EAST AFRICAN HIGHER EDUCATION QUALITY ASSURANCE NETWORK

ANNUAL FORUM OF THE 9th EAST AFRICAN HIGHER EDUCATION QUALITY ASSURANCE NETWORK, 6TH – 10THMAY 2019, BUJUMBURA, BURUNDI

1. PREAMBLE

The East African Higher Education Quality Assurance Network (EAQAN) is a network of quality assurance practitioners in the region. The Network was formally established in 2012 and organized its first forum in May 2012 which was held in Entebbe Uganda. Since then, and following the agreement during the EAQAN General Assembly, EAQAN in collaboration with the Inter-University Council for East Africa (IUCEA) has been organizing an annual QA Forum around May every year. The subsequent forums have been held in Kigali 2013, Arusha in 2014, Nairobi in 2015, Entebbe 2016, Dar es Salaam 2017 and Kigali in 2018. These gatherings provide opportunity for EAQAN members to present papers and share best practices and experiences on key issues of quality assurance, receive further training and network with other QA practitioners in the region and beyond.

Both EAQAN and the IUCEA, as close partners share, the same remit to improve quality of the higher education sector in the region. For this the IUCEA has been committing resources to EAQAN to build capacity for enhanced quality improvements in higher education in the region. To accomplish the objectives of the Forum, EAQAN has been receiving support from DAAD, HRK, DIES and National Commissions and Councils for Higher Education in the region. The 2019 EAQAN Conference shall build on lessons from themes of previous conferences as well as from suggestions given by participants during evaluation of the 2018 Forum held in Kigali. This forum will emphasize on issues of promoting Competence Based Learning for achieving Sustainable Development Goals; this will support Entrepreneurial, Innovative and Market driven Programs in Higher Education. In addition the Conference will address issues related to sustainability of quality systems, structures for quality education, performance monitoring and evaluation in higher education.

2. FORUM THEME:
COMPETENCE BASED LEARNING FOR ACHIEVING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Sub-Theme 1: Entrepreneurial, innovative and market driven programs in Higher Education
Sub-Theme 2: Sustainability of quality systems & structures for quality education
Sub-Theme 3: Monitoring of Higher Education institution initiatives for sustainable and inclusive development in Society.

FORUM GOAL AND OBJECTIVES
The main *Goal* of the Forum is to foster dialogue through sharing of ideas on higher education policies, Quality assurance practices, challenges and prospects for promoting quality and relevance of higher education in the region.

The main objectives of the forums are to offer academics and practitioners in quality assurance the opportunity to:
   a) Strengthen collaborations, networking and capacity building among stakeholders involved in Quality Assurance work in the region. Specific emphasis of capacity building through keynotes and training workshops offered will include *Promoting Entrepreneurial, innovative and market driven programs in Higher Education*
   b) Discuss policies concerning Competence Based Teaching and learning in the East African Higher Education system and Societal Impact.
   c) Learn lessons from other regions on the Involvement of Private Sector on Quality Enhancement and Institutional Sustainability
   d) Share lessons learnt during the period of Quality Enhancement of the Higher Education sector in East Africa.

3. FORUM ACTIVITIES
   a) Paper Presentations on various topics
   b) Key Note addresses by experts and discussions
   c) Networking and Cultural events
   d) Training Workshops to build capacity on enhancing quality practices in teaching and learning
   e) Roundtable dialogue involving VCs and DVCs to discuss pertinent issues on quality in Higher Education in East Africa

4. PAPER PRESENTATIONS
Those wishing to present papers on any of the topics identified below should submit their complete papers for evaluation. Papers chosen for presentation will be classified in appropriate paper sessions as defined by the organizing committee. Conference papers must be prepared according to the guidelines issued to authors. Quality papers will be published in reputable peer reviewed Journal.

