

## **DIES CONFERENCE ON**

**Strengthening Universities, Enhancing Capacities  
in Higher Education Management for Development  
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### **Working Group 2:**

**Cross-Border Quality Assurance Through Capacity Development and  
International Cooperation – DIES Projects in Developing Countries**

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## **The Inter-University Council for East Africa (IUCEA)**

- **A strategic institution of the East African Community (EAC, Partner States: Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania, and Uganda)**
- **Mandated to play a significant role in the strategic development of higher education and research in the EAC Partner States**
- **Current membership is 88 universities, both public and private universities**
- **Operates under an Act enacted by the East African Legislative Assembly of EAC**

## **The Inter-University Council for East Africa: Main Objectives**

- Facilitate networking among universities in East Africa, and with universities outside the region;**
- Provide a forum for discussion on a wide range of academic and other matters relating to higher education in East Africa;**
- Facilitate maintenance of internationally comparable education standards in East Africa so as to promote the region's competitiveness in higher education.**

## **The Inter-University Council for East Africa: Main Functions**

- Coordinate inter-university cooperation in East Africa;**
- Facilitate strategic development of member universities;**
- Promote internationally comparable higher education standards and systems for sustainable regional development.**

## **Process to establish regional quality assurance system in East Africa**

**Motivated by the need to harmonize the quality of higher education in East Africa in view of changing dynamics characterized by:**

- Massification in student enrolment;**
- New universities (public and private) being established at an exponential rate;**
- Proliferation of private universities;**
- Introduction of parallel programmes;**
- Establishment of distance education for dial mode delivery or stand alone systems;**
- Development of E-learning higher education systems.**

## **Process to establish regional quality assurance system in East Africa**

**Self-driven by IUCEA; DAAD offered capacity development support through:**

- Development of quality assurance guidelines and instruments in the form of a handbook: Road Map to Quality**
- Training of quality assurance coordinators**
- Training of other quality assurance actors at universities and higher education commissions**
- Piloting guidelines and instruments for self-assessment at programme level**
- Training of regional peers**
- Piloting peer review through visits to universities that carried out self assessment**

## **The Process ...**

### **The chronological steps:**

**2005:** IUCEA Governing Board decides to introduce a regional quality assurance system in East Africa

**2006:** Regional and national brainstorming workshops to concretize process conducted

**2007:** National/Regional workshops to conceptualize the process conducted

## **The Process ...**

### **Phases of the initiative:**

**2006 – 2010: Phase I**

**2011-2015: Phase II**

## **Goals for establishing an East African quality assurance framework**

- **Develop a common East African Higher Education Area**
- **Enable member universities to participate in cross-border education in and outside East Africa**
- **Set common higher education quality standards for universities in East Africa as a framework for mutual recognition of education systems and qualifications attained**
- **Promote and safeguard comparability and compatibility of higher education quality assurance standards in East Africa and with outside world**

## **Goals for establishing an East African quality assurance framework ...**

- **Promote graduate labor mobility regionally/internationally**
- **Set uniform regional higher education benchmark standards based on international practices**
- **Streamline regional benchmark standards to national and institutional local environment**

## **The process**

- **Regional and national consultative dialogue involving universities, governments, quality assurance experts, academicians and IUCEA through workshops**
- **Information visits to Europe by Vice Chancellors and Chief Executive Officers of national higher education commissions/councils**
- **Development of quality assurance guidelines and instruments in the form of a handbook for the regional framework**
- **Sensitisation of Deans, HoDs, DVCs, Vice Chancellors, students, commissions/councils, Governments etc**

# The

# Process

...

- **Training of quality assurance coordinators/officers**
- **Piloting the guidelines and instruments for self-assessment at programme level**
- **Training of regional peers**
- **Piloting peer review through visits to universities that carried out self assessment**
- **Cost sharing introduced (between IUCEA, national commission/council, and universities) to finance activities**

# Accomplishments

## (a) Establishment of structure of the framework

- **Built capacity in quality assurance at universities, higher education commissions/councils, and IUCEA**
- **Prepared user-friendly quality assurance Handbook (A Roadmap to Quality) in four volumes based on existing national benchmark standards and systems, and on international practices**
- **Harmonizing university quality assurance systems**
- **Setting uniform regional higher education quality benchmark standards**
- **National and institutional quality assurance systems being streamlined to the regional system but accommodating institutional/national contexts**

## **Accomplishments ...**

### **(b) Capacity Building: Human resources**

- **Training of staff at universities, higher education commissions/councils and IUCEA on quality assurance guidelines, instruments, practices and processes**

### **(c) Capacity building: Institutional**

- **Establishment of a Quality Assurance Unit at IUCEA**
- **Establishment of quality assurance units/directorates in universities**
- **Establishment of strong link between IUCEA and national higher education commissions/councils on QA processes**

## **Internal evaluation**

- **Carried out in 2010**
- **Aimed to document achievements, constraints and challenges**
- **Identified the way forward for future activities**
- **Report used for external evaluation**

## **External evaluation**

- **Carried out between September and December 2010**
- **Aimed at assessing achievements made and documenting the lessons learnt**
- **Involved collection, recording and organizing information about activities and processes carried out**
- **Covered outputs and outcomes, interaction between various stakeholders and establishing challenges encountered**
- **Made a number of conclusions which have been used to establish activities for Phase II**

## **Activities for Phase II (2011 – 2015)**

- **Multiplication of activities and consolidation of achievements**
- **Creation of a regional quality assurance network**
- **Development of sustainability and ownership strategies of system at universities, IUCEA and Commissions/Councils**
- **Develop demand-oriented training programmes**
- **Development of subject benchmark standards**

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION**