



Global University Network for Innovation (GUNI)-Africa, African Quality Assurance Network (AfriQAN) and the Association of African Universities (AAU)

7TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE AND WORKSHOPS ON QUALITY ASSURANCE IN HIGHER EDUCATION IN AFRICA

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE AFRICAN QUALITY ASSURANCE NETWORK (AfriQAN)

And

SYMPOSIUM OF RECTORS, VICE-CHANCELLORS AND PRESIDENTS OF UNIVERSITIES

FOUR EVENTS IN ONE YOU SHOULD NOT MISS

**September 21-25, 2015
Venue: Sheraton Hotel, Abuja, Nigeria**

CONFERENCE THEME:

STRENGTHENING QUALITY ASSURANCE IN HIGHER EDUCATION IN AFRICA TO MEET REGIONAL AND GLOBAL CHALLENGES

Background

The 6th International Conference on Quality Assurance in Higher Education in Africa (ICQAHEA) with the theme *“Post-2015: Emerging Developments in Quality Assurance in Higher Education in Africa”* was held on 15th- 19th September, 2014 in Bujumbura, Burundi with financial support from the European Union. The conference was designed as an integrated package made up of plenary and parallel sessions; six parallel practical and hands-on capacity building workshops; the African Quality Assurance Network (AfriQAN) plenary meeting; and a Symposium of Rectors, Vice-Chancellors and President of universities on the theme: *“Tackling Challenges of University Administration in Africa to Promote Quality: What Works”*.

The conference reviewed and discussed the progress made over the last ten years and challenges encountered in improving quality and enhancing quality assurance in higher education in Africa. These included: the establishment of national quality assurance agencies; the capacity developed through the ICQAHEAs; the design of the concept of African Higher Education and Research Space (AHERS); the quality assurance initiatives implemented by the Association of African Universities and the African Union (AU) respectively; the revision of the Arusha Convention on mutual recognition of degrees and periods of study under the coordination of UNESCO and the AU; and the implementation of the Joint African Union -European Union Strategy (JAES) on higher education with a focus on the African higher Education Harmonisation Strategy, the Tuning methodology and academic mobility.

The conference also discussed a preliminary draft of a Study on the development of a « *Pan-African Quality Assurance and Accreditation Framework (PAQAF)*” and identified international good practices in quality assurance and accreditation that could be adapted to the African situation.

Several results were obtained in the follow-up to the 6th ICQAHEA. These include the adoption and signature of the revised Arusha Convention ; completion of the PAQAF study ; progress made in the design and development of the East African Credit Accumulation and Transfer scheme ; successful implementation of the African Quality Rating Mechanism (AQRM); production of the Global University Network for Innovation (GUNI)-Africa online Quality Assurance in Higher Education Series ; strengthening of the Joint African Union- EU Strategy (JAES) including the expansion of activities aimed at supporting the Harmonisation Strategy, the launch of Phase 2 of the Tuning methodology, the development of joint degree programmes, the establishment and running of centres of excellence in Africa, particularly through the Pan-African University; and support to accreditation, quality assurance, and academic mobility.

However, despite these achievements, accreditation and quality assurance are still facing at least three significant groups of challenges at national, regional and global levels.

The first group of challenges is related to a survey of stakeholders in the higher education community in Africa carried out over the last quarter of 2013 and enrolling over 350 Experts. The survey revealed that depreciating quality of higher education teachers, research capacity deficit, infrastructural/facilities inadequacies, governance and management inefficiencies and lack of a continental Quality Assurance framework and accreditation system hamper the quality of higher education in Africa. The second group of challenges is related to the implementation of sub-regional and continental reforms, frameworks and programmes including: the “Licence-Master-Doctorate” (LMD) reform in the African and Malagasy Council for Higher Education (CAMES) Member States; the ratification and Implementation of the revised Arusha Convention; the establishment of an African Higher Education and Research Space (AHERS); and the development of a continental Quality Assurance and accreditation framework (PAQAF). These efforts should build on existing models at national and regional levels and draw on good practices from other regions of the world.

