



DAAD

Deutscher Akademischer Austausch Dienst
German Academic Exchange Service

HRK German Rectors' Conference

The Voice of the Universities

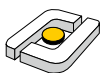


DAAD
HRK

Dialogue on Innovative Higher Education Strategies

**Management
of faculties and departments
as major challenge in higher education**

The DIES International Deans' Course
A workshop series with deans
from African and Asian universities



Fachhochschule Osnabrück
University of Applied Sciences

**Management
of faculties and departments
as major challenge in higher education**

The DIES International Deans' Course
A workshop series with deans
from African and Asian universities

Imprint

Publisher

University of Applied Sciences Osnabrück, German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) and German Rectors' Conference (HRK)

Author:

Prof. Dr. Peter Mayer, University of Applied Sciences Osnabrück

Printed by: IVD GmbH & Co. KG

Osnabrück, Dezember 2008

© German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) and German Rectors' Conference (HRK)

Any reprinting or publication of this document or extracts is subject to the prior written approval of the publishers.

Nachdruck und Verwendung in elektronischen Systemen – auch auszugsweise – nur mit vorheriger schriftlicher Genehmigung durch die Herausgeber.

Supported by:



Federal Ministry for
Economic Cooperation
and Development

Preface	4
1 Higher education in transition – new challenges for tertiary institutions.....	5
1.1 Changes in tertiary education	5
1.2 Drivers for change	8
1.3 Training for management of higher education institutions as a key challenge for training	10
2 A DIES-project – the conceptualization of a workshop series	11
2.1 The DIES-programme – a programme to address management issues in higher education.....	11
2.2 Partners for the DIES International Deans’ Course.....	12
2.3 The DIES International Deans’ Course – targeting the deans as key decision-makers	14
2.4 The objectives of the course.....	14
2.5 The didactic concept.....	15
2.6 Programme, issues and topics	17
3 Lessons learned.....	19

Preface

In 2006, the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) and the German Rectors' Conference (HRK), together with the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation (AvH), the Centre for Higher Education Development (CHE) and Fachhochschule Osnabrück, University of Applied Sciences (FHOs), started to offer a training programme for newly elected deans, vice-deans and heads of departments from universities in East and West Africa as well as South East Asia, aimed at preparing them for taking over senior managerial positions within their institutions. The programme is offered within the framework of DIES (Dialogue on Innovative Higher Education Strategies), the joint Higher Education Management Capacity Enhancement Programme of DAAD and HRK.

The **DIES International Deans' Course** takes place in the context of fundamental changes in tertiary education in general, and changes in the management of higher education institutions in particular. This context is true not only for Germany and other European countries but for other regions of the world as well. The training programme involves a series of meetings and activities in Germany and countries in Africa and Asia, which support participants in acquiring the skills required to successfully lead and manage faculties, departments, schools or colleges.

This brochure briefly describes the background of the project, i.e. the transformation of higher education sectors worldwide and the resulting challenges for managing higher education institutions. It then outlines the concept of the training programme and reflects on the lessons learned while implementing the first **DIES International Deans' Course Africa** (in cooperation with the University of Addis Ababa, Ethiopia and Moi University, Kenya) and the first **DIES International Deans' Course South East Asia** (in cooperation with the Gadjara Mada University, the Bandung Institute of Technology and the Philippine Normal University).

The DIES International Deans' Course is supported by the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ). The DAAD and the HRK wish to thank the BMZ for its kind support.



Christoph Hansert
Head, Division Higher Education
Management (DIES), DAAD



Marijke Wahlers
Head, International Department,
HRK

1 Higher education in transition – new challenges for tertiary institutions

1.1. Changes in tertiary education

A process of fundamental change of tertiary education is currently taking place in almost all countries around the world. Europe is going through a phase of fundamental reforms, tertiary education in North America is changing, and major reforms characterize tertiary education in the Southern hemisphere as well.

The most fundamental reforms in higher education are currently taking place in Europe. With the demise of the communist system in Eastern Europe and the end of the deep split between Western Europe and Eastern Europe, there has been a unique process of political and social change, hugely affecting tertiary education in Europe. Eastern European countries have adopted new tertiary education policies, private universities have been set up, new programmes with new curricula and content developed, and new alliances agreed upon. The far-reaching changes in Eastern Europe have not left Western Europe untouched. The demand for innovation and change in higher education has gained momentum, many changes originated from this mood of reform which swept through Europe at the beginning of the 90s. Many countries started to reform their tertiary education systems, launched innovative projects in order to inject new ideas and allowed new concepts to be tested.

The reform-mindedness in Europe received a big boost when the Bologna-declaration was signed in 1999. The action lines of the Bologna process have triggered massive transformation processes in all the signatory states with the original 29 in 1999 having grown to 46 in 2008. The key elements of the Bologna process such as the introduction of the two cycle model, the modularisation and the use of the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS), of internationalisation, of adjusting the national quality assurance system to the needs of international challenges, all of this has kept universities and policy makers busy throughout the years since signing the declaration.



Most countries have opted for additional policy reforms, which went far beyond the changes agreed upon in Bologna or the subsequent meetings in Prague (2001), Berlin (2003), Bergen (2005), and London (2007): across

Europe there has been a move towards modernizing universities and the tertiary education system as a whole. The European Union supported this change, the Commission of the European Union called for further reforms of the “way in which higher education systems are regulated and managed to the ways in which universities are governed” (Commission of the European Communities 2006). Higher education institutions in most countries now operate in a framework of increased financial flexibility and decentralized responsibility. University governance has been adapted in many countries. The notion of competition has gained ground in virtually all countries in Europe. Rankings of universities, business schools, and scholarly institutions in terms of their performance in research or in teaching has increased enormously.



Germany has gone through a period of reforms of its tertiary education system since the beginning of the nineties when unification created an atmosphere of change. After intensive debate and public reflection, the key legislative instrument to regulate tertiary education was substantially changed in 1998. And just a year later, Germany was among the signatory states of the Bologna declaration in 1999, and started to implement the reforms agreed upon at the beginning

of the new century. Concurrently with the implementation of the Bologna process, the governance system characterizing the tertiary education system in Germany has been fundamentally changed. Boards of trustees have been introduced and given the power to influence the strategic management of tertiary institutions. The power of the rectors, presidents and deans has been increased. The role of academic bodies such as faculty boards, senates, councils, and student parliaments has been changed. The idea of higher education institutions needing better management has gained prominence and ground. The idea of autonomy for higher education and new forms of accountability has received growing support and made policy makers opt for this new governance model. Rules concerning financing have been changed as well. Tuition fees have been introduced at the beginning for some programmes only, and then in some states for all bachelor and master programmes. Ministries have changed the rules for allocating budgets to higher education institutions - with formulas to calculate the financial support amended in order to strengthen incentives to perform, competitive processes have gained ground. The flourishing of numerous rankings is closely connected to this change in allocating scarce resources. The countrywide “competition for excellence” sent a strong signal to the public that public money for higher education should (at least partly) be invested where superiority is indeed achieved. It was a clear break with the idea that money is distributed in such a way that everyone gets a fair share, keeping in mind as well regional consideration, developmental perspectives etc.

Tertiary education in Africa is also confronted with major challenges. While English-speaking countries have practiced the two-cycle system for decades and have worked with elements such as modules and credit points in the past, many study programmes need adjustment in terms of structure and contents. Many programmes have not been reviewed for a long time. Ideas such as outcome-based learning have gained ground in Africa as well. Issues such as employability are equally important. Some countries are going through a process of developing a new system of quality assurance. Because of the lack of public resources, public universities are facing serious financial constraints. High population growth rates and the need to invest scarce public resources in primary and secondary education have further added to the problem of the tertiary sector being cash-strapped. The deteriorating public investment per student in most countries has led to a serious decline in the quality of tertiary education. Higher education institutions have had to respond innovatively by looking for new sources of funds, reducing costs etc. At the same time, new private universities fill part of the gap which has been left by underfinanced public tertiary institutions. Many countries have introduced new governance models.

Quality management in higher education in African countries

The Inter-University Council for East Africa (IUCEA), DAAD and HRK cooperate in the field of quality management. On the basis of a jointly developed manual Quality Assurance coordinators of more than 40 universities in Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, Rwanda, and Burundi have conducted pilot programme self assessments and received international peer reviewers. This has been enabled by parallel multipart intensive training courses and on spot visits of international experts.

Universities in Asian countries have gone through fundamental reforms. The economic growth rates in many countries have allowed for increases in public allocations for higher education. The increase of public spending in countries such as China and South Korea has been exemplary. The growing living standards and willingness to pay for higher education has led to an increase of private contributions towards higher education. The number of university graduates has increased in most countries. Some countries, such as Indonesia, have seen an astonishing increase in private tertiary institutions. With new institutions coming up, there has been less of a need to deal with the transformation of old and established institutions. Instead, the identification of appropriate rules for new institutions has become more

important. And with private institutions gaining relevance, countries have had to find the right balance between autonomy and state guidance. The development of new curricula is constantly challenging the various players in the system. New ideas for managing tertiary institutions based on concepts like autonomy and accountability have gained ground.

1.2. Drivers for change



The differences in economic, social and political conditions notwithstanding, changes in tertiary education in Europe, Africa and Asia are similar in many ways because the factors impacting on higher education are almost the same in the three continents.

Globalisation is shaping tertiary education

Globalisation has deeply affected higher education. While academia has always been international to some extent, disciplines increasingly define themselves as part of the wider international community, searching for knowledge in their discipline. Benchmarking takes place in an international context. Curricula are developed with reference to approaches in other countries and regions. A look at university bookshops in Afri-

can, Asian and European countries quickly reveals the level of integration. A great many textbooks are used around the world. International conferences and international journals are powerful in influencing the way priorities are defined in disciplines. The internet makes it possible to compare didactic approaches in different countries and allows for benchmarking without great costs. Universities, especially from highly developed Anglophone nations, but also from France and Germany, have started to offer programmes abroad and often act as competitors for local providers of educational services.

Generation of knowledge becomes more important

With the generation of knowledge becoming increasingly crucial for economic growth, countries recognize the relevance of establishing higher education systems where institutions are able to produce the output required in society. This is not only true for developed countries, which see their future in human capital-intensive production but additionally in developing countries. There we are faced with fears that a neglect of higher education will erode the chances to close the divide between the rich and poor nations.

Expansion in higher education

Many countries around the world are faced with the challenge of expanding access to higher education. Countries in the Southern hemisphere are confronted with high birth rates and the resulting increase in the number of young people entering the educational system. And many countries see the need to expand the percentage of students entering the tertiary education system.

New technologies drive change

New technologies have radically changed practices in academic life. The use of computers, the internet, electronic learning platforms, and presentation methods have all brought tertiary institutions around the world closer together. Differences have been eroded. Electronic databanks allow students around the world to access academic journals and material. Contact between universities across borders is much easier as the internet allows for videoconferences and for distance learning when students and teachers are thousands of kilometres apart. Such changes impact considerably on academic practices in Europe, Africa and Asia.

New concepts in public management gain ground

New concepts in public management, which have substantially transformed other sectors of public life in countries around the world, find their way into higher education: Decentralization of decision-making is as important as the idea of strengthening rules and regulations which rely less on state guidance and more on self-regulation, markets and similar mechanisms. The philosophy that management of public institutions can benefit from experiences in the private sector, that cost-efficiency can be reached when modern controlling methods are used, has deeply influenced thinking about running public sector institutions. And it has influenced thinking about the management of higher education institutions, which are predominantly public.

More competition in higher education

The idea of tertiary education institutions being in competition has gained ground. Governments increasingly try to identify and give special support to a selected number of institutions which can compete internationally. Rankings, despite widespread uneasiness about the arbitrariness in choosing and measuring criteria and calculating a final ranking list, are seen increasingly as an instrument to describe differences in quality, be it in terms of quality of study programmes, quality of research, or quality of services. This is true in the national as well as in the international context.

Convergence of higher education policies around the world

There has been a global convergence in thinking about the higher education policies which are most suitable. The process of European integration in general and the Bologna process in Europe has acted as a forceful mechanism to spread ideas across borders, to compare policies and to get detailed information about success stories from other countries. Work by international organizations such as OECD, UNESCO, the World Bank, the European University Association (EUA), the Association of African Universities (AAU), the Association of Universities of Asia and the Pacific (AUAP) and others have produced numerous studies, publications and other output which has helped to spread information about best practices or what has come to be seen as such.

1.3. Training for management of higher education institutions as a key challenge for training



The change in the policy environment for higher education institutions involves a tremendous challenge for tertiary institutions. Decision-makers need to have a sound understanding of the new framework conditions. And they have to reflect upon consequences for their daily work, on adaptations of their tools and instruments, or new tools and instruments. There is wide-spread agreement that the best performance of key decision-makers in tertiary institutions is possible only

when the knowledge and skills-gap is addressed. There is a need to check whether skills are still satisfactory, whether they need to be upgraded, or if new and totally different skills are needed. And this applies to all levels; it stretches from the leadership at the top to the staff implementing the new programmes and services.

Such qualifications take place in the context of an increasing number of conferences, seminars and workshops or other forms of expanding the knowledge base on higher education management issues. By these activities, public institutions such as ministries want to raise the level of know-how in the higher education system. Bodies representing universities such as Rectors' Conferences, bodies representing certain disciplines or type of faculties offer programmes to inform and educate, or provide a platform for discussion. Sometimes tertiary institutions in a geographic region work together; in some cases universities use their networks with other universities to collectively offer programmes to upgrade skills. Some universities with programmes in management have started to offer study programmes on the master's level by adapting tools and techniques successfully used in management to the context of tertiary institutions. New service providers have come up with training programmes.

Programmes address skills' gaps at the top management level; others target the level of deans. Some programmes are directed at assistants of top management of universities or faculties. Quite a number of programmes are directed at staff working in higher education.

Some specialized programmes deal with issues such as human resource management in higher education, others look at marketing in higher education. Strategic management and universities, controlling in tertiary education and IT in modern universities are topical issues as well. Study programmes have been designed in order to qualify staff in matters of higher education management. This is a sound response to the new complexity, to the need to respond effectively to the changes tertiary institutions are confronted with.

2 A DIES-project the conceptualization of a workshop-series

2.1. The DIES-programme – a programme to address management issues in higher education

The German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) and the German Rectors' Conference (HRK) have responded to this challenge of changes in higher education management and the need for new skills, new strategies, and new perspectives by develop-



ing a platform of dialogue between higher education institutions in Germany and developing countries. The joint DAAD-HRK programme, which was started in 2002 with the name "Dialogue on Innovative Higher Education Strategies" (DIES), offers activities in the field of higher education management. Issues such as strategic management, quality management, curriculum design and transnational study programmes are covered. The conferences, seminars, study visits or other forms of exchange are usually organized together with partners in Germany and from abroad. (For the full list of activities see www.hrk.de or www.daad.de).

