

# Renewal of Higher Education in Africa

Report of AU/NEPAD Workshop

27-28 October, DBSA Offices  
Johannesburg



20 November 2005

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## 1. Background <sup>1</sup>

Education has once again emerged at the top of the development agenda in Africa. On the one hand, basic education is seen, both under in the worldwide campaign in the name of Education for All (EFA) and the Millennium Development Goals (MDG), as a key factor for the reduction of poverty. On the other hand, the recognition of the critical role of higher education in building the knowledge economy by the World Bank and other international fora organized under the World Conference on Higher Education (WHCE) has put higher education as one of the prima agendas of development. In Africa, this latter movement has strengthened the call for the revitalization of higher education. However, under prevailing economic conditions, the revitalization of higher education can no longer be left to national efforts alone. Therefore, the need to strengthen higher education, especially through active collaboration has already become an important strategy for building capacity, facilitating professional mobility, enhancing human development and attaining regional integration in Africa.

In its Plan of Action 2004-2007 as well as Strategic Framework for Deadline 2015, the revitalization of the African university emerges as a major agenda of the African Union. The AU's "flagship" projects, including NEPAD's efforts to promote Regional Centers of Excellence are part of this drive to strengthen higher education and research.

The AU's drive to renew African universities aims to achieve the following objectives:

- to transform the African University into a "Development University" which responds to local and regional needs while enhancing the continent's competitiveness also in the global knowledge economy;
- to position the African University as a partner and a resource for regional cooperation and integration of Africa;
- to mobilize all stakeholders in a concerted effort to share responsibilities and create synergies in the renewal of African universities.

As background it is also important to note that the AU acts through regions, facilitates discussion and engages in advocacy on selected issues. NEPAD on the other hand is a mandated programme of the AU, with its main brief being to promote social and economic transformation. NEPAD is mainly a technical/implementation arm that reports to the AU Summit and the Head of State Implementation Committee. NEPAD identifies programme through regional economic communities and is currently engaged in research on status of higher education, the relevance of tertiary education to development, capacity development through student and faculty exchanges, strengthening research networks the promotion of regional centres of excellence. NEPAD identifies key implementation and promotes collaboration and the coordination of resources.

It is important to note that the AAU tabled the following points at the Aberthy meeting prior to the G8 June 2005 meeting:

1. Consolidate democracy and increase support for Africa;
2. Increase support for higher education amongst political leaders;

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<sup>1</sup> From Prof Taye Assefa's synthesis paper: Revitalising Higher Education in Africa.

3. Renewal is dependent on state and economic revival, national strategies for S&T and higher education;
4. Strengthen leadership and management in higher education;
5. Facilitate African led centres for excellence;
6. New programmes must not be G8 driven;
7. Programmes necessary at system levels (governance, financing), institution level (leadership, equipment) and societal (more interaction).

## **2. Purpose of Workshop**

According to Prof Mboya and Dr Tema, the main reasons for constituting a joint AU/NEPAD working group were to:

1. Develop a programme/agenda for higher education within the activities of AU/NEPAD;
2. Create a space for interactions between higher education and a range of societal stakeholders that will allow higher education to become part of the 'developmental path', rather than being trapped in a critical/adversarial role;
3. Discuss ways that will allow higher education to be part of the new emphasis on science, technology and innovation;
4. Ways in which higher education can be refurbished after a long period of neglect in many countries.

Appendix 1 contains a list of participants and copy of the Agenda.

## **3. Revitalising Higher Education in Africa: A Synthesis Report**

The synthesis report commissioned by AU from Dr Taye Assefa for the meeting argues that to facilitate the process of developing a framework for the AU's intervention, it is necessary to review the challenges and issues of higher education in Africa as documented in the papers and studies produced by important actors and partners such as the Partnership for Higher Education in Africa, the Association of African Universities, the World Bank, UNESCO, among others. Accordingly, the synthesis report aims to:

- provide an understanding of the current debates in the area;
- identify common areas of focus among the documents;
- identify activities that can be immediately implemented; and
- identify issues that need further investigation.

Recent literature on the renewal of tertiary education in Africa identify several challenges that the African countries and their universities must address in order to reinforce the contribution of higher education to the process of sustainable human

development. The challenges identified include access and equity, quality and relevance, research, funding, privatization and differentiation, governance, and cross-cutting issues such as gender, HIV and AIDS, ICT, and regional collaboration.

**Prof Assefa's report proposes the following framework for revitalization:**

**1. *Promote Regional Cooperation: Consolidation and effective implementation of existing sub-regional and regional initiatives for revitalization of higher education in Africa.***

- a) Facilitate mapping of existing regional programs to renew African universities;
- b) Establish regional focal points and encourage consolidation of sub/regional initiatives to avoid unnecessary duplication of efforts and wastage of resources, to enhance program impact, to identify gaps based on priority needs at the national, sub-regional and regional levels;
- c) Mobilize resources and critical support for effective implementation of prioritized as well as consolidated program interventions;
- d) Facilitate sub/regional and North/South collaboration and partnership to ensure effective program implementation, monitoring and evaluation;
- e) Provide public fora and appropriate channels/media for sharing information and experience, and for exchange of views on program initiatives, and for promoting best practice.
- f) Identify research and higher education institutions that can be recognized as centers of excellence especially with regard to the AU/NEPAD Business Plan for Science and Technology.

**2. *Promote policies conducive for renewal of African higher education institutions.***

- a) Facilitate mapping of existing national and sub/regional policies on education and related sectors such as information and communication technology;
- b) Facilitate identification of policy gaps and reform needs;
- c) Advocate policy reforms at national, sub-regional, regional and international levels;
- d) Create public platforms for policy dialogue between policy makers, HE actors, stakeholders, researchers and partners;
- e) Facilitate representation of sub/regional HE actors and stakeholders on relevant structures and fora of the AU, NEPAD, and the RECs;
- f) Promote best practices and exchange of information and experience on policy reforms.

**3. *Promote Higher Education as a Field Study and Research.***

- a) Provide support for postgraduate as well as short-term training programs in higher education studies, including leadership development (for example, the [University of the Western Cape](#) can serve as an "incubator" in higher education studies until other institutions develop their capacity);
- b) Facilitate regional networking and collaboration in developing and providing Distance Education and Open Learning programs in the field of Higher Education; encourage the participation of members of the Diaspora in such programs;
- c) Encourage curriculum development in the area of Higher Education;

- d) Build capacity for research on higher education (for example, by setting up research grants on higher education, by strengthening CODESRIA's research fellowships on HE, by promoting research centers on higher education such as the AAU's *Higher Education Research Training Institute - HERTI*);
- e) Facilitate identification of priority research agendas and themes in the field of higher education for funding by partners;
- f) Encourage policy research/interface and effective utilization of research outputs in policy/decision-making, planning and reform processes;
- g) Provide support for publications on higher education such as case study publications, working paper series, regional journals such as *Journal of Higher Education in Africa*, etc.;
- h) Facilitate and encourage widest dissemination of research findings on higher education issues.