The third group of challenges arises from the Resolutions adopted at the African Summit on Higher Education held in March 2015 in Dakar, Senegal. These include: radical expansion of higher education to achieve a participation rate of 50% within 50 years; improvement of graduate employability; support for emerging research universities and training of all academic staff at the PhD level by 2063. These challenges call for further strengthening of quality assurance of teaching, learning and research and establishment of robust mechanisms for quality assurance of research universities and centres of excellence. In this regard, the PAQAF Study suggests that such mechanisms should build on both minimum quality standards and standards of excellence.

The 7th ICQAHEA will help to consolidate the results achieved to date in accreditation and quality enhancement and propose relevant solutions to sustainably address the challenges of quality assurance in higher education in Africa.

Objectives of the Conference and Workshop

The conference will

- review national and regional developments in quality assurance in higher education in Africa up to 2015;
- document best practices in higher education quality assurance from other regions of the world and draw lessons for the African context for the promotion of quality culture;
- identify modalities for implementation or further strengthening of regional and continental reforms, frameworks and programmes, including the LMD reform; ratification and Implementation of the revised Arusha Convention; establishment of AHERS; and development of PAQAF;
- review and further development of accreditation and enhancement of quality assurance of research universities, centres of excellence and PhD training programmes;
- foster the acquisition of skills in (a) the implementation of the revised Arusha Convention; (b) measurement and modelling of quality in higher education; (c) quality assurance of open and distance learning delivery systems; (d) strengthening effective implementation of LMD reforms; (e) quality assurance of emerging non-traditional higher education delivery systems; (f) setting up and running effective quality assurance units at the institutional level; and (g) AUC agenda on Harmonization of Higher Education systems in Africa; the Tuning II and Credit Transfer projects supported by the AU-EU Joint Strategy; and
- identify roles that all stakeholders should play in the implementation of the post-2015 initiatives in order to guarantee success.

Sub-themes

- National and regional developments in quality assurance in higher education in Africa;
- Accreditation and quality assurance: lessons from other regions;
- AU-EU Joint Strategy on Harmonization, tuning, mobility and joint programmes
- Promoting graduate employability;
- Sustaining quality through Implementation of continental frameworks and programmes including the revised Arusha Convention, AHERS and PAQAF;
- Quality, ICT and LMD Reforms; and
- Accreditation and quality assurance of research universities, centres of excellence and PhD training programmes.

Expected outcomes

The following are the expected outcomes of the conference:

- Participants would have deepened their understanding of the current status, challenges, opportunities and prospects in quality assurance in higher education in Africa;
- Participants capacity would have been developed to be change agents in the implementation of an agenda of improving quality in higher education in Africa for global competitiveness;

- Blueprint developed/proposed for supporting the implementation of accreditation and quality enhancement reforms, frameworks and programmes at national, regional and continental levels;
- Blueprint developed/proposed for supporting the 2014-2017 Action Plan of the African Union Commission in the area of higher education;
- Skills of quality assurance practitioners for national quality assurance agencies enhanced and networking opportunities created;
- Documentation available on the various initiatives on accreditation and quality assurance enriched and expanded; and
- Communiqué reflecting the conclusions and action plan arising from the debates and deliberations of the conference.

Conference Package and Collocated Events

The Conference package is made up of the following collocated events on the dates shown:

| Date | Event |
|---|--|
| Monday, September 21 | Arrival and Registration |
| Tuesday-Wednesday, September 22-23 | Conference |
| Wednesday September 23 (afternoon) | Six Capacity-building Workshops in three parallel groups of two |
| Thursday, September 24 (morning) | AfriQAN General Assembly and Symposium of Rectors, Vice-Chancellors and Presidents of Universities |
| Thursday, September 24 (after tea break) | Symposium for Vice-Chancellors and Rectors |
| Thursday, September 24 (after lunch) | Workshops continue |
| Friday, September 25 (morning) | Closing ceremony of 7 th ICQAHEA/Excursion and Tours/Departure |
| Saturday, September 26 | Departure |

Workshops

A rich menu of workshops has been carefully prepared to enhance knowledge and skills of participants. Each workshop will be hands-on and practical in delivery and each will run for four hours. Each participant will be able to select three workshops over September 16 and 17. These workshops will build capacity of participants who will go back enriched with skills to be able to implement quality assurance practices at the institutional, national and continental levels. These workshops have formed a unique characteristic of ICQAHEAs over the years. Feedback from participants at previous ICQAHEAs has encouraged the organisers to continue with this tradition.