2.2. Partners for the International Deans' Course



Five organizations with a proven track-record in dealing with higher education management cooperate in offering the deans' course: the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD), the German Rectors' Conference (HRK), the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation (AvH), the Centre for Higher Education Development CHE and the University of Applied Sciences Osnabrück.

The DAAD is a self-governing organisation of the German institutions of higher education and the world's largest funding organisation for international academic exchange. The DAAD, which has responsibilities in the fields of foreign cultural and education policy, development policy and national higher education policy, runs a large number of educational activities to inform members about new trends and developments, to prepare scholars and staff from tertiary institutions for the challenges internationalisation brings for institutions.

The German Rectors' Conference/Hochschulrektorenkonferenz (HRK) is the voluntary association of state and state-recognized universities and other higher education institutions in Germany. The HRK is the political and public voice of the universities and other higher education institutions and is the forum for the higher education institutions' joint opinion-forming process. The HRK addresses all topics relating to the responsibilities of higher education institutions, one of them being international higher education cooperation. In its work, it deals extensively with the challenges of managing higher education institutions.

The Alexander von Humboldt Foundation (AvH) is the major German organization facilitating international academic relations through cooperation between outstanding foreign and German researchers. The AvH offers re-

search fellowships, research awards and special programmes for alumni, and organizes many major meetings in Germany for scholarship holders.

The Centre for Higher Education Development (CHE), a think tank for developments in higher education and jointly funded by the Bertelsmann Foundation and the German Rectors' Conference, presents new ideas and concepts for higher education to the public and expert community. CHE, well known for their influential university ranking of German, Austrian and Swiss higher education institutions, offers numerous training programmes for tertiary institutions.

The University of Applied Sciences Osnabrück (FH Os), a medium-sized tertiary institution in the northern part of Germany, offers a wide variety of bachelor and master programmes. In 2004, it began to offer an MBA programme "Higher education and research management", becoming one of the key tertiary education institutions to offer programmes which give students both the theoretical and practical know-how to manage higher education institutions.

Five partner institutions from Africa and Asia respectively were involved in the detailed planning of the programme. Moi University from Kenya and Addis Ababa University are co-organizers for the DIES International Deans' Course for African participants, and Philippine Normal University from the Philippines, Gadjah Mada University and Bandung Institute of Technology from Indonesia are co-organizers for the programme for Asian participants.

Training courses for faculty management in Germany

The CHE Centre for Higher Education Development offers three open workshops and several in-house workshops per year for people involved in faculty management, ranging from deans and vice deans to heads of department and faculty managers. Topics covered among others are strategic planning, financial management and change management (www.hochschulkurs.de). Every year around 75 participants use this opportunity to learn new skills and network with others who face similar challenges. In addition, CHE runs a free knowledge portal named Forum Fakultätsmanagement (www.fakultaetsmanagement.de) with all kinds of news and information in this field. The WiKi format enhances exchange among people involved in faculty management.

2.3. The DIES International Deans' Course – targeting deans as key decision-makers



The management of faculties has been identified as an area where changes and challenges are most pronounced and a particular need arises to qualify decision-makers. Deans, vice-deans or deputy deans and heads of departments are the people who carry enormous responsibilities in administering and man-

aging faculties. Deans of faculties need new skills, they need to have a sound understanding of new requirements, they have to have knowledge about the potential of modern management methods, and their limitations. They need to have social skills in order to create a climate where tertiary institutions find a way that is accepted by people inside and outside the academic realm.

DAAD, HRK, AvH, CHE and FH Os decided to offer a comprehensive programme for participants from Africa and Asia where such skills to manage faculties would be at the centre. A joint workshop with higher education experts from African and Asian universities was held in November 2006 to explore needs and possibilities to address needs. The organizers finally decided to launch a training programme for deans or vice-deans from Africa and Asia that would address the new challenges for higher education management in faculties.

2.4. The objectives of the course

The objectives of the DIES International Deans' Course were identified as:

- The programme should provide knowledge for participants from African and Asian countries on the fundamental changes in higher education in Germany, Europe and around the world.
- Participants should gain an insight into new thinking about management of higher education institutions that might help them to improve the performance of their institutions.
- The programme should give participants practical skills to respond to changes in higher education in their own working environment by using the practical learning approach.

- The programme should build bridges between higher education institutions in Africa, in Asia and in Germany, enabling all sides to use the knowledge about each other for further contacts in teaching, research and administration.
- The programme should assist persons who studied in Germany and have come to occupy leadership roles in African and Asian higher education institutions.

2.5. The didactic concept

Implementation of the International Deans' Course is in four steps stretching over a period of more than a year. This is based on the idea that the complex skills required to manage higher education institutions can not be meaningfully discussed, trained or reflected upon when there is just one get-together where people absorb information. Learning in this context is a process which takes time, requires joint reflection, needs to be based on phases of new inputs provided, and time to apply the new inputs in reality.