#### **4. Promoting university reforms.**

- a) Mobilize resources and set up a regional fund for higher education institutions that seek to develop and implement reform programs;
- b) Forge partnerships with and strengthen organizations that promote university reforms;
- c) Advocate national and regional policy reforms to create a conducive environment for institutional reforms;
- d) Establish, coordinate and strengthen an *African Observatory of University Reforms* at the regional level and a *National Observatory of University Reforms* at the local level, with constituent higher education institutions and research centers as members at the base. To minimize cost, it is necessary to explore the means for making the Observatory function as a virtual network, with a hosted secretariat at the regional level and links with members through the Internet. The purpose is to make the Observatory serve as an 'innovation hub" to foster innovation in higher education. Activities include mapping of both system and institutional innovations; developing databases of university reforms; enhancing access to a wealth of data for research and policy making; analyzing and synthesizing reforms; promoting information and experience sharing; encouraging benchmarking and promoting best practices; facilitating strategizing and reform planning; facilitating harmonization of reform practices; encouraging networking and inter-university collaboration; disseminating reform information and research outputs through publications, CD-ROMs, email alerts, newsletters, seminars and workshops;
- e) Establish university reforms web portals at the regional and national observatory levels;
- f) Promote Observatories' publications and public fora for discussion and debate on university reforms;
- g) Identify model higher education institutions that can be recognized as centres of excellence in university reforms and promote exchanges and links with other institutions for experience sharing and collaboration.
- h) Promote sub-regional and regional programs and centers for training of trainers in university reforms, senior and middle-level university leadership, and national policy makers and regulators in higher education reforms;
- i) Encourage establishment of working groups to identify issues and propose strategies for addressing challenges in broad reform areas;

- j) Develop reform monitoring and evaluation mechanisms and encourage its practice to sustain and strengthen university reforms;
- k) Encourage peer reviews among higher education institutions as part of the monitoring and evaluation mechanism;
- l) Include higher education as part of the elements to be considered in the NEPAD peer review process, particularly with regard to assessment of the relationship between government and the higher education sector, and the development and implementation of sectoral policy reforms;
- m) Devise and implement regional advocacy strategies and mechanisms to promote reforms.

**5. Strengthen the sub/regional instruments for quality assurance, accreditation and recognition of qualifications and promoting adoption of international instruments and guidelines.**

- a) Promote the full ratification and effective implementation of the *Arusha Convention on the recognition of qualifications in higher education in Africa*, which has to date been ratified by only twenty African states and the Holy See (Shabani 2004, 159);
- b) Facilitate the conclusion of formal cooperation of agreements between the African regional committee and the sub-regional bodies such as CAMES and RECs as well as among the sub-regional bodies;
- c) Facilitate the harmonization of national qualification frameworks as well as recognition and accreditation procedures and practices at the sub-regional and regional levels;
- d) Strengthen the initiatives of sub-regional networks such as the *Higher Education Quality Management Initiative for Southern Africa* (HEQMISA) and regional ones such as the AAU's African Quality Assurance Network to promote cooperation and partnership among regulatory bodies and practitioners, as well as improve quality management systems at the institutional level;
- e) Promote the endorsement and implementation of international guidelines for managing cross-border provision of higher education -- for example, *"Sharing Quality Higher Education across Borders: A Statement on Behalf of Higher Education Institutions Worldwide"*, which was prepared by the International Association of Universities (IAU), the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada (AUCC), the American Council on Education (ACE) and the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) and endorsed by the university vice chancellors during the 11<sup>th</sup> General Conference of the AAU, in February 2005 in Cape Town. A similar guideline developed by OECD and UNESCO has also been finalized;
- f) Promote best practices and benchmarks in quality assurance and encourage information and experience sharing;
- g) Promote the development of databases of African quality assurance policies and procedures, as well as QA experts.

**Discussions following Synthesis Paper**

Appreciation was expressed for the wide ranging and thorough paper (Appendix 2 is an Executive Summary). The following points/issues were raised:

1. **Revitalizing - and for what?** – questions were raised as to whether “revitalizing” is the correct term because it implies that higher education

in Africa had been “vital” during a previous period and many scholars would disagree. Alternative terms such a “rethink” or “transformation” were mentioned. Also raised were questions about “revitalization for what”, but both discussions ended inconclusively.

2. **Universities or higher education** - agreement was reached that it was time to expand the term “higher education” to all post school institutions while recognizing that higher education is a differentiated system with a particular role for universities, and for other more vocationally or technologically orientated institutions.
3. **Systems** - it was suggested that the Synthesis paper may focus too much on institutions, rather than systems. Currently most states in Africa are developing increasingly complex and diversified systems, requiring emphasis not only on individual institutions, but for system capacity and integration.
4. **Build on other initiatives** - there are a great variety of ‘revitalization’ activities taking place and it was stressed that AU should try and ensure that new efforts build on these. It also implies greater effort at co-ordination.
5. **Map initiatives** – it was stressed that in order to build and coordinate revitalization efforts, current and new initiatives should be mapped and the information disseminated.
6. **Accessing donor resources** – the ‘promise’ of much greater donor contributions to higher education in Africa raises very important questions about what structures and mechanisms will be put in place and how will AU ensure that ‘revitalization’ does not become donor driven.
7. **From challenges to strategies** – it was felt that in the past too much emphasis had been put on ‘challenges’, and that it may be time to shift the focus to strategies for renewal. But, it was pointed out that strategies must be properly informed about what exactly the problems are, otherwise strategies will falter.
8. **Science and technology** - a comment was that the Synthesis paper did not pay enough attention to the increasing emphasis on S&T, which is increasingly regarded as a more important contributor to development than higher education. Strategies on how to link higher education to S&T initiatives should be explored.
9. **Networks, not centers of excellence** - the point was made that internationally there is a shift towards networks of excellence, rather than ‘physical’ centers of excellence, which is a strategy that does not have a history of success in Africa.
10. **Financing higher education** - a central issue for any revitalization programme will be to determine what are adequate funding levels and what is the responsibility of the state, clients and partners. This also raises the thorny issue of “cost-sharing”. The question was asked at to



whether controversial issues such as cost sharing should/should part of the policy discussions of AU?

11. **Higher education, development and the knowledge economy** – when addressing these issues there should be sensitivity to the fact that European and US notions of the knowledge economy and the important role of higher education in these economies cannot be simply copied and replicated in Africa without a much more complex and nuanced understanding of how that could work on the continent – which necessitates more research and reflection.

### **Identified Areas of Focus for Programs**

A working group distilled the Synthesis Paper and the ensuing Discussions into **Three Thematic Issues:**

- Promote and Develop Policies for the Renewal of Higher Education at the Global, Continental, Regional, National and Institutional Levels;
- Promote International, Continental, Regional and Sub-Regional Cooperation;
- Promote Knowledge Production and Dissemination (Research and Teaching) of Higher Education.

For an elaboration of the three thematic themes, see the attached set of slides (Appendix 3). From this elaboration the following were identified as focus areas.