Contents of Workshops

| Workshop | Content | Facilitator |
|--|--|---|
| No. 1: Using AMOS Statistical Models to Predict Quality in Higher Education Systems | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Measurement of quality in higher education systems • Predictive models of quality | Professor Peter Okebukola & Dr. Michael Arove |

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|---|---|--|--|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practical work on using AMOS software to model quality in higher education • Using AMOS by quality assurance units of universities | | |
| No. 2 Implementation of the revised Arusha Convention | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provisions of the revised Arusha Convention • Practical steps in implementing the provisions at the institutional, national and regional levels | Professor Juma Shabani | |
| No. 3: Establishment and effective operation of quality assurance agencies/units at national higher education and institutional levels | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Structure, functions and legal frameworks of quality assurance agencies/units • Quality assurance of input, process, output and outcomes in higher education • Resources and funding • Challenges and Overcoming obstacles to success • Setting up and running effective quality assurance unit in a university | Professor Chiedu Mafiana, Professor Ignatius Uvah, Dr. Noel Saliu and Professor Anthony Arinze | |
| No. 4: The Tuning II methodology on an African credit transfer and accumulation system | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Process of Tuning • Elements of the African credit transfer and accumulation system • Practical work on Tuning | Professor Olusola Oyewole and Dr Beatrice Delpouve | |
| No. 5: Quality Assurance of Open and Distance Learning | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Setting minimum standards for open and distance learning • Quality assurance of courseware, delivery system, evaluation practices, research and student support | Dr. Suleiman Ramon-Yusuf | |
| No. 6: Strengthening and Accelerating Implementation of LMD Reforms | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Status of LMD reforms • Impediments to reforms • Case Studies of best practices | Professor Juma Shabani | |
| No. 7. Essentials and Implementation Framework of the Pan African Quality Assurance and Accreditation Framework (PAQAF) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key elements of the Pan African Quality Assurance Framework (PAQAF) • How to implement PAQAF at the national, sub-regional and continental level • Capacity building for | Professor Peter A. Okebukola and Bart Fonteyne | |

Grouping of Workshops

(**Note:** Participants are to register for one workshop from each group)

Group A

- No. 1: Using AMOS Statistical Software Models to Predict Quality in Higher Education Systems
- No. 2 Implementation of the revised Arusha Convention

Group B

- No. 3: Establishment and effective operation of quality assurance agencies/units at national higher education and institutional levels
- No. 4: The Tuning II methodology for implementation of an African credit transfer and accumulation system

Group C

- No. 5: Quality Assurance of Open and Distance Learning
- No. 6: Strengthening and Accelerating Implementation of LMD Reforms
- No. 7. Essentials and Implementation Framework of the Pan African Quality Assurance and Accreditation Framework (PAQAF)

General Assembly of African Quality Assurance Network (AfriQAN)

The African Quality Assurance Network (AfriQAN) hosted by the Association of African Universities (AAU) was setup to provide assistance to institutions concerned with quality assurance in higher education in Africa. The network is the official platform for the cooperation of African quality assurance organisations and collaborates with similar organisations in other regions.

In April 2009, AAU organised a stakeholder's workshop in Dodowa, Ghana which came up with a declaration, the "Dodowa Declaration" that emphasized the importance of the network to foster collaboration and linkage among the quality assurance bodies within Africa. Accordingly, an interim AfriQAN committee was elected whose efforts led to the development of a draft AfriQAN constitution. At the first general meeting in Accra, Ghana, from 25th to 27th November 2009, the founding members of AfriQAN, met and adopted the AfriQAN Constitution. In September 2012, a number of constitutional amendments were suggested, which were subsequently approved in June 2013 in Libreville, Gabon. The agenda for the 2015 General Assembly meeting will include an update on the AfriQAN activities and projections for the future; subscription and membership dues; and election of the new AfriQAN Executive Board.

