Proposal:

Transforming Higher Education for Development Through Research

The university must become a primary tool for Africa's development in the new century. Universities can help develop African expertise; they can enhance the analysis of African problems; strengthen domestic institutions; serve as a model environment for the practice of good governance, conflict resolution and respect for human rights, and enable African academics to play an active part in the global community of scholars. (Kofi Annan, in Bloom et al, 2005)[1]

December 2006

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[1] Bloom, Canning & Chan (2005). Higher Education and Economic Development. WB Seminar

Contents

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Abstract

This proposal started with a consultation in Accra in November 2003, where a consensus emerged that in Africa, a range of different capacity building functions such as leadership skills/awareness training, higher education as a field of study, and research, had to be separated, but linked. From October 2003 to December 2005 a number of proposals and reports were developed about different approaches to link, through networks, leadership training, higher education studies and research. Following a meeting of the United States Foundation Partnership for Higher Education in Africa (PHEA) presidents in February 2006, the Centre for Higher Education Transformation (CHET) was commissioned to produce a report for wider consultation (Dar-es-Salaam, August 2006). The brief was to explore an approach or model for establishing a structure that would conduct policy-orientated research on selected issues on a continent-wide basis, and disseminate research information through electronic, hard copy and dialogues, to policy-makers, institutional leaders and funders.

This report consists of three sections. Section 1 elaborates the arguments for research on higher education and the increasingly important role that higher education plays in socio-economic development. It proposes that studying higher education in relation to socio-economic development should be located within broader global (UN Millennium Declaration, the G8 Africa Action Plan) and continental (NEPAD, AU) frameworks. While these global and continental declarations, intentions and goals provide a global political framework for the transformation of higher education, what they do not do is spell out what the roles are that higher education can play in contributing towards sustainable development, which is simultaneously local and global. The main aim will be, through research, to explore the possible contributions that higher education can make to social and economic development, as well as the institutional transformation required to contribute to development.

Section 2 sketches a research plan that outlines research areas that could be explored, and advocacy, meaning ways of disseminating research-based information. Three thematic research areas are explored: higher education and social/citizenship development, higher education and economic development, and institutional development. Top priorities in both global and continental development frameworks are democracy and improved governance. Research in this area could investigate what role higher education can play in training people in different governance levels, as well what higher education institutions themselves can do to improve citizenship education in the curriculum, and through democratic governance practices on their campuses. Regarding higher education and economic development, a useful point of departure could be to investigate a series of more specific questions about "how does it actually work?" Key to economic growth is an increase in high level skills, and it will be important to look at approaches to improve participation rates and absorbing the increasing number of school-leavers. Institutional reform is one of the areas most published about, and there is a need to review and synthesise lessons learnt. Also important to understand better are institutional transformation approaches by governments and international aid agencies, institutional and programme differentiation, and the professionalisation of staff.

Section 3 outlines an operational plan that describes the composition and functions of a Research Coordinating Group. It also describes a possible structure and the possible functions of a Coordinating Agency that will provide the managed component of the network. Also outlined are the composition and tasks of Research Groups and the different roles of possible advocacy agencies.

Section 1: Framing the Role of Higher Education in Development

1.1 A Global Development Programme for Africa

At the start of the new century the General Assembly of the United Nations adopted the United Nations Millennium Declaration (2000)[2] and the eight Millennium Development Goals.[3] As part of the general goals, section vii (27) refers to meeting the special needs of Africa: "We will support the consolidation of democracy in Africa and assist Africans in their struggle for lasting peace, poverty eradication and sustainable development, thereby bringing Africa into the mainstream of the world economy." (p7)[4]

The Millennium Declaration and Goals are framework documents that stress values, principles and aims, rather than action plans. The main emphases are on democracy (good governance and peace), equality, and the eradication of poverty and disease. Higher education and its potential contribution are not mentioned directly.

The next major development framework statement came from the G8 Gleneagles summit and the subsequent *Africa Action Plan* (2005)[5], and the *Report of the Commission for Africa*.[6] Following the Gleneagles G8 summit (July 2005) the office of the British Prime Minister issued a communiqué proclaiming "a historic opportunity and a renewed commitment".[7] The key headings of the communiqué stress the following: "… a renewed commitment to Africa, peace and stability, good and responsive governance, investing in people, promoting growth, financing for development, partnership and mutual accountability."[8]

While the G8 summit and the communiqué certainly created a momentum for a new focus on Africa and more effective co-operation for development with the continent's countries, the proposed nature of the G8's 'renewed commitment' to Africa was far from uncontroversial. Not only did part of the British press[9] react negatively, but agencies such as the UN Envoy for HIV/Aids in Africa[10] and even the International Monetary Fund responded rather critically to the G8's proposals for debt relief.[11] By the end of 2006, very little 'concrete' implementation is evident.

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[2] www.un.org/millennium/declaration/ares552e.pdf

[3] www.un.org/millenniumgoals/

[4] www.un.org/millennium/declaration/ares552e.pdf

[5] Africa Action Plan, http://www.state.gov/e/eb/rls/othr/11511.htm

[6] Report of the Commission, http://www.commissionforafrica.org/english/about/story.html

[7] http://www.commissionforafrica.org/english/about/story.html

[8] http://www.direct.gov.uk, p7880

[9] The Guardian, for example, comments on the G8 communiqué by calling it "A truckload of nonsense: the G8 plan to save Africa comes with conditions that make it little more than an extortion racket" (Guardian, June 14, 2005).

[10] "G8 Africa Aid Redirected to Iraq", Sunday Independent, 11 September, 2005; p 3.

[11] The 'smaller' donor countries in the IMF, Belgium, the Netherlands, Norway and Switzerland, indicated that the G8 proposals could, to a large extent, be regarded as offering the poorest countries 'a cigar from their own box.' While the proposal contained interesting elements, the core of it was not very well substantiated and too ad-hoc, leading to questions such as: how should debt relief be financed;

The *Africa Action Plan* (2005) and the *Report of the Commission for Africa* start to mention higher education more specifically. While stressing the importance of quality primary and secondary schooling, they assert that there is an important role that this sector can play in enhancing social and economic development in Africa. The *Africa Action Plan* for instance, focuses broadly on developing research and higher education capacity, as well as information and communication technologies (ICTs). Specifically, the plan points to the need to develop research centres and 'chairs of excellence' in areas integral to the *New Partnership For Africa's Development* (NEPAD); promoting the exchange of visiting academics; developing research partnerships between G8 and African research institutions; instituting scholarships for women; and, supporting initiatives to make the best use of ICTs to address education issues.

The Commission for Africa report identifies four priorities in the sector: professional skills, physical infrastructure, human resources, and research capacity. It specifically calls for a fund of US$500 million to be created for 'revitalizing' African institutions of higher education and a fund of US$3 billion for strengthening science, engineering and technological capacity.

NEPAD[12] locates sustainability in African development within the context of the UN Millennium Goals, proclaims it as a new framework of interaction with the rest of the world, and declares a new political will amongst African leaders for continent-wide development programmes. However, higher education is not mentioned amongst the eight main objectives for which African leaders will take joint responsibility.[13] These responsibilities are mainly about good governance, promoting democracy, macro-economic responsibility, building state capacity, infrastructure, basic education and health.

However, in sections 121-124[14], the 2001 NEPAD dovcument states that the implementation plan supports the immediate strengthening of the university system across Africa, including the creation of specialised universities, institutes of technology (special emphasis) and networks of specialised research, and to reverse the brain drain into a brain gain. It also lists as one of the immediate actions a "task force to review and put forward proposals for the research capacity needed in each region of the continent".[15] (NEPAD, 2001, p17)

A closer reading of the main international declarations and agreements on development in Africa shows widely divergent approaches, with an emphasis on one or more of the following: aid, trade, debt reduction, poverty relief,

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which countries are eligible, and what are the conditions for debt relief? An IMF director coming from one of these four countries indicated that the G8 is moving in the direction of the starting-point of the four small countries, i.e. contributing substantially to the funding of development, but in his view, the G8 still has a long way to go in adapting its development approach (De Volkskrant 5 August 2005: 'Het G8-voorstel was niet goed doordacht').

