



United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization

Organisation  
des Nations Unies  
pour l'éducation,  
la science et la culture

Original: English  
ED-07/CONF.HED/RIQ/5  
30 November 2007

Third Global Forum on  
International Quality Assurance, Accreditation and the  
Recognition of Qualifications in Higher Education

**Learners and New Higher Education Spaces:  
Challenges for Quality Assurance and the Recognition of Qualifications**

Dar es Salaam, Tanzania  
13-14 September 2007

**DRAFT FINAL REPORT**

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## **INTRODUCTION**

1. The Third Global Forum on International Quality Assurance, Accreditation and the Recognition of Qualifications<sup>1</sup> took place at the Kilimanjaro Hotel Kempinski, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania from 13-14 September 2007. The Forum was organized by the UNESCO Division of Higher Education in co-operation with the Open University of Tanzania, the UNESCO Regional Bureau for Education in Africa and the UNESCO Cluster Offices in Harare and Dar es Salaam. While the two previous meetings of the Global Forum were held at UNESCO HQ, the Third Global Forum was organized in Africa to highlight its focus on specific needs and developments in sub-Saharan Africa. The Forum was followed by two events devoted exclusively to Africa: the Second International Conference on Quality Assurance in Higher Education in Africa (Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, 17-19 September 2007) and the Training Workshop on Developments of National Qualifications/Quality Assurance Framework for SADC Countries (Zanzibar, Tanzania, 21-22 September 2007).

The 2007 Global Forum focused on 'Learners and New Higher Education Spaces: Challenges for quality assurance and the recognition of qualifications' and allowed for in-depth discussion of issues of international quality assurance, accreditation and the recognition of qualifications from learners' perspectives in increasingly changing higher education spaces. While focusing on Africa, the Global Forum retained its mission to promote global dialogue and policy debate on issues related to international quality assurance, accreditation and the recognition of qualifications in higher education.

2. The Third Global Forum was classified as a meeting of experts, and its working languages were English and French. The majority of documents were made available in both working languages.

## **OBJECTIVES OF THE THIRD GLOBAL FORUM**

3. The objectives of the Third Global Forum were: (a) to review UNESCO's activities related to globalization and higher education with a focus on international quality assurance, accreditation and the recognition of qualifications during the period covered by UNESCO's Medium-term Strategy (2002-2007); (b) to examine the emerging challenges in quality assurance, accreditation and the recognition of qualifications with a special focus on learners' needs and perspectives; (c) to address the ethical challenges linked to globalization and building knowledge societies based on equal access to quality education; and (d) to propose future actions for UNESCO and its partners as part of the Medium-term Strategy (2008-2013).

## **PARTICIPANTS**

4. The meeting brought together some 150 participants from over 58 UNESCO Member States representing ministries of education and institutions of higher education from all UNESCO regions as well as representatives of intergovernmental organizations and non-governmental organizations including student NGOs. (See Annex I: List of Participants.)

## **ORGANIZATION OF DISCUSSIONS**

5. The Third Global Forum was organized around plenary sessions and parallel working group sessions resulting in over 30 presentations. The welcome address on behalf of the Government of Tanzania was followed by a keynote address on the topic of the Forum. Participants further engaged in a thematic debate focusing on the following questions: Who are the learners? Who are the providers? What are the challenges for quality higher education? The thematic debate was followed by four parallel working groups on: (1) The UNESCO/OECD Guidelines and capacity building for quality assurance in higher education; (2) Quality assurance in distance education; (3) Students' perspectives on quality assurance and the recognition of qualifications; and (4) Quality assurance in teacher education. Participants had the opportunity to discuss and provide input for the conclusions of the four working groups in the ensuing plenary session. Finally, the closing session of the Forum focused on 'New challenges for quality assurance'. (See Annex II. Final Programme.)

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<sup>1</sup> Launched in 2002 as part of UNESCO's mission to respond to the ethical challenges and dilemmas facing higher education as a result of globalization, the UNESCO Global Forum on International Quality Assurance, Accreditation and the Recognition of Qualifications aims to provide a platform for dialogue between a wide range of higher education providers and stakeholders and to link existing frameworks dealing with international issues of quality assurance, accreditation and the recognition of qualifications. The activities of the Global Forum are based on UNESCO's standard-setting, capacity-building and information dissemination functions.

## OPENING OF THE GLOBAL FORUM

6. Mr. Celestine Gesimba, Director of Planning in the Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology, opened the Third Global Forum on International Quality Assurance, Accreditation and the Recognition of Qualifications on behalf of H.E. Mr. Peter Msolla, the Minister for Higher Education, Science and Technology of Tanzania.

## SUMMARY OF DISCUSSIONS

### *Opening session*

7. The discussions of Session I (Opening Ceremony), chaired by Professor Tolly Salvator Augustin Mbwette, Vice-Chancellor of the Open University of Tanzania, centred on outlining new developments in higher education arising from the emerging knowledge society and progress in the implementation of the Global Forum Action Plan.

8. In her introductory remarks, Ms Stamenka Uvalic-Trumbic, UNESCO, Division of Higher Education outlined new challenges for quality assurance and the recognition of qualifications faced by higher education stakeholders since the 2nd Global Forum and provided an overview of the implementation of the Action Plan of the Global Forum. Ms Uvalic-Trumbic identified the following five areas as emerging challenges related to quality assurance, accreditation and the recognition of qualifications: cross-border higher education; quality assurance in distance education, including e-learning and Open Educational Resources; quality assurance capacity building with a special focus on Small States; quality assurance in teacher education; and empowering learners for informed decisions.

9. The keynote speaker, Dr Narciso Matos, Member of the International World Conference on Higher Education Follow up Committee and Executive Director of the Foundation for Community Development of Mozambique, focused his presentation on 'Learners and New Higher Education Spaces'. He highlighted the sweeping changes in higher education such as the need for massification in particular in developing countries; the increasing marketization of the higher education sphere through both training for industry and the increasing numbers of private providers; the growing importance of information and communication technologies; and the trend towards internationalization of education including increased student and academic mobility. Though global in its scope, the presentation focused particularly on the educational landscape and changes that have occurred in African education systems over the last decade: the positives and negatives of increasingly internationalized education and student mobility; student access opportunities and the need to educate students about the complexity of this diversified higher education arena so that they can make informed choices.

The address stressed that policy and actions related to improving access to higher education must be based on a holistic view of the education system and all its parts – basic education, secondary education, diversified higher education institutions (HEIs), and connected with the outside – meeting the needs of the market and local and global societies. In a globalised world of growing competition among HEIs, to meet the access imperative, a premium must be placed on internationalization approaches that favour networking, collaboration and partnerships and mobility schemes that prevent brain drain and promote brain circulation. Higher education policies at governmental and institutional levels need to recognize that higher education offered by a differentiated set of institutions, catering for the diverse needs of learners as well as society, would improve access to higher education. Information and communications technology (ICT) should not be seen as the panacea for increasing or widening access to higher education but rather as part of a continuum of modalities (distance education, face-to-face etc.) that can create a blended teaching and learning environment, facilitating learning for all.

### *Thematic debate:*

#### ***'Who are the learners? Who are the providers? What are the challenges for quality higher education?'***

10. The thematic debate was chaired by Ms Alice Lamptey of the African Association of Universities. Four presentations on the above topics set the stage for the discussions:

Dr Kai-min Cheng (University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong, China) observed that societies are undergoing fundamental changes, which are best reflected in the workplace. The advent of customization and personalization of services has resulted in changes in the characteristics of organizations as well as what individuals in the workplace expect from educational providers. Traditional manufacturing factories are increasingly becoming a thing of the past and the nature of work units is fundamentally changing through the operation of processes of out-sourcing, de-layering and so forth. The changes to career paths engendered by this process are a particular challenge for education and in order to meet the needs of societies and the individuals in them, education systems must stop relying on the old credential-oriented industrial production model. Reforms in this area are needed and must be accompanied by considerations of quality assurance and a clear idea of what quality represents.