#### **Areas of Focus for Programs:**

1. Negotiate space in the development process of appropriate policies at international level on issues such as GATS, WTO, and ensuring that there is dialogue and agreement.
2. Develop and promote continent wide policies on issues such as financing, governance, HIV /AIDS, ICT, equity including gender, Science and Technology.
3. Create a fund for the renewal of higher education to be used education in areas such as curriculum development, quality improvement and research on issues such as the links between higher education and development.
4. Promote reform policies at regional, national and institutional levels.
5. Identify policy gaps in critical areas, establish expert panels to map and analyze policies, and gaps, in identified areas.
6. Support public platforms (Forums) for dialogue between policy makers, higher education stakeholders, researches and social and economic partners.
7. Support the expansion of higher education as a field of study at the post graduate level.
8. Support the identification and information dissemination on best practice policy reforms.
9. Facilitate the ratification and implementation of the recognition of qualifications in Africa, at continental and regional levels and qualifications framework in line with the Arusha Declaration.
10. Facilitate the mapping of existing national and sub-regional policies on education and related sectors such as information and communication technology.
11. Support and promote the establishment of knowledge/research networks on the continent and with colleagues from other continents.

## Appendix 1: Agenda & Participants



# RENEWAL OF AFRICAN UNIVERSITIES

Development Bank of Southern  
Africa (DBSA), Midrand, South Africa

27-28 October 2005

## PROGRAMME

### Thursday, 27 October 2005

08h00	Registration, Tea and Coffee	
09h00	Welcome & Introduction	Prof. Mzobanzi Mboya (NEPAD)
	Objectives of the Meeting	Dr. Botlhale Tema (AU)
09h15	Overview of Programme	Dr. Teboho Moja (Facilitator)
09h30	Renewal of African Universities	Presenter: Dr. Taye Assefa Chair: Prof. Mzobanzi Mboya
10h45	Tea / Coffee Break	
11h15	Group Discussion	3 Groups
13h00	Lunch	
14h15	Group Discussion - continues	3 Groups
16h00	Tea / Coffee Break	
16h30	Feedback on the Issues	Facilitator: Dr. Teboho Moja
18h00	Break	

### Friday, 28 October 2005

09h00	Framework for Action	Facilitator: Dr. Teboho Moja
10h45	Tea / Coffee Break	
11h15	Framework for Action	Prof. Taye Assefa Dr. Beatrice Njenga
13h00	Structure of the Report	Facilitator: Dr. Teboho Moja Dr. Nico Cloete
13h30	Lunch and Departure	

**AU EXPERTS' MEETING on Renewal of African Universities  
27 & 28 October 2005**

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# **REVITALIZING HIGHER EDUCATION IN AFRICA**

## **Executive Summary (Taye Assefa)**

### **Introduction**

Education has once again emerged at the top of the development agenda in Africa. On the one hand, basic education is seen, both under in the worldwide campaign in the name of Education for All (EFA) and the Millennium Development Goals (MDG), as a key factor for the reduction of poverty. On the other hand, the World Bank's recognition of the critical role of higher education in building the knowledge economy and the call made in international fora organized under the World Conference on Higher Education (WHCE) that a movement similar to EFA should be accorded to higher education has put the latter as one of the prima agendas of development. In Africa, this latter movement has strengthened the call for the revitalization of higher education. However, under prevailing economic conditions, the revitalization of higher education can no longer be left to national efforts alone. Therefore, the need to strengthen higher education, especially through active collaboration has already become an important strategy for building capacity, facilitating professional mobility, enhancing human development and attaining regional integration in Africa.

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The AU's drive to renew African universities aims to achieve the following objectives:

- to transform the African University into a "Development University" which responds to local and regional needs while enhancing the continent's competitiveness also in the global knowledge economy;
- to position the African University as a partner and a resource for regional cooperation and integration of Africa;
- to mobilize all stakeholders in a concerted effort to share responsibilities and create synergies in the renewal of African universities.

To facilitate the process of developing a framework for the AU's intervention, it has been found necessary to review the challenges and issues of higher education in Africa as documented in the papers and studies produced by important actors and partners such as the Partnership for Higher Education in Africa, the Association of African Universities, the World Bank, UNESCO, among others. Accordingly, this synthesis report has been produced to:

- provide an understanding of the current debates in the area;
- identify common areas of focus among the documents;
- identify activities that can be immediately implemented; and
- identify issues that need further investigation.

Recent literature on the renewal of tertiary education in Africa identify several challenges that the African countries and their universities must address in order to reinforce the contribution of higher education to the process of sustainable human development. The challenges identified include access and equity, quality and relevance, research, funding, privatization and differentiation, governance, and cross-cutting issues such as gender, HIV and AIDS, ICT, and regional collaboration.

### **Access and Equity**

The rise in the prices of oil and other manufactured goods since the 1970s, the fall in the prices of primary goods in the world market, the loss in the value of national currencies, combined with other factors to trigger a deficit in the balance of payments of heavily indebted African countries. This forced them to accept the conditionalities in the IMF/World Bank-imposed Structural Adjustment Programs in return for technical and financial assistance. A consequence of this is the reduction in the level of public funding of higher education, partly because investment in higher education was thought to provide less social return than that in basic education and partly because the general economic decline pushed the state to require universities to operate under a severe austerity regime.

The decline in public expenditure was in sharp contrast with the dramatic increase in gross enrollment ratio in tertiary education. Furthermore, up to 80 percent of the higher education budget was devoted to personnel and student maintenance costs, leaving few resources for infrastructure, libraries, equipment, or supplies. Existing resources were hence overstretched to meet rising enrollments. As a consequence, the teaching/learning environment deteriorated and the quality of education began to suffer.

The inability to augment the capacity of physical infrastructure, facilities and other resources led the tertiary institutions to limit enrollments by instituting competitive admission. The students with better-endowed family and educational backgrounds were in a better position to score the required high points and secure admission than those students from economically marginalized and other disadvantaged social groups, including girls, who had inadequate preparation at the primary and secondary school levels. Equitable access therefore could not be ensured.

In order to redress the equity balance and attain gender parity, several universities have adopted different forms of affirmative action, ranging from means-tested scholarships to quota systems and lower entry points. To reconcile excellence with equity and ensure retention and success, some have reinforced their regular programs with supplementary remedial support for students with weaker academic backgrounds. These approaches have reportedly helped to enhance access and ensure success to girl students and others from the marginalized and disadvantaged social groups. Nevertheless, affirmative action at the tertiary level will not fully resolve the problem of institutional discrimination at the lower level. It is necessary to enhance opportunities for all by improving access to and raising the quality of primary and secondary education. Still, the need for systematic research to determine the effectiveness of affirmative action and their precise impact on students, institutions, and society has been underlined.

