

Networking and Collaboration between Universities

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Introduction

Education at the centre for attainment of UN Agenda 2030, the SDGs

“one is too small a number to achieve greatness” and “If you want to walk Fast, walk Alone; If you want to walk Far, walk together”

Networks, collaborations and partnerships have become norms in the present day globalized society; break down barriers between Universities:

Closely connected team of people, companies, institutions that exchange information; purposeful relationship all parties strategically choose to cooperate in order to achieve shared or overlapping objectives. Collaborations occur at various.

Principles on which successful networks are grounded:

- clearly defined and realistic agenda;**
- problem that is widely shared & in which there is strong self-interest involved;**
- willingness on the part of participants to commit resources, such as personnel & facilities;**
- possibility for outside funding to facilitate the birth of the proposed network & to ensure its functioning for the first few years;**
- sufficient scientific caliber of the participants to ensure that contributions will be made,**
- strong & efficient leaders who have the confidence of the participants.**

Areas of networking and collaboration between universities in Africa

Research & publications, capacity building; staff & student exchange; credit transfer; cross border education,

Finding innovative ways of addressing common regional problems needing common/ homegrown solutions such as technology, health, environment, energy, climate, innovation, social structures rural activities, farm and non-farm agricultural production, that can effectively create occupation for most new job seekers.

Civil conflict, migration and refugee issues, poor economic growth, widening gap between the few rich and the many poor citizens

corruption

Common challenge: how Catholic universities through appropriate programs can produce graduates with the skills, knowledge and attitudes to address the problems and bring about positive change in Africa.

Collaborative research networks have the greatest potential to upgrade skills of participants and to fortify the ability of developing countries to conduct research designed to overcome constraints to holistic development.

In collaborative research networks, individuals pool their resources and talents, participate in planning and policy formulation.

Information exchange, material exchange or scientific consultation networks are key.

Professional advantages provided by viable collaborative research networks

- ❖ concentration on important, widespread problems;
- ❖ providing access to new information & methodologies >improving efficiency & proficiency in production & use of data;
- ❖ avoiding redundancy;
- ❖ saving time;
- ❖ increasing training possibilities;
- ❖ creating opportunities to develop leadership skills.

CUEA Faculty of Science collaboration with College of Science, University of Notre Dame

- **First-hand experience on the curricula at the college**
- **Staff development opportunity in Financial Mathematics for junior academic staff**

- **Visiting Professor in Patent Law came for a trimester and did seminars**
- **Research project on Health Economics begun in 2016- Faculty of Science**
- **Research Project with Faculty of Education- joint research project being developed**

- **Community service Dandora project of the Faculty of Science which extended to Kibera.**
- **Laboratory equipment donation.**

Benefits of Collaborations

- sharing of knowledge, skills and techniques.
- ensures a more effective use of human resource talents.
- research can be carried out more effectively and efficiently.
- improve local, regional and international standing of universities and their access to research resources.
- One way of transferring new knowledge, esp. tacit knowledge. Research requires not only scientific and technical expertise, but also the social and management skills needed to work as part of a team, soft skills not taught in the classroom but are best acquired in collaborative activities.
- a source of stimulation and creativity. A cross-fertilization of ideas is enhanced which may in turn generate new insights or perspectives

- Opportunity for universities to benchmark against each other, improve quality in their systems and enhance employability of their graduates beyond national borders.
- International collaboration programs help by providing students with ability to study, work and travel in an international capacity.
- In regional collaboration students will recognize attractive opportunities closer to home, with fewer alienating cultural challenges.
- Collaboration can enhance the visibility of the universities. Networking has been enhanced with modern ICT such as Skype[®], teleconferencing and social media.
- Internationalization of R&D and boosting international cooperation with the possibility of improving the number of joint patents between African countries. Collaborate in demystifying and infuse Intellectual Property Rights into university curriculum; defense of intellectual property in Africa and knowledge of trends in global intellectual property rights should be well understood.