Sir John Daniel (Commonwealth of Learning) noted that a key challenge for the twenty-first century is to extend mass higher education to the world by bridging the gap between current age participation rates of less than 10% in poor countries and rates exceeding 50% in rich ones. Opening up access to tens of millions of new students requires radical cuts in the cost of higher education. Already the profile of provision shows growing roles for private providers, distance learning and cross-border supply. But new approaches are also needed. Expanding connectivity and the growing pool of open educational resources could be combined to move teaching and learning from a 20<sup>th</sup> century industrial model to a 21<sup>st</sup> century information-network model.

Dr Mokhtar Annaki (Whitney International University System) presented the Whitney International University model as a viable solution to the imperative of widening access to affordable quality higher education and focused on the case of this model in Morocco. The Whitney system combines computer, Internet and two-way satellite technologies to deliver a blended learning experience encompassing curricula ranging from skills-based learning and short-cycle courses to Bachelor's and Master's degrees. The successful implementation of such a model in a developing country depends on a series of aspects such as the expectations and apprehensions of institutional and political leaders, the various constraints posed by the general socio-political environment, the need to devise solutions that would comply with existing regulation developed for traditional campus-based delivery.

Ms Najwa Qaisy, Pan-Commonwealth of Learning Conference Award Winner for 2007, concluded with a presentation on her experience as a distance learner in her native Iraq. In her view, distance learning has proved beyond doubt that it is a suitable solution for remote and cut-off learners who cannot participate in the traditional face-to-face learning courses.

11. The debates following the above presentations highlighted the following aspects:

**The learners:** The Forum noted that new higher education learners are varied in their age, socio-economic status, motivation and interests. Their numbers are exploding as the expansion of higher education comes to be seen as a route to developed status. Most learners will be people for whom higher education was previously an unattainable goal. As a result they will look for higher education that will improve their livelihoods by being accessible, affordable, appropriate, accredited and accepted.

A second major group is the lifelong learners, who present a challenge to higher education systems designed for young school-leavers. There are also students who travel abroad to study whose numbers have tripled since 1980 and increased more than 50% since 1998. Africans are the greatest educational travellers: One out of every 16 Africans in higher education is studying abroad. The numbers of students in the poorer developing countries who study programmes from abroad are still trivial compared to local provision.

**The providers:** The Forum deliberated on the question of who would provide higher education for tens of millions of extra students in the coming decades. A wide array of new providers is joining the higher education scene including new conventional and open universities as well as media companies, multinational companies, corporate universities, networks of universities, professional organizations, and IT companies. Indeed, private provision is already higher education's fastest growing segment worldwide. It is predicted that it will account for most of the higher education provision in some developing countries in a decade or two and already accounts for 70% of technical education in India.

Participants observed that higher education conducted for profit is still a frightening concept to some people. There is the myth that private providers avoid disadvantaged students though this is often the reverse of the truth. In the USA 62% of Hispanic students and 47% of African-American students who earn two-year certificates earn them at private career colleges. Furthermore, those who start their higher education in private career colleges have higher completion rates than those who start in public institutions.

The second myth, still held tenaciously in many countries is that zero or low tuition fees promote a broader socio-economic student profile. For years research has shown this to be untrue. In reality, access to higher education is most equitable when a fee regime is combined with bursary and loan funds for poorer students. Having fee regimes in both the public and private sectors creates a level playing field that allows the combined efforts of governments and investors to satisfy the need for higher education more fully.

**The new approaches:** The Forum focused on the new rise in for-profit institutions and the challenges that this has created in many countries. New approaches have originated in both the public and the private sectors. The early development of distance education, from the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century onward, was mainly driven by the private sector, which combined the technologies of printing and the postal service to create correspondence education. However, the second wave of multimedia distance education that began forty years ago was primarily driven by the creation of open universities in the public sector. Today the widespread development of e-learning, which usually means distance learning with some online components, is occurring in both the public and private sectors.

Whatever the methods used, distance learning is growing fast: 24% of India's higher students are now distance learners and the government has a target of 40%. The Indira Gandhi National Open University already has 1.5 million students enrolled there and there are burgeoning numbers in the state open universities. For example, the West Bengal Netaji Subhas Open University, which had only a few thousand students in the year 2000, has just this month reached mega-university status with 100,000 students.

The various forms of distance learning have already dramatically reduced the cost and increased the availability of quality higher education. But do new technologies allow us to envisage another quantum leap to wider access and lower costs?

Two technological developments that could allow new providers to reach a much lower price point and open up higher education to the billions at the bottom of the pyramid were noted. First, is the galloping increase in connectivity around the globe: The Internet and mobile telephony have tremendous potential for improving the student experience, both as a channel for distributing learning materials and as a vehicle for useful interaction.

The second significant breakthrough is not the Internet *per se*, but its potential to create a global intellectual commons of excellent learning materials with appropriate pedagogy for the electronic age. These are called Open Educational Resources, or OERs. They are the teaching equivalent of the tradition of building on each others' work that characterizes academic research.

In only a few years OERs have evolved from sharing information to sharing learning to sharing teaching. By making excellent materials freely available for sharing and onward adaptation, OERs could slash the major cost of distance learning, which is the development of quality learning materials. This could be the key breakthrough for taking higher education to the bottom of the pyramid in the large states and reducing both foreign exchange costs and dependency for the small states.

## **Parallel thematic working groups**

### **Workshop 1:**

#### ***UNESCO/OECD Guidelines and capacity building for quality assurance in higher education***

12. The first thematic working group reviewed the implementation of the UNESCO/OECD Guidelines for Quality Provision in Cross-border Higher Education two years after its adoption in 2005. The objective was to assess the extent to which the Guidelines have provided an international framework for quality in cross-border higher education and to propose further work in this area for UNESCO and its partners.

13. Discussions on this sub-theme benefited from several presentations on the following topics:

*The Communiqué of European Higher Education Ministers (London, 17-18 May 2007) and its relation to the UNESCO/OECD Guidelines for Quality Provision in Cross-border Higher Education:* The rise in awareness of the need for a strategy to position the European higher education in a world perspective has increased over the last years and was particularly evident at the 2005 mid-term review of the Bologna Process. Currently existing structural programmes for increasing cooperation and cohesion are now coupled with an action line to increase the 'attractiveness of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) and cooperation with other parts of the world'. This attractiveness will be coupled with openness to other parts of the world

and will be based on ongoing international work on developing guidelines for quality provision in cross-border education. The triumph of academic values in this process should be considered as one of the keys to its success. The next stage of the Bologna Process will involve promoting the EHEA, strengthening cooperation based on partnership; intensifying policy dialogue; and improving recognition. The Communiqué explicitly states that this work ought to be seen in relation to the OECD/UNESCO *Guidelines for Quality Provision in Cross-border Higher Education*.

*Capacity-Building for Quality Assurance – The Experience of RIACES:* The presentation addressed capacity building in RIACES (La Red Iberoamericana para la Acreditación de la Calidad de la Educación Superior) and how efforts have been focused in three directions: training of external quality assurance agencies staff (both technical staff and board members who are responsible for policy and accreditation decisions); training of academic and administrative staff within higher education institutions to enable them to engage in self-assessment exercises and to develop and implement realistic and quantifiable improvement plans; finally, training of external reviewers to support the work of existing quality assurance agencies within the region. Different strategies have been used, depending on the development of national quality assurance experts and bodies, and the specific needs of network members. The presentation also looked into the different strategies and analysed the factors contributing to their effectiveness and the adjustments to be made.