## **Financing**

Inadequate state subsidy, the purely monetary interpretation of the private/social rates of return from higher education, combined with the findings that most beneficiaries of public subsidies were students from middle and higher income background, and the characterization of higher education as elitist have all combined to push the privatization agenda in higher education in Africa. This situation led to a demand that the beneficiaries, i.e., parents and students, should be made to share the cost of providing higher education. Furthermore, the need for cost-effectiveness and supplementary income to augment public subsidy also pushed higher education institutions to devise cost-sharing, cost-cutting and revenue-generating schemes. The measures taken ranged from withdrawal or reduction of public subsidies allocated to student social services, to introduction of tuition and other fees and admission of privately sponsored students, including foreign students, commercialization of service units and university assets, and introduction of demand-driven courses. The adoption of a neo-liberal economic policy, the liberalization of higher education, a relative relaxation of state control of institutional autonomy, and the development of institutional strategic plans often set the context for these reforms. The outcome of these reforms varied from country to country and even from institution to institution. Some institutions such as Makerere University have been able to significantly increase their enrollment of fee-paying students and use their additional earnings to provide financial incentives for their teachers, improve some facilities and even make a modest expansion of physical infrastructure. In some institutions, cost sharing is reported have resulted in either no marked increase in enrollment or even in its decrease, and in some other cases it is reported to have increased the economic hardship of students and led to adverse effects such as student strikes, prostitution, and a diversion of study time to income-generating student business. In some countries, loan schemes and graduate taxation were introduced to enable students to cover their costs while in others the shortage of lodging space is reported to have initiated staff and students to embark on investing in construction of dormitories using their own resources. Some governments are also reported to have introduced an education tax to augment state subsidy to the public higher education institutions. However, there is no indication of improvement of equity as a result of these financial reforms.

Despite the gains particularly from the financial reforms, there is an increasing concern about the sustainability of the reforms. Weakness cited in the criticisms against the financial reforms in Makerere, for instance, include "overcommercialization" of the academic programs, linking the rapid expansion of the university to a decline in quality and equity, as well as a reduction in faculty time available for research and publication. Further, the explosion in student enrollment has not been matched by a corresponding in facilities, notably, lecture halls, seminar rooms and laboratories and equipment for science-based subjects. Issues have also been raised about whether privatization and marketization are not detracting universities from their basic functions as centers of critical thinking and reflection, of knowledge production, of creation and cultivation of values and of enhancing equal opportunities for all and of innovation to address society's needs for growth and progress. While institutional initiatives aimed at cost-cutting and diversification of sources of income available to universities are clearly necessary and viable, this cannot be taken as an excuse for the state to abdicate its responsibility of social providing provisioning.

## **Differentiation and Privatization**

Although gross tertiary enrollment in Africa remains the lowest compared to other regions, the *rate* of increase in the last three decades has been regarded as the highest of all the regions of the world. Clearly, the existing public institutions could not meet the ever-increasing and diverse demands for higher education, including lifelong learning. To respond to this, in addition to establishing new public institutions, system deregulation and differentiation has been undertaken in many countries. Both non-profit and for-profit private institutions have been opened up. The mode of provision has began to be diversified with both new and some of the existing public institutions offering Distance Education and Open Learning. Together, these have enhanced access opportunities, although the proportion of the students the private institutions have been able to absorb still remains quite low compared to the public institutions. Despite the many potential benefits of Distance Education, such as addressing lifelong learning needs, cost-efficiency, curriculum flexibility, adaptation to post-graduate training for working students, potential for training on HIV/AIDS, etc., the challenges of expanding it in all countries are daunting. These range from lack of policy and poor communication infrastructure, to lack of expertise, appropriate teaching materials, and poor quality of learner support services. However, these can be addressed through initiatives for regional collaboration, such as NEPAD's arrangement with UNISA, AVU, and NOUN to provide teacher training in six countries affected by war and conflicts. UNESCO's partnership with the South African Institute of Distance Education is expected to facilitate the development of policies for open and distance higher education.

Most of the private institutions are concentrated in urban areas and focus on the low-cost vocational and commercial programs, including short-duration tailor-made courses that target the job market. Hence, they pose a challenge to the public institutions in their competition for high fee-paying students; unlike the public institutions they don't have to cross-subsidize programs that have a lesser market demand such as basic research, the humanities, and lab-based science subjects that require higher investment. Most private higher education institutions also rely on part-time teachers that are often drawn from the public higher education institutions. By avoiding the cost of hiring full-time staff and by using the services of teachers from the public institutions, they are in effect benefiting from public subsidies. By sharing teachers in this way, they are also in position to build their image and reinforce their competitive edge, for they will argue that they have well experienced teachers who can assure the quality of their education. The teachers also benefit by earning extra income. The public institutions, however, do not have the benefit of ensuring the full time of these teachers at their disposal for research, mentoring younger staff and other assignments. Regulatory policies therefore need to address these issues when licensing and accrediting private higher education institutions.

The contribution of private higher education to development priorities could be enhanced through the creation of an enabling and supportive environment. This includes access to loans, allowing students on government scholarships to enroll in private institutions, tax holidays and tax exemptions for imports of educational materials, access to free or low cost land for construction of buildings in areas. However, such public support to private higher education institutions may need to be proportional to their inputs in addressing issues of equity, especially opening of access opportunities to those living in underdeveloped or peripheral regions, contribution to development of human resources in key areas such as applied science and health science.



The opening of the education sector to private participation has also paved the way for cross-border provision. This form of provision has involved both public institutions from within Africa, such as UNISA, and other providers, both for-profit and public, that are based in the West and have either partnerships with local ones or have branches in Africa. However, whereas South Africa has put in place a guideline that requires its institutions to ensure that the quality of the education they provide abroad is no less than that available to students registered with the home institution, this kind of quality assurance is not always available from providers outside the continent. Ensuring the quality of cross-border provision is therefore an emerging major challenge - more so with the inclusion of education as a tradable service under the WTO's General Agreement on Trade in Services (WTO/GATS).

The inclusion of education under GATS has rekindled the debate on whether higher education is a public or a private good, and raised concerns about the threats posed by GATS, namely: that research will be marginalized, quality compromised, equity sidelined, public support withdrawn, state sovereignty and authority undermined, cultural autonomy diluted, and national and regional development agendas put at the mercy of the market. The fact that most of the national quality assurance and accreditation bodies are new and not well developed compounds the challenges posed by for-profit cross-border providers and GATS. The alternatives proposed are to enhance regional and international collaboration in research, capacity building, policy formulation and advocacy, quality assurance, and to create an enabling environment for local providers.

### **Quality and Relevance**

The challenge to the quality of higher education in many countries of Africa has come mainly from a combination of interrelated factors. These include: the high increase in enrollment; the inadequacy of resources to replenish educational supplies, improve and expand facilities such as lecture halls and classrooms, libraries, laboratories and lodgings, thereby creating overcrowding; the lack of small-group tutoring and other remedial support; peer mentoring, outdated teaching methods that simply rely on lectures; outdated curricula that are not regularly reviewed to accommodate current needs and developments in the field; the shortage of qualified staff which prevents peer mentoring and results in heavy workloads to others; the preoccupation of an increasing number of staff with extra income-generating activities such as part-time teaching and consultancy which takes up time that should have been devoted to research and student consultation; brain drain which exacerbates teacher shortage, high level of inbreeding due to the shortage of qualified staff, the weakening of research and publishing activities due to inadequate resources and shortage of researchers, the limited number of graduate programs and limited capacity for alternative staff development programs, poor access to up-to-date scientific information and literature due to low library budgets and limited development of ICT infrastructure and access to online resources, decreased opportunities for sabbaticals and fellowships thus narrowing opportunities for keeping abreast of new developments; and low level of development of quality management systems.