[12] http://www.nepad.org/2005/files/documents/inbrief.pdf
[13] http://www.nepad.org/2005/files/documents/inbrief.pdf, (p8, number 49)
[14] Nepad, Ibid.
[15] Nepad, Ibid.

improvements in health care, security, infrastructure, investment, governance and capacity development. There is currently no generally accepted 'development model' or approach that links a set of key drivers for development (this is probably owing to the neglect by orthodox economic theorists of issues relating to poverty and development, and the particularity of national interests of the participating countries). There does seem to be some agreement, explicitly or implicitly, that any aspect prioritised – whether it be massive amounts of aid, more trade, debt relief, infrastructure development or better governance – will require an improvement in human resource capacity and skills.

1.2 Role of Higher Education in Development

The UN, UNESCO, G8 and NEPAD declarations, intentions and goals provide a global political framework for the transformation of higher education. What they do not do is spell out what the roles are that higher education (and research) can play in contributing towards sustainable development, which is simultaneously local and global.

Until the mid-1990s the role of higher education in Africa's development was something of an anomaly, with the majority of education development projects focused on the level of primary or secondary schooling. International donors and partners regarded universities, for the most part, as institutional enclaves without deep penetration into the development needs of African communities. Amongst others, this view was promoted by the World Bank for many years.

This one-dimensional strategy led to development policies that had negative consequences for African societies and the potential for the sustainable development of their economies. Neglect of higher education led to the disestablishment of research centres, medical schools, agricultural centres, telecommunication and technological development, business training centres, vocational and skills schools, and other institutions in the tertiary education sector which are critical to the development of African societies and their economies.

Three fundamentally different positions with respect to higher education's role in development initiatives can be distilled from the literature. The first could be called **"higher education as luxury ancillary"**. From this perspective, higher education is a sector that every country should have, but it is a 'luxury sector' compared, for example, to primary education and its rate of return (World Bank, 1980s), or infrastructure development which provides more direct poverty relief than education or health (World Bank, 2004)[16]. This approach is not only supported by international policy agencies, but also by many governments in Africa. Uganda, for example, increased the share devoted to primary education in its overall education budget from 52% in 1995 to 68% in 2002, while the concomitant share for higher education decreased from 28% to 16% (Mamdami, 2005).[17] The World Bank itself decreased the proportion of

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[16] World Bank (2004). Annual Review of Development Effectiveness. The WB's Contribution to Poverty Reduction.
[17] Mamdami (2005). Thinking Through the Makerere Reform 1989-2005 (Unpublished).

its education budget for higher education from 17% in 1985-89, to 7% by 1995-99 (Bloom, 2005).[18]

The second approach acknowledges a role for higher education in national development, but conceptualizes it as **"a producer of appropriately skilled professionals and applied knowledge"**, or in the words of Prof. Ndebele, Chair of the Association of African Universities (AAU) and Vice Chancellor of the University of Cape Town: "… a service producing educated workers, rather than a strategic value-adding asset." Jeffrey Sachs, in *The End of Poverty (Penguin, 2005)*, posits financial commitment and the strengthening of vocational and technical training as the key educational drivers for development. The paper on higher education recently released from the Office of the President in South Africa partially echoes Sachs and does little to allay Ndebele's concerns (Office of the President of South Africa, 2005).

The third position locates higher education as the **"engine of development in the new knowledge economy"** (Castells, 1991).[19] According to this view, the new modes of economic production are increasingly dependent on knowledge and information technology. Knowledge and 'informationalism' have become central to development in the global economy. The availability and use of information and communication technology is a prerequisite for economic and social development. Econometric studies show the close statistical relationship between diffusion of information technology, productivity, and competitiveness for countries, regions, industries, and firms (Monk, 1989[20]; Castells, 1991[21]). A recent World Bank calculation shows that the knowledge sector adds more value to a product than the business process does (Serageldin, 2000).[22] So, "if knowledge is the electricity of the new informational international economy, then institutions of higher education are the power sources on which a new development process must rely" (Castells, 2001).[23]

There is increasing evidence that high levels of education in general, and of tertiary education in particular, are essential for the design and productive use of new technologies, and that they also provide the foundations for any nation's innovative capacity (Carnoy & Castells, 1993[24]; Serageldin 2000[25]). Recent data show that higher education participation in Sub-Saharan Africa remains under 5%, while for many high-income countries it is well over 60% (Bloom, 2005).[26]

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[18] Bloom, Canning & Chan (2005). Ibid.

[19] Castells M (1991). The University System: Engine of Development in the New World Economy. Paper for the World Bank Seminar on Higher Education and Development.

[20] Monk P (1989). Technological Change in the Informational Economy. Printer Publishers, London.

[21] Castells M (1991) Ibid.

[22] Serageldin I (2000). University Governance and the Stakeholder society. Keynote Address, International Association of Universities, Durban, SA

[23] Castells M (2001). Universities as Dynamic Systems of Contradictory Functions. In: Muller J, Cloete N and Badat S (2001). Challenges of Globalisation. South African Debates with Manuel Castells. Cape Town: Maskew Miller Longman.

[24] Carnoy, Castells, Cohen, Cardoso (1993). The New Global Economy in the Information Age: Reflections on our Changing World. Published by the Pennsylvania State University.

[25] Serageldin I (2000). Ibid.

[26] Bloom, Canning & Chan (2005). Ibid.

Figures 1 and 2 below show that a significant upward shift occurred between 1965, 1995 and 2002/3 in participation in higher education and in national income in middle- and high-income countries. The figures also show that the differences in participation rates between low- and high-income countries are increasing. This correlation does not necessarily entail a causal relationship, but it certainly points to an increasing association, leading to the conclusion that:

> *"… not only is a well-functioning higher education system considered a necessary condition for (economic) development, but institution and capacity development in general are acknowledged as prime goals of development co-operation"(De Gast, 2005).*[27]

Figure 1: Participation Rates: Sub-Saharan Africa Falls Further Behind
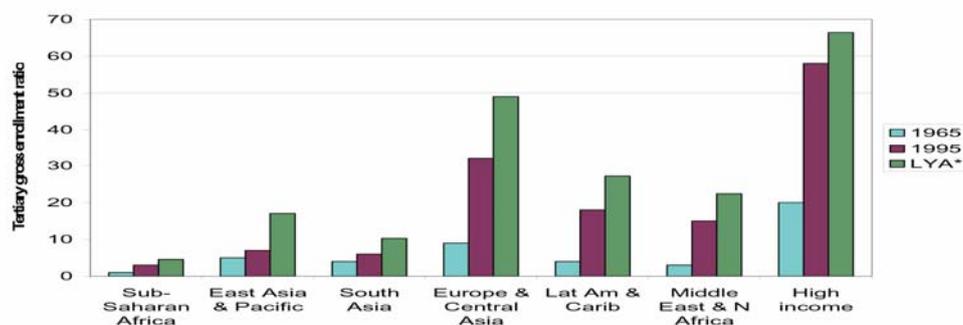
* LYA (latest year available) means that for each country, the most recent data available are used, and those data are then aggregated by region. For most countries LYA is 2002/2003. The range is 1998/1999 to 2003/2004. Source: UNESCO and World Bank.

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[27] De Gast (2005). The visions, policies and programmes of a sample of Northern donors regarding the support for higher education development in the South. NUFFIC conference, May, 2005-09-16.

Figure 2: Relationship between Participation Rate and National Income

Average Tertiary Gross Enrolment Ratios by National Income, 1965 and 1995
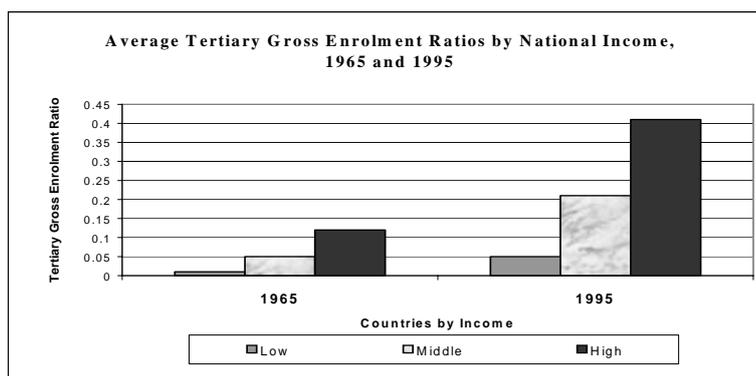
Source: Higher Education in Developing Countries (World Bank 2000)

This type of evidence has led a number of countries to put higher education at the core of their development strategies. The best known model in a developed country is that of Finland, which, following the deep recession of the early 1990s, selected knowledge, information technology and education as the major cornerstones of its new (economic) development policy[28] (Hölttä and Malkki, 2000).[29] Ireland, Australia and New Zealand have also followed this route successfully.