The first step: The meeting in Osnabrück and Berlin

The first course aims at introducing important new concepts in higher education management. Participants are sensitized for new ideas and issues, for the forces of change, and the answers found in Germany, other European countries, and around the world. At the end of the first meeting in Germany, participants are requested to identify an issue which they work on in the following months in the framework of a specific project called "personal action plan" (PAP). By identifying such a project, participants are applying the new skills to their own work environment. This approach allows for a more active application of the ideas, concepts and theories which are introduced during the course and reduce the typical distance or split between the seminar context and professional reality. The progress on the personal action plans is then shared with other participants throughout the period of the International Deans' Course.

The second step: The regional meetings

The second step involves a meeting of participants of the International Deans' Course from the same country or region and an expert from Germany a few months after the first meeting in Germany. This meeting is meant to provide an opportunity to discuss experiences of higher education management in general and of implementing the personal action plan in particular - together with the other expert participants from



the DIES International Deans' Course. This allows for joint reflection on forces hindering change, and provides for an opportunity to exchange views on alternatives. This meeting is characterized by an intensive debate with participants who are drawn only from the deans' course and hence know each other and have already developed trust and understanding. This second meeting creates a special atmosphere which is important for deliberating on strategies of change and getting to the heart of issues and matters. The regional meeting is typically used as well to organize a public forum where important issues in higher education are dealt with. Topics selected for this open forum were quality management, change of governance, strategic management et al.

MBA in Higher Education Management

In 2004, the University of Applied Sciences in Osnabrück started to offer a MBA programme on higher education and research management. The programme is organized in such a way that students can participate on a part-time basis. Many students already hold advanced positions in higher education. Participation is aimed at preparing students to take over leading positions in higher education or research management. One alumnus became rector of a tertiary institution soon after graduating. Topics in the programme include internationalization, management tools in higher education, marketing in tertiary education, controlling in higher education. The growing number of alumni have created a network of experts who have advanced skills in management of higher education institutions.

The third step: The final workshop

The third workshop with all participants brings the DIES International Deans' Course to an end after a period of approximately nine months. New input is provided, change processes are jointly reflected upon and lessons learned are discussed. This all feeds into further planning of activities.

The fourth step: Follow up

There is in fact an important follow-up to the DIES International Deans' Course which is the intraregional and inter-regional networking of participants of the course. The DAAD specifically supports initiatives where participants link up to participants in other DAAD-activities related to higher education management or otherwise. And many participants use their experiences and old or newly established contacts to German higher education

institutions to identify joint projects with German universities or universities of applied sciences, or exchange information, or establish other forms of cooperation. The participants have access to various programmes specifically designed to bring alumni of the DAAD in touch with each other and scholars in Germany.

About 15 countries were identified to participate in the International Deans' Course. Instead of having one or two participants from each country, it was decided to run the programme in two steps: The programme would start with participants from Africa, and continue a year later with participants from Asia. While the exchange of experiences from Africa to Asia and vice versa would have been beneficial as well, the experience of sharing between African participants and Asian participants was felt to be more important because it allowed the exchange of experiences among universities, countries or tertiary education system which are similar.

2.6. Programme, issues and topics

The first DIES International Deans' Course started in May 2007. The DAAD, the HRK, the AvH, the CHE and FH Os were joined by Moi University from Kenya and Addis Ababa University from Ethiopia. They organized the series of activities with participants coming from Ghana, Nigeria, Sudan, Ethiopia, Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Malawi, and South Africa.



The second DIES International Deans' Course was offered in 2008, with the same organizers on the German side, and three partners from Asia: the Philippine Normal University from Manila in the Philippines, the Gadjah Mada University from Indonesia and the Bandung Institute of Technology from Indonesia. Participants came from Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, Laos, Vietnam and the Philippines.

The course in Osnabrück and Berlin focuses on the following issues. Each issue is dealt with by allotting one day for deliberations, leaving room for presentations, discussions, group work and other forms of deliberations.

Schedule for the first International Deans' Course – issues
Changes in higher education policies and Bologna process – an overview
Management in higher education – issues and challenges
Financial management in higher education
Soft skills training – skills required in higher education
Quality management as challenge for institutions
Visits to three universities in Berlin: Free University of Berlin, Humboldt-University, Technical University of Berlin and discussions with representatives of these universities about management issues
Identification and reflection of personal action plans
Sum up, evaluation and reflection on way forward

Experts for the meetings in Osnabrück and Berlin were drawn from different institutions: deans from both large and small universities, representatives of universities and universities of applied sciences. Presidents and deans reported on their experience in higher education management, and scholars who do research on management in higher education spoke to the participants and reflected on best practice. Experts from institutions like DAAD, HRK, AvH, CHE contributed to the deliberations. In order to bring in expertise from abroad at a very early stage, facilitators from universities in African and Asian countries were invited to join for the planning and implementation of the whole course.

