors' Conference is the voluntary association of state and state-recognised universities in Germany. It currently has 267 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.

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