



VIETNAM NATIONAL UNIVERSITY
HO CHI MINH CITY

Good Governance in Higher Education: concepts, implement, and training

Case: Vietnam National University-HCMC

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Former Member of National Council of Education

Former Rector, Cantho University

**DIES-Conference: Strengthening Universities, Enhancing Capacities –Higher Education
Management for Development**

28/29 November 2011, Bonn, Germany

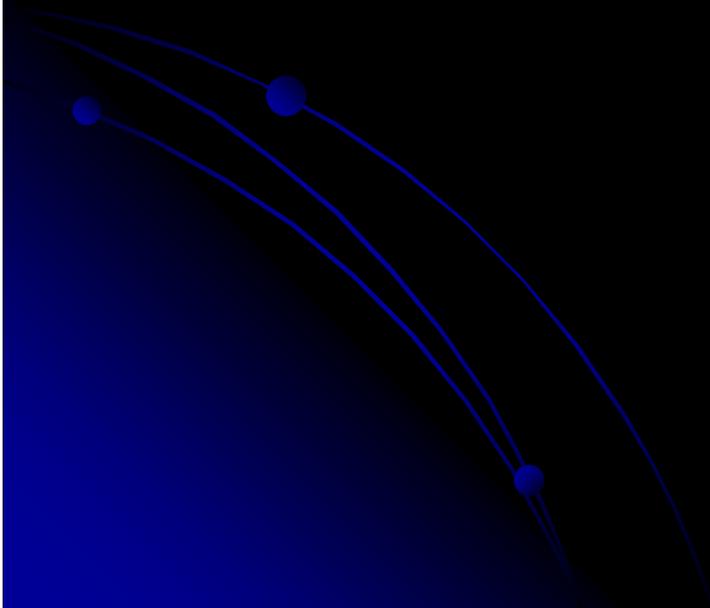


CONTENT

- **Higher education reform**
- **Issues of University Governance in VN**
- **Lessons learned**
- **Training programs in VNU-HCMC**



HIGHER EDUCATION REFORM IN VIETNAM





HE Reforms in Vietnam

Period	Before 1954	1954-1975	1975-1990	1990 to date
	Colony	Vietnam war	Reunification	Reform
North	French system	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Russian (++++)▪ French (+)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Russian (++++)▪ French (+)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Broadening curricula▪ More comprehensive university
South	French system	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ American (+++)▪ French (+)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Russian (+++)▪ American (++)▪ French (+)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ More practical, less theoretical▪ “Standard” degrees, QA▪ <u>2 national</u>, 3 regional, >100 mono-disciplinary, >30



HE Reforms in Vietnam

Opened door policy from 90s

Transition + fast-growing economics

Old type of human resource

- top-down
- employment: gov.
- public servant =>

obey

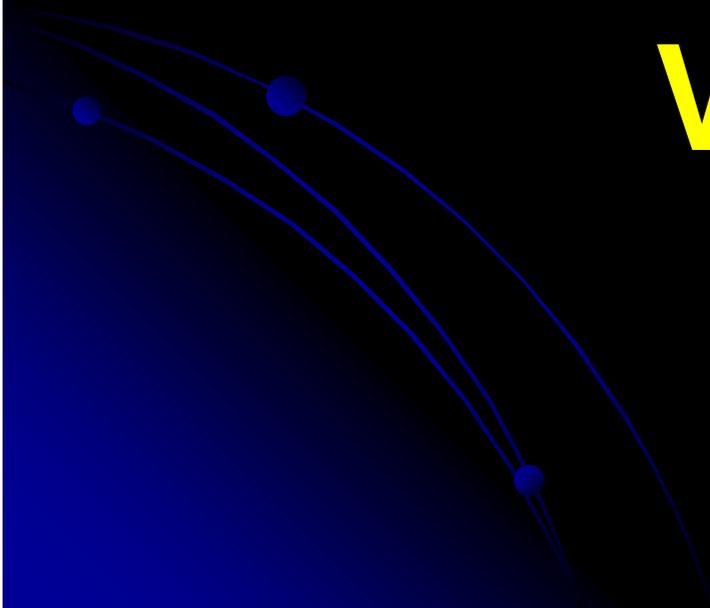
New type of human resource

- bottom-up
- employment: private
- entrepreneurship =>

create

Leadership

ISSUES OF UNIVERSITY GOVERNANCE IN VIETNAM





University autonomy

- Lack of international standards, norms, definitions; internationally-accepted common practices => **vague definition/understanding of autonomy**
- Weak linkage with industry/business/society => **unclear accountability**
- Centralized power (example Prof. promotion: confused practices and criteria) => **quality control**
- **Unclear role division** between ministries and universities

Boundary

- Laws
- Government policy
- Accountability/
Society
Responsibility
- Tradition
- Quality

Reality

- Law ambiguity
- Bureaucracy
- Auditing
- Standardization
- ...