Challenges of Collaborations

- Travel and subsistence costs, transportation of equipment
- Costs in terms of time.
- Challenges in terms of increased administration > If collaboration is large or spans a considerable distance, more formal management procedures needed; may create problems of bureaucracy, difficulties arising being blamed on bureaucracy and foster a sense of grievance against other collaborators. In research collaboration, formal management structure may also stifle creativity of researchers
- Reconciling different management cultures, financial systems, international tax laws, rules on intellectual property rights etc; differences over reward systems, promotion criteria and time-scales, clash of values over what is the most important research/theme/program to pursue, how to carry it out, or over commercial or ethical implications.
- Legal status of the collaboration and where its seat of administration /management is domiciled.

ACUHIAM objectives

- **Promote academic collaboration among Universities & Institutes concerned;**
- **Promote a high level of study & research;**
- **Encourage exchange of knowledge through publications, exchange of programs & of lecturers;**
- **Promote an incultured approach in teaching & in research,**
- **Share experiences in administrative structures & financial self-support of the Universities & Institutes;**
- **Sensitize the local churches & the Episcopal Conferences in view of a firmer commitment to, and a determined support of, the Universities and Institutes of Formation;**
- **See if the university formation has an impact on the concrete life of people in Africa.**

Successes of ACUHIAM and emerging issues

1. General Assemblies have been held as per the ACUHIAM Statutes. An ACUHIAM anthem was composed, presented 2014 & 2017 General Assemblies, adopted. In French and English; to be further interpreted into Portuguese.

- Conferences in the past have been held successfully. One planned for Librarians of Catholic universities and higher institutes in Africa and Madagascar however did not take off due to lack of funds.

Emerging issue: Cost sharing of costs

2. African Catholic Universities Quality Agency (ACUQA),

- Goals: to create self-supporting and independent quality assurance agency, to develop and implement quality assurance framework to guide institutions in the creation of their quality assurance cultures, to provide training and support for institutions seeking to enhance their quality assurance cultures and to develop quality assurance capacity across the border.
- SAUT developed a proposal and obtained fund in 2008; duration of the project April 2009 to January 2012. In the last phase ACUQA; 13th September, 2012 ACUQA registered in Tanzania

- ACUQA: an exemplary independent Quality Agency in Africa that could support universities in Quality Assurance systems.

Emerging issues: Agency's Strategic Plan 2014-2017 presented in the 2014 General Assembly in South Africa. The General Assembly approved the strategic plan on condition that it must be translated into French and finally be submitted to the president for final approval. Due to lack of funds up to now the translation has not been done.

CEO of ACUQA reported at the June 2017 General Assembly that donors declined to support the strategic plan in 2014 because it was not approved by the General Assembly in South Africa. Hence there has been no activity since 2014 in ACUQA.

African Catholic Universities Research Initiative (ACURI)

presented and adopted at ACUHIAM General Assembly of 2012 in Kinshasa, DRC. Pioneer project: modalities of mainstreaming peace studies and research in Africa's Catholic universities,

Proposal for Institutionalizing Education, Training and Research in Peace Studies, was developed by the ACUHIAM Scientific Committee and approved 2014 GA.

Program developed by ACUHIAM Scientific committee with input from USA-CPN, Catholic Relief Service, AMECEA Secretariat. The participation of the CPN, CRS and AMECEA enriched the program to a large extent and really demonstrated that indeed collaboration and networking is a worthwhile endeavor that brings good fruits from the cross fertilization of ideas.

GA 2014 resolution program be handled by the CUEA CSJE with Prof. Mwayuli as the Program Coordinator; Mr Richard Kakeeto of CSJE was given the lead role in implementing this program. The ongoing Institute is a fruit of this program.

Emerging issues: Behind time frames; a number of items in the program are being tackled at this Institute. Most piloting universities involvement still elusive.

GA 2017 ACURI be domiciled at CUEA. University Management made aware.

