Harmonization Strategies in African Higher Education: Tuning and its potential in Africa

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Presentation Outline

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Introduction

- Various National/Colonial inherited HE systems and legacies

- Consequences:
  - Non-uniformity and lack of recognition of different forms of certification, and
  - Limitation to African integration and the mobility of students across the continent.
1 - Importance of AU Harmonization Strategy

- In response, the AU Commission, in collaboration with EU, AAU and other stakeholders, embarked on developing a framework to harmonise higher education programmes in Africa.

- This initiative aimed to:
  - foster cooperation in information exchange,
  - harmonise procedures and policies,
  - attain comparability among qualifications, and
  - standardise curricula,

so as to facilitate professional mobility of both staff and students.
Support of AU Harmonization Process

- AQRM
- PAQAF
- TUNING Methodology
2- TUNING/ Definition and its potential in Africa.. 1

The Tuning Project first launched in Europe in 2000 as a process involving academics working in subject groups with other stakeholders in **curriculum development to enhance student competences**

- **Three key issues to note about Tuning:**
  - Tuning is a **project** for universities and by universities.
  - Tuning is a **network of communities** of academics.
  - Tuning is a **methodology for designing and delivering degree**
3- Tuning is a methodology for designing and delivering degrees.

- with a clear objective:
  - to build compatible and comparable degrees that are relevant to society and that are intensively focused on maintaining and improving quality.
  - This methodology explicitly calls for the process to value and preserve the valuable diversity coming from the traditions of each country.
Factors affecting Graduate Employment and Employability:

1- **Exogenous factors** related to the ability of a country to integrate its graduates. This has an impact on "employment" of graduates;

2- **Endogenous factors** associated with the institution's efforts to ensure the proper preparation of graduates, which determines their "Employability";

3- **Other factors serving as a bridge** between exogenous and endogenous, i.e. linking of "the employment and employability" include:
   - The socio-political environment,
   - The link between higher education and the productive sector,
   - etc.
Importance of Tuning to Africa

- **Methodology**
  - Tuning methodology *(involving academics working in subject groups with employers and other stakeholders in curriculum development)* is a useful tool for the implementation of AU’s strategy on harmonization of its HE system.

- **Training**
  - Requisite skills certainly the first step towards "employability", and jobs of today and tomorrow, strongly conditioned the quality of graduates.
African High Education Institutions to rethink their curricula in such a way to develop a SYSTEM that:

• Facilitates professional **mobility**.
• Is focused on learning **outcomes**.
• Promotes **dialogue** with society through constant and dynamic consultation.
• **Creates a Common Space for Higher Education.**
• Is **flexible** to achieve them in different ways.
What must be emphasized in Training

- Generic Competences
- Subject Specific Competences
- Student Workload (Credits)
- Approaches to teaching, learning and assessment
Key Results of TUNING Phase 1……(1)

- **60 Universities** in the 5 African Regions linguistic diversity (English, French, Portuguese, Arabic) involved
- **Tuning as a hope** to develop the capacity of HEIs to elaborate on curricula adapted to the needs of the society for a specific employ;
- **To solve the issue of historic legacies**, in diverse training profiles, bringing together specialists of different countries in a variety of domains in a consensus manner;
Key Results of TUNING Phase 1…….(2)

- That is a major result in terms of implications (mobility on African continent and worldwide etc.)
- High convergence of results of Tuning Phase 1 with results from other continents could lead to a better management of Mobility over the world.
- Tuning I allowed to put on the scene a relatively large number of participants with the ability to contribute to disseminate the methodology
- Progresses made in the project in each of the countries over the last years
3- Challenges to the Implementation of Tuning: incorporation of credit accumulation and Transfer in HEIs

1- Diversity of HEIs’ operation in term of governance: impact on implementation (duration of the process)
Departments/ Board of Faculty/ Senate/ Management Board National Accreditation Structure, etc.

2- Importance of the choice of representative/ focal person of the institution: Decisional Level/Top Management/ Opinion Leader
- Teacher;
- Member of Educational Board
- Member of Councils (Faculty and University Senate)
- Deans, Vice-Rector, Rector
Challenges Ctd...2

3- Traditional Resistance to innovation and change: usual reasons: Additional work load for teachers, learners and administrative staff

4- Necessity of ownership by all stakeholders of the institution

5- Need for involvement of national authorities and regional and sub regional organizations in the process;

6- Information and widespread awareness of actors in the implementation (teachers / administrators/ learners);

7- Information and awareness; To understand that this is not another reform
4-Next Steps

1. The advent of LMD in the francophone area, c... opportunity to jump on;

2. **Need for advocacy among Universities leaders (VCs, Deans, Heads of departments, etc.)** to encourage set up of institutional arrangements for recognition of the new degree programs;

3. **Sufficient staff resources to be allocated** to Tuning process;

4. **Development of new learning methods and materials**

5. **Full incorporation of Distance Education into Tuning process**
Conclusion

- Successful implementation of the Tuning initiative as envisaged implies:
  - Necessity of **firm Commitment of all partners** involved in the process.
Based on AAU mandate we believe that the Tuning methodology can produce concrete programme outputs in the selected areas which are so critical for Africa, to enable our educational system meet its objectives.

the success of Tuning Phase 2 is also our success.

AAU is therefore committed to playing her part for the successful implementation of Tuning Africa.

AAU is a platform of sensitization and dissemination: visit our website: www.aau.org
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