self-management

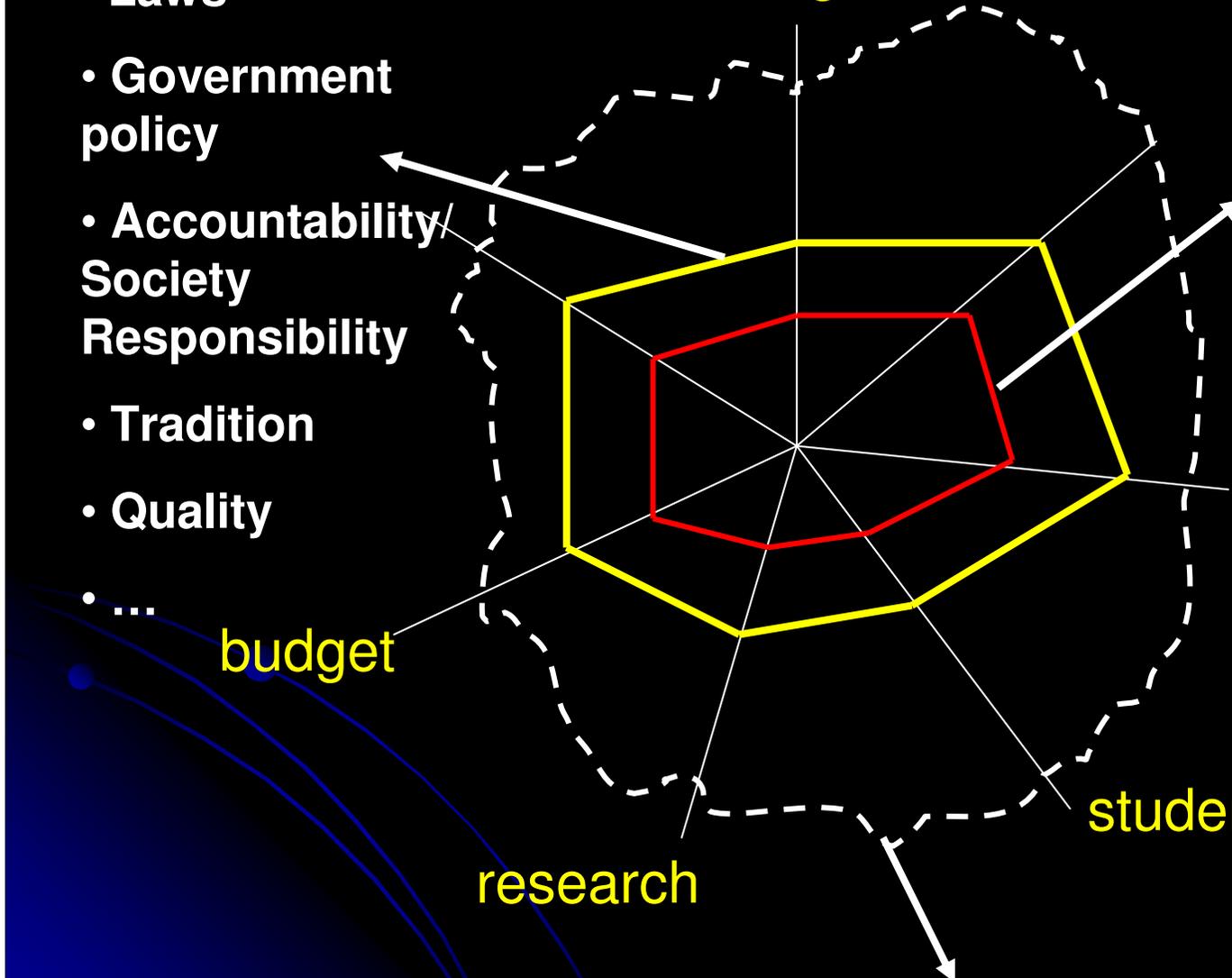
education

budget

student admission

research

University rector's dream





University autonomy

Ambiguity in Laws and Legal Procedures

- complex law system related with university autonomy:
 - Law of Education
 - Law of Budgeting
 - Law of Government Officials
 - Law of Auditing
 - Law of Science and Technology,...
- Law of Education (2005): new or clearer defined concepts: autonomy, quality assurance, university governance, credit system,...



University autonomy

Law of Education 2005

Article 14

State (Ministry of Education) responds:

- education objectives
- curricula and contents
- planning
- staff qualification
- testing / exam regulations
- degrees
- quality assurance
- **autonomy**
- **decentralization**

