DIES CONFERENCE ON
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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, academician 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