There were regional meetings four to five months after the initial get together in Germany: The workshops were organized by participants at their home university and brought together participants of the International Deans Course from the region. The regional workshops typically have the following structure:

Schedule for the regional meeting - topics for deliberation
Internal workshop: discussion of personal action plans
Joint workshop with external participants on challenges in higher education management. Topics discussed in the various workshops were quality management, governance reforms, financial management

There is a final workshop of all participants. The schedule for the meeting is determined by the interests of participants, their requests to look deeper into some issues. The first meeting covered the following issues:

Schedule for the final meeting - Topics for deliberation
Change management – challenges and best practices
Personal action plans – lessons learned
Bologna process – structures, procedures, challenges
Quality management
Networking, public relations work in higher education institutions

3. Lessons learned

Strong interest in higher education management

The programme has been designed on the premise of fundamental changes in higher education management around the world, confronting virtually all tertiary institutions with new challenges they find themselves not sufficiently equipped for. The conferences and workshops, with participants from Africa and Asia, confirm that higher education institutions find it extremely challenging to meet the new demands. Participants call for further measures to address the skills gap. The feed back from the programme shows the potential of providing knowledge, skills and competencies to the leadership of faculties in African and Asian countries. Conditions for deans do differ in many ways: in terms of what kind of leadership role they are expected to and are allowed to play, and whether they are expected to be visionary, participatory, communicative etc. This all depends on the size of institutions, on disciplines and their traditions, on the history of institutions, on the culture, on people working in the institution, the availability of charismatic persons etc. But deans in all countries can make a difference when they fully understand the challenges and can see changes in a wider perspective, when they master the management instruments and when they are able to communicate effectively the changes that are required. Only a few programmes in African and Asian countries do address the changes and the implications for management; even fewer programmes are directed at the target group of deans. And while some organizations in Africa and Asia like rectors' conferences, universities, consulting agencies, and international organizations are starting to take up the challenge, the approach, however, quite often lacks a comprehensive and systematic nature. In most countries, especially in the African context, there is little written material available reflecting upon changes in higher education and implications for management of higher education in their countries.



Bologna process still needs explaining and reflection



While the discourse in Europe on the nature and implications of the Bologna process has been very intense in the last years and people in higher education generally have a good understanding of experiences elsewhere, there is still a great need in Africa and Asia to learn about and reflect upon the key elements of the Bologna process. However, the ensuing discussion on the lessons for tertiary institutions outside Europe is what is most important.

Some participants in the course challenged how the Bologna process is implemented in Europe. The criticism was quite focussed when participants had some experience themselves with the German educational system and had learned that the German Diplom-programmes offered added value over other courses. Others were impressed by the large number of European countries which have decided to intensify cooperation, looking at common routes and options. But beyond understanding the European transformation of higher education and the forces that drive such a process, it is of greatest significance for the institutions in Africa and Asia to clarify what "Bologna" means for institutions in Africa and Asia. Can tertiary institutions continue with their programmes without adjustment, or is there a need for a fresh look? What does it mean for quality assurance, for partnerships and for exchange programmes? A Kenyan education expert boldly challenged participants by asking whether African countries should join the Bologna process. If the Bologna process is defining an important benchmark in higher education, then adopting some of the key elements might be a reasonable course. And the signatory states of the Bologna declaration are the countries where the most important partners for academic cooperation in Africa and to a smaller extent in Asia come from. Furthermore, a large number of students from African and Asian countries spend part of their studies in Europe, many universities run joint programmes with universities in Europe. Implementing policies in the field of quality management would give, so the argument goes, a clear signal to all institutions involved which kind of direction the quality debate will take, and thereby avoid unnecessary tension and waste of resources. Participants and experts were cautious concerning the implications of the Bologna process. And there will not be easy answers, but the key challenge remains: what has to change in a country with close links to European countries, when a substantial change process in higher education takes place in Europe? And if anyone should reflect upon these questions, it is the leaders of academic institutions. The DIES International Deans' Course provides for this opportunity to discuss, to reflect, to exchange thoughts and ideas.

Strategic management most important

There is considerable interest in looking at the potential of strategic management tools for charting the course of universities or faculties. The changes currently taking place are seen as fundamental and the need for a more holistic approach in management is recognized in many institutions. Participants shared their experience that management is quite often re-active rather than pro-active, with the latter approach leaving much more room for shaping processes and influencing the course of affairs. In some universities, quite advanced tools such as balanced scorecards are used, which left a strong impression on participants when exposed to such experiences. In other universities, the tools used are still very rudimentary and simple, a characterization of the management as "strategic" would be euphemistic. The International Deans' Course experience shows: interest in learning about elaborate tools of strategic management is high.

Discussions during the various International Deans' Course meetings show clearly that a purely managerial approach towards leading a faculty is not feasible or desirable, neither in Germany, and nor in the African or Asian context. There are clear limits to the adoption of a management philosophy in higher education. The learning process is more complicated and diverse than a production process of goods, the individuality of teaching staff might be a burden in some situations, but is a great advantage when a generation of new knowledge is desired. Participatory traditions in higher education are also defining clear limits to the applicability of management practices used in corporate life.