→ **Newly, quickly and vaguely evolving concepts**



Not-well-defined/risky zone

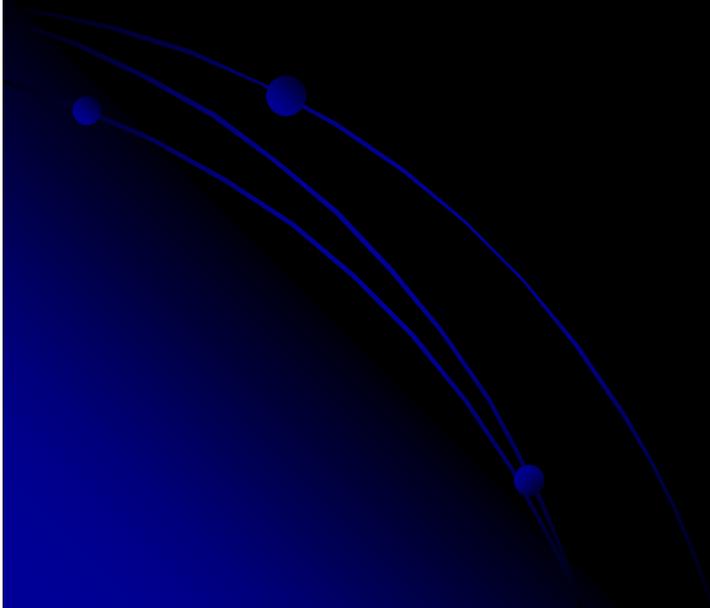


→ 4 levels of autonomy

- 2 National universities PM **highest**
- 3 Regional and 14 Key universities MOET **high**
- more than 100 other universities MOET + line ministry
- provincial universities MOET+ line ministry
+ provincial authority

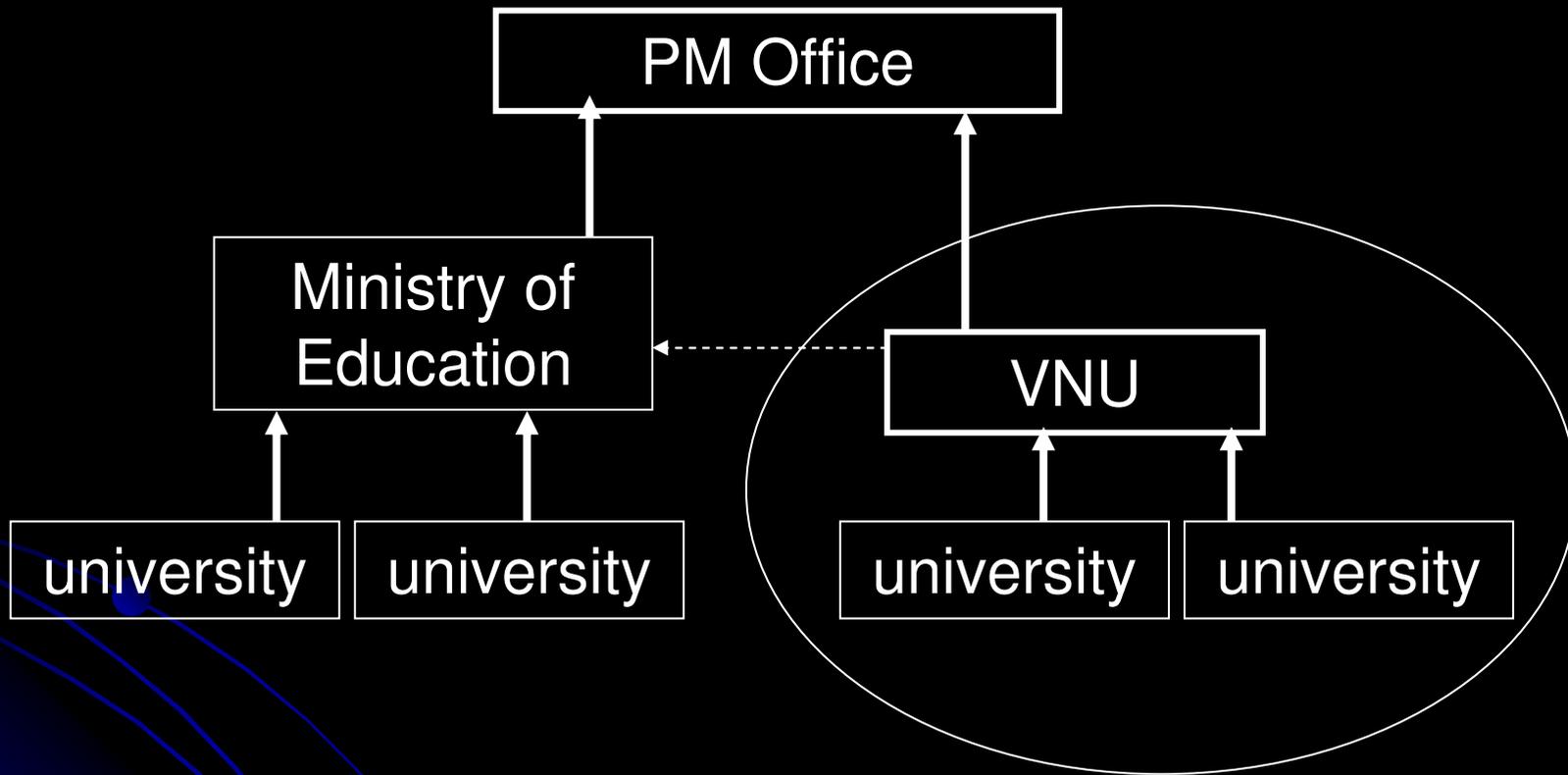
Special university charter for the 2 National universities:
testing cases for a high-level autonomy

