

25.10.2019 | Brussels | Workshop C
AFRICA-EUROPE CONFERENCE
ON HIGHER EDUCATION COLLABORATION



THE AFRICA-EU PARTNERSHIP
LE PARTENARIAT AFRIQUE-UE



DAAD



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Conclusions & Recommendations

"CAPACITY BUILDING AND CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT THROUGH INTERNATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS & INNOVATIONS"

Action statement

Facilitate transnational education partnerships between European and African universities by providing an enabling environment for mobility (ISM) and partnership (IPPM), which is based on reciprocity and which is proven to boost engagement and research output among academics, while also instilling and developing in students the skills for competitiveness and innovation which Africa needs and improving life chances and aspirations of student entrepreneurs

Context of discussion

International partnerships and collaborations in Africa are not a new phenomenon. The speakers in this session suggested that the main motivation for African universities to engage in international partnerships is academic capacity building, especially on research. Africa can be a key player in the global knowledge society and move from the periphery to centre of global higher education. The speakers highlighted the importance of an enabling environment and reciprocity, the need to co-create knowledge and share effective practice, which must be adapted to local context, and the importance of mobility to improve life chances and aspirations of students. There was clear understanding of the value, and future potential, of a pan-African strategic approach which transcends individual country interests and promotes a breadth of African improvement.

Key themes that emerged were internationalisation, governance and the importance of networks, for example the East Africa association – which focuses on quality assurance, mutual recognition, and the African network of professionals in internationalisation

Emerging trends are the rise of higher education partnerships, overtaking the old model of sending the best scholars to Europe, more South to South and intra-African partnerships, and regionalisation.

Issues raised

The speakers highlighted asymmetries in partnerships; partnerships have in the past been unequal. Recent developments in Africa, for example, the continental 2063 strategy, mobility programmes at African level and regional level – e.g. EAHEC – declared a common higher education area. These approaches facilitate areas such as mobility, regional quality assurance frameworks and recognition of professional qualifications. There

is also increased mobility of professionals. Africa faces a number of challenges in research and innovation, including the need for relevant and quality curriculum. There was a call for collaborations and partnerships relevant to the African context and delivering on the African agenda.

The speakers also discussed the importance of graduates as job creators and the need for collaborations, providing the skills for competitiveness and innovation, which Africa needs to improve the life chances and aspirations of student entrepreneurs.

Recommendations

Several specific recommendations for action emerged from the session:

1. To re-commit to long-term partnership with the European Union in seeking improvements to processes and practices
2. To incorporate new models and practices in partnerships, which recognise the growing status and standing of African knowledge and research
3. To collaborate on programmes, which benefit youthful populations without access to higher education while maintaining the highest quality
4. To develop and sustain mobility and alumni networks – for example conferences to influence policy and increase collaborations
5. To increase opportunities for student mobility through partnerships
6. To develop institutional research partnerships to facilitate an increase in academic staff with PhDs and increase publication and citation rates
7. To focus collaborations on the top 10 critical skills identified by employers across Africa e.g. problem solving, analytical skills, skills for competitiveness and innovation
8. To tackle credit mobility – through co-designed programmes, resources and grants for mobility and measuring impact, leading to advocacy and evidence for society
9. To develop industry / academia partnerships to enable graduates as job creators giving greater relevance and context and to highlight the importance of research collaboration with industry, a much-needed partnership in order to address national and regional challenges
10. Many of the challenges faced by Africa are global challenges and it is important to grow intra African research collaboration to tackle some of these issues

Recommendations stem from a workshop that took place in the framework of the conference **“Investing in people, by investing in higher education and skills in Africa”**, organised by the European Commission, the African Union Commission, DAAD, British Council, Campus France and Nuffic on 25th October 2019 in Brussels.

The following speakers have contributed to the debate:

- *Dr James Jowi - Principal Education Officer at the East African Community (EAC) Secretariat and founding Executive Director of the African Network for Internationalization of Education*
- *Professor Sibusiso Moyo - DVC of Research, Innovation & Engagement, Durban University of Technology, South Africa. Former Vice-President of SARIMA (Southern African Research & Innovation Management Association) responsible for Research Management.*
- *Apiyo Okwiri - Former President of the Erasmus Mundus Alumni Association (worldwide), co-lead on the establishment of the African Student and Alumni Forum*

Chair: Maddalaine Ansell, Director Education, British Council

Rapporteur: Kevin van Cauter, Principal Consultant Higher Education, British Council

Presentations and further reading on the topic of refugee integration in higher education are accessible on the [conference website](#).