Publications of the ACUHIAM Journal/Revue de L'ASUNICAM (ISSN 2220-7554)

- Volume I Number 2, Part 1 Year 2010 Catholic Universities in Africa for Peace and Reconciliation: Searching for Root Causes of and Solutions to Violence and Conflicts (2010)
- Volume I Number 2, Part 2 Year 2010 Catholic Universities in Africa for Peace and Reconciliation: Searching for Root Causes of and Solutions to Violence and Conflicts (2010)
- Volume 2 Number 1, Year 2011: Catholic Universities in Africa: Educating for Holistic and Sustainable Development (2012)*
- Volume 2 Number 2, Year 2011: The Role of Africa's Catholic Universities in the Attainment of the Millennium Development Goals (2015)*
- Volumes 3 & 4 (in preparation): Ethics and Resources of Africa: Land, Family and Religion

* Year of publication

- Emerging issues: Delay in having timely volumes as is professionally required hence * above; frustrations in getting articles for the ACUHIAM Journal. There has been no serious marketing of the Journal, a problem if solved should make publication of the journal self-sustaining. There have been fewer contributions to the Journal articles from Francophone countries and none from the Lucophone countries.

ACUHIAM Learning from relatively successful networks and collaborations in Africa

Inter-University Council for East Africa (IUCEA): harmonizes curricula, admission criteria and student/staff exchange; quality assurance etc.
Headquarters in Kampala, Uganda

Lake Victoria Research Initiative (VicRes) established in 2002 through a series of consultations involving academics, researchers & stakeholders from universities & research organizations in East Africa: & SIDA/Sarec the funders. Day to day operations: **a lean Secretariat** (VicSec composed of VicRes Coordinator, Project Officer & Project Assistant); assisted by

Policy and Advisory Committee (**VicPac**) &
Scientific Committee (**VicSac**)

Annual Forum (AF) dialogue on progress of the project, sharing research findings and results of on-going projects.

African Union Commission: Headquarters in Addis Ababa Ethiopia

- **African Union Youth Volunteer Corps ... a wind of change! a continental development programme that recruits youth volunteers to work in all 54 countries across the African Union.**
- **AU-YVC promotes volunteering to deepen the status of young people in Africa as key participants in the delivery of Africa's human development targets and goals.**
- **It brings people together to share skills, knowledge, creativity and learning to build a more integrated Continent and by implication strengthen Africa's relevance in the globalized world.**



FAWE

Forum for African Women Educationalists
Forum des éducatrices africaines



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FAWE

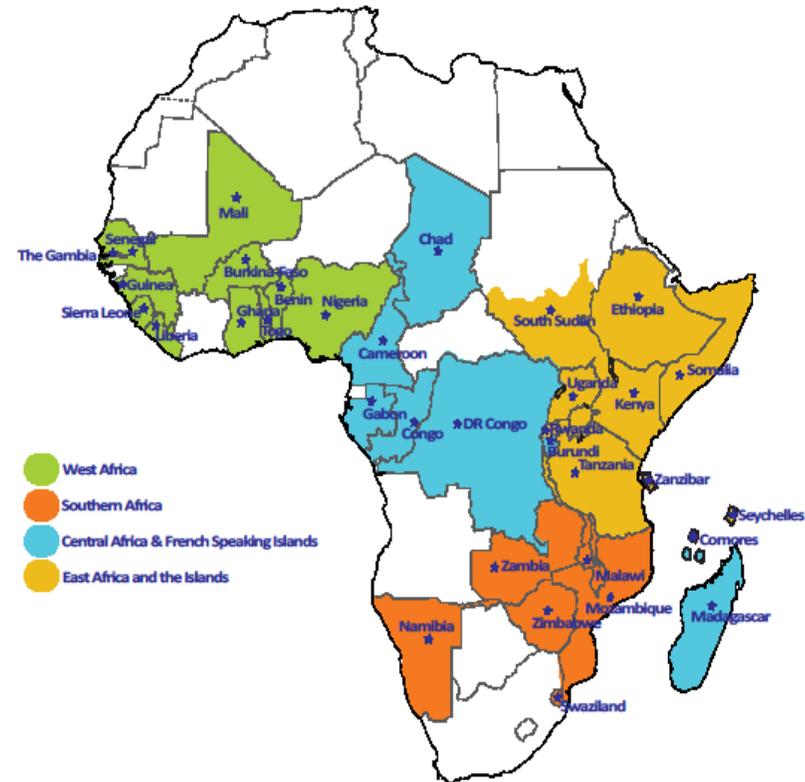
❑ Established in 1992; 34 chapters working in 33 countries in SSA