*The UNESCO/OECD Guidelines for Quality Provision in Cross-border Higher Education and Capacity-Building for Quality Assurance in Higher Education:* In the last decade one of the major changes on the educational landscape has been the increasing diversity of provision particularly for transnational education programmes. This change has been partially as a result of international cooperation but it has not been a problem free process. One major problem is the higher numbers of for-profit educational providers who treat students as customers rather than as partners in the learning process. Quality assurance measures may not be adequately guaranteed, particularly for cross-border education; this may then mean that substandard providers cannot be properly identified. The problem of cross-border quality assurance also highlights that most quality assurance models are based on national understandings of education systems. Challenging this trend, and paving the way for an international framework on quality assurance has been the UNESCO/OECD Guidelines for Quality Provision in Cross-border Education. Increased knowledge of these guidelines among all relevant stakeholders, including students, will assist in system development as well as pushing quality assurance in education up the political agenda.

*UNESCO/OECD Guidelines for Quality Provision in Cross-border Higher Education. An Institutional perspective:* It was noted that higher education institutions are important participants and sites for debates about quality and quality assurance in cross-border education. As the leading players in the higher education sphere, they have direct impact on both the delivery and the recognition of higher education within their countries, regions and globally. A survey conducted by IAU in 2007 identified the levels of familiarity of higher education institutions with the new UNESCO/OECD Guidelines for Quality Provision in Cross-border Higher Education and their perceived usefulness for achieving quality assurance.

*Challenges for an Emerging Quality Assurance Network:* Globalization and the internationalization of higher education have created both challenges and opportunities in quality assurance (QA) to which countries and regions have responded in different ways, depending on their traditions, culture, resources and priorities. Moreover, the open workforce place in different countries magnified the need to produce quality graduates at the national and regional levels. The existence of international and regional QA networks around the world stimulated the African and the Arab regions to develop their networks for QA in higher education. The challenges that must be faced when initiating a QA network are not the same for developed and developing countries. Some of the most important include: identification of the region, the diversity of nationally-based understandings of QA, financial limitations, political intervention and domination of the state-owned institution resisting competition, lack of experience in QA, inadequate inter-country communication, emergence of multiple networks in a given region, the status of the network and the small scale of representation of countries in a given region.

*Between Continental Networks and Bilateral Assistance — Co-operative Development of Sub-continental Quality Assurance Systems. Lessons Learned from a Central American-German Project:* International development cooperation for enhancing quality assurance has been focusing on bilateral system development or close continental networks mainly facilitating the exchange of experience. The Global Initiative for Quality Assurance Capacity (GIQAC) of the World Bank and UNESCO now opens the way for supporting sub-continental quality assurance systems in small and medium-sized university systems within developing countries. It is hoped that this development will aid in the creation of important economies of scale especially when organizing training and facilitating adaptation process within institutions. Moreover, by bringing together decision-makers as well as academic and non-academic peers from neighbouring

countries, sub-continental QA organizations help increase ownership, independence of decision-making and the trans-national spread of innovation. The presentation described the approach used for developing the Central American Quality Assurance System, analysed some lessons learned and suggested how issues such as weak incentives, pitfalls of non-national initiatives could be converted into an innovative initiative for cross-border development.

*Feedback on the Guidelines from the perspective of QA agencies:* Cross-border higher education (CBHE) was noted as posing a challenge for QA agencies. The root of this problem is that QA agencies are often created by national bodies and as such their reach is confined to their nation. Can/should exported HE be subject to the QA regime of the exporter, the importer or both (or neither)? It is natural to say that the respective QA agencies should collaborate so that the QA supervision is complete, effective and efficient, but such collaboration is not easy. Many agencies are aware of this problem, and have taken note of the Guidelines, reflecting on them and discussing them. This has created awareness of issues, possible actions to take and possible problems that might arise. As a result, the Guidelines are well-regarded, but often in a passive way. There are few cases in which the reflection has resulted in specific and comprehensive action. There is a desire for ideas, incentives and support which would enable the Guidelines to become a 'living' document.

*Regional and Multi-State Solutions for Small States for Quality Assurance of Higher Education:* Quality assurance in small states has its own unique set of issues. To explore QA strategies for small states, UNESCO commissioned seven case studies. The overall picture that emerges is that of policy reforms and diversity in approaches to external QA with scope for a lot of capacity development. Current policy frameworks in many small states are undergoing reforms, and it implies an opportunity for the small states to articulate QA issues in the policies explicitly. The case studies provide examples of good practices and exemplar models of cooperation among small states and between small states and their large neighbours. While individual states may lack effective QA policies and practices, their combined effort has the potential to provide the critical base for collaborative QA strategies, as can be interpreted from the lessons of experience of the HE sector.

14. Overall, the presentations indicated that the various stakeholder groups find the Guidelines to be very useful. While there is general appreciation and acknowledgement that the Guidelines serve as a good international QA framework, awareness about the Guidelines among some stakeholder groups is low. Implementation requires attention.

15. Participants sought some clarifications to the findings of the surveys presented by the speakers. The positive impact of the regional initiatives such as the Bologna Process and the Brisbane Communiqué were noted by the participants. The importance of ensuring that the UNESCO General Conference takes note of the Guidelines was emphasized.

16. The working group made the following recommendations regarding cross-border higher education:

UNESCO and OECD should t

- Take steps to enhance governments' awareness of the existence of the Guidelines. Higher education institutions (HEIs) need to take the lead through briefing governments about the benefit of the Guidelines.
- Ensure that the Guidelines get adequate attention is difficult in some countries due to the changing political situation. There is a need to have identifiable champions in those countries to ensure that the governments pay attention to the Guidelines.
- Establish policy dialogue involving all stakeholders and using tracer studies that bring in external perspectives; training in self evaluation and of peer evaluators.
- Provide incentives and sanctions to encourage quality improvement and remind stakeholders of their professional commitments.
- Establish QA capacity improvement funds.
- Ensure that in countries without QA agencies, networks of QA agencies such as INQAAHE and APQN approach governments inviting them to participate in network activities. This approach can be further strengthened to promote the Guidelines, since QA agencies have been the natural champions to promote the Guidelines in many countries.
- Encourage associations and networks of HEIs need to think about the various ways in which they can use the Guidelines to guide good practices among their members.



- Set up an inter-agency committee to work with small states to support the issues raised in the practical steps proposed in the presentation.

UNESCO, under its clearing house role, should:

- Create a platform/portal to improve information flow and access.
- Improve cooperation between national QA agencies and HEIs through increased dialogue and opportunities to work together.

### **Workshop 2: Quality assurance in distance education**

17. Discussions in this working group focused on identifying the key areas to be addressed recognising that distance education includes a continuum from mixed programmes to purely e-learning. A major question which guided the Forum under this sub-theme was: ‘what can UNESCO provide to its Member States to help them meet the challenges of this growing area?’ Several presentations were made to stimulate discussions on the theme:

*A Perspective on Challenges to the Delivery of Distance Education in the UNISA Context:* The presentation described how the University of South Africa (Unisa) underwent a merger at the beginning of 2004 to establish the single dedicated distance education institution in the reconfigured South African Higher Education (SAHE) system. The merger followed a protracted policy development process that culminated in the restructuring of the SAHE landscape from 36 public institutions to the current 23. The presentation gave an account of how Unisa has risen to the multiple challenges of repositioning itself in the new higher education landscape to fulfil its social mandate in terms of the National Plan on Higher Education. It reflected on the challenges confronted by a dedicated distance education institution that is dispersing its efforts simultaneously to overcome aspects of its legacy, giving effect to new policy and developmental goals, attending to quality assurance imperatives, reconfiguring its systems and processes, reassessing its capacities and rethinking its use of ICTs — all within a new strategic planning framework.

*Recognition and Higher Education Spaces – the OUT experience:* Given by a student from the Open University of Tanzania (OUT), this presentation discussed several key observations from a student’s perspective such as: the importance of screening carefully incoming students to guarantee that they have the required qualifications for admission; the importance of ensuring that students understand the relative merits and disadvantages of distance education; the challenge of providing adequate materials in some fields; the need to increase employers’ knowledge about distance education and their awareness of the level of training provided by distance HEIs such as the OUT; and the importance of a loan/aid system which would allow students to cover all costs associated with distance education studies. The presenter concluded by stressing that, in his view, distance education is a viable alternative to face-to-face education which could help meet his country’s development needs if given high priority by government and the stakeholders.