Governance Structure in Vietnam National University HCMC



3 reform periods in Vietnam National University-HCMC

Phases	Number of institutions	Governance structure	Main issues
Establishment (reported to MOET)	10 universities	“big university”	autonomy of <i>specialized</i> university
Re-structure (reported to PM)	3 + 2 universities	“small ministry”	extra “layer” of administration
Development (reported to PM)	6 university members	university system	most suitable but new concept in VN





Role division between VNU and Members

Roles

Steering and strategy

VNU

Vision
VNU objectives

Members

Mission, inst. objectives, strategic plans

Quality

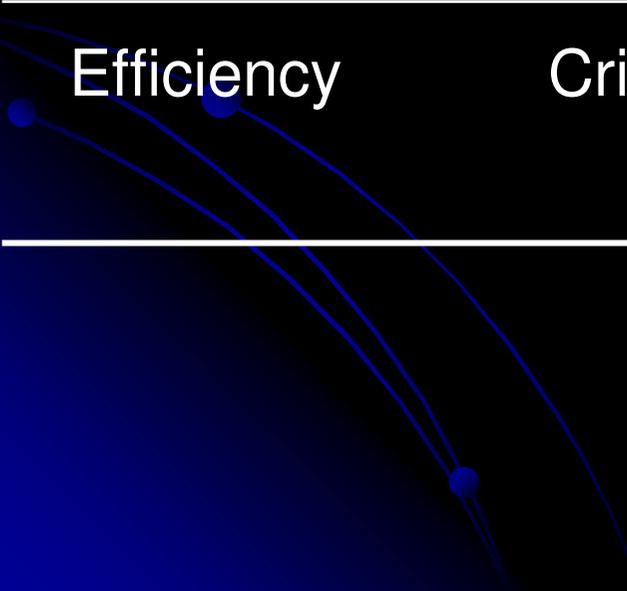
Criteria, QA
Supervision

Implementation plan
Curriculum development

Efficiency

Criteria

Action plan
Internal guidelines





University autonomy

Differences between VNU and others

Issues

VNU

Others

Finance

Direct from NA

MOET/LM

Curriculum

Self-decided

MOET

QA

Self-evaluated
system

MOET

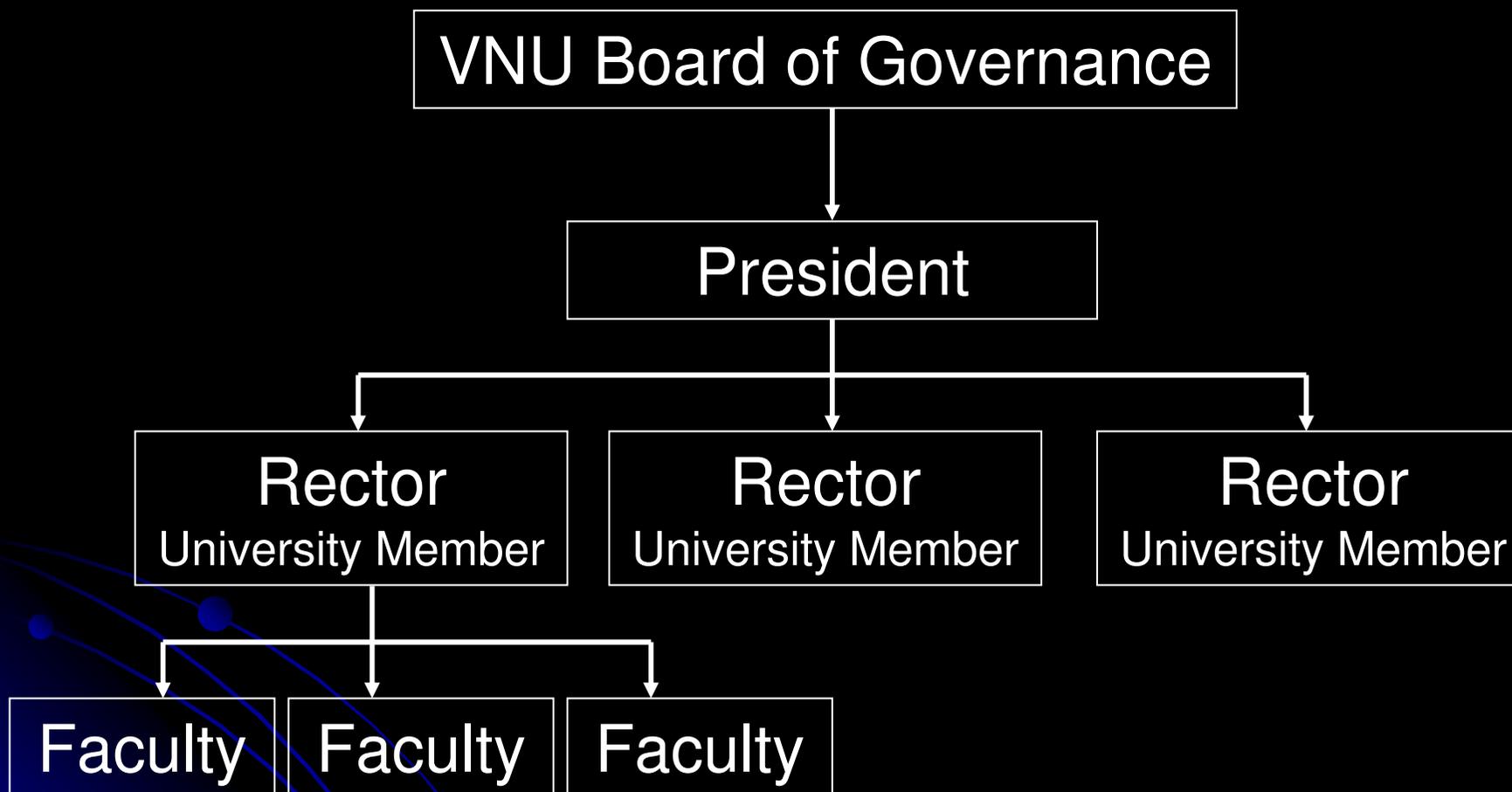
Fund raising

Autonomous

Approval
needed



VNU structure





University Governance

Board of Trustees

- Less than 5% of Public Universities in Vietnam having Board of Governance
- The first BOG in Vietnam
- University Presidents are Board President
- 30% members of the Board from outside



University Governance

Leader appointment

- President and Vice Presidents: *Prime Minister*
- Rector and Vice Rectors: Minister of Education

Finance

- Tuition fee: *Prime Minister*
- Expenditures: University President => Faculty/Staff General Assembly



University Governance

Student admission

- Qualification: National University Entrance Examination
- Number: *Ministry of Education*