The ageing of the professoriate is another challenge that will compound the problem of staff shortage and low research output. Efforts at ensuring continuity and succession through staff development programs are constrained by insufficient resources, weak graduate programs, scarcity of fellowship opportunities, the slackening of mentoring practices, and the weakening of research programs. Short-term measures for dealing with the problem of ageing include raising the retirement age and retention of the retired staff on short-term contracts. However, these

measures need to be reinforced by longer-term interventions aimed at correcting the conditions that led to the staff deficits in the first place.

Other strategies adopted to address the problem include fostering inter-university partnerships in the form of sandwich graduate programs, including collaboration through regional centers of excellence. International and regional cooperation to enhance opportunities for sabbaticals, short-term training and staff exchange programs will also help to improve the quality of staff.

The establishment of regional networks of research and graduate training, some with initiated by AAU with support from ADEA/WGE, and others by donors, have been useful in building the human resource capacity of several African universities and in stemming the outflow of intellectual talent. Apart from conducting their own research, these networks have also been able to strengthen research by mobilizing resources and offering research grants to young scholars in universities with limited research budgets. Nevertheless, the financial sustainability of these institutions will remain tenuous so long as they continue to be dependant on external funding.

Another element of quality is relevance. With the increasing privatization of higher education, there is a trend of equating relevance with market responsiveness. The fulfillment of the broad mission of a university, spanning critical thinking, knowledge generation, innovation, production of different skills, "an enlightened citizenry", laying the foundation for democracy, nation building, and social cohesion, calls for a more comprehensive definition of relevance, a different pedagogic orientation, and new learning competencies. Academic programs should produce not just job seekers but also job creators, cultivate analytical skills necessary for independent thinking, cater to the needs of not just those enrolling fresh from secondary schools but also those that need lifelong learning. This requires not only redesigning the curriculum to meet the demands of the knowledge society but also adoption of a different methodology as well as retraining of teachers.

### **HIV and AIDS**

An emerging challenge facing higher education in Africa is the HIV and AIDS pandemic. The close interaction among the main constituent members of the university community, as well as the norms and practices pertaining to social and sexual life on university campuses in Africa make these institutions particularly vulnerable to the HIV/AIDS pandemic. Its devastating impact on higher education includes, the death of teachers, students and administrators, a reduction in the number of persons to be educated, an increase on workload of replacements, frequent teacher absenteeism and intermittent student attendance due to illness or for caring for family members, low teacher and student morale, a rise in university expenditure (due to missed classes, lost investment in staff and students, high health service costs), a decline in quality of education, and a fall in the number of graduating students.

Studies carried out by SAUVCA, AAU and WGHE on the response of higher education institutions to HIV and AIDS show that, except for some universities in Eastern and Southern Africa, there is generally:

- A lack of institutional policy towards HIV and AIDS.
- Lack of a coordinated response across the higher education sector
- Lack of a national and regional audit system to track progresses and difficulties faced by institutions

- Lack of collaborative programs with GOs and/or NGOs and little or no regional collaboration
- Few or no university-wide structures for coordinating and implementing institution's response
- Poor
- Little or no budgetary provision for implementation of any AIDS-related plans
- Poor records on the HIV/AIDS-affected due to lack of management information systems, pervasive secrecy and fear of stigmatization and discrimination.
- Little or no evidence of mainstreaming HIV/AIDS into the teaching process and into the curriculum;

These surveys underline the need for:

- integration of the response into the institution's mission
- a strategic approach that defines the framework and structures for institutional response;
- Committed leadership
- Experience and information sharing
- Cohesion with national policies and strategies
- Ensuring multi-disciplinarity and cross-sector collaboration in research.

Apart from the commissioning of the studies and dissemination of the findings, recent regional initiatives to build the capacity of higher education institutions to effectively respond to HIV/AIDS include the production of a training toolkit by the AAU, the WGHE's support to enable institutions to develop HIV/AIDS policies, a UNDP project to enable institutions to mainstream HIV/AIDS into the curriculum. The AAU and WGHE are also promotion regional networking and collaboration.

### **Brain Drain**

Some sources indicate that there are more African scientists and engineers working in the USA than there are in the entire African continent. Such outflow of human capital has a serious impact on national development efforts and the capacity of higher education institutions to fulfill their missions. Firstly, the skills lost through brain drain cannot be easily replaced given the considerable amount of investment required to produce even a first-degree holder let alone one with a tertiary degree coupled with sufficient research skills. Secondly, the loss of well trained and highly skilled personnel to a higher education institution means a reduced capacity to produce the necessary quality and quantity of skilled human resources and research needed for national development. Thirdly, the outflow of highly skilled professional person power results in reduced public service efficiency, low productivity, low competitiveness, decreased income and a decline in national growth.

There are various factors that lead to brain drain, especially from higher education institutions. These include: rising student enrollments and increased work load, deteriorating working conditions, lack of opportunities for productive intellectual engagement with peers abroad, declining state funding, poor salaries and benefits, lack of academic freedom and institutional autonomy, plus political instability and conflict. these push factors are aggravated by the pull factors in the industrial world, which includes better income and work environment as well as greater opportunities for professional development and protected individual freedom.

Strategies to contain the outmigration of talent and in some cases even achieve reversal include: improving institutional autonomy, working conditions, salaries and benefits, opportunities for intellectual engagement and professional development at the institutional level; launching and/or strengthening joint degree programs; creating conducive condition for permanent or temporary repatriation of members of the Diaspora; Use of ICT for tapping into the skills of members of the Diaspora. The long-term solution, however, lies in ensuring rapid economic growth and improving the livelihood of people, creating a democratic society wherein individual liberties are guaranteed, and ensuring peace and stability.

### **Information and Communication Technology**

The increased pressure for access, the need for diversification and expansion of open and distance learning, the need to develop efficient management of information systems, the need for effective quality management systems, the need to access the wealth of scientific information available through the Internet, and the need to disseminate research outputs widely and rapidly, the need to network with peers regionally and internationally have made access to and effective utilization of ICT a critical requirement for higher education to effectively accomplish its mandates. However, most universities' efforts to access and utilize ICT have been constrained by lack of capacity (infrastructural, human and financial resources) and an unfavorable policy environment (both institutional and national). In particular, the high cost of bandwidth has been a major obstacle for greater integration of ICT in higher education activities.

A variety of initiatives have been launched at the institutional, national, regional and international levels, to help higher education institutions in Africa to build their ICT capacity and/or to identify the current status of ICT, the main issues and challenges encountered, and the solutions to overcome the major constraints. At the national level, many institutions of research and higher education, for example, in South Africa, Kenya, Nigeria, Egypt, have formed consortia to buy bandwidth, coordinate access and manage effective utilization. At the Partnership for Higher Education Africa has been striving to enhance ICT access in eleven institutions by facilitating for them to form a consortia. The WGHE has been providing technical support to a number of institutions to enable them to develop an ICT policy. The Association of Francophone Universities has been establishing campus centers to provide ICT access to students, teachers and researchers. Last February, the AAU was given a mandate by its members to act as a focal point for various regional initiatives and also to establish a regional consortia of higher education institutions to facilitate access to higher bandwidth at lower cost, as well as to facilitate the integration of ICT in the basic functions of member institutions. The AAU has already commissioned consultants to develop a plan of action to be tabled for discussion and adoption at its conference during the WSIS in Tunis in November 2005. However, the success of these regional initiatives will hinge not only on the mobilization of huge amounts of financial resources and the development of human resources, but also the readiness of governments to address the problems of power supply, the liberalization of the telecom industry and VSAT licensing, tax exemptions for imports of ICT equipment and software for educational and research purposes.