The development model of the East Asian countries in the 1970s and 1980s, in particular that of South Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong and Singapore, and to a lesser extent Malaysia, was a product of the massive investments made in education in general and in higher education in particular. The latter became especially important when some of these countries decided to shift the emphasis in their economic development strategy to high value-added production.

On the other hand, the Chinese and Indian economies, which have been displaying unprecedented high levels of sustained growth since the early 1990s, exhibit two important characteristics with respect to higher education that set them apart from both the 'East Asian tigers' of the 1980s and from other contemporary developing countries. First, investment in higher education is seen as a parallel process (and not a consecutive one) to providing broader access to, and improving the quality of, primary and secondary schooling. In other words, they have shown that if poor countries want to participate in the globalised knowledge economy, investments in higher education are crucial, at the same time as improving access and quality in schooling.

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[28] From being amongst the lowest on a number of Human Development Indicators of Western European countries during the 1980s, Finland is now 13th overall in the world and amongst the top five in areas such as ICT usage and researchers in R&D, and the highest in terms of public expenditure on higher education (World Human Development Index, 2002).
[29] Hölttä S and Malkki P (2000). Response of Finnish Higher Education Institution to the National Information Society Programme. Published by Helsinki University of Technology and International Relations.

The second, related point, illustrated in the development pattern of the Chinese and Indian economies, is that the traditional growth path that sees the initial domination of primary sector activities (agriculture and mining) followed by manufacturing and then by services, does not necessarily hold. The speed and extent to which developing countries are able to absorb, use and modify technology developed in the north, will ensure a more rapid transition to higher levels of development and standards of living.

Capturing the new attitude towards higher education, *The Economist*, in a special issue (September 8, 2005: p14), says the following:

> *"Across the developing world, higher education is coming in from the cold. Gone are the days when it was purely a luxury for the elite. Governments are rapidly expanding their higher-education systems, with China probably witnessing the biggest expansion of student numbers in history. … The main reason for this flurry of activity is the dramatic growth in the supply of potential students. Secondary school enrolment rates have grown rapidly across the developing world. But there has also been a revolution in economic thinking. Not so long ago the World Bank pooh-poohed spending on higher education as both economically inefficient and socially regressive. Now many development economists are warming to higher education, pointing to the demand for graduates—as demonstrated by their wage premium—and to the positive effect of university-based research on the economy".*

However, investment in higher education per se is a necessary, but not a sufficient condition for development. Important as the investment in higher education may be, attention must be paid to the efficiency and effectiveness of that investment, which includes ensuring that there are appropriate linkages with the labour market needs of the economy.

Notwithstanding the importance of these country examples and studies, solid research evidence is still lacking on the socio-economic links and impacts of higher education at the local, regional, national, and/or transnational levels. Such data will be key for the design and implementation of new higher education policies and institutional strategic plans.

History shows that rather than formulate development paths, many states tried to force higher education into undemocratic political agendas, resulting in many institutions in Africa having a rather ambiguous, if not antagonistic, view of 'development and higher education'.[30] It is not only some academics in Africa that are ambiguous about the role of higher education in development – recent high profile documents produced by African ministries are silent on the role of higher education. The Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), for instance, produced a weighty tome in 2004 entitled: *Economic Report on*

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[30] Perhaps it was not surprising when, in August 2005, amid considerable tensions around autonomy (Jansen, 2004 TB Davie Academic Freedom Lecture, UCT), the new Minister of Education in South Africa titled her keynote speech: "African Universities and the Challenges of a Developmental State". (Pandor, 2005: http://www.chet.org.za/issues/PandorAcademicFreedom05.doc**).**

Africa – Unlocking Africa's Trade Potential.[31] There is no reference in this highly publicised document to the role of higher education and its importance for knowledge creation, skills development and development in general. A similar lack of focus on higher education characterises the official documents of NEPAD and the Southern African Development Community (SADC).

At a recent workshop (27 October 2005) organised by the African Union, an AU official (Dr Tema) stated that for many African heads of state, "… higher education is seen as either irrelevant to development or a threat to the state … but that the AU secretariat now wants to bring higher education back into the mainstream" (Workshop Report, NEPAD, 2005).[32] Similarly, while the original NEPAD[33] founding document refers only to higher education in the broadest possible terms, discussions with the NEPAD secretariat indicate a substantial degree of interest in the higher education sector, particularly with respect to the development of human resources for the sector, obtaining a greater understanding of the relationship between higher education and development, cross-border education, student and staff exchange programmes, and developing regional centres of excellence.

1.2.1 Social Cohesion: Development is not only Economic

There is a worldwide tendency to promote higher education in utilitarian, instrumental terms, particularly in the context of the knowledge economy in which higher education can be regarded as either "a service producing educated workers" or an "engine of development in the new knowledge economy". However, one of the strongest claims higher education can make is that it can contribute to democratisation in two ways: citizenship and equality.

In the announcement (25 April 2000) that four major foundations will donate US$100 million to African universities, Susan V. Berresford, president of the Ford Foundation, said that

> *"… strengthening African universities will do more than bolster economic development. Strong African universities can play a role in protecting basic freedoms, enhancing intellectual life, and informing policy making. A previous bias in favor of helping mainly primary and secondary education has been giving way, as donors come to see higher education as a necessary component in the development of poor countries".*[34]

At the African Regional Consultation held in Dakar in April 1997[35], the then Secretary General of UNESCO, Fredrico Mayor, repeatedly stressed to the heads of state the importance of investing in higher education as part of promoting peace and democracy and as an essential factor in citizenship

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[31] http://www.uneca.org/
[32] NEPAD (2005). Renewal of Higher Education in Africa. CHET.
[33] http://www.nepad.org/2005/files/documents/inbrief.pdf
[34] William Saint, World Bank communiqué.
[35] In Higher Education in Africa: Achievements, Challenges and Prospects. Unesco, Dakar.

education. He emphasised that higher education is an investment for world democracy that can discourage ethnicity, racism, sexism, narrow nationalism and fundamentalism. By promoting the critical skills and habits associated with a liberal arts education, higher education could play a role in pursuing the objectives of democracy. Students could find their own voices in a multi-centric education that appreciates ambiguity, contradiction and nuance, and that prepares them to accept the coexistence of difference and sameness. In urging the British government to invest in higher education, the *Dearing Report* (UK Government, 1998) puts "civilisation" as the first of six reasons for doing so. In a book on unity and diversity, Cross *et al* (1999) argue that "… a curriculum for common citizenship, and providing sites for democratic practices could be a central role for higher education."[36] A brief overview of the role of higher education and democratic values is provided in *Higher Education in Developing Countries (*World Bank, 2000*)*.

The main joint development strategy of the member states of the European Union combines economic and other aims. The heads of state of the European Union met in Lisbon in 2000 and agreed to embark on a strategy to make the European Union "the most competitive and dynamic knowledge based economy in the world by 2010".[37] With the launching of the so-called Lisbon Strategy the University came to the centre of attention within the EU. In the Lisbon Strategy the University, as part of education and research systems in Europe, was envisioned as a core institution of "the Europe of knowledge". Unlike the Bologna process – a European level process unique to the higher education sector – the Lisbon process directed the attention to education and research much more broadly in making them means to reach the ambition of socially and environmentally sustainable economic growth.

In the African context President Thabo Mbeki has, on a number of occasions, bemoaned the absence of debate and the silence of black intellectuals in public discussions. Higher education cannot provide skills and knowledge in an unproblematic way to the state; part of higher education's crucial contribution to society, and to the government, is critical engagement. The critique also has to explore issues and knowledges related to that of the African continent because there is a double challenge – developing and debating new relevant knowledge and liberating ourselves from our intellectual colonial heritage. Higher education thus does not have a simple linear relationship to society, but often a contradictory and oppositional role which, if managed appropriately, makes a major contribution to society.