Sharing Information on Quality Management in Higher Education

The German Rectors' Conference is not only the voice of German universities and universities of applied sciences, it also provides its member institutions with information on important developments in higher education and supports their institutional development. One of its important projects is the Project Quality Management, which aims at accumulating and exchanging experience in quality assurance at a national and international level and at encouraging university management as well as individual faculty members to work on the introduction and enhancement of quality assurance procedures and mechanisms.

University governance is changing

University governance, i.e. the design of institutions, rules, values that shape the exercise of power in tertiary institutions, is changing across Europe. While governance is not part and parcel of the Bologna process, the process is certainly important in explaining the dynamics. Research shows that governance models in Europe are becoming more similar, there is a tendency towards systems assimilating. A highly influential research work looked at governance models in most European countries and identified five dimensions of governance: the role of the state, the role of external stakeholders, the role of academic self-governance, the role of managerial self-governance and finally the role of competition when allocating scarce resources (CHEPS 2006). The study found that there is generally a tendency towards less direct management by the state, there is more involvement of external stakeholders, there is more delegation of managerial authority to the tertiary institution, and there is a more competitive outlook. In many countries changes are triggered by the state, but other forces come into play as well. Discussions during the IDC on this tendency in Europe provoked lively discussion on trends in Africa and Asia. Quite a number of countries in Africa and Asia saw a redefinition of the role of the state, generally leaving more scope to universities to define their direction. Other stakeholders gained in importance as well.

The first meeting of IDC participants started with a description of the governance structure at the home universities of experts participating. This opened new perspectives in terms of seeing different organizational modes, reflecting upon possibilities to choose between different organizational set-ups. By using concrete, real examples to discuss the advantages and disadvantages of different governance models, participants could reflect more thoroughly on what options are available.

Changes in funding of tertiary education



One of the inputs in Germany into the discussion with deans from Africa and Asia was the analysis of the changes in the funding of higher education, especially financing the teaching function of tertiary institutions. Participants discussed the changes in many European countries where experts have observed a move towards the use of lump-sum payments to tertiary institutions, an increase of the use of financial formulas, and of incentives for high quality. Discussions showed the need for a more decentralized system in the context of tertiary education in the South as well.

Level of funding education insufficient

Major differences exist in terms of total funding for tertiary education and funding per student. The level of funding in Germany and other European countries can be considered as too low. In comparison, the level of funding in African countries is at an extremely low level, and has even declined in the recent past. For Asia, the situation is much better than in Africa, but still remains difficult. With insufficient funds available, the question needs to be addressed what kind of mechanisms should be in place to use the scarce resources most efficiently. Here as well the interaction proved important because participants could exchange opinions, reflect upon consequences and share thoughts on how to deal with the trends.

Need for external funding

Similarities and interests exist in terms of the importance to attract external funds for research. Both European as well as African and Asian universities are being challenged to develop the necessary infrastructure to secure funding for research activities. While European funding for research activities in European universities becomes more important, the importance of foreign funding cannot be compared with the need, especially in Africa, for funds to be secured from foreign sources.

Quality management

The discussions on quality management proved to be very useful. The quality debate in Europe has been very intense, many new organizations were set up, tertiary institutions try to establish effective systems, and they try to develop a quality culture where this was absent before. Such discussions will go on because the challenge of measuring quality in higher education is different in comparison to measuring the quality of a normal product or service. Quality has been an important issue in African education as well. Some universities have established quality management units, some universities work with external examiners. Evaluation of lectures is common in many tertiary institutions, but more thorough systems still need to be established.

The presentation of the East African quality network, a project supported by DAAD and HRK as part of their DIES-project line, triggered discussions on essential elements of an institution which is characterized by good or high quality. And presentations by a number of deans about their attempts to go for quality in their faculty showed that room for innovative measures is there.



Soft skills as important element of training deans



The integration of soft skills training in the programme proved very valuable. A one-day-workshop covering topics such as “conflict management”, “management of meetings” and “presentation skills”, by now quite typical in study programmes and training activities in Germany and Europe, provided participants with an opportunity to reflect on the behavioural side of leadership. The trainers, most of them with international experience, used case studies and role plays to help participants to reflect on behaviour in dialogue or team situations, to help them to see more clearly how certain routines can guide and misguide individuals teams when they look for solutions, and to help them find strategies to handle these situations.

Case studies from Germany important for a better understanding

The programme is based on the idea that higher education management challenges are best understood when theoretical knowledge about higher education, management, and psychology and sociology are coupled with an understanding of the conditions of real challenges in tertiary education. This, for example, involves sudden policy changes, challenging internal traditions and expectations from the public. Or it means that management has to deal with serious financial limitations and bureaucratic conditions which do not allow for the first, best solution.



Resource persons for the International Deans’ Course are selected in such a way that practical experiences are shared in an open and frank manner, shedding light on the difficult processes in academia as well as possible solutions. Resource persons bring experiences from a great variety of institutions, large and small universities, traditional ones and new ones. The University of Applied Sciences Osnabrück, one of the organizers of the International Deans’ Course, contributes some case studies, three universities in Berlin, the Freie Universität Berlin (FU) , the Technische Universität Berlin (TU) and the Humboldt Universität zu Berlin (HU) repeatedly expressed their readiness to share experiences and give participants insights into the management of large universities. The visits finalized the programme, allowing for a reflection on the models, instruments and tools presented in the course and see how they are applied in large public universities in Germany.