Key Topics:
   a) Competence Based Learning In Higher Education:
Societies everywhere are undergoing very deep and dynamic transformations, and this calls for new forms of education to foster responsive competencies that societies and economies need, today and tomorrow. This means moving beyond literacy and numeracy, to focus on learning environments and on new approaches to learning for greater justice, social equity and global solidarity. The new job market competitiveness depends on ability to operate new technologies, ability to continuous self-education and fast adaptation to various working conditions. The main idea of the competence-based approach is that education has to provide not isolated knowledge and skills but to develop students' ability and readiness for future professional activity in various social and working conditions. Thus, this sub-theme of the forum is aiming at facilitating dialogues on improving the quality of teaching and learning by embracing modern pedagogical approaches and use of technologies in order to meet the overall goal of ensuring that East African graduates meet stated learning outcomes of critical thinking, problem solving, innovative and creative thinking.

b) Entrepreneurial, Innovative and Market Driven Programs In Higher Education

The main focus in this sub theme is creating a Culture of Innovation and Entrepreneurship in higher education in East Africa Region, Developing an Entrepreneurial Mindset in Students and Faculty, Managing and Leading in a Multicultural mindset and Integrating Entrepreneurship within the Curriculum that will inculcate talents identification and development, critical thinking and innovation with the learning process. In summary, the focus is to develop the entrepreneurial university culture.

c) Monitoring of HE institution initiatives for sustainable and inclusive development in Society

Education is key to the United Nations integrated framework of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). It is about ten years since the regional quality assurance in higher education initiative was launched by IUCEA in collaboration with DAAD, HRK and national Commissions and Councils in the EAC countries. Many institutions developed QA policies, established QA units and appointed QA officers with the objective to operationalise internal quality assurance systems based on the regional QA framework. Having operated for 10 years now, regional higher education stakeholders need to reflect on the following questions: Is there evidence that the internal QA systems in universities are working for the better? What is the relationship between universities, national higher education regulatory bodies and regional and global development initiatives? What experience can we share and learn from each other? QA Officers from universities are therefore encouraged to write research-based findings that highlight the steps taken to plan for the impact of education to societies that we operate in. What is their level of efficiency and effectiveness in the enhancing sustainable development initiatives in higher education?

5. HIGH LEVEL QUALITY ASSURANCE DIALOGUE:

A one-day high level dialogue meeting involving Vice Chancellors (VCs) and Deputy Vice Chancellors (DVCs) is scheduled on the last day of the Forum(Thursday 10th May 2018). It will also draw senior executives from the Government, Commissions and Councils for Higher Education and Professors from academic institutions. Discussion will be centered on harmonising curricula through development of subject's specific benchmarks.

6. NETWORKING AND CULTURAL EVENTS

The Conference participants shall be treated to a variety of networking events including *cultural events* that will not only exhibit the rich diversity of the East African cultural heritages, but will also provide opportunities for the participants to be entertained and to build partnerships for the enhancement of quality assurance in their respective institutions. In addition, attempts will be made for *parallel site visits* to learn from IQA initiatives in various Higher Education settings in Burundi.

7. CAPACITY BUILDING TRAINING WORKSHOPS

Training Workshopswill be facilitated by the regional and international experts in the broad thematic areas shown below:
- Modern Pedagogical and Technological Approaches and Competence Based Learning In Higher Education
- Entrepreneurial, Innovative and Market Driven Programmes in Higher Education

- Monitoring of HE institution initiatives for sustainable and inclusive development in Society

8. CONFERENCE DATE AND VENUE

The 9[th]Annual Forum of the East African Higher Education Quality Assurance Network is scheduled to take place in Bujumbura, Burundi from 6th to 10[th]May 2019. The specific venue/hotel will be communicated later.

9. TARGET PARTICIPANTS

The target participants for this Conference are all EAQAN members, Country Chapter members, Quality Assurance Coordinators/Directors/Officers from Universities; Quality Enthusiasts and Practitioners; University Academic, Research and Administrative Staff; Senior University Managers, Chief Executive Officers of National Commissions and Councils for Higher Education, Higher Education Policy and Decision Makers and Experts, Trade Unionists, professional bodies, students and student unions and other higher education stakeholders.

10. CONCLUSION

This Concept Note is intended to invite you all to start preparations for the EAQAN 2019 Forum by (1) Preparing a paper or a poster on one of the Conference's themes and submitting on time (see call for papers); 2) Clearing your Institutional and individual EAQAN annual subscription fees; 3) Mobilizing resources since participation to the Forum is on cost sharing arrangement and 3) Setting aside time for the event.

11. COMMUNICATION

All communications should be sent to eaqan2019@gmail.com and copied to the EAQAN President, on Email: barymaks@yahoo.co.uk. and to the EAQAN General Secretary, Prof. Julius K. Maiyo: maiyojulius@kibu.ac.ke

Please visit EAQAN web page hosted in IUCEA Website: www.iucea.org/EAQAN for this and other information

IMPORATNT DATES

Submission of Abstracts: 26th January 2019
Submission of full papers: 9th March 2019
Thank you

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