*Development of Quality Guidelines and Implementation of a Quality Assurance System in Distance Education: the Experience of Universitas Terbuka, Indonesia:* The institution is a mega-university with over 400,000 students, 35 programmes and over 700 courses on offer, 36 regional offices, and 400 tutorial locations. The institution has established a Quality Assurance System Committee and a Quality Assurance Centre. It has developed a quality assurance framework, adopting the draft of the Asian Association of Open Universities (AAOU) QA Framework. Some key lessons learnt at the University during this process are: quality is a significant investment which requires necessary resource and funding commitment; establishing and sustaining quality work culture are significant challenges; QA leads to constructive and positive changes in organizational culture; QA is an effective instrument to help HEIs achieve quality brand in the eyes of their stakeholders; the importance of establishing a new quality ‘life style’ of the people, products and services at the institution; the importance of team building and changing the work culture of staff; continuous assessment is crucial in quality assurance; improved institutional performance and work satisfaction can result from good QA; finally, QA helps to achieve the stated vision, missions and goals of the institution.

*The UNESCO Higher Education Knowledge Base for Open and Distance Learning (HEODLKB):* This project was set up to support decision makers and practitioners with ready access to information and tools that will assist them in more effective policy planning, development and management of ODL in higher education programmes. This cross-regional project focuses on quality provision of ODL in higher education and involves regional knowledge base resources in Africa, Arab States, Asia and the Pacific, CIS/Baltic Countries

and Latin America and the Caribbean. It also includes an inter-regional 'Decision-Support Tool' focusing on quality assurance of distance education. The purpose of the African HEODL 'knowledge base' is to offer an integrated knowledge guide to distance education and open learning for sub-Saharan Africa. The 'knowledge base' includes selected readings, reports of good practice and other information tools, targeted to help public and private organizations and individuals using distance education as a means of human development in the higher education sector. Its primary objectives are to discover and document how distance learning can be used in African higher education to solve local human resource development problems; to gather information about relevant continental research and experience and to disseminate this knowledge widely; and to contribute to indigenous knowledge development in Africa by profiling internationally the work in distance education of higher education institutions in different countries.

*E-xcellence – Benchmarking quality in European higher education e-learning:* E-xcellence is an instrument which is designed to improve e-learning performance through the establishment of appropriate quality benchmarks. It covers all frameworks (pedagogical, organizational and technical) with special attention to course accessibility, flexibility and interactivity. This instrument was developed by a consortium of 13 significant partners on the European higher education scene to provide an easy and affordable method for institutions to compare their performance with the appropriate benchmarks. It consists of a full on-line manual with e-learning benchmark criteria and related performance indicators supplemented by a web-based self-assessment tool. By providing agreed benchmarks as well as ways of measuring institutional progress on them, *E-xcellence* enhances e-learning in the region and is of particular use for Open Educational Resources.

*Quality and Social Pertinence – the Role of the Latin American Institute for Quality in Distance Higher Education (CALED):* Distance higher education, which emerged in Latin America in the 1970s, appears to be an important opportunity for the development of education in the region. The implications of this development bear on the overall educational development of the region; nevertheless the adoption en masse of distance education raises new challenges particularly related to the extent to which distance education relies on technology. The fact that ICTs have been introduced into the educational landscape in an ad hoc manner means that they have not been adequately integrated into structures of research and technology transfer to broader society. This in turn will mean that they may not produce the desired results. 'Latin American and Caribbean Institute for Quality in Distance Higher Education' or CALED, has been one attempt to circumvent this problem by introducing quality standards, measures and services to train staff and assessors on appropriate quality assessment procedures. One other development of note is the role of distance education facilities in developing south-south relationships – these may provide useful ways forward for developing higher education systems in Latin America.

*New developments for the use of technologies at Shanghai TV University and quality issue:* Shanghai TV University (SHTVU) operates in a competitive environment with some 70 universities and colleges, many of which offer online programmes. SHTVU has quadrupled its enrolment in the last decade thus becoming one of the few mega-universities in the world. From its inception, SHTVU has focused on monitoring, linking with and meeting the rapidly changing demands of economic and social development, reform and opening process in Shanghai. Its motto 'For All Learners and All for Learners' demonstrates its continued focus on both expansion of the university and quality of programmes. In order to achieve the mission of the university, as well as to monitor and increase the quality of teaching and learning a high degree of innovation is required particularly in the effective use of technologies. Different combinations of available technologies are used in SHTVU's strategies with care taken that technologies are appropriate for the particular categories of students for which they are intended. Using this approach rather than simply adopting the most modern technologies has been key to the universities' success.

18. Issues raised in the discussions that followed the presentations include:

- What are the gender profiles of distance education students? Examples provided from the panel suggested that higher numbers of women than men seem to be enrolled in distance education programmes. It was unclear why this might be, but there appear to be different contextual reasons to explain the relatively high levels of enrolment.
- How does distance education quality compare with face-to-face education? It is hard to compare these without looking at specific contexts. Often, distance education programmes end up being of poor quality, particularly in developing countries, because such programmes are structurally under-funded. However, if properly funded and well implemented, distance education programmes can at least be of comparable quality to, if not better than, equivalent face-to-face programmes.

- What is the impact on quality of online tutors? Online tutors can improve the quality of the learning experience if well implemented, and can lead to improved throughput rates. However, there is also a risk of online tutors raising the expense of distance education programmes dramatically.
- What are the challenges of implementing quality audits? These are too numerous and complex to have discussed meaningfully beyond what is contained in the presentation notes above. An issue raised focused on whether audit committees should include people who are not experts in distance education. While this has value, one also needs to be careful to ensure that the audit committee members do not end up judging distance education programmes using assumptions brought falsely in from other modes of delivery.
- Where should intellectual property rights reside? If intellectual property rights are left with individual academics, it will be very difficult to create cost-effective distance education programmes delivery. The conventional practice is to pay authors for content development, and then buy out the rights so that these are owned by the institution. Interest is growing also in the concept of OERs, where the rights are released under licences such as the Creative Commons licence. An example of OpenLearn was mentioned as a good example of such materials. There is, however, a corresponding danger of 'dumping' of poor quality educational resources into developing countries.
- Course design quality: Another issue raised was the problem of materials that are compiled which are simply downloaded material from the Internet. The problem here is really associated with lack of understanding of principles of good distance education programme and course design. If distance educators do not have a solid grasp of good instructional design, it is likely that the quality of materials will suffer as a result. Ensuring quality in materials development is a process, and requires investment.
- How does one balance access and success? This is always challenging, and there is an ongoing requirement to balance the opening of access with providing the necessary conditions to ensure success. There are also problems with delivering services to remote people, particularly in developing countries (e.g. connectivity, roads, postal services, etc). Here, political support is a key prerequisite to ensuring cheap access to connectivity.
- Sharing of good practice: Examples were shared of good practices from EADTU, Ecuador; OpenLearn, Nigeria, and others. Ways of balancing online learning with other forms of distance education practice for developing countries were noted, with a particular emphasis on the reality that many learners in those settings do not yet have access to the Internet. The participants discussed an interesting initiative by Nigeria to launch a communications satellite to reduce costs of bandwidth and facilitate delivery of education to people.

19. The working group made the following recommendations:

- There is a need to develop a quality assurance framework for Open and Distance Learning through consultations with Member States
- There is a need to place strong emphasis on training of good instructional designers. In particular, OER initiatives should not become an excuse not to develop these skills in developing countries; otherwise they will simply serve to convert developing world education systems into consumers of developed world educational products.