Case studies from partner universities in Africa and Asia important for a better understanding

While all participants shared their experiences and observations throughout the course, the IDC for African participants looked extensively at the University of Addis Ababa in Ethiopia and the Moi University in Kenya. The IDC in Asia looked extensively at three case studies: the Philippine Normal University, the Gadjah Madah University and the Bandung Institute of Technology in Indonesia. The use of case studies from Germany as well as from African and Asian countries implied a very practical approach and discussion ensuring that applicability of ideas and concepts was always present.

Methodology based on personal action plan

The IDC was designed in such a way that each participant identified a specific project he or she would work on in the months after the first training. It was reasoned that this would provide an opportunity to think about the applicability of methods and tools learned in their own academic environment. This approach proved very effective; it increased the participants' interest to look at the tools discussed in the course from their practical point of view. Communication between the first part of the International Deans' Course and the second meeting, when first results of the project were presented, showed that this approach was very successful in terms of giving the course the character of a laboratory for tools in higher education management. Some of the personal action plans led to concrete changes: the introduction of a specific quality management approach in a university in Southern Africa, or the implementation of a human resource development programme in a university in Uganda.

Regional integration in Africa still insufficient, approach very useful

The Bologna process and European integration have provided for numerous opportunities in Europe to learn about policies, practices, and problems in other countries. For those who are interested, it is no longer difficult to get access to relevant information about higher education in other countries of the Bologna process. Detailed information about the state of transformation with quite specific details is available. Experiences in other countries can be used for change processes in one's own country. This is much less easier in Africa and Asia. Little is known to key personnel in higher education institutions about higher education trends even in neighbouring countries. There are few easily accessible sources of information, there is little staff exchange. The workshop, which included numerous occasions to exchange

views on experiences in other African countries, filled an important gap: The IDC helped to strengthen the view on regional integration, on learning from immediate neighbours. Ties were established which will last and help to organize a permanent dialogue.

Creation of links to German institutions helpful



Participants had been selected after applying through their DAAD regional office. Applicants were people holding advanced positions in tertiary institutions. Most of them had already some contact with the DAAD: Many of the participants had studied in Germany or had participated in other DAAD programmes before. The series of activities provided an opportunity to keep in touch with the academic system in Germany, to reflect upon

the changes of a system they had been in and most of them cherished. Other participants who had not studied in Germany used this opportunity to learn about the higher education system in Germany and the reforms.

The programme is designed in such a way that participants have many opportunities to develop new links or re-establish old ones, to network with other participants of the International Deans' Course or network with participants of other management-related DAAD-activities in the region. This is seen as a major advantage of the programme, going beyond other training activities where the main activity is "only" the training and learning provided during a training activity. The International Deans' Course is meant to open avenues into a network of other experts and a pool of knowledge which can be tapped when needed.

The International Deans' Course fills an important gap, and at the same time fits well into the activities of the organizations providing the training. The joint effort of five institutions and the methodological approach have been useful in establishing an innovative approach in training decision-makers in higher education.

For further information, please visit the organizers' websites

Hochschulrektorenkonferenz : www.hrk.de

Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst: www.daad.de

Alexander von Humboldt-Stiftung: www.avh.de

Centrum für Hochschulentwicklung : www.che.de

Fachhochschule Osnabrück: www.fh-osnabrueck.de

Reference material for reforms in higher education:

Center for Higher Education Policy Studies (CHEPS): "The extent and impact of higher education governance reform across Europe, Part One: Comparative analysis and executive summary", Brussels 2006,

internet: http://ec.europa.eu/education/doc/reports/doc/curricular1_en.pdf
on 14th of November 2008

Commission of the European Communities: Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament: "Delivering on the modernisation agenda for universities: education, research and innovation, Brussels 2006,

internet: http://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/2010/doc/comuniv2006_en.pdf
on 14th November 2008

ENQA: Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area, 2nd. Edition, Helsinki 2007,

internet: http://www.enqa.eu/files/ESG_v03.pdf
on 14th November 2008

Gaethgens, Christiane and Peter A. Zervakis: Implementing Bologna: Experience from German Higher Education Institutions, in: EUA Bologna Handbook: Making Bologna Work, 4th Supplement 2007.

HRK: Education for a Global World – Reforming German Universities toward the European Higher Education Area, Bonn 2008,

internet: <http://www.eyemag.se/core/main.php?&SITEID=f3452&PROJECTNR=2794&PHPSESSID=a0f89e4f81858605e528382c07e9fb90>
on 14th November 2008



DAAD

Deutscher Akademischer Austausch Dienst
German Academic Exchange Service

HRK German Rectors' Conference
The Voice of the Universities



DAAD
HRK

Dialogue on Innovative Higher Education Strategies

Supported by:



Federal Ministry for
Economic Cooperation
and Development