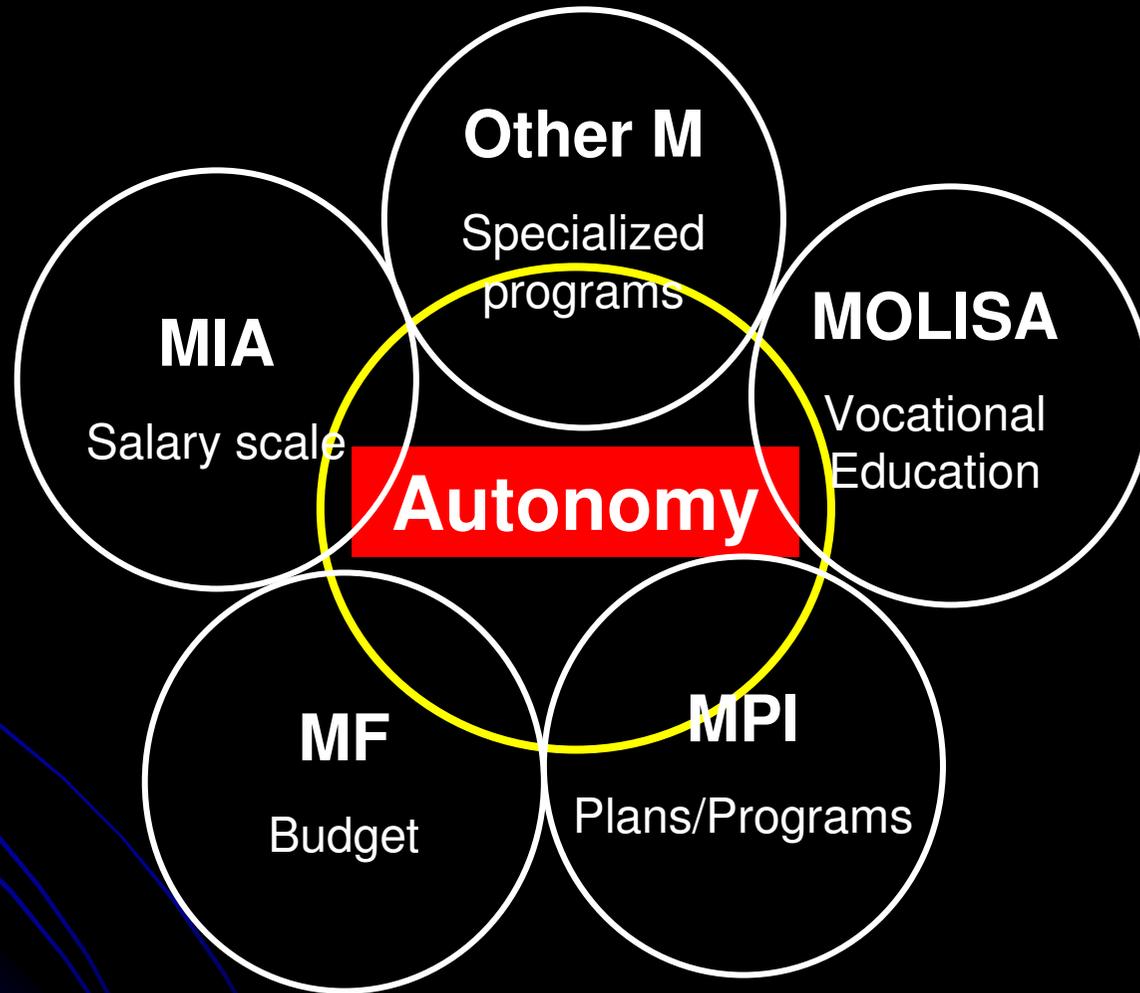
Professor promotion

- National Council of University Promotion
- University appointment

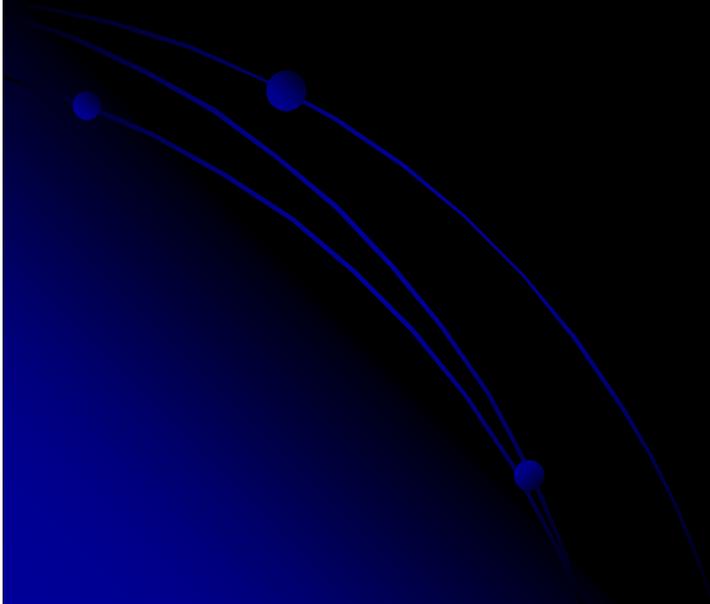
Staff management

- “supervised” by *Ministry of Internal Affairs*
- salary scales decided by *Ministries of Internal Affairs and Labor*

“RESIDUE” of autonomy of VNU-HCMC



LESSONS LEARNED





Lessons learned

1. Transition in university decision-making:
centralization => de-centralization = mixture

- confused by new concepts
- old habits and traditions

2. Unclear accountability / society responsibility
mechanism (University **Council/Board of
Trustees**: few universities, including VNU, well-
established + clear functions)



Lessons learned

3. Autonomy is THE key word but **what's next after autonomy?**

4. Introduce

- University leadership training => RTC in VNU-HCMC
- New **Strategic plan**
- New Cultures
- Norms,...