### **Workshop 3:**

#### ***Students' perspectives on quality assurance and the recognition of qualifications***

20. Participants discussed current trends in student quality literacy, information needs and challenges as well as the issue of 'bogus institutions'. The thrust was to identify areas where UNESCO can contribute resources benefiting students directly and in identifying quality courses of study and facilitate the recognition of their qualifications. The following presentations served to stimulate discussions on this theme:

*The US model of accrediting higher education: a case study of The American University of Paris (AUP):* It described the process undergone by the AUP in order to receive its institutional accreditation. Tracing the history of accreditation in the US, the author concentrated on the concrete ramifications of these on the university. Even though the AUP is a small and relatively young institution, the accreditation process is an in-

depth study every ten years carried out by the institution, the same as that undergone by older, richer, larger and better known universities like Harvard and Berkeley.

*Local Skills Development - CISCO Networking Academy Program* considered changes in the way people live, work, play and learn that are occurring as a result of the Internet. New emerging technologies are vital for economic redevelopment of a nation. A major challenge for emerging economies is to have enough skilled people to operate and maintain technologies that will be crucial for economic development. Cisco worked with instructional designers and educators to develop a curriculum to teach educators and students how to design, build and maintain computer networks. Launched in October 1997, the Academy Program uses a blended learning model, each Academy integrating high-quality face-to-face teaching with hands-on lab exercises. It prepares graduates for networking and IT-related jobs in the public and private sectors, as well as for higher education in engineering, computer science, and related fields.

*The Genpact Associate Trainee Programme (ATP)* is an initiative meant to raise the employability levels of high school graduates. Launched in 2005, the programme enables Genpact high school graduate employees to earn a regular B.Com (Computers) degree by working for three days a week at Genpact and studying for 2 days a week at the Osmania University. At the end of three years, ATPs would have gained three years of valuable work experience and earned a college degree. Graduates are offered full-time employment with Genpact if they so desire, they can decide to pursue their studies or seek a job with another company.

*Entrepreneurship and Higher Education* reported on JADE's initiatives to stimulate the development of capabilities and skills which are not part of the traditional academic curriculum. Through the creation of student consultancy firms called Junior Enterprises, students gain practical knowledge which is highly valued by employees. These activities are regarded as extra-curricular, but should find their way into traditional education settings to offer students the skills they would need on the job market. Although JADE activities focus mainly on Europe, universities in other parts of the world are preparing to implement the concept of Junior Enterprises.

*Student short-term mobility in international exchange programmes: Challenges for quality assurance and the recognition of qualifications in education* addressed the challenges specifically posed by mobility programmes and the large numbers of students that undertake them. The student pool for mobility programmes is drawn from diverse study environments which all have different study programmes and standards. Additional problems attendant on student mobility include financial, language and cultural obstacles that may need to be surmounted. In order to guarantee quality mobility programmes and positive experiences for mobility students there is a need to identify the stakeholders responsible for guaranteeing quality and parity. The presentation approached this question from both a theoretical perspective as well as considering the personal experience of a student who had undertaken a one-year exchange.

*Quality provision and fraud: active role of UNESCO* considered the difficulties of quality assurance and quality control. Though there is an appearance of homogeneity of subject content and scope in medical education as compared to other disciplines, there can still be vast differences in the resources, content and conditions within which these courses are taught which will result in slightly different outcomes. It is not sufficient to share good practices or work towards developing accreditation in medical education in one region (for example, Europe). Cooperation and recognition of medical education should involve all regions so as to increase the ability of all those concerned to detect and uncover fraud at all stages. Medicine is a very sensitive discipline and profession: it is one of the oldest subjects taught, has a lot of ethical, cultural and moral content and overlaps closely with human rights, dignity and intimacy. Loss of credibility due to fraud could have long-term negative consequences.

*Connecting Head, Heart and Hands: Innovations and Potentials Demonstrated by the Integral Development Studies Program, Ubon Rajathanee University, Thailand* discussed a particular understanding of higher education as a holistic enterprise involving head, heart and hands and how it was been used in a Thai university to effect changes in the lives of students and henceforth their societies as well. The presentation described and analysed some of the many community-university initiatives on the university campus, and explored their significance in relation to the Thai concept of higher learning. Finally, the presentation included a series of recommendations from a diverse range of actors (faculty staff, students, community leaders and so on) for enhancing the programme.

*Students and quality assurance: towards an HEQC (Higher Education Quality Committee) approach* highlighted some of the challenges facing the South African higher education in terms of student participation and quality-related issues. While there has been a constant increase in student numbers in recent years, with a majority of female students, an analysis of the higher education system found it inefficient in various

regards (poor throughput rates, highly differentiated in terms of race, high drop-out rate, etc.) and identified some factors which could explain its poor performance. A study was commissioned by the Council for Higher Education to understand the relationship between student success and academic culture in three South-African universities and a campaign was launched in 2002 by the HEQC and the Department of Education to inform the public and to provide prospective students with information, to identify legal and illegal providers, etc. The HEQC Student Quality Literacy project was presented as a concrete initiative to protect students from low quality higher education provision.

*The UNESCO Portal on Recognized Higher Education Institutions* is a pilot project designed to offer access to online information on higher education institutions recognized, or otherwise sanctioned, by competent authorities in participating countries. It provides students, employers and other interested parties with access to authoritative and up-to-date information on the status of higher education institutions and quality assurance in these countries. The pilot is a first stage in the development of an international portal. It involves a limited number of countries from regions with different economic development levels and its objectives are to ascertain the feasibility, cost-effectiveness and sustainability of an international portal on recognized higher education institutions. If the pilot project is successful, it will provide the foundations for the implementation of a larger-scale project hosted by UNESCO.

21. A summary of the issues raised in the discussions that followed the presentations include:

- Student involvement is vital for the successful implementation of viable quality assurance systems.
- Communication is key to achieving optimal stakeholder participation.
- Capacity-building is needed if the availability of information and communication technology is to be taken full advantage of. Access to information and to technology should go hand-in-hand with the ability to use them effectively.
- Student organizations have an important role to play in the design and implementation of student quality literacy initiatives.

22. The working group recommended that:

- Students be included in developing, maintaining and enhancing quality of higher education.
- Capacity building for students be facilitated to enable them to play active roles in quality assurance.

#### **Workshop 4: Quality assurance in teacher education**

23. The Forum identified the challenges to quality assurance in teacher education and highlighted examples of good practices in quality assurance policy and practice as seen from national, sub-regional and regional perspectives.

24. The first session considered 'Current Practice, Trends, Challenges and Opportunities'. It began by placing the debate on quality assurance for teacher education within the context in which teachers operate and the expectations upon them. It highlighted the need to ensure that teacher education facilitates the effective learning of students towards transformation of community or the society; the need to consider quality assurance for teacher education as an opportunity to review the implications of shifting paradigms, new challenges, uncertainties, expectations and societal change; and the importance of preparing teachers who can respond appropriately to new challenges and needs.

25. Looking at global trends in quality assurance for teacher education, the emergence of National Qualifications Frameworks (NQFs) and Regional Qualifications Frameworks (RQFs) was discussed. There are currently over 50 NQFs with more being developed in Europe as part of the Bologna Process and elsewhere around the world. The South African NQF served as an example to discuss how the National Policy Framework for Teacher Education and Developing fits within the South African NQF, and how quality assurance for teacher education fits within national frameworks and structures generally. The discussion

then considered the stakeholders, processes, content and criteria used in doing quality assurance for teacher education both internally and externally.

26. The session then benefited from presentations on regional systems and trends in quality assurance in teacher education. In his presentation — based on a recent assessment of several teacher training institutions and programmes in various Arab States— Dr. Ramzi Salamé (UNESCO Regional Bureau for Education in the Arab States) highlighted the following issues and challenges facing teacher education and training (TET) systems in the region:

- The need for comprehensive national TET frameworks, consisting of a clear National Teachers' Qualifications' Framework encompassing the various categories of teachers and other educational personnel, a clear vision on the roles and functions of each category and the expected competencies and benchmarks for the training programmes, curricula, and the teaching and learning schemes.
- The need for the diversification of institutions, programmes and training models, and for a better articulation between the various components of the training
- The need to ensuring the physical, intellectual and cultural environment that would enhance commitment to quality and enable institutions to attain it.
- The need to establish QA and quality enhancement mechanisms at national and institutional levels.

