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

9TH 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

September 18 – 22, 2017

Venue: AAU Headquarters, Accra

CONFERENCE THEME:

QUALITY HIGHER EDUCATION, HARMONISATION AND ATTAINMENT OF THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS IN AFRICA

BACKGROUND

The 8th International Conference on Quality Assurance in Higher Education in Africa (ICQAHEA) with the theme: *"Multidimensions of Innovation in Higher Education in Africa: Towards Enhancing Quality and Accelerating Regional Harmonisation"* was held on September 19-24, 2016 in Windhoek, Namibia with financial support from the European Union and Peregrine Academic Services. Gillette, WY, USA, and the Government of Namibia. The conference was designed as an integrated package made up of plenary and parallel sessions; six parallel practical and hands-on capacity building workshops; special sessions; the African Quality Assurance Network (AfriQAN) General Meeting; and a Symposium of Rectors, Vice-Chancellors and President of universities on the theme: *"Preparing Higher Education Managers in Africa for Multidimensional Innovations in Quality Assurance and Regional Harmonization"*. The conference reviewed different dimensions of innovation in African higher education that address quality and regional harmonization; and discussed recent developments and innovative practices in

accelerating regional harmonization, especially under the Africa-EU partnerships. It also provided a platform for the formal launch of the (a) Harmonisation, Quality Assurance and Accreditation (HAQAA) initiative, (b) the Virtual Institute for Higher Education in Africa (VIHEAF) and (c) two AfriQAN initiatives in quality assurance, namely, Quality Assurance for Higher Education Leaders (QAHEL) and Quality Assurance for Higher Education Personnel (QAHEP)

The conference adopted several recommendations that should help to further enhance quality and accelerate regional harmonization.

The 9th ICQAHEA that is organized under the theme "*Quality Higher Education, Harmonisation and Attainment of Sustainable Development Goals in Africa",* will take stock of the progress made in implementing the recommendations of the 8th Conference and identify the strategies required in order to consolidate the results achieved in enhancing quality and accelerating regional harmonization. This conference is therefore a follow up to the 8th ICQAHEA. The conference will also address the role of quality assurance and regional harmonization in higher education in attaining the sustainable development goals (SDGs) adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in September 2015 in order to end poverty, protect the planet, and ensure prosperity for all.

It is now agreed that since the advent of the knowledge-based economy, higher education institutions all over the world should play a major role in the development processes and therefore in achieving the SDGs. The contribution of higher education institutions will be provided mainly through training of high-level human resources and creation of new knowledge required by the development through modern innovative teaching and learning techniques and research and innovation respectively.

Recognition of the role of higher education in achieving the SDGs was one of the major conclusions of the World Sustainability Forum held in January 2017 in Cape Town, South Africa. According to a Statement made at the Forum by Dr Jeffrey D Sachs, a world-renowned Economist, who is the Director of the Earth Institute at Columbia University in the United States and Senior United Nations advisor, *"achieving the SDGs would be impossible without the leadership role of the university sector. I do think the academic and university sector have a unique role to play. I do not believe the SDGs can be achieved without the university sector."* The participants to this Forum also recognized that *"Africa's ability to meet the SDGs is closely tied up with its research capacity",* which confirms the central role of universities in the implementation of the SDGs.

In addition to the emphasis made on research, higher education institutions are challenged to enhance quality and accelerate harmonization in order to contribute more effectively to achieving the SDGs. For at least two decades, quality assurance has been at the heart of higher education policies at national, regional and institutional levels all over the world. In Africa, several initiatives have been launched to take up the challenge of quality assurance. These include the capacity building programs in quality assurance implemented by the Inter-University Council for East Africa and the African and Malagasy Council for Higher education (in it French acronym CAMES) and the various quality

assurance and regional harmonization initiatives being carr;   Since 2000, higher education institutions have been challenged to engage in harmonization of their programs in order to align their curricula to the needs of the world of work and the national development agendas and to promote mobility and international recognition of qualifications.

The 9th ICQAHEA will review ongoing and emerging initiatives in quality assurance and regional harmonization and identify the gaps to be filled in order to enable higher education institutions to fully contribute to the achievement of the SDGs. Finally, the conference will provide a platform to higher education stakeholders to reflect on the contribution of the African continent to the World Conference on Quality Assurance and the SDGs, to be organized in 2018 in Paris by UNESCO in collaboration with the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA)/ International Quality Group (CIQG), the International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education, and the World Bank.

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OBJECTIVES OF THE CONFERENCE AND WORKSHOP

The objectives of the 9th ICQAHEA and Workshops are to:

1.   Review recent developments/achievements in enhancing quality and promoting regional harmonization in Africa and beyond;

2.   Promote awareness among the African higher education community of recent developments in enhancing quality assurance and accelerating regional harmonization under the Africa – EU partnership, including the continental strategy for Education for Africa 2015-2025 (CESA); the Harmonisation of African Higher Education Quality Assurance and accreditation (HAQAA) Initiative; Tuning and Erasmus +;

3.   Provide a platform for discussing the role of quality assurance and harmonisation in higher education in attaining sustainable development goals in Africa;

4.   Document best practices from other regions of the world on quality assurance and harmonization in higher education in attaining the SDGs and draw lessons for the African region;

5.   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; (f) setting up and running effective quality assurance units at the institutional level; and (g) Tuning and Credit Transfer.