5. Clearer role division between State and Institutions

Roles

Steering and strategy

State

Vision, state objectives

Institutions

Mission, inst. objectives, strategic plans

Quality

Criteria, QA
Supervision

Implementation plan

Efficiency

Criteria

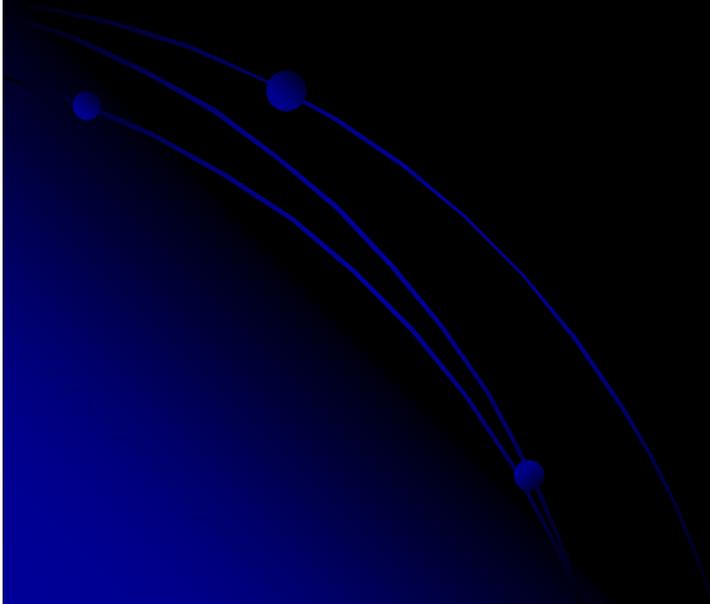
Action plan

Internal guidelines

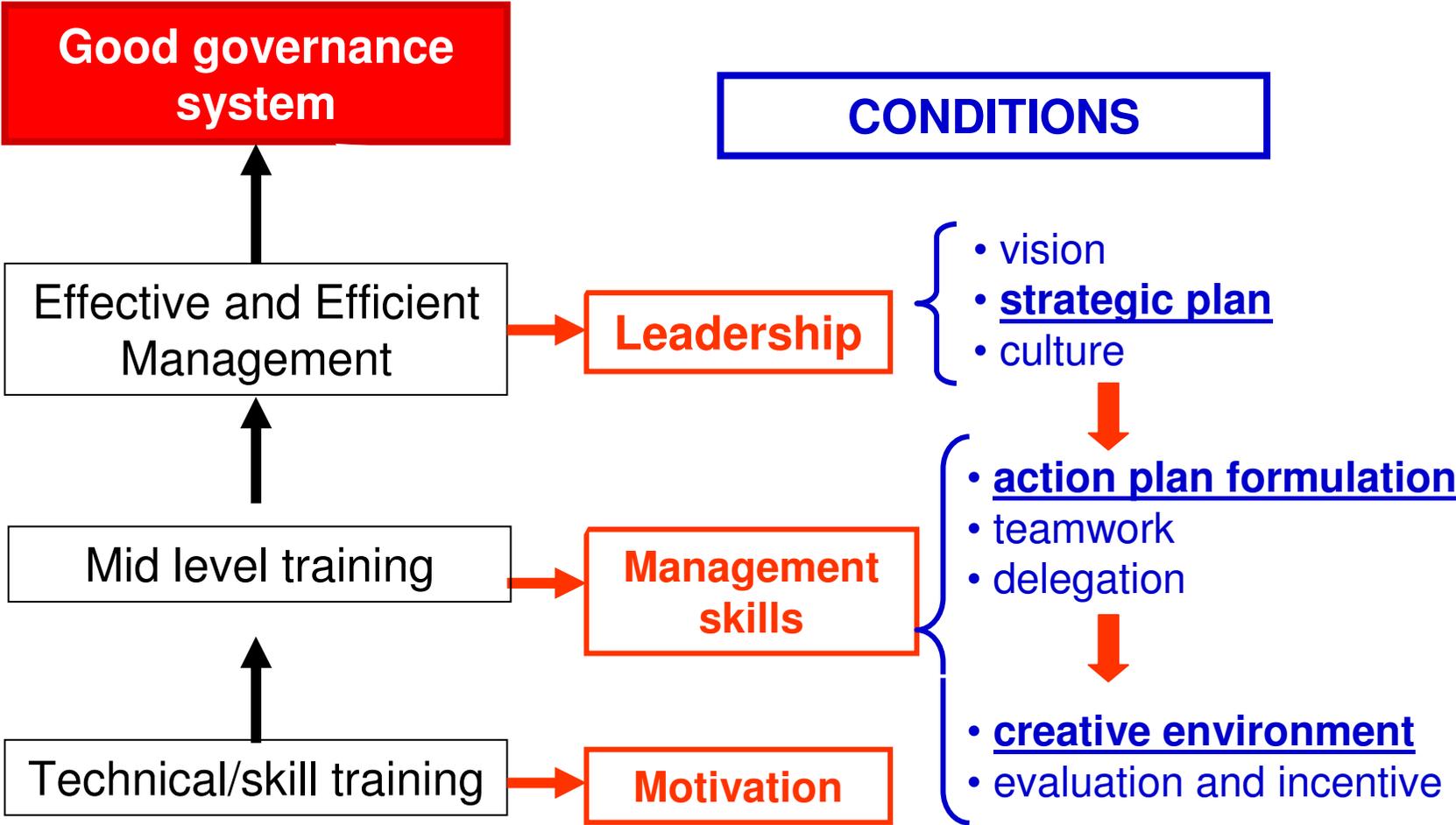
6. New HE Laws

- **quality assurance** and **efficiency** should be the “core”
- then, **conditions**:
 - ✓ autonomy and accountability (at least 1 chapter)