❑ Registered as a Pan African membership NGO registered in Nairobi, Kenya, in 1993

non-profitable, non-partisan,
voluntary, charitable organization,

Contributing to the attainment of Education for All (EFA) and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

FAWE'S ADMINISTRATIVE CLUSTERS



Management: General Assembly (the supreme governing body), the Board (with reasonable sub-regional representation); the Secretariat, (headed by the Executive Director based at the headquarters in Nairobi handling the professional & administrative functions of FAWE).

National chapters contextualize the objectives of FAWE and focus on influencing education action to reduce gender disparities in access, retention, transition, participation and performance through a range of initiatives. FAWE demonstrates what works, then pilots, documents and scales up and negotiates for mainstreaming of the successful good practices and in the process influence policy.

Governments free primary education, FAWE's Centres of Excellence model, re-entry policies for adolescent mothers, *Tuseme* model, gender-responsive pedagogy, Bursary and scholarship programs, STEM program among others. **increased rates of enrolment; retention and completion of school among the youth especially girls**

Suggested way forward for ACUHIAM

Have a physical permanent secretariat with full time professional staff and have national or regional chapters/clusters for continuous activity.

Have guiding principles and pillars to enhance achieve its goals and objectives. Could a stable ACUHIAM come up with such an innovative approach through efficient networking?

Make itself more visible and popularize its activities and bring more collaborators on board from governments, donors and international organizations to civil society organizations, school authorities, teachers, students and their families.

Continue to extend its networks and collaboration to other Catholic based universities both inside and outside Africa.

Lack of commitment to ACHUHIAM by member institutions should be addressed. All these bring to question the sustainability of ACUHIAM

People tend to make sacrifice for what they perceive as important. Is ACUHIAM important enough for its members to be committed to it both financially and in time amid a lot of competing challenges?

There has to be a deliberate move to make ACUHIAM important so that members see its need and why they should be committed to it.

Concluding remarks:

Networking and collaboration between African Catholic universities and with other universities is not an option. Africa has some of the most abundant natural resources in the world, many of which are yet to be tapped. These include not just minerals and oil, but also bountiful possibilities for clean energy. Above all Africa has the world's youngest population with 200 million people aged between 15 and 24, a figure that will double by 2045 (2012 [*African Economic Outlook*](#) report).

“If it invests in education and training to develop the potential of its youth, Africa could become one of the most dynamic and productive economies” (AfDB, 2011).

The Potential, the Problem, the Promise in Africa are in these youth comprising more than 20% of the population. Africa's Catholic universities can play a big role through networking and collaboration in achieving this.

Universities in Africa have continued to produce graduates who have served as civil servants as well as the private sector yet many problems prevail.

The continent needs Catholic universities working together to produce graduates who are endowed with **the knowledge, conscience and attitudes needed for moving the continent forward.**

As part of this development, primary reforms will be needed in how curricula are designed, programs of study, pedagogy, site of the universities as well as selection of common university courses that bring out **accountability and the virtue of shame for selfishness, corruption and destruction of what God has endowed to man.**

Catholic Universities in Africa through relevant and diversified programs and working in partnership are obliged to give to society **graduates who are holistically formed to be able to address moral, ethical, social, economic, technological, intellectual and legal issues facing the continent.**

As our friends and benefactors from outside the continent (a number graciously represented at this Institute) assist us, the obligation is on us to network and collaborate as universities as we nurture the youth.

ACUHIAM has no option but to rebrand/recommit itself to the noble objectives on which it was founded.