Symposium of Rectors, Vice-Chancellors and Presidents of Universities

The symposium will enable Rectors, Vice-Chancellors and Presidents of universities to share information on the achievements, challenges, opportunities and prospects of their respective institutions in quality assurance of teaching, learning and research. The symposium is also organized as part of the follow up to the Conference of Rectors, Vice Chancellors and Presidents of African Universities (COREVIP) scheduled for June 2015 in Kigali Rwanda on the theme "*Internationalization of Higher Education in Africa* ». The COREVIP will focus on the following four sub-theme which are

closely related to quality assurance: Harmonisation and Quality; Mobility and Transferability of Credits; New Modes of Teaching and Learning; and Curriculum Relevance and Employability.

Expected Participants

The conference will be of interest to all stakeholders in quality assurance in higher education in Africa as well as policy makers and practitioners in quality assurance from other regions of the world. Participation is open but not limited to:

- Ministers in charge of Education/Higher Education/Science and Technology/ICTs and Labour
- Permanent Secretaries/Directors-General of Education and Senior Officials
- Heads and management teams of national and regional quality assurance agencies
- Vice-Chancellors, Rectors and Provosts of higher education institutions
- Officers and Members of AfriQAN
- Officers in charge of higher education at the African Union Commission
- Quality Assurance practitioners
- Experts in ICT, teaching and research in higher education
- Civil society
- Staff Unions
- Students and Students' Associations
- Professional associations
- Employers or employers' associations
- Development Partners including the ADEA and the European Union
- Stakeholders in education in Africa
- Stakeholders in higher education from other regions of the world

Conference, Workshop, General Assembly and Symposium Dates

- **Arrival:** Monday, September 21
- **Conference:** Tuesday-Wednesday, September 22-23
- **AfriQAN General Assembly:** September 24
- **Symposium of Rectors, Vice-Chancellors and Presidents,** September 24
- **Workshops:** September 23 and 24
- **Closing ceremony, Excursion and Tours and Departure:** September 25

Exhibition

A limited amount of space will be available for commercial vendors' displays/exhibits during the conference.

Working Languages

The working languages of the meeting will be English and French.

Partners

- Association of African Universities(AAU)
- Global University Network for Innovation (GUNi-Africa)

- African Quality Assurance Network
- African Union Commission
- National universities commission, Nigeria
- Okebukola Science Foundation
- More partners are encouraged

Conference Fee

A conference fee of \$250 (two hundred and fifty US dollars) will apply to all non-student participants. Students will be expected to pay \$50 (fifty dollars) for registration.

Venue

The conference will hold at the **Sheraton Hotel, Abuja**. (www.sheratonabuja.com). Conveniently located in the heart of the Federal Capital City, the Sheraton Abuja Hotel with 540 guest rooms and suites is only 40 minutes' drive away from the Nnamdi Azikiwe International Airport and is nestled within the many Tourist Sights and Sounds of Abuja.

Accommodation

The Organising Committee will negotiate good rates with hotels located in close proximity to the conference venue with shuttle facilities. The list of selected hotels will be provided as soon as possible.

Call for Papers

Papers or posters on issues falling within the sub-themes outlined above may be submitted as contributions to the conference. Persons who wish to present a paper or poster at the conference should submit an **extended synopsis** (in English or French) of 800 words (i.e. two A4 format pages of single spaced typing or the equivalent, including any tables or diagrams and a few pertinent references) together with completed Form A for Submission of a Paper and the Participation Form B (both on the conference website) on or before **30 May, 2015**. In addition, the synopsis should be sent electronically to the Conference Secretariat, email: jushabani@yahoo.fr and pokebukola@yahoo.com

Authors will be informed **mid-July** whether their paper/poster has been accepted for presentation by the Programme Committee. A subset of papers presented at the conference will be published subject to peer review. Further details will be provided after the extended synopses have been reviewed.

Conference website

The conference website is located at www.okebsf.org/2015icqahea Please visit the site to register and receive updates on the conference, workshops, the AfriQAN General Assembly and the Symposium.

For Further Information

For further information please contact:

- Professor Juma Shabani (jushabani@yahoo.fr)
- Professor Peter A. Okebukola (pokebukola@yahoo.com)
- Professor Chiedu Mafiana (chiedu.mafiana@gmail.com)
- Professor Jonathan Mba (for AfriQAN-related inquiries) (jcmba@aau.org)
- Alice Sena Lamptey (mawuenalamptey@hotmail.com)