1.2.2 Economic and Social Development Requires Institutional Development

For Manuel Castells, higher education cannot contribute to either social or economic development unless "… the two basic elements of a university are established, that is a proper institutional setting and high quality faculty"

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[36] Cross, Cloete, Beckham, Harper, Indiresan, Musil (1998). Diversity and Unity: The Role of Higher Education in Building Democracy. Maskew Miller Longman.
[37] http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/smn/smn21/s21mn14.htm

(2001, p218).[38] If these conditions are not met, resources in terms of equipment and physical plant will be wasted and the recruitment of good students cannot begin.

Institutional restructuring will have to deal with new resources, reorganisation and differentiation simultaneously. The institutionalisation of higher education institutions is of paramount importance because the degree of institutionalisation impacts on motivation and the capacity to follow rules and codes of behaviour, and is part of 'pact'-based long-term cultural commitments.[39] Establishing such institutional cultures is necessary for organisations to function as higher education institutions, and to socialise students, and societies, for certain forms of citizenship.

A key aspect of the transformation of higher education institutions in Africa will be differentiation, which will have to deal both with different assumptions about what the university is for, and different skill functions. Instead of attempting to develop a single model African university, Africa may have to experiment with different visions of university organisation and governance. For Europe, Maassen and Olsen (2006) have identified four "visions"; namely, the university as: a rule-governed community of scholars, an instrument for national political agendas, a representative democracy, or a service enterprise embedded in competitive markets. Part of the transformation of universities in Africa will have to be to better understand and promote institutions with different underlying visions, modes of organisation and functions.

1.3 Research and Advocacy

At a recent symposium on *Evidence-Based Practise* it was argued that policy-makers, practitioners and funders take it upon themselves to intervene in the lives of others, intending to do good, but sometimes doing more harm than good. It was also argued that in order to minimise risk, interventions should be informed by reliable research evidence, and that it is irresponsible not to use evidence-informed decision-making whenever it is possible.[40] At the same symposium, John Mugabe asserted that there is a weak tradition in NEPAD, the Organisation for African Unity (OAU) and the AU of seeking science advice because of limited public and political demand for reliable scientific information and the weakness of scientific institutions. [41] This is part of a larger problem of a lack of emphasis on research in universities in Africa that Mamadami [42] argues started during colonial rule and continues to the present under different guises of the "Developmentalist University", propagated by the Bretton Woods Institutions, Development Aid and certain forms of nationalism.

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[38] Castells, M. (2001). Universities as Dynamic Systems of Contradictory Functions. In Muller, Cloete, Badat. Challenges of Globalisation: South African Debates with Manuel Castells. Maskew Miller Longman.

[39] Maassen, P and Olsen, J. European Integration and University Dynamics. (Forthcoming 2007)

[40] Evidence-Based Practice. 2006. An International Seminar on the Nature, Purposes, Ethics, and Politics of Evidence in a Democracy. Academy of Sciences of South Africa. CSIR, Pretoria.

[41] John Mugabe. 2006. Public Policy–Making in the Context of Nepad and the African Union. In: An International Seminar on the Nature, Purposes, Ethics, and Politics of Evidence in a Democracy. Academy of Sciences of South Africa. CSIR, Pretoria.

[42] Mamdami, M (2006). Higher Education, the State and the market Place. 16th Commonwealth Conference, Cape Town.

Applying this more directly to higher education reform, Maassen and Olsen state that in university reforms there is an abundance of fashionable assumptions, doctrines and solutions in search of problems about how to transform institutions, but a scarcity of systematic examination of problems and the effects of previous reforms. They call this *"Strong convictions, weak evidence"* (p18).[43]

The following are problems regarding knowledge about higher education transformation:

- A lack of basic knowledge about higher education produced in Africa, resulting in continued dependence on foreign examples and consultants;
- Studies on higher education consisting of fragmented institutional case studies that do not add up to a body of generalisable knowledge;
- Sustainability and knowledge building that is undermined by constantly shifting interests and funding patterns as a consequence of short-term, un-programmatic projects and funding;
- Lack of coordinated capacity building, both for knowledge production and transfer/dissemination; and,
- Poor connectivity between the knowledge produced and the relevant decision-makers.

There is no 'quick fix' capacity building solution to the problems listed above. If Africa is to move beyond poverty relief and crisis management, what is needed is a more systematic knowledge and expertise base about higher education in Africa – something that is missing from many of the laudable programmes, from ICT to leadership to gender empowerment. The recent PHEA (2005)[44] survey showed that higher education studies receives virtually no support, which means that many of the development programmes are implemented on the basis of non-African expertise, or are simply 'hit and miss'. In the words of Jeffrey Fine, an economist with considerable experience in Africa: "If you want to develop higher education in Africa, then you must study higher education in Africa".

More systematic knowledge about African higher education is not only necessary to improve higher education delivery, but also to engage in a more informed manner with funders, and for development agencies to make better investment and capacity building choices. To start breaking the dependency chain, the following are some of the necessary steps:

- Produce a more systematic, research-informed knowledge base about higher education transformation;
- Train researchers who can produce knowledge relevant for policy;
- Bring about greater coordination in knowledge production, transfer and dissemination; and,

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[43] Maassen and Olsen, Ibid.
[44] Cloete, Maassen, Muller, Pillay , Teferra. Multilateral and Bilateral Efforts to Contribute to Higher Education in Africa; CHET, December 2005.

- Facilitate better links/interactions between higher education researchers and policy-makers, institutional leaders and other higher education stakeholders.

From the context described above it can be argued that what is needed is a focused effort to develop an African co-operation structure on higher education that will allow for relevant research activities and capacity building through effective national and international networking. Furthermore, such a structure should stimulate the link between theory, on the one hand, and the practice of higher education in Africa, other developing countries, and in Europe and the United States, on the other. It is very important that research be linked more effectively to decision-makers through forums and other forms of information dissemination.

1.3.1 Advocacy

The relationship between research-based information and policy decision-making often swings between two extremes: on the one hand, those who want to do research that will directly 'dictate' practice, and on the other hand, researchers for whom producing the report is the final step in the process. The result of the first approach is often 'consultancy' rather than research. The effect of the latter is that the limited research that is undertaken in Africa is ignored, as policy-makers are made aware, through various distribution channels, of the latest developments in Europe and the United States, while there is little or no sharing of, or debate about, what can be learnt from policies and practices in Africa.

Advocacy can take many forms, from social movement street marches to one-on-one policy 'influencing'. For a project on knowledge about higher education, at least three different formats are possible. The first is the most traditional, and indirect, namely journals and books. The *Journal for Higher Education in Africa* (CODESRIA) and a number of local journals in South and East Africa that deal with higher education specifically could be supported to fulfil this function.

