The untapped potential of Quality Management and Accreditation in Africa

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Structure of Presentation

1. Background: HE and Quality in Africa

    - Development of HE in Africa

    - African HE in the 21st Century: Revitalization, Quality and Massification

2. HE Quality Assurance in Africa: national, regional and continental

3. Results of quality challenge in African HE

4. Current initiatives

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- Modern public HE systems have their roots in university colleges set up during colonialism by former colonial powers

- Post independence: European university model in most countries in terms of structures and governance, similar mainly to French and UK models

- 60ies-80ies: support from national governments and Europe, development of strong and high quality institutions (Makerere, UCAD, Ibadan, Nairobi, Khartoum,etc.)

- 1970 ff: economic crisis, debt crisis, structural adjustment, wars and fragility, military governments, rise of corruption – in consequence cuts to HE funding, decline of African university

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1. Development of HE in Africa (2)

- 1990ies: World Bank support to basic education, largely scrapping of HE funding; cash strapped universities survive but with poor quality

- 2000s: modest changes, WCHE (UNESCO 1998), slow changes in World Bank policies (Creating knowledge societies 2003), WCHE 2009; increasing donor support

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1. African HE in the 21st Century: Revitalization, Quality and Massification

- Massification and increased enrolment

- Reduced public funding, privatization an cost sharing

- Lack of infrastructure and equipments

- Brain drain within and out of the continent

- Poor governance, political influence

- High graduate unemployment despite low enrolment

- Rise of private HE, CBHE some with questionable quality

- Poor quality that needs to be improved

- Effects of HIV/AIDS crisis

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1. African HE in the 21st Century: Revitalization, Quality and Massification – Strategic areas of intervention

- Match enrolment with capacity

- Expand and improve infrastructure and equipment

- Train and retain staff, attract African diaspora

- Increase research outputs at all levels

- Diversification of funding

- Linkage to private sector/economy/labour markets

- Use of ICT and ODL, new modes of delivery

- Transparency, governance, accountability and quality

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1. African HE in the 21st Century: Revitalization, Quality and Massification

- ODA for HE: 1990-99 $ 110m/year 2000-05 $ 515m/year

- COMEDAF II Algeria 2005: HE as a priority area

- AU Action Plan for the second decade of education (2006-15): HE one out of 7 priority fields

- AUC harmonization strategy (2007): foster mobility benchmarking and QA throughout the continent

- Africa –EU Partnership (2007): tuning, quality, mobility

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2. HE Quality Assurance in Africa: national, regional and continental

- 1990/2000: some institutions start with institutional QA approaches (e.g. Maritius, UDSM) mainly through collaboration with European/North American partners

- Set up of indepnedent national QA structures in many countries (Nigeria, South Africa, Kenya, etc.); in some countries ministry remains responsible

- As of 2016 approximately half of the 48 SSA states have a national QA body (only 1 francophone country)

2. HE Quality Assurance in Africa: national, regional and continental

Regional initiatives

- 2003: initiative to promote QA in SADC countries (partly funded by GIZ); little progress made

- 2005 East Africa (IUCEA in cooperation with DAAD), regional QA framework, pilot evaluations, peer reviews, subject benchmarking

- CAMES/francophonie: implementation of LMD reform along Bologna Process action lines, in theory link to quality but lack of funding, as of May 2016 only 1 country (Senegal) has set up an agency

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2. HE Quality Assurance in Africa: national, regional and continental

Continental initiatives

- AAU initiatives (promotion of QA, Quality connect project with EUA piloting institutional asessments in 5 HEIs)

- AfriQAN launched in 2009

- ICQAHEA conferences by UNESCO (Bamako) and GUNI

- AQRM pilot by AUC in 2010 (32 responses, only 1 francophone), revised version now available (including peer reviews)

- AU strategy to establish PAQAF and QAA at continental level

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3. Results of quality challenge in African HE

- NUC Nigeria withdrew accreditation of departments in more than 20 universities in 2010

- Many law firms in South Africa report serious deficiencies among LLB graduates

- 2011: Kenya engineering board refuses to recognise degrees from 3 leading public universities

- 2014: 51-62% of graduates considered unfit for employment by employers (IUCEA survey)

- Graduate unemployment high in many countries (>25%) despite low enrolment rates (<10%)

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4. Current initiatives

Harmonization of African HE QA and Accrediation (HAQAA)

- Funded by EU as part of joint AU/EU strategy, implemented by U Barcelona, ENQA, EUA, AAU, DAAD

- Runs February 2016 - November 2018

- Objectives

  - Further development of PAQAF

  - Enhance regional collaboration in QA

  - Capacity building for internal and external QA

  - Sharing good practices

  - Build upon regional initiatives and political priorities

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4. Current initiatives

EWAQAS

- Funded by BMZ through DAAD in cooperation with NUC, NAB, CAMES, UNESCO, UEMOA

- Objectives

  - Strengthening capacities in West and Central Africa, divided by language groups

  - Capacity building for external QA in francophone countries

  - Capacity building for internal QA

  - Close partnership between African and European colleagues (mainly France and Germany)

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THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION

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