 - ✓ governance: de-centralized
 - ✓ ...
- clear role/responsibility divisions: ministries, city/provincial authority and universities
- **university board of trustees**: role, composition, appointment

TRAINING



DESIGN GOOD GOVERNANCE TRAINING PROGRAM

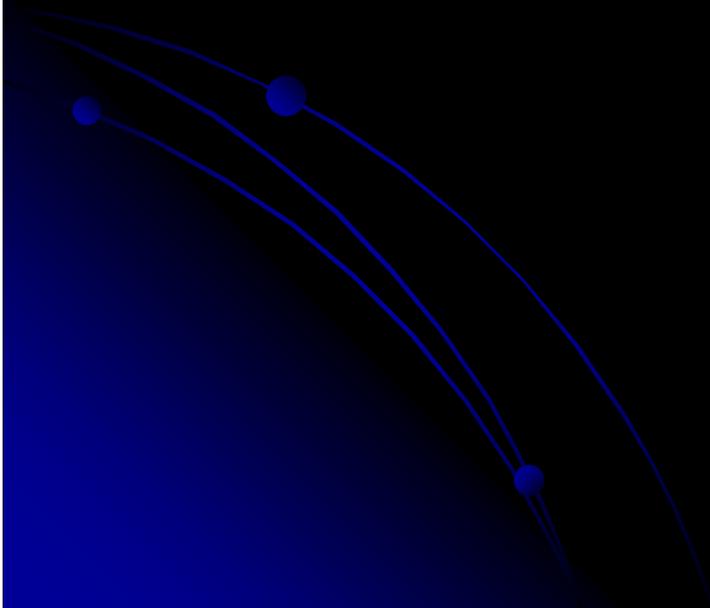


Train the BOG members

- the first to be trained
 - to provide **new concepts, norms,...**
 - by
 - ✓ strategic planning **formulation** workshop => strategic plan approval
 - ✓ special report of strategic programs (action plan)
 - ✓ study tour, ...
- 