Secondly, in order to integrate the 'fragmented' outputs from research projects and data/information sources, it would be necessary to produce a kind of a Higher Education in Africa Review (HEAR), which could be disseminated in electronic and hard copy formats. This will not involve simply sending whatever information is available to a huge database of recipients. It will require the expert selection and translation of research-based materials to be disseminated through different media. Such a publication could draw on information sources such as the International Network for Higher Education in Africa, a part of the Boston College Centre for International Higher Education, which has an extensive collection of information on higher education in Africa, including the following:

- A worldwide list of links to institutions, initiatives and organisations that work on higher education in Africa;

- A database of the names, research interests and contact details of individuals active in scholarship and development work in higher education; and,
- A database of published sources which features a comprehensive bibliography of works published on higher education in Africa.
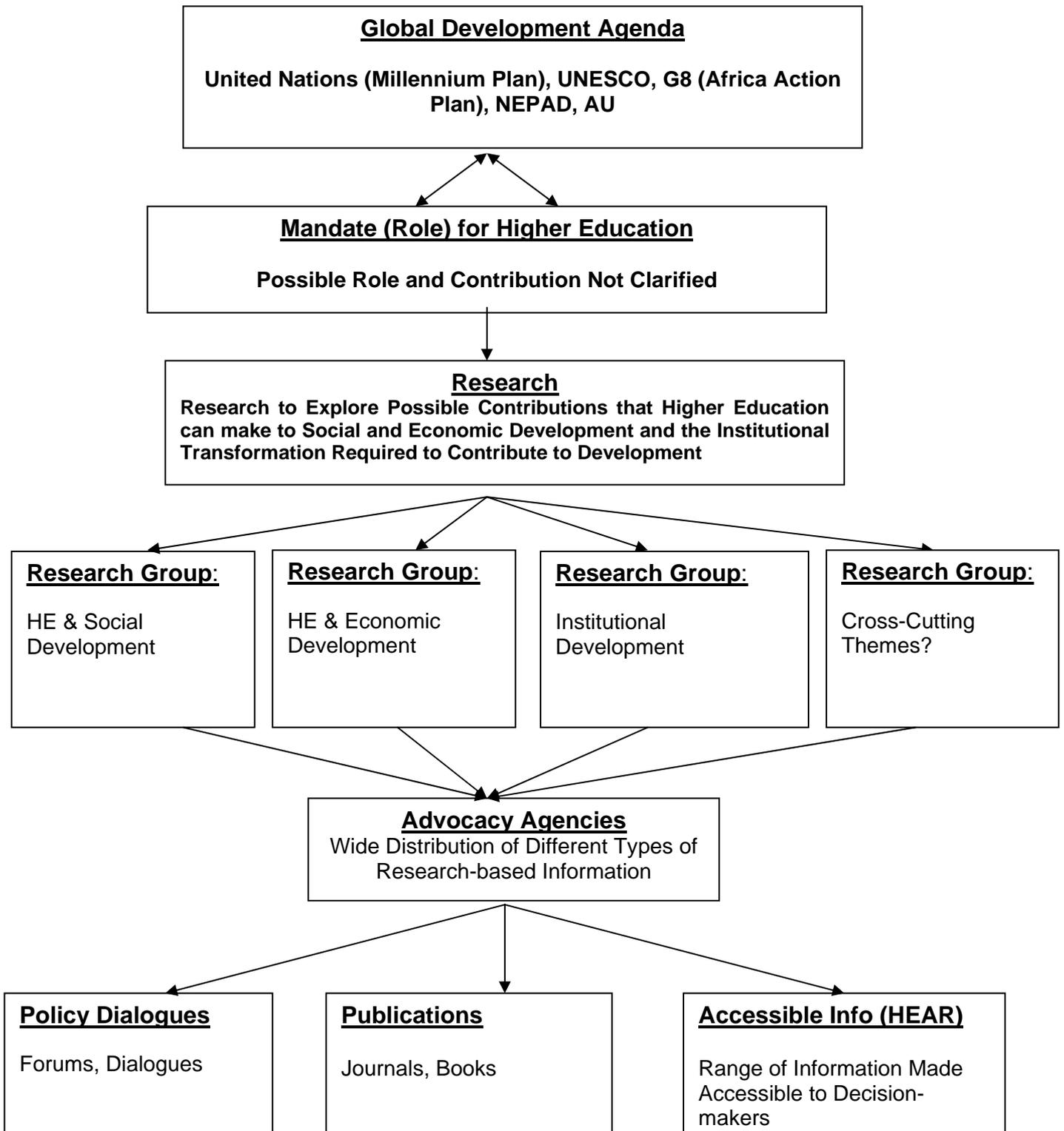
Other sources of information are the Higher Education Library and Information Resource Centre (University of Western Cape) which has the most extensive collection of materials in the world on higher education in Africa. Through its document digitization project, this Centre will be able to support researchers and students in any part of Africa. There is also the AAU Database of African Theses and Dissertations (DATAD) and the Michigan and CODESRIA dissertation database, both of which include materials pertaining to higher education in Africa. The challenge will be to select and present relevant information in such a way that it is readily accessible to researchers and decision-makers.

Thirdly, knowledge-rich debates about key issues such as cost-sharing, public versus private higher education, and efficiency, are a possible way forward out of the current, seemingly intractable circular arguments about these issues in African higher education. Forums should be encouraged and these debates can be distributed and shared in hard copy and electronically. CHET has been running a Policy/Change Dialogue project in South Africa that puts into conversation academics, administrators, government officials and leadership. The discussions are published on the web and are made available to a higher education community of more than 3000 participants. The African University Leaders' Forum is a new advocacy forum that has been established under the auspices of the AAU. A challenge here will be to distribute the leadership forum debates to those who did not participate directly, and perhaps to promote regional dialogues.

In summary, the aim will be to introduce a more systematic research-based voice into the policy debates regarding higher education in Africa. Advocacy has to be understood as different methods of disseminating research information, namely through journals, forums, dialogues, and 'interpreted' information that is widely distributed to different levels of decision-makers.

On the following page is a diagram of the Conceptual Framework.

Conceptual Framework

Global Development Agenda

United Nations (Millennium Plan), UNESCO, G8 (Africa Action Plan), NEPAD, AU

Mandate (Role) for Higher Education

Possible Role and Contribution Not Clarified

Research
Research to Explore Possible Contributions that Higher Education can make to Social and Economic Development and the Institutional Transformation Required to Contribute to Development

Research Group:	Research Group:	Research Group:	Research Group:
HE & Social Development	HE & Economic Development	Institutional Development	Cross-Cutting Themes?

Advocacy Agencies
Wide Distribution of Different Types of Research-based Information

Policy Dialogues	Publications	Accessible Info (HEAR)
Forums, Dialogues	Journals, Books	Range of Information Made Accessible to Decision-makers

Section 2: A Research Plan

2.1 Process of Developing a Proposal

The process started with a Ford Foundation-initiated meeting in Accra (November 2003)[45] which concluded, amongst others, that:

> *"The current situation in Africa does not allow for a linear, straightforward development of an expertise network because the basis is lacking, i.e. research capacity located in higher education research centers that have a long tradition of cross-national cooperation. Therefore a new initiative is necessary for the establishment of an expertise network on higher education in Africa. The network/s would be expected to deal with:*
> - ***Knowledge production** - research that is more analytic and programmatic;*
> - ***Knowledge reproduction** - Masters and Doctoral programmes and management and leadership capacity building through focused training programmes;*
> - ***Knowledge dissemination** - knowledge in the academic domain (publishing), forums and dialogues".* (p4).

The Accra meeting also agreed that a major inherited problem, often brought about by a lack of capacity, is that a range of functions have been collapsed into each other, including leadership capacity building, skills/ awareness training, teaching higher education as a field of study, and research. There was a consensus that some of these key functions had to be separated, but linked, and that a key method of linking is through networks. In short, the conclusion was: "differentiation and connection"[46].

From Accra in October 2003 to Dar es Salaam in January 2007 is a path that has consisted of three planning grants, three proposal documents, eight reports, four consultations, and numerous partnership meetings which, in total, generated more than 500 pages in documentation (see the Appendix for a detailed list).

Following a meeting of PHEA presidents in February 2006, it was decided that a report be commissioned, in preparation for a wider consultation (Convening, January 2007) that would propose an approach/ model for how to establish a structure that would, amongst other things:

- **Conduct policy-orientated research regarding selected issues on a continent-wide basis, and**

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[45] Bawa, Chacha Nyaigotti-Chacha, Cloete, Kwanashie, Sawyerr, Subotzky (2004). Towards a Sustainable Higher Education Expertise Network. CHET.
[46] Bawa et al (2004). Ibid.

- **Disseminate (electronic/hard copy/dialogues) research information for policy-makers, institutional leaders and funders to facilitate more, and more effective, research-based policy and advocacy**.

2.2 Mapping of Research

The best, but not the only, way of identifying what research is being done, is to map research output. The Centre for Research on Science and Technology (CREST) at the University of Stellenbosch was commissioned to undertake a study on research output on higher education in Africa.[47]

The main aim of the study was to map both individuals and institutions that were conducting research in the field of higher education for the period 1995 to 2004. The 'experts' to be mapped were African scholars, i.e. scholars either affiliated with institutions on the African continent or working there, or scholars born on the African continent and currently working in another country.