### **Regional Initiatives for Revitalizing Higher Education In Africa**

Efforts to revitalize higher education in Africa are multi-dimensional both in content and level. At the institutional level, many universities have developed strategic plans

and embarked on a variety of reform activities. To build their capacity, many universities have also initiated or strengthened inter-university collaborations, both with institutions in Africa and those based in the North, in the areas of research, capacity building, staff exchange, information and experience sharing, etc.

Another related trend is the formation of sub-/regional networks and the transformation of some universities as centers of excellence, some initiated by the AAU, with support from ADEA's WGHE, others such as the AERC and ACBF supported by donors. These networks are very useful in strengthening regional cooperation; in building the human resource capacity of sister institutions; in improving quality by ensuring relevance of content, participation in research and reduction in inbreeding; avoiding the huge cost of either launching an expensive solo program or sending trainees abroad; and harmonization of curricula and promotion of brain circulation within the region thereby stemming the tide of brain drain. Ensuring their financial sustainability is a challenge that still has to be addressed.

Several international partners have also been very active in funding or implementing interventions aimed at enhancing the transformation of the education sector in general and the strengthening of higher education in particular. The "African Higher Education Activities in Development" (AHEAD) database developed by ACU in support of the AAU, ACU, and SAUVCA 10-year partnership program has been able to compile data on 349 externally-funded projects in African higher education. An analysis of the database shows that the main thematic areas that draw the highest funding support or the highest number of projects are:

1. sector governance projects (by The World Bank)
2. human resource development projects (by CIDA and JICA)
3. institutional strengthening as well as HIV/AIDS projects (by Ford)
4. quality enhancement/curriculum development, science and technology and research collaboration (by NUFU and JICA).

A point to be noted, however, is that an emphasis on project funding may not show all the influential actors in African higher education. An important example in this context is UNESCO, which has been very influential in promoting higher education by identifying emerging issues, by its advocacy, by promoting academic and professional mobility, developing guidelines and promoting best practices, by organizing regional and international fora for exchange of ideas and experiences among researchers, actors, policy makers, practitioners and partners as well as stakeholders. In October 2002, UNESCO formally launched the Forum on Higher Education, Research, and Knowledge, which is launched the Forum on Higher Education, Research, and Knowledge in Dakar, Senegal. The African Scientific Committee, composed of researchers and policymakers, has been working to identify critical gaps in our understanding of higher education in Africa, to examine conditions of knowledge production and consumption in Africa, as well as the sources of influence, to commission research on selected themes, promote debates and discussions, strengthen research capacity, revitalize knowledge producing institutions, and improve the research environment.

Another important pan-African actor in the area of research on the African higher education scene is the Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa (CODESRIA). Since its founding in 1973, CODESRIA has been playing a catalytic role in developing and sustaining a community of social science researchers in Africa. Through its training programs, promotion of principles of academic freedom, support for research and scholarly publications, and facilitation of forums for critical

reflection and the exchange of views, and the nurturing of networks of researchers, CODESRIA has been actively striving to strengthen multidisciplinary research in African higher education and research institutions. It has also been promoting the cultivation of an African perspective in Social Science research. Apart from the fact that its activities are tied to the needs and concerns of the universities and research centers, most of its program participants are drawn from these institutions. CODESRIA is also working to contribute to the revitalization of higher education through its partnership in the publication of the *Journal of Higher Education in Africa*, its hosting and coordination of ADEA's Working Group on Education and Finance and its new research theme "Higher Education in Africa: Crisis, Reform, Transformation".

Another pan-African actor promoting the transformation of higher education in Africa is ADEA's Working Group on Higher Education (WGHE). Since its establishment in 1989, the WGHE has been actively supporting case studies on critical issues of higher education, organizing public platforms for policy dialogue and experience sharing among researchers, policymakers, stakeholders and partners, building the capacity of higher education institutions through support for leadership training, strategic planning and policy development in such areas as ICT and HIV/AIDS, and development of networks for research and graduate training. The WGHE has also been actively engaged in policy advocacy through wide dissemination of its research findings using its publications, public fora, and electronic media such as the website. Its case studies on university reform experiences and surveys of recent innovations in higher education institutions, coupled with its programs for promotion of strategic planning and policy development are clear indications of the WGHE's commitment to enhancing the revitalization of African universities.

Among the regional initiatives aimed at revitalizing higher education in Africa, by far the most ambitious and comprehensive one is the 10-year partnership program developed by the Association of African Universities (AAU), the Association of Commonwealth Universities (AAU), and the South African Vice Chancellors Association (AAU). The program has already been endorsed by the Commission for Africa in its report of March 2005, which was submitted to the G-8 Summit. In its report, the Commission has called upon the international community to provide the US \$5 billion necessary to fully implement the program.

Launched under the title, *Renewing the African University*, the programme is based on the belief that the universities of Africa must be at the heart of any sustainable effort to rebuild the continent. If Africa's universities are to play this role, a major and sustained program of renewal must occur, which will require partnerships not only with local and regional actors and stakeholders, but also with the universities, businesses and governments of the developed world.

The partnership program seeks to address most of the challenges identified in this synthesis report, namely, access, equity, governance and leadership, staff development and research, infrastructure development including ICT, relevance and market responsiveness, and HIV/AIDS. It also seeks to promote a constructive engagement between the state and the higher education institutions, increase the participation of African universities in the global knowledge economy and to promote North/South and South/South collaboration, enhance partnership between universities and local actors, and promote regional collaboration.

The 10-year partnership program is complemented by the AAU's four-year Core Program which revolves around the theme of "*Networking of African Higher*

*Education Institutions for the Renewal of the African University*". The Core Program, which was approved by the vice chancellors of its member universities at its 11<sup>th</sup> General Conference in February 2005, covers research capacity development, quality assurance, gender, ICT, scholarly information, HIV/AIDS, and regional networks for graduate training in Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution. The AAU has also signed an MOU with NEPAD and a number of other regional actors. By virtue of its experience in regional program implementation, the scope of its new programs, its wide networks and partnerships as well as its regional status as an apex continental organization representing 185 universities drawn from 44 African countries and the four linguistic zones, the AAU stands as an indispensable partner in any regional program aimed at revitalizing African universities.