27. It was also announced that the UNESCO Regional Bureau for Education in the Arab States is currently working with various regional partners towards establishing a regional body that would work as a regional agency for quality assurance of teacher training institutions and programmes, with functions encompassing the development of conceptual frameworks, setting benchmarks and standards, advocacy for QA and quality enhancement, technical assistance to Member States and TTIs, and undertaking quality assurance actions.

28. Focusing on francophone Africa, Professor Komlavi Francisco Seddoh of UNESCO emphasized that the teacher is a major agent for change and revitalization of the African education system. Teacher training should be based on the following principles:

- Adapting to new students, new knowledge, new conditions and the constant changing quality
- Including both the 'know-how' and the 'learning to be' and ensuring that the teachers have critical minds and individual freedom
- Establishing a permanent dialogue between theoretical and practical knowledge
- Considering lifelong learning and in-service learning as indispensable components of professional development.

Students must be at the centre of the education system. For teachers to succeed in their mission, the profession must be made more socially attractive. Several francophone African countries have recognized the importance of this issue and have started taking appropriate measures to reduce precarious recruitments and employment of unqualified teachers. Higher education teachers should also feel part of the prevailing changes in education and have the necessary training in order to be able to face the challenges of their particular mission. It was suggested that UNESCO should continue to support African countries in developing their capacities in policy development to facilitate a holistic approach to teacher education and quality assurance for teacher education.

29. Dr Morella Joseph of the CARICOM Secretariat spoke about the process of setting up the necessary regional infrastructure to establish quality assurance systems in teacher education in the Caribbean. The provisions of the Caribbean Single Market and Economy (CSME) allow for the free movement of teachers in the various institutions across the region. The Teaching Certificate, the Associate Degree in Teacher Education, the Teaching Diploma, the Pre-service Bachelor in Education, and the Post-graduate Diploma in Education, are all awarded on completion of a programme of initial professional studies. However, the programmes that lead to these initial professional qualifications differ significantly in content, duration and assessment criteria, and are delivered at different academic levels. There is urgent need for standardization with respect to programmes that offer initial professional teaching qualifications in order to facilitate the work of the Regional Accreditation Agency. A coordinated system and procedures for a common registration process for teachers in the region will facilitate the standardization of teaching and the determination of equivalency of initial professional qualifications. The teacher educator should be rightly considered as a specialist, and should be required to have specialized training to be eligible for recruitment to this role. The Caribbean Community Council for Teaching and Teacher Education (CCCTTE) is to be established to support and facilitate the Ministries of Education across the region to effectively monitor and manage the quality of the educational process in the schools of the region. The CCCTTE will monitor, advise on,

coordinate and/or conduct activities related to pre-service and in-service teacher development, registration and licensing of teachers and teacher educators, and will manage and direct the professional development of teacher educators in the region.

30. The working group then split into four sub-groups to consider various questions in relation to current practice, trends, opportunities and challenges.

The second session of the workshop began with the sub-groups reporting on their discussions.

The first group highlighted the difference between quality and quality assurance, the need to define quality assurance and to look at quality assurance at the institutional level rather than just national and regional levels. The question of whether and how quality assurance for teacher education is different than quality assurance in higher education was raised. This is particularly relevant as continuing professional development/in-service training is often done by the Ministry of Education and not within higher education structures. Another point raised was that although teachers are civil servants, they are also professionals and this dichotomy might create problems in that teachers may not be able to be 'licensed' as are doctors and nurses. Furthermore, attention should be paid to issues related to the fact that there are many types of teachers, including those with certificates, those with diplomas and those with degrees.

The second group included representatives from both Arab and African countries. They noted that the lack of specific quality assurance mechanisms for teacher education makes it difficult to identify stakeholders involved in the process, though potential stakeholders could and should be Ministries of Education, teachers' unions, teachers themselves, international organizations, donor agencies and communities. Quality assurance for teacher education often focuses on pre-service teacher education, but in-service training is also very important. Governments need to know what all those involved in teacher training are doing and integrate these initiatives into the national systems. In applying QA mechanisms and measures to teacher education, the group advised that countries should not go from the start to full-fledged international QA paradigms but rather for modest approaches in both the pre- and in-service. It could be valuable to apply a SWOT analysis in evaluation, whether internal or external. Institutions should then get their evaluation reports so they can make adjustments and improvements.

The third group, consisting of representatives from francophone African countries, considered the partners and primary actors implicated in QA for teacher education: governments, particularly the national structures in charge of teacher education; teacher training institutions; teachers; inspectorates; learners, parents, civil society and trade unions. The members of the group noted that evaluation institutions intervene mostly at primary and secondary levels while the higher education sector mainly depends on the Conseil Africain et Malgache pour l'Enseignement Supérieur (CAMES) and, sometimes, national institutions. Evaluation is done through inspection visits centred on the relevance of curricula, teaching and learning conditions, results, and internal and external efficiency. There are, however, important constraints tied to financial and human resources. Evaluation criteria should be more closely tied up to the educational priorities and needs of the society. The private sector also has a role to play and has to be involved in QA for teacher education.

The fourth group mentioned the various stakeholders involved in QA for teacher education, including universities, inspectors of schools, teacher training institutions, students, NGOs, unions, teacher educators and tutors, administrators, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Finance, private institutions and regional and national qualifications authorities. This suggests that teacher education has to be looked at holistically within the entire system. The processes for QA for teacher education could include training seminars for teachers and university professors, external moderation, moderation of exams, inspection visits, regulation of entry requirements and regulation of curriculum content. The scope or content of the QA must then look at various issues such as infrastructure/environment, conditions of service, quality of delivery and the relevance of the content that is being delivered. The group also warned that quality assurance can have a negative impact, particularly if regional qualifications authorities are set up, in that countries may start competing and focusing on rankings at the expense of quality teacher education/training. In addition, attention must be given to the fact that, since the discussion is often very technical, stakeholders often do not participate and it is necessary to involve them actively. QA for teacher education faces many particular challenges such as teacher educator shortage, attrition, class size, absenteeism, the use of unqualified teacher educators, and low priority/status afforded by both universities and the governments themselves. Governments often do not devote enough resources to teacher education, and tend in many cases to give more support to basic education. Additional challenges include the lack of statistics and data on teacher education, the lack of guidelines for accreditation and renewal of licenses and very weak schemes for teachers' career paths.

31. The discussion then moved to a consideration of various responses that have been developed for QA for teacher education, both UNESCO responses as well as those of other agencies. Peter Wells from CEPES stressed that all the problems mentioned (status of teachers, lack of teaching resources, low retention of teachers — particularly in transition countries — existence of unqualified teachers, low salaries and low motivation) apply to the European Region as well. Teachers are also often not trained for the realities of the classroom. He also mentioned that quality assurance can place pressure on teachers to perform.

Dr Mohan Menon of the Commonwealth of Learning (COL) presented the Quality Assurance Toolkit for Teacher Education Institutions developed by COL in partnership with the National Assessment and Accreditation Council, India. This initiative started in 2004 and involved other accreditation agencies such as the National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE), Nigeria and teacher education experts from 20 countries in sub-Saharan Africa, South Asia and the Caribbean. The toolkit contains three parts and lists 75 quality indicators under 25 quality aspects within 6 quality areas in the toolkit. Over 300 experts participated in this initiative. The draft toolkit is available for use by any country. This toolkit can be used for internal and external assessment and for orienting personnel in quality assurance as well as for formulating policies in quality assurance in teacher education. The main use is for internal assessment in institutions leading to the development of a quality culture. The toolkit is being tried out now in selected institutions and will be formally released in December 2007.