The Higher Education Expertise Database (HEED) is currently captured in an MS Access relational database. The information is organised into three main tables. These are:
- HE Publications (2472 records)
- HE Experts (1427 unique individuals)
- HE Authorships[48] (3440 records)

The main database divides publications into three domains:
- Leadership and Management
- Teaching and Scholarship (the latter includes studies about postgraduate work and libraries), and
- Policy.

Figure 4.1 below shows that the majority of publications (1403 units) were classified as Teaching and Learning, followed by a second significant cluster of publications in Policy (1217). The smallest cluster (457 units) was classified as belonging to the category of Leadership and Management studies.

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[47] To access the extensive database, contact Johann Mouton at jm6@sun.ac.za
[48] "Authorship" refers to the individual contributions to each publication. Every single author in multiple-authored publications is counted separately when compiling an authorship table. Authorship tables are useful for constructing patters of research collaboration. In this database it means, therefore, that 2472 unique publications were produced by 1108 unique individuals and because of multiple authorships of some publications, the total number of authorships came to 2622.
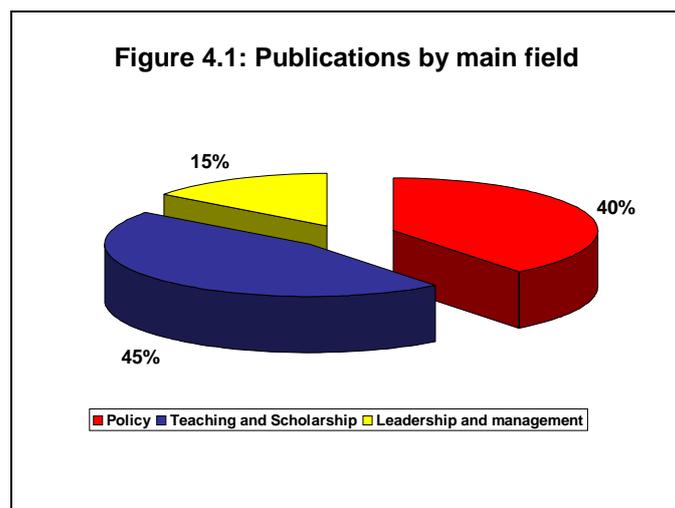
Figure 4.1: Publications by main field

Table 2 provides a breakdown of the main categories in the policy subfield. Excluding the country studies, the field of policy research is dominated by issues relating to reform, transformation and transition in national higher education systems, research and scholarship concerns (very often about new modes of knowledge production), and issues around globalisation and regionalisation (North-South issues).

TABLE 2:   POLICY BY SUB-FIELDS

Main Fields	Nr of publications
HE case/country studies	155
HE General	115
Transformation and reform	105
Research and scholarship	70
African universities	57
Globalisation/regionalisation	51
Governance	49
Private HE	43
HE and society	42
Financing	42
Teaching and learning	41
QA	41
HE and development	37
Philosophy of education	35
Access and equity	23
Distance education	15
Women in HE	14
University and the labour market	14
Technology and HE	14
Human resources	13
University libraries	12

Closer inspection of the data on experts shows the typically skewed distribution which one finds in most cases where scientific production is concerned. For example, there are 272 authors who have produced 3 or more publication equivalents while the remaining 855 authors produced less than 3 publications each. A breakdown shows that there are 20 experts who produced more than 20 publication equivalents and this constitutes 30% of the total production of those who produced more than 3 publication equivalents. This group is followed by a group of 24 who produced between 10 and 20 publication equivalents constituting 16% of overall production. 72 individuals produced between 5 and 10 publication equivalents in this period – this constitutes 26% of this publication output. And finally, there are 126 individuals who produced between 3 and 5 publication equivalents and this constitutes 28% of the total output above 3. Of the total database, 68% are male and 32% female

If an "expert" is regarded as somebody with 5 or more publications, then they are distributed as follows; South Africa 62, USA 12, Nigeria 11, Kenya 5, Botswana, 5, Ghana 4, Tanzania 3, Senegal 2, Namibia 2, Malawi 2, Uganda 1, Ethiopia 1, Zimbabwe 1, Lesotho 1, and Algeria 1.

The prevalence of country/case studies is possibly an indication of the rather parochial focus of many of the publications. Further inspection of this category also shows – rather disappointingly – that many of these are single country studies with very few examples of comparative research. The positive aspect of this focus on country studies is that it presents a pool of case studies for courses in higher education studies.

Rather surprising, and disappointing, is the lack of work on key issues such as higher education and development and the lack of comparative work on financing, governance, access and equity, as well as 'brain drain' and its effects on higher education.

2.3 A Thematic Approach

The above analysis of research publications does not include unpublished 'commissioned' research. Nevertheless, what emerges clearly is the need for programmatic focus areas in which information can be collected, synthesised and disseminated in ways that will be useful for understanding and communicating the challenges that face higher education in Africa.

The general aim is to contribute to an improved analytical framework and empirical basis for understanding higher education change, including the key processes and outcomes. This could be done either by undertaking more conventional studies regarding important issues such as finance, governance, quality, privatization, etc, or by contextualizing the problems and issues of higher education within the broader socio-economic context of the continent. It

is the latter that is proposed here and the following could constitute general guidelines for such a study:[49]

- Investigate higher education beyond national boundaries by looking at issues and demands derived from global and continental development frameworks;
- Go beyond routine, incremental reform and conceptualize current dynamics as a search for a new relationship (pact) between higher education and its environment;
- Consider both the substantive performance of institutions and explore the importance of the legitimacy of institutions;
- Look beyond single institutional frameworks and view change as a process of contestations within higher education, and within broader social and economic contexts; and,
- Go beyond explanations determined by 'environmental determinism' or leadership strategic planning, and consider the more complex processes and factors within which higher education in Africa is embedded.

In developing a framework for a continental research programme, Africa could be seen as grappling with remarkably similar issues as those described by Olsen (2007): "The University is in search of a new pact and legitimate position in the political and societal order at the same time as Europe in general is in search of a new order".[50]

2.3.1 Higher Education and Social Development

The top priority in the global (Millennium, G8) and the continental (NEPAD) frameworks is democracy – accepting the link between effective governance and development. For higher education, democracy refers mainly to governance arrangements and citizenship. Much has been written about violations of institutional autonomy, and about the trend of poor governance at the state level being reflected at the institutional level. It is doubtful whether further studies on this topic, undertaken in isolation from the larger context, would have much more to contribute.

At the supra-national level it would be useful to look at what roles continental (AAU, AU) and regional structures (Inter-University Council for East Africa) could play in ensuring improved governance practices. The question could also be asked as to how higher education institutions could contribute more effectively to the training of people in governance positions at the national, state and municipality levels. Training others for improved governance will also raise questions regarding governance at the training institution itself.

While Frederico Mayor's plug for higher education as an institution that promotes democracy and tolerance is very laudable, he does not clarify how, and under what conditions this happens. As has been argued: while it is assumed that higher education promotes democracy through knowledge and

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[49] This 'guide' is informed from "Europe of Knowledge: Search for a New Pact" in Maassen and Olsen: European Integration and University Dynamics. (Forthcoming, 2007)
[50] Olsen, J. Europe in Search of Political Order. Oxford University Press (Forthcoming 2007)

tolerance for diversity, it could end up promoting cultural differences and intolerance[51] if it does not problematise the tension between diversity and unity. [52]

Carol Schneider, former President of the American Association of Colleges and Universities, argues that higher education has to foster the following types of learning:

- Cultural knowledge – diverse cultures and its transformations
- Power – domination and responses by the oppressed
- Equality and justice – democratic ideas, constitutions and human rights
- Self knowledge – sources and conflicts of identity, and
- Diversity and equality issues in the chosen field of study.[53]

It could be argued that the United States itself is not doing very well on some of Schneider's prescriptions. Nevertheless, the issues outlined seem fairly universal. They do, however, highlight the fact that, in many cases, the curriculum and curriculum transformation are viewed as the main pedagogy for citizenship formation, and that the socialization of students through democratic governance practices on the campuses is not taken into account.