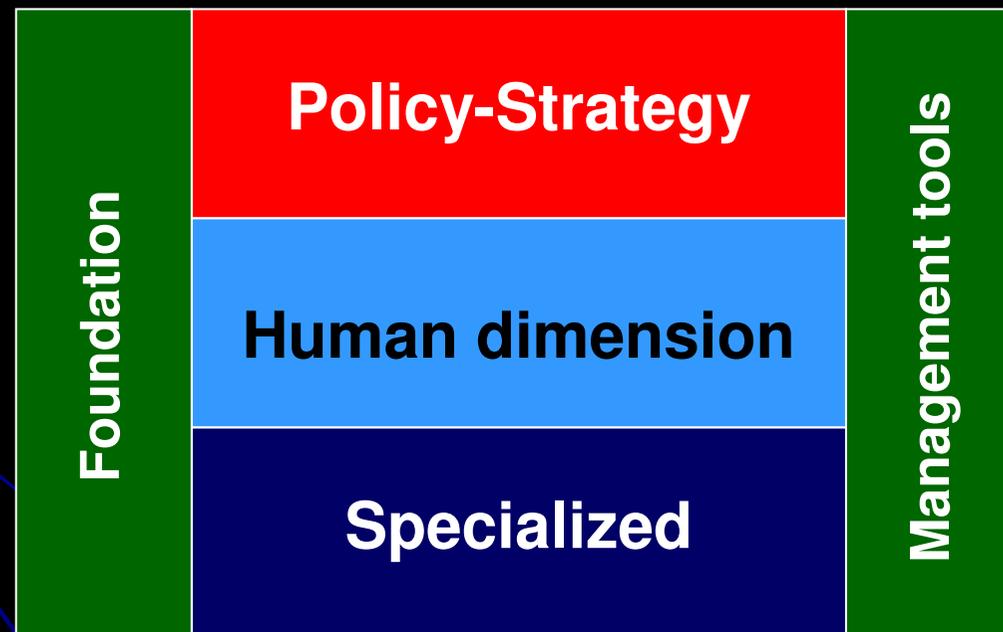
Train leaders of university members

- Center of University Governance and Management
- 3 dimensions of training programs
- team building and interaction between levels
- common theme: Total Quality Management



Train university staff and faculty

- young leadership program
- promote quality culture



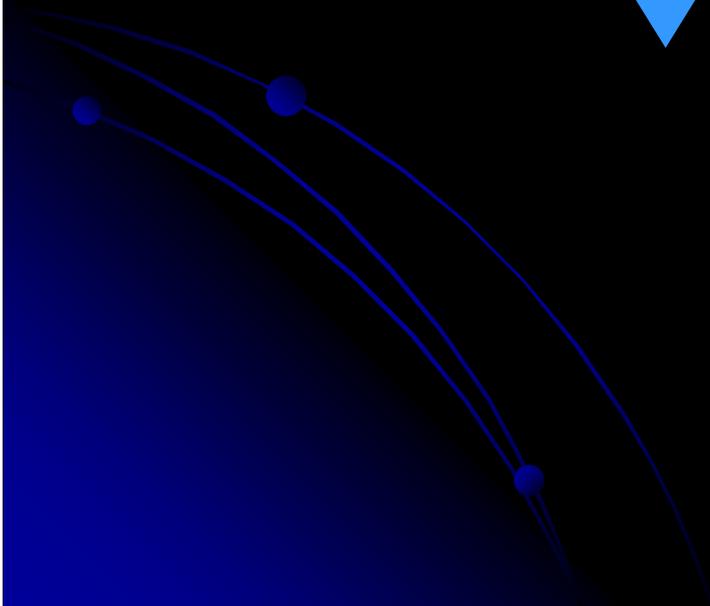
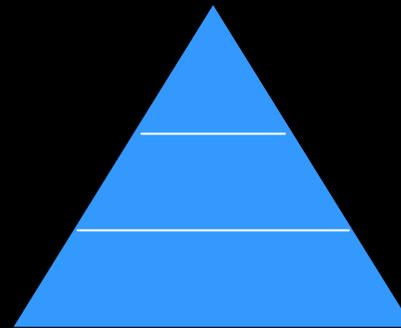
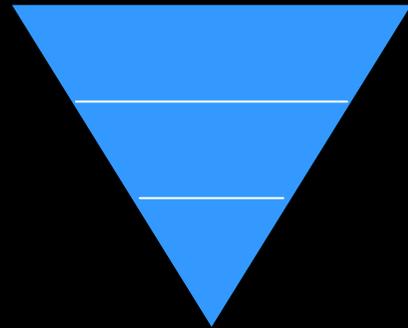
TRAINING PROGRAM CONCEPT

Participant	Rector	Vice Rector	Dean	Director
Strategic dimension				
Human dimension				
Basic/technical				



Questions

Which one is more stable?





Be aware, in some countries,
university leader can be a
dangerous job!!!

Thank you