In conclusion, the group talked about appropriate responses and levels of those responses, at global, regional and national level. The group then looked at existing responses, from UNESCO, COL and other stakeholders. It also considered research and information sharing in order to strengthen knowledge, draw comparisons and support harmonization processes, and policy forum in order to bring together expertise and experience towards development frameworks and guidelines. The group discussed various types of responses, emphasizing key issues such as the need to ensure that responses were nationally driven, but involved key stakeholders. The importance of advocacy and awareness raising was stressed. Discussion also focused on the importance of achieving a balance between drawing on existing frameworks and ensuring national/institutional ownership of the framework. The need for an African model of QA for teacher education was stressed. The role of UNESCO as a convener at all levels and its role in terms of supporting links between these levels was also considered. The need to challenge the role of quality assurance and even to question whether it is required or not, and to consider the possible negative impact it can have – for example limiting/restricting the systems, was reviewed. UNESCO's role in exposing Member States and development partners to the dialogue and substantive issues in key areas such as QA and their implications was reviewed.

The importance of looking beyond teacher education to frameworks at other levels, to other professions, to other experiences in the process of development was highlighted. Particularly important is the need to consider how teacher education is similar to, and how it differs from, higher education. The point was also made that although teacher education can look to national systems and structures it can also initiate systems at other levels.

Finally the need to consider QA in relation to the whole system, i.e. not just initial teacher training and lifelong, but also the need to consider teacher status, salaries, working conditions, and for broader policy frameworks to support teachers and teaching was stressed.

32. The working group recommended that:

- UNESCO should refine normative instruments e.g. Conventions and Guidelines on Cross-border higher education in order to reflect quality assurance for teacher education.
- UNESCO should provide more capacity building to assist Member States with QA for teacher Education.
- UNESCO should convene targeted forums for countries to exchange experience of QA for teacher education.

***Closing Panel:  
New Challenges for Quality Assurance***

33. The Closing Panel, chaired by Sir John Daniel, CEO and President of COL, brought together a variety of higher education experts who presented their perspectives on the new challenges for quality assurance:



*New Higher Education Spaces: Inter-Regional Comparisons: The African Union (AU) Harmonization Initiative* examined the process of the recent harmonization initiative within African education systems. This process was designed to achieve a greater degree of mutual recognition of the contents and quality of education programmes, degrees and certificates in the different nations and regions within the AU and the world. The specific purpose of the AU harmonization initiative is to strengthen the capacity of African higher education institutions to meet the educational needs of African countries, to ensure that the quality of education is systematically improved against common, agreed upon benchmarks, and to facilitate faculty and student mobility. The broad developmental objective of this initiative is to strengthen the education and training of graduates equipped with the knowledge and skills needed to drive Africa's economic and social development.

*New Higher Education Spaces: Inter-regional Comparisons: The Bologna Process*, initiated in 1998, has drawn together the three essential higher education actors (governments, universities and students) in the creation of a EHEA by 2010. The process is non-binding and involves at present 46 European countries. The success that this process has enjoyed so far is due to the visibility of the reform and the large scale of adherence by the various stakeholders, in particular the higher education institutions. Achievement of the EHA is based on three main pillars: the adoption of the three-cycle degree system, a European Register of Quality Assurance Agencies and common foundations for doctoral degrees and is accompanied by the introduction of tools to facilitate the comparability and compatibility of higher education studies. The May 2007 London Conference was instrumental in redefining the strategic priorities of the Bologna Process by stressing the development of the social dimension and the setting up of the European Register of Quality Assurance Agencies. The London Communiqué also stresses the importance of the Framework for Qualifications of the EHEA.

*New Challenges for Quality Assurance: Experience from a sub-Saharan African University* highlighted the importance of quality assurance for higher learning institutions. In order to consider how to measure and improve quality within higher education institution it is necessary to understand the scope of quality in teaching programmes, consultancies and research performance, resources and infrastructure, students and staff and so on. Quality is an important determinant for the respect and status given to an institution and one of the main ways it is commonly ascertained is through the quality of graduates. One of the necessary undertakings for institutions who wish to improve their quality level is a process of careful, continuous and objective assessment. The process of quality measurement and quality assurance generally also brings its own challenges which this presentation considered through a case study of the University College of Land and Architectural Studies.

*New challenges for quality assurance – the CAMES perspective* discussed the role and responsibilities of CAMES in the field of quality assurance. Through its programme on the recognition of qualifications and its quality assurance activities, the CAMES assists higher education institutions (HEIs) — both public and private — in their efforts to improve the quality of their teaching and research. The CAMES develops norms and benchmarks for quality assurance; contributes to the development of HEIs capacities to enhance the quality and relevance of their teaching, learning and research activities and thus the employability of graduates and recognition of their qualifications. Accreditation, the modernization of education and training so that students acquire the knowledge and skills required by the world of work, opportunities for lifelong learning etc. are other areas of intervention of the CAMES in support of the higher education institutions.

*Activities of the Anti-corruption Student Network in South East Europe* considered the action of this network founded by student and youth organizations in 2003. This network has as its primary goal the drawing together of stakeholders to explore and expose various forms of corruption in higher education in order to increase the speed of reform and the overall quality of higher education. Major problems have centred on various forms of academic fraud including cheating by students, bribing of teachers, and irregularities in the admission process. Perceptions are an important part of assessing corruption and the original action of this network was to survey five countries covered by the network. In order to increase transparency the results of this survey were published in 2005 and promotional and press materials, public activities, policy recommendations and so forth accompanied their release with stakeholders from all levels of higher education involved in the release.

*Migration intentions of pharmacy students – a global study of root drivers* considered the migration intentions of health students as a reflection and cause of increasing global inequalities. Mass migration from such health systems also tends to accompany increasing deteriorations in those systems and presents challenges to all facets of sustainable development, particularly the way in which higher education contributes to the skilled workforce within countries. From a quality assurance perspective, it is important to consider how the quality of education may affect the attitudes of students towards professional practice within their country and

abroad, and thus their intention to migrate. An international research study undertaken by the International Pharmaceutical Students' Federation helped to identify the factors correlated most highly with the eventual intention of migrating and stressed that research and policy should approach migration as being synonymous with workforce attrition and hence symptomatic of wider imbalances.

*Challenges for Quality Assurance in an Education 3.0 World* was the final presentation of the session. The concept of Education 3.0 has been used to categorize a possible future scenario of change in higher education in which we will see a breakdown of most of the boundaries, imposed or otherwise within education, to create a much freer and more open system focused on learning. Education in the 20<sup>th</sup> and early 21<sup>st</sup> centuries (Education 1.0) has been based on scarcity. Professors and learning resources are scarce, so they are aggregated into institutions within which most of the key processes are contained. This containment means that the factors that contribute to quality are largely contained within individual institutions, and quality assurance is a matter of assuring the quality of institutional processes. An increasing abundance of free and open resources for use in education means that learning resources are no longer scarce, and a proliferation of networking and learning technologies that blur the distinction between play and study, means that sources of learning are no longer as scarce as they once were and that professors are not the only valid means to ensure that learning takes place. In an Education 3.0 world, institutions will be called on to accredit not programmes of study or courses, but rather to accredit learning achieved. Learning achievements may happen in a variety of institutions, some contact and some virtual, as well as through self-study and through a resurgence of digital apprenticeships. The speaker discussed the challenges of quality assuring learning achieved in the context of Education 3.0 in higher education.

### **Closing session**

34. The General Rapporteur, Dr Peter Okebukola, Former Executive Secretary of the National Universities Commission, Nigeria provided a succinct overview of the proceedings (including the objectives and methodology of the meeting) as well as a summary of recommendations on quality assurance activities for the activities related to: students; teachers; distance education and cross-border higher education. These can be found in Annex III (Summary of recommendations of the Third Global Forum) to this report.