Internationally, many higher education institutions do not seem enthusiastic about self-consciously promoting democracy. The reasons are complex, but some of the factors appear to include: a loss of confidence in what counts as knowledge, and by implication, as democracy; and, a loss of community (and by implication citizenship) within higher education itself.[54]

Considering the fairly universal demand and funding for improved governance and democracy in Africa, it seems imperative that a research network on higher education should develop a research programme that investigates the relationships between higher education and governance/citizenship in a broader and more complex manner than simply as institutional autonomy from government.

2.3.2 Higher Education and Economic Development

The lack of support for higher education by governments and certain international financial institutions has not prevented these actors from accusing higher education in Africa of being disconnected from its environment, and of not making a contribution towards innovation and economic productivity. These and other factors have contributed to major development frameworks such as NEPAD, the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), and GEAR[55] in South Africa, positing investment in infrastructure and agriculture, macro-economic restraint, education-for-all and

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[51] For example, a number of 9/11 bombers studied at universities in the Middle East and in Europe.
[52] Cross, et al. Ibid.
[53] Schneider (1999) in Cloete, Cross, Muller and Pillay: Culture, Identity, and the Role of Higher Education in building Democracy in South Africa. In Cross et al. Ibid.
[54] Cross et al. Ibid.
[55] GEAR (1997). Growth, Employment and Redistribution: A Macroeconomic Strategy. Pretoria: Department of Finance.

health as the key drivers of development, without giving a nod to high level skills and knowledge creation as essential elements of sustainable development.

This approach is in sharp contrast to the European Union and many East Asian development frameworks where knowledge production, 'informationalism' and high participation rates in tertiary education have become central to development and to competing in the global economy.

While it seems that a broad, 'statistical' case has been made for linking higher education to development (see section 1), what is much less clear is: **"how does it actually work?"** Undertaking more fine-grained studies to gain a better understanding of the different ways in which institutions link to development in their supra-national, national and regional contexts, will not only contribute to making the case for linking higher education to economic development, but it could also be 'illuminating' for institutions and academics who are interested in 'connectivity'.

The following is a perfunctory list of some possible questions to investigate:

- What is the nature and level (typology) of relationships between the universities and their surrounding environment(s)?
- How are the immediate needs of the region reflected in the missions and core activities of the higher education institutions?
- What types of formal and/or informal institutional arrangements regarding regional development initiatives have been created over time?
- What key factors (internal/external) have acted as enablers and/or constraints to reaching the proposed developmental objectives?
- How were development activities at a variety of levels – teaching, research and service – institutionalised, i.e. became part of the formal (daily) activities of the institutions? What type of role is/was played by individuals and by institutional incentives?
- How can institutional (university) behaviour (e.g. active, passive), in light of regional development needs and initiatives, be characterised?

One of the main aspects of the relationship between higher education and economic development has to do with different types of links between knowledge production at the universities and its various linkages to external organisations. The other main aspect is the provision of skilled personpower.

Three key issues in terms of human resources development are: participation rates, the absorption of increasing numbers of school-leavers, and quality. Figurers 1 and 2 (section 1.2) show the strong relationship between participation rates and national income, and how, for example, sub-Saharan Africa is falling further behind. For a start, it would be useful to undertake a study of participation rates in Africa, changing trends, and the distribution of students in different types of post-school (tertiary) institutions.

Closely linked to the issue of participation rates is the question: what kind of planning and provision is being made for greater participation in tertiary

education, and what are possible implications for staff requirements, resources and quality, given that in most countries in Africa, school throughput rates are improving, albeit slowly?

One of the few higher education issues that the NEPAD document mentions specifically is 'brain drain'. However, this issue is cast in the rather outdated mode of 'brain drain, brain gain'. What could be interesting is to investigate successful examples of 'brain circulation', particularly in countries such as India and Brazil, and look at possible ways in which such programmes could contribute to strengthening universities in Africa.

2.3.3 Institutional Development (Transformation)

Institutional transformation can be looked at in many different ways. According to the research mapping exercise (section 2.2), higher education institutional and country transformation and reform studies constitute by far the most published studies in the area of policy research. The prevalence of country/case studies is possibly an indication of the rather parochial focus of many of the research efforts. More importantly, further inspection of this category shows that many of these are single country studies with very few examples of comparative research. A point of departure in this area could be to review and synthesise these studies in order to identify discernable trends or lessons that have emerged, and to design comparative studies that could be more informative.

Two areas worth surveying that are related to institutional transformation are the polices of and efforts by governments and development aid agencies to build and reform institutions. This is of particular importance in light of Castells'[56] assertion that a "proper institutional setting and quality staff are required" before allocating resources and students.

Key systemic issues relating to institutional reforms include the diversity of the landscape and performance differentiation. For decades, Africa had a rather monolithic higher education system, consisting mainly of universities that were trying to do the same kinds of things. However, as a recent study [57] shows, there is increasing differentiation in the extent and range of institutions and programmes, whether planned or driven by 'market' forces. Regarding the latter, it is important to look at, for example, private higher education not as replicating or in competition with public higher education, but as responding to the lack of public provision, and to addressing different skill requirements. Linked to differentiation is increased participation rates and the absorption of the slow, but steady, increase in secondary school output across the continent. A key question is: what kind of institutional planning is being undertaken to deal with this crucial issue?

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[56] Castells, M. (2001). Universities as Dynamic Systems of Contradictory Functions. In Muller, Cloete, Badat. Challenges of Globalisation: South African Debates with Manuel Castells. Maskew Miller Longman.
[57] Ng'ethe, Subotzky and Afeti. (2006). Differentiation and Articulation Within Tertiary Education Systems in Africa. Association for the Development of Education in Africa Working Group on Higher Education. Accra.

Underpinning the above are issues of quality. One of the important areas in this regard is the professionalisation of staff, which can be understood to include leadership, management and teaching/supervision skills improvement. It is important that a distinction is made between leadership, management and teaching/supervision because each has specific implications for targeting (who is to be "trained"?), delivery methods (how?), programme content (about what?), and providers (by whom?). It could be useful to begin with an audit into what kinds of programmes are available (from short-cycle non-certificated, to generic and specific skills through certificated programmes), and who is conducting these (national or regional associations, business schools, etc). Gaining a better understanding of training and capacity building, rather than yet another survey of 'training needs', could be a way of getting a better grasp on this currently fragmented, but important, area of institution-building.

The mapping of expertise by Crest discussed in Section 2.2, 56% of the articles in the area of policy deal with institutional development, 23% with socio-economic development and 20% with political/citizenship development.

2.3.4 Cross-Cutting Themes

If research is organised according to thematic themes, the question arise about cross-cutting themes such as gender, HIV Aids, etc. For the time being it is suggested that these be dealt with within each theme, rather than as "separate" variables.

Section 3: An Operational Plan

An internet search revealed a paucity of research and information centres in Africa, not only in education and the humanities, but across fields as well. In preparation for this proposal, aside from drawing on the considerable experience and expertise of the working group, and from the web search, interviews were conducted with heads of a number of research centres.

The structure that bears the closest resemblance to the brief for this project is the Social Aspects of HIV/AIDS Research Alliance. The SAHARA model is not exactly replicable in higher education, but does provides some useful pointers. SAHARA is an:

> "… *alliance of partners established to conduct, support and use social sciences research to prevent further spread of HIV and mitigate the impact of its devastation on South Africa, the SADC region and sub-Saharan Africa. It aims to facilitate collaborative research to reduce unnecessary duplication of research, provide evidence to improve access to care, enhance rigor in research methodology and improve quality of data that is used for planning and implementing interventions. It also provides a platform for*

exchange of ideas through conferences and publications including journals and books".[58]

This Alliance has an oversight board, a coordinating centre, is linked to the Human Sciences Research Council for administrative and information technology (IT) support, and has four regional research nodes which conduct common and region-specific research. The regional nodes are located within universities and staffed by academics against a percentage of their contracts, or on commissioned research. Apart from the core staff in the coordination centre, all the node staff work part-time or are on project-related contracts. The alliance is thus project- and 'outsourced'-driven, with a very small core staff and an extensive service-on-demand support network.