Furthermore, a regional initiative by the African Union or NEPAD aimed at revitalizing African higher education needs to take cognizance of the main initiatives already in process, namely, the university renewal program developed by AAU, ACU and SAUVCA, and complement, refine and reinforce it to meet both national and regional goals. This calls for not only a closer collaboration in program coordination but also creation of a conducive policy environment and mobilization of resources for building the institutional capacity of the AAU and its implementing partners. In endorsing the renewal program, the Commission for Africa (2005, 138) urged the international community to commit in 2005 to provide US\$500 million per annum over ten years to revitalize Africa's institutions of higher education. NEPAD and the African Union should add their voice to this call and actively campaign to secure the fund.

### **The Way Forward: The Role of the African Union**

In its Strategic Plan 2004-2007, the African Union (AU) identifies higher education as a strategic resource for the achievement of its mission and underscores the need to revitalize it. It sees its role in this process as a catalytic one and aims to achieve it by "capitalizing on existing initiatives" and "empowering existing structures and mechanisms". As part of its revitalization initiative, it has developed ten "Flagship Projects", among which are: Regional Curriculum Initiatives (Flagship Project 2); Centers of Academic Excellence (Flagship Project 4); Scaling up E-learning Initiatives (Flagship Project 5); and Continental Fellowships and Educational Exchange Schemes (Flagship Project 7).

With assistance from the Centre of African Renaissance Studies (a graduate school of Univ. of South Africa), NEPAD is preparing an African framework for developing centers of excellence in Africa. Once identification of the five centers of excellence is completed, the program is expected to start in 2007. NEPAD's has also developed a Project for the graduate training of nurses and midwives using five HEIs in Kenya and Tanzania.

The AU's chosen role of a catalyst and its strategy of "capitalizing on existing initiatives" and "empowering existing structures and mechanisms" is appropriate and pragmatic. The AU's intervention to enhance revitalization of higher education in Africa should be based on its niches as a continental organization of member states, i.e.,

- a) policy advocacy
- b) resource mobilization and capacity building
- c) promotion of collaboration and partnership
- d) identification of priority areas
- e) facilitation of consolidation and monitoring of regional initiatives

- f) identification of regional focal points for coordination
- g) promotion of centers of excellence
- h) promotion of benchmarking and best practices
- i) Creation of platforms for policy dialogue between practitioners, researchers, policy makers, stakeholders and partners.

Obviously such a niche cannot translate into a continental program of intervention without putting in place the necessary structures and frameworks for partnering with existing actors and institutions that are already implementing regional initiatives for renewing higher education. Some of these partners have already been identified in the preceding sections; however, there is need to broaden the representation based on the significance of the individual partners on the African higher education and research landscape.

While the specific details of the governance structure, management, and coordination of the AU's intervention can be worked out later, we can envisage the necessity of a top- level organ drawn from the AU, NEPAD, and about ten representatives of key regional institutions to provide core leadership, which can be referred to as **Higher Education Forum of AU**. If necessary, this organ can be supported by thematic working groups composed of reputed scholars and/or representatives of other relevant sub-regional and regional institutions. Between them these organs will be responsible for defining the strategies and modalities of the AU's intervention, setting priorities, and determining the scope, content and time frame of the intervention.

Even though renewing the African university is a mammoth task, given the diversity of the challenges and the enormous resources required, it is obvious that a few localized initiatives will not have much impact. That is why a review and consolidation of the existing regional initiatives would be a strategic approach. Since the AU's primary role would be catalytic in light of the niches identified above, the following interventions have been proposed for preliminary consideration by the team of experts. These interventions have been proposed with the belief that they are more amenable to a continental approach, and being not fragmented by a narrow focus on a specific challenge or issue of higher education, they are likely to have a broader and more tangible impact. If endorsed, it is assumed that implementation will be effected under the oversight of the above-mentioned Forum.

### **Proposed Framework for Revitalization:**

#### **1. *Promoting consolidation and effective implementation of existing sub-regional and regional initiatives for revitalization of higher education in Africa***

- a) Facilitate mapping of existing regional programs to renew African universities;
- b) Establish regional focal points and encourage consolidation of sub/regional initiatives to avoid unnecessary duplication of efforts and wastage of resources, to enhance program impact, to identify gaps based on priority needs at the national, sub-regional and regional levels;
- c) Mobilize resources and critical support for effective implementation of prioritized as well as consolidated program interventions;
- d) Facilitate sub/regional and North/South collaboration and partnership to ensure effective program implementation, monitoring and evaluation;
- e) Provide public fora and appropriate channels/media for sharing information and experience, and for exchanging views on program initiatives, and for promoting best practice.



## **2. Promote policies conducive for renewal of African higher education institutions**

- a) Facilitate mapping of existing national and sub/regional policies on education and related sectors such as information and communication technology;
- b) Facilitate identification of policy gaps and reform needs;
- c) Advocate policy reforms at national, sub-regional, regional and international levels;
- d) Create public platforms for policy dialogue between policy makers, HE actors, stakeholders, researchers and partners;
- e) Facilitate representation of sub/regional HE actors and stakeholders on relevant structures and fora of the AU, NEPAD, and the RECs;
- f) Promote best practices and exchange of information and experience on policy reforms.

## **3. Promoting Higher Education as a Field Study and Research**

- a) Provide support for postgraduate as well as short-term training programs in higher education studies, including leadership development (for example, the University of the Western Cape can serve as an "incubator" in higher education studies until other institutions develop their capacity);
- b) Facilitate regional networking and collaboration in developing and providing Distance Education and Open Learning programs in the field of Higher Education; encourage the participation of members of the Diaspora in such programs;
- c) Encourage curriculum development in the area of Higher Education;
- d) Build capacity for research on higher education (for example, by setting up research grants on higher education, by strengthening CODESRIA's research fellowships on HE, by promoting research centers on higher education such as the AAU's *Higher Education Research Training Institute - HERTI*);
- e) Facilitate identification of priority research agendas and themes in the field of higher education for funding by partners;
- f) Encourage policy research/interface and effective utilization of research outputs in policy/decision-making, planning and reform processes;
- g) Provide support for publications on higher education such as case study publications, working paper series, regional journals such as *Journal of Higher Education in Africa*, etc.;
- h) Facilitate and encourage widest dissemination of research findings on higher education issues.

## **4. Promoting university reforms**

- a) Mobilize resources and set up a regional fund for higher education institutions that seek to develop and implement reform programs;
- b) Forge partnerships with and strengthen organizations that promote university reforms;
- c) Advocate national and regional policy reforms to create a conducive environment for institutional reforms;
- d) Establish, coordinate and strengthen an *African Observatory of University Reforms* at the regional level and a *National Observatory of University Reforms* at the local level, with constituent higher education institutions and research centers as members at the base. To minimize cost, it is necessary to explore the means for making the Observatory function as a virtual

network, with a hosted secretariat at the regional level and links with members through the Internet. The purpose is to make the Observatory serve as an 'innovation hub' to foster innovation in higher education. Activities include mapping of both system and institutional innovations; developing databases of university reforms; enhancing access to a wealth of data for research and policy making; analyzing and synthesizing reforms; promoting information and experience sharing; encouraging benchmarking and promoting best practices; facilitating strategizing and reform planning; facilitating harmonization of reform practices; encouraging networking and inter-university collaboration; disseminating reform information and research outputs through publications, CD-ROMs, email alerts, newsletters, seminars and workshops;