35. Participants expressed their thanks to UNESCO for providing an open space for dialogue among a wide range of stakeholders engaged in a constructive intellectual debate on a topic of increasing interest worldwide. They agreed that the Global Forum should continue as a platform for exchange between the various partners and stakeholders in international and cross-border higher education. The Global Forum should provide an inclusive space to share information between different partners, networks and stakeholders in higher education. It should also initiate debate on the social, political, economic and cultural dimensions underpinning globalization and higher education.

36. In her closing remarks, Ms Stamenka Uvalic-Trumbic, Division of Higher Education, UNESCO, highlighted UNESCO's specific role and functions in standard-setting, capacity building, and clearinghouse activities as delineated in its Medium-Term Strategy<sup>2</sup> activities foreseen in the Global Forum Action Plan which could contribute to meeting the challenges of promoting access to quality provision of higher education with a special focus on learners' needs. She thanked the participants for their active contribution to the Third Global Forum and the spirit of cooperation that they demonstrated during its proceeding.

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The working and reference documents, as well as the majority of the presentations of the Third Global Forum on International Quality Assurance, Accreditation and the Recognition of Qualifications are available on the UNESCO website at:

[http://www.unesco.org/education/higher\\_education/global\\_forum/third\\_meeting](http://www.unesco.org/education/higher_education/global_forum/third_meeting)

<sup>2</sup> UNESCO's Draft Medium-Term Strategy, 2007-2012, reaffirms UNESCO's functions as a *laboratory of ideas, a standard-setter, a clearing house, a capacity-builder in Member States, a catalyst for international cooperation*

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## FINAL PROGRAMME

**Day 1 – Thursday 13 September 2007**

- 8:00 – 9:00     **Registration**
- 9:00 – 9:45     **Session I: Opening Ceremony**
- Chair:** Professor Tolly Salvator Augustin Mbwette,  
                  *Vice-Chancellor, Open University of Tanzania*
- Welcome Address by the Government of Tanzania  
                  Mr Celestine Gesimba, Director of Planning, Ministry of Higher Education, Science and  
                  Technology
- Welcome Address and Introductory Remarks by UNESCO  
                  Ms Stamenka Uvalić-Trumbić, *UNESCO Division of Higher Education*
- 9:45 – 10:30**   Keynote Presentation ‘Learners and New Higher Education Spaces’  
                  Dr Narciso Matos  
                  Member of the World Conference on Higher Education Follow-up Committee  
                  Former Director, African Higher Education, Carnegie Corporation of New York  
                  Executive Director, Foundation for Community Development, Mozambique
- 10:30 – 11:00   *Coffee Break*
- 11:00 – 13:00**   **Session II: Thematic Debate**
- Chair:** Dr. Alice Sena Lamptey, Association of African Universities, Ghana
- Plenary Discussion ‘Who are the learners? Who are the providers? What are the  
                  challenges for quality higher education?’**
- Dr Kai-ming Cheng, *University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong, China, S.A.R.*
- Sir John Daniel, *CEO, Commonwealth of Learning, Canada*
- Dr Mokhtar Annaki, *Senior Vice President Development, Middle East & Africa, Whitney  
                  International University System*
- Ms Najwa Qaisy, *Pan Commonwealth of Learning Conference Award Winner, Iraq*
- 13:00 – 14:30   *Lunch Break*
- 14:30 – 17:30**   **Session III - Parallel Thematic Workshops**  
                  (see **Annex I** and **II** for programme)
- 18:00            *Conference Cocktail*

**Day 2 – Friday 14 September 2007**

- 9:30 – 12:30 **Continuation of Parallel Thematic Workshops**  
(see **Annex I** and **II** for programme)
- 12:30 – 14:00 *Lunch Break*
- 14:00 – 15:30 **Session IV - Plenary: Reports and Next Steps:**  
**Reports from the Working Groups and Discussion in Plenary**  
**Chair:** Ms Stamenka Uvalic-Trumbic, *Division of Higher Education, UNESCO*  
**Rapporteurs from Workshops:**
- *Workshop 1: 'UNESCO/OECD Guidelines and capacity building for quality assurance in higher education', Dr Stella Antony, The Asia-Pacific Quality Network (APQN) and Ms Alice Sena Lamptey, Association of African Universities*
  - *Workshop 2: 'Quality Assurance in Distance Education', Mr Neil Butcher, SAIDE, South Africa*
  - *Workshop 3: 'Students' perspectives on quality assurance and recognition', Ms Nomvula Mapule Mabuza, The International Pharmaceutical Students' Federation (IPFS)*
  - *Workshop 4: 'Quality assurance in Teacher Education', Ms Ramya Vivekanandan, Division of Higher Education, UNESCO*
- 15:30 – 17:00 **Session V. Closing Panel: New Challenges for Quality Assurance**  
**Chair:** Sir John Daniel, *CEO, Commonwealth of Learning*  
**Speakers :**  
Dr Olu Oyewole, *Association of African Universities (AAU), Ghana*  
Ms Françoise Profit, *President ENIC Network*  
Ms Dawah Magembe Mushi, *Former DAAD Scholarship Holder, Assistant Lecturer at Ardhi University, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania*  
Pr Jean Koudou, *Directeur de programmes, Le Conseil Africain et Malgache pour l'Enseignement Supérieur (CAMES)*  
Mr Dragan Mihajlovic, *Belgrade Open School, Serbia*  
Dr Tana Wuliji, *International Pharmaceutical Federation (FIP), The Netherlands*  
Dr Derek Keats, *The University of the Western Cape, South Africa*
- 17:00 – 17:30 **General Rapporteur**  
Dr Peter Okebukola, *Former Executive Secretary of the National Universities Commission, Nigeria*  
**Next Steps and Closing Remarks**  
Ms Stamenka Uvalić-Trumbić, *UNESCO Division of Higher Education*

## Annex 1 - Parallel Thematic Workshops - Thursday 13 September 2007

<b>Workshop 1</b> UNESCO/OECD Guidelines and capacity building for quality assurance in higher education  Focus: UNESCO/OECD Guidelines	<b>Workshop 2</b> Quality assurance in distance education  Focus: DE, e-learning in institutions	<b>Workshop 3</b> Students' perspectives on quality assurance and the recognition of qualifications  Focus: Quality provision and fraud	<b>Workshop 4</b> Quality assurance in teacher education  Focus: A global overview of issues
<p>The panel will bring together representatives of some of the stakeholders targeted by the UNESCO/OECD Guidelines for Quality Cross-border Higher Education to review the implementation of the Guidelines two years after their adoption in 2005. The objective of the session is see to what extent the Guidelines have provided an international framework for quality in cross-border higher education and to propose further work in this area for UNESCO and its partners.</p> <p><b>Chair:</b> Mr Jan Levy, <i>Counsellor, Permanent Delegation of Norway to the OECD</i></p> <p><b>Rapporteur:</b> Dr Stella Antony, <i>The Asia-Pacific Quality Network (APQN)</i></p> <p><b>Speakers:</b>            Dr Ian Whitman, <i>OECD</i>            Dr Maria Jose Lemaitre, <i>CNAP, Chile</i>            Ms Anela Beso, <i>ESU</i>            Ms Eva Egron-Polak, <i>IAU</i></p>	<p>The discussions will focus on identifying the key areas to be addressed in this field, recognizing that distance education includes a continuum from mixed programmes to purely e-learning. The objective of this workshop will be to identify the main issues and key stakeholders in this field. What can UNESCO provide to its Member States to help them meet the challenges of this growing area?</p> <p><b>Chair:</b> Dr Olu Jegede, <i>Vice Chancellor, Open University of Nigeria</i></p> <p><b>Rapporteur:</b> Mr Neil Butcher, <i>SAIDE, South Africa</i></p> <p><b>Speakers:</b>            Dr Narend Bajjnath, <i>UNISA, South Africa</i>            Mr Francis Maingu, <i>Student Representative, Open University of