The Higher Education Research and Advocacy Network in Africa (HERANA) could consist of three structures:

- A **Coordinating Agency** that provides support to the research networks and links the research networks to the advocacy structure;
- **Research Networks** (three areas) that will form a network, survey the identified area and conduct specific projects within the designated areas; and,
- **Advocacy Agencies** that will produce and disseminate journals and policy information, and construct dialogues.

3.1 Coordinating Agency

The Coordinating Agency will provide the 'managed' component of the network. It should be a structure that is linked to at least one higher education institution, but should not be a sub-structure (institute, centre) of a particular university. This is important in order to 'insulate' the agency from the politics and bureaucracies of institutions. However, formal links are necessary to retain contact with academia, for academics to act as research programme coordinators, and for the mentoring of doctoral students.

The Coordinating Agency would have to play both a supportive and a coordinating role for the research programmes and the advocacy components. Depending on the scale of the project, more 'permanent' staff could be considered at a later stage. However, it is strongly recommended that during the first start-up phase of three to five years, the agency should outsource, on a service-on-demand basis, professional services such as financial, IT, travel and information/publication management. It could be anticipated that during the first three-year phase, the Coordinating Agency has a stronger support function, with more of a coordinating role during the second phase, when the research networks will be more established. During phase one, the possibility should be explored as to which of the thematic programmes could be constituted into research networks organised around 'centres'.

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[58] http://www.sahara.org.za/

The Coordinating Agency will have its own Board that ensures fiduciary responsibility and implementation efficiency, but for the network it will report to a **Research Coordination Group** that will consist of the Research Coordinators of the thematic research groups, a representative of each of the advocacy agencies groups, and a representative from the funders. The Research Coordinating Group will be responsible for oversight of the research activities and ensure the link between research and dissemination.

In summary, the tasks of the Coordinating Agency will be to:

- Serve as secretariat for the Research Coordinating Group;
- Support the Research Groups in terms of logistics, identification of expertise and resources;
- Monitor progress and product delivery;
- Support Advocacy groups with identifying materials and with regard to information distribution;
- Facilitate links between research and advocacy groups; and,
- Provide an accountability link between the network and funders.

3.2 Research Programmes

The research programmes will be constituted along the three thematic areas indicated above. During the first phase the network will:

- Map out the area
- Identify and define the main problem areas
- Collect and analyse relevant information
- Produce informative reports about the particular issues, and
- Draft a research agenda in the particular area.

The research programme will be led by a Research Coordinator who, preferably, will be located at a university or research institute that will provide an institutional base. The Research Coordinator will also be entitled to funds for administrative support. The Research Groups will comprise as many part-time or project-based commissioned researchers as agreed upon by the Research Coordinating Group, and each group should include a minimum of two experts who are members of a research network outside of Africa, and a minimum of two doctoral (post-doctoral) students. Each group will have to work out its own operational plan that will include meetings (minimum face-to-face and maximize electronic interaction), specify the problem area and methods for analysis, and task allocation. Research plans will have to be approved by the Research Coordinating Group, and the Coordinating Agency will provide agreed to logistical support.

3.3 Advocacy Agencies

The advocacy/information agencies will operate as independent operations, but with a specific brief to promote dialogue and disseminate research-based information.

Currently the *Journal for Higher Education in Africa* (CODESRIA) and a number of local journals in South and East Africa deal with higher education specifically, and an index of journal articles with abstracts could be developed and distributed as *Updates* or *Briefs*. The information centre at the UWC Centre for the Study of Higher Education already has the beginnings of such a service. In terms of linking researchers and academics, the UWC Information Centre, the International Centre for Higher Education in Africa (Boston), CREST and the AAU researcher database could be linked to provide a 'community' of researchers in particular areas in higher education in Africa. The challenge will be to link these information bases electronically so that users can easily access relevant information about the latest academic publications and who is working on what.

Regarding accessible information (HEAR) the main challenge would be to 'translate' research results into accessible, policy-orientated information that can be distributed broadly amongst policy-makers within and outside the higher education community. Doing this requires special skills in terms of understanding the research and the political/policy environment.

The second issue is whether HEAR would collate and publish, on a bi-annual basis, key indicators about higher education in Africa, such as enrolments, participation rates, graduation numbers by fields of study, financing, development aid, etc. It could also, as the CHEPS monitor does, analyse policy developments and trends. Such a review would be useful for donors, researchers and decision-makers, and could be used, through forums such as the African University Leaders' Forum and other forms of dissemination, to foster policy debates and affect policy decisions.

The information generated by the research groups could form part of the agenda of the African University Leaders' Forum, for whom a challenge will be to bring government, business and other leaders into the dialogue.

Below is a diagram of the Operational Plan.

Operational Plan

Research Coordination Group
Members: Thematic Research Group Leaders, Advocacy Agency Reps and Funder Representative
Tasks: Approve Research Plans, Report on Progress and Ensure Links Between Research and Information Dissemination

Coordinating Agency
Responsibility: Secretariat for Research Coordination Group, Support Research Groups, Monitor implementation, Ensure links between research and advocacy agencies, Accountability to funders.
Outsourced Support Services: IT, Financial Services, travel and workshop, publications.

Research Group: HE & Social Development	**Research Group**: HE & Economic Development	**Research Group**: Institutional Development	**Research Group**: Cross Cutting Themes
Members: Coordinator, Admin Support, 2 'external' experts, 2 doctoral, max 10 members?	Members: Coordinator, Admin Support, 2 'external' experts, 2 doctoral, max 10 members?	Members: Coordinator, Admin Support, 2 'external' experts, 2 doctoral, max 10 members	Gender HIV Aids To be Considered in 2nd phase?

Advocacy Agencies
Wide Distribution of Different Types of Research-based Information

Policy Dialogues	**Publications**	**Accessible Info (Hear)**
Leadership Forum AAU	Journals/Reports CODESRIA	Electronic & Print International Centre For Higher Education in Africa (Boston) UWC Info Centre

Appendix

Process of Developing a Project for a Higher Education Expertise Network in Africa

	Title	Date	Pages
1	Report: *Towards a Sustainable African Higher Education Expertise Network* AAU/Ford sponsored consultation – Accra	November 2003	18
2	Planning Grant: *Towards a Sustainable African Higher Education Expertise Network: Regional Programmes in HES and Leadership and Management* AAU, CHET, UWC – Foundation Partnership	June 2004	28
3	Planning Grant: *Towards a Sustainable African Higher Education Expertise Network for Higher Education Studies* AUU, CHE, UWC – Ford Foundation	October 2004	13
4	Proposal: *International and Regional Developments Relevant to Higher Education*	July 2005	3
5	Report for Higher Education Expertise Meeting CHET, Inter University Council of East Africa	August 2005	57
6	Report: *Multilateral and Bilateral Efforts to Contribute to Higher Education in Africa* US PHEA	January 2006	32 Appen 80
7	Consultation: CHET, Codesria, Higher Education Studies Group, Cheikh Anta Diop University (Dakar)	January 2006	
8	Report: *An Approach Towards Developing Higher Education as a Field of Study* US PHEA	January 2006	26 Appen 85
9	Proposal: Towards a Higher Education in Africa Review (HEAR)	April 2006	5
10	Consultation with NEPAD secretariat	April 2006	
11	Consultation: HEDDA Partners (Oslo)	June 2006	
12	Presentation: *Crossing the Divide: Governance of Development Cooperation in Higher Education* NORAD (Oslo)	June 2006	36
13	Report: *Proposal for Establishing a research and Information Dissemination Network for Higher Education in Africa – A research-based Voice*	June 2006	27
14	Planning Grant: *An Approach Towards Establishing a Higher Education Advocacy, Research and Information Dissemination Network* Ford Foundation (US PHEA)	July 2006	7
15	Report for Meeting of Working Group Durban	October 2006	
16	Proposal: *Strengthen and Deliver Cooperative Masters Level Programmes in Higher Education Studies* – Oslo, UWC, Makerere, CHET Norwegian NOMA programme	October 2006	20
17	Higher Education in Africa Expertise Network Centre for Research on Science and Technology	December 2006	50
18	Report: *Establishing a Higher Education Advocacy, Research and Information Dissemination Network in Africa* Convening of Researchers and AHEFP (Dar-es-Salaam)	January 2007	32