- e) Establish university reforms web portals at the regional and national observatory levels;
- f) Promote Observatories' publications and public fora for discussion and debate on university reforms;
- g) Identify model higher education institutions that can be recognized as centers of excellence in university reforms and promote exchanges and links with other institutions for experience sharing and collaboration;
- h) Promote sub-regional and regional programs and centers for training of trainers in university reforms, senior and middle-level university leadership, and national policy makers and regulators in higher education reforms;
- i) Encourage establishment of working groups to identify issues and propose strategies for addressing challenges in broad reform areas;
- j) Develop reform monitoring and evaluation mechanisms and encourage its practice to sustain and strengthen university reforms;
- k) Encourage peer reviews among higher education institutions as part of the monitoring and evaluation mechanism;
- l) Include higher education as part of the elements to be considered in the NEPAD peer review process, particularly with regard to assessment of the relationship between government and the higher education sector, and the development and implementation of sectoral policy reforms;
- m) Devise and implement regional advocacy strategies and mechanisms to promote reforms.


**6. *Strengthening the sub/regional instruments for quality assurance, accreditation and recognition of qualifications and promoting adoption of international instruments and guidelines***

- a) Promote the full ratification and effective implementation of the *Arusha Convention on the recognition of qualifications in higher education in Africa*, which has to date been ratified by only twenty African states and the Holy See (Shabani 2004, 159);
- b) Facilitate the conclusion of formal cooperation of agreements between the African regional committee and the sub-regional bodies such as CAMES and RECs as well as among the sub-regional bodies;
- c) Facilitate the harmonization of national qualification frameworks as well as recognition and accreditation procedures and practices at the sub-regional and regional levels;
- d) Strengthen the initiatives of sub-regional networks such as the *Higher Education Quality Management Initiative for Southern Africa* (HEQMISA) and regional ones such as the AAU's African Quality Assurance Network to promote cooperation and partnership among regulatory bodies and

practitioners, as well as improve quality management systems at the institutional level;

- e) Promote the endorsement and implementation of international guidelines for managing cross-border provision of higher education -- for example, "*Sharing Quality Higher Education across Borders: A Statement on Behalf of Higher Education Institutions Worldwide*", which was prepared by the International Association of Universities (IAU), the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada (AUCC), the American Council on Education (ACE) and the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) and endorsed by the university vice chancellors during the 11<sup>th</sup> General Conference of the AAU, in February 2005 in Cape Town. A similar guideline developed by OECD and UNESCO has also been finalized;
- f) Promote best practices and benchmarks in quality assurance and encourage information and experience sharing;
- g) Promote the development of databases of African quality assurance policies and procedures, as well as QA experts.

Slide 1




## **Framework For The Renewal of African Higher Education**

**Three Thematic Issues:**

- 1. Promote and Develop Policies for the Renewal of HE at the Global, Continental, Regional, National and Institutional Levels**
- 2. Promote International, Continental, Regional and Sub-Regional Cooperation**
- 3. Promote Knowledge (Research) Production**

Slide 2



## **Strategic Principles**

- Higher Education is a sector that includes post secondary school institutions and comprises a differentiated system of institutions
- The State has a Financial responsibility to adequately support HE
- Renewal should be African driven
- Renewal should be a coordinated approach that demarcate roles and responsibilities
- The role of HE in development is complex and multifaceted
- The Renewal Process will be Participatory with strong nation state and expert inputs

Slide 3



## Policies for the Renewal of Higher Education (1)

- Develop appropriate policies at international level on issues such as GATS, WTO, etc
- Develop and promote continent wide policies on issues such as financing, governance, HIV Aids, ITC, equity
- Advocate policy reforms at regional, national and institutional levels
- Identify policy gaps and signal problem areas, such as adequate financial support for public HE, cost sharing, human resource capacity development, etc
- Facilitate public platforms for dialogue between policy makers, HE stakeholders, researchers and social and economic partners
- Establish expert panels to map and analyse policies in identified areas

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## Policies for the Renewal of Higher Education (2)

- Encourage the expansion of higher education as a field of study at the post graduate level
- Promote and allocation of adequate resources for continent wide and regional research projects on issues such as the relationship between HE and development, governance relationships, curriculum development, quality improvement, equity enhancement
- Promote the identification and information dissemination on best practice policy reforms

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### **Promote International, Continental, Regional and Sub-Regional Cooperation (1)**

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- Facilitate international collaboration and partnership arrangements
- Mobilise resources to strengthen agencies and programmes that support continental, regional and sub-regional cooperation
- Facilitate the ratification and implementation of the recognition of qualifications in Africa, at continental and regional levels
- Promote the endorsement and implementation of guidelines for the management of cross-border education
- Strengthen initiatives for regional and sub-regional quality assurance and improvement
- Promote best practices and benchmarks in quality assurance and information sharing

Slide 6

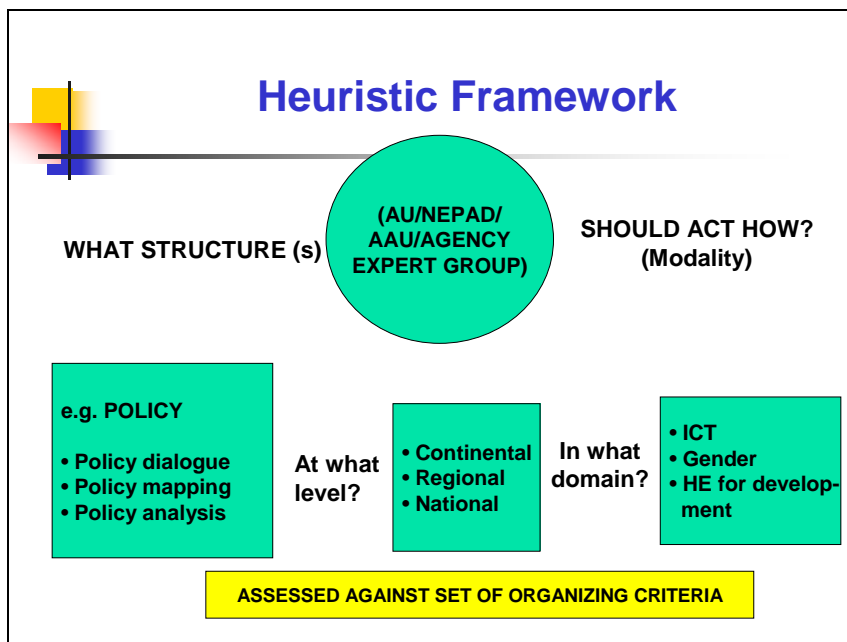


### **Promote Knowledge Production Networks**

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- Recognise and promote the contribution of HE for high level knowledge production and innovation
- Facilitate the linking of knowledge production networks at international, continental and regional levels
- Recognise that knowledge networks require capacity building and connectivity and mobilise the necessary resources for attainment
- Facilitate the identification of centers of excellence networks in specific knowledge areas
- Promote the increase of post graduate and post doctoral education as an integral part of the renewal of HE

Slide 7



Slide 8