Sub-themes

1.   Recent regional developments in enhancing quality and accelerating harmonisation: lessons from other region;

2.   Regional Quality assurance an harmonization Initiatives in Africa : the continental strategy for Education for Africa 2015-2025 (CESA); the Harmonisation of African Higher Education Quality Assurance and accreditation (HAQAA) Initiative; Tuning and Erasmus +;

3.   The role of quality assurance and harmonization in higher education institutions in attaining the SDGs in Africa and beyond;

4.   The role of research and development and ICT in higher education institutions   in attaining the SDGs

Expected outcomes

The following are the expected outcomes of the conference:

- Participants would have deepened their understanding of the role of quality and harmoniation in higher education in attaining the SDGs I Africa;
- Participants would have deepened their understanding of the role of research and development and ICT in attaining the SDGs;

- Awareness of the African higher education community would have been raised to be change agents in the support of implementation of recent developments in regional harmonisation under the Africa-EU partnership;
- Participants' skills would have been strengthened and networking opportunities established to enable them to implement effectively quality assurance practices at the institutional, national and continental levels.

- Documentation available on the role of quality assurance, harmonisation and research and development in higher education in attaining the SDGs would have been enriched and expanded; and
- Communiqué reflecting the conclusions and action plan arising from the debates and deliberations of the conference.

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. 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: Emerging trends in programme and institutional accreditation: Beyond the stereotype	☐ Traditional processes of conducting programme and institutional accreditation ☐ New drivers shaping quality ☐ Futuristic models of accreditation	Professor Peter Okebukola & Dr. Michael Ahove
No. 2 Implementation of the Addis Ababa Convention	☐ Provisions of the Addis Ababa Convention ☐ Practical steps in implementing the provisions at the institutional, national and regional levels	Professor Juma Shabani and Yohannes Woldentasae
No. 3: Establishment and effective operation of quality assurance agencies/units at national higher education and institutional levels	☐ Structure, functions and legal frameworks of quality assurance agencies/units ☐ Quality assurance of input, process, output and outcomes in higher education	Professor Chiedu Mafiana and Dr. Noel Saliu

	☐ Resources and funding ☐ Challenges and Overcoming obstacles to success ☐ Setting up and running effective quality assurance unit in a university	
No. 4: Practicum on African Quality Rating Mechanism (AQRM)	☐ Philosophy, objectives and indicators of AQRM ☐ Practical work on AQRM	Yohannes Woldentasae
No. 5: Quality Assurance of Open and Distance Learning	☐ Setting minimum standards for open and distance learning ☐ Quality assurance of courseware, delivery system, evaluation practices, research and student support	Dr. Suleiman Ramon-Yusuf

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF AFRICAN QUALITY ASSURANCE NETWORK (AFRIQAN)

The African Quality Assurance Network (AfriQAN) hosted by the Association of African Universities (AAU) was set up 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 General Assembly will include an update on the implementation of the AfriQAN work plan 2017-2018; subscription and membership dues.

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 the use of quality assurance and regional harmonisation in attaining the SDGs in Africa.

Expected Participants

The conference will be of interest to all stakeholders in quality assurance and harmonization in higher education in Africa as well as policy makers and practitioners 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 18
- Conference, Workshops, Parallel Sessions, Special Sessions and Contributed Paper presentations Tuesday-Thursday, September 19-21

- AfriQAN Annual meeting: Wednesday September 20
- Symposium of Rectors, Vice-Chancellors and Presidents, Thursday, September 21
- Excursion and Tours and Conference closing dinner : Thursday, September 21
- Closing ceremony and Departure: Friday; September 22

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 Portuguese, English and French.

Partners

- Global University Network for Innovation (GUNi-Africa)
- African Quality Assurance Network
- Association of African Universities (AAU)
- African Union Commission
- Peregrine Academic Services
- 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 AAU Headquarters, Accra

ACCOMMODATION

The Organising Committee has negotiated good rates with the following hotels located in close proximity to the conference venue with shuttle facilities.

Mensvic Grand Hotel
5 minutes' drive from conference venue
Room rate: US$110 (bed and breakfast)
Airport shuttle available
Contact: info@mensvichotels.com (Belinda or Foster)
Tel: +233 201617807

MJ Grand Hotel
5 minutes' drive from conference venue
Room rate: US$100 (bed and breakfast)
Airport shuttle available
Contact: mkt@mjgrandhotelghana.com (Mr. Akuffo) and
mj@mjgrandhotelghana.com (Mr. Ali)
Tel +233 570178708; +233 277516181; +233 554517251

AH Hotel
10 minutes' drive from conference venue
Room rate: US$100 (bed and breakfast)
Airport shuttle available
Contact: reservation.ahhotel@gmail.com or info.ahhotel@gmail.com (Elsie)
Tel: +233 208391083

Tomreik Hotel
6 minutes' drive from conference venue
Room rate: US$100 (bed and breakfast)
Airport shuttle available

Contact: fom@tomreikhotel.com (Stephen)
Tel: +233 244286915 / +233 501577820

AngeHill Hotel
7 minutes' drive from conference venue
Room rate: US$ 90 (Single, bed and breakfast)
            US$120 (Double occupancy, bed and breakfast)
Airport shuttle available
Contact: angehillhotel@yahoo.com (Abraham)
Tel: +233 302 517270 / +233 243405125

Erata Hotel
7 minutes' drive from conference venue
Room rate: US$90 (bed and breakfast)
Airport shuttle available
Contact: eratahotel@hotmail.com or info@eratahotel.com (Afua)
Tel: +233544336761

University of Ghana Guest Centre
10 minutes' drive from conference venue
Room rate: US$60 (bed only)
Contact: Tel: +233 302 512513

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) through the conference website on or before **July 21, 2017**. 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-August** 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.icqahea.org. Please visit the site to register and receive updates on the conference, workshops, the AfriQAN General Assembly and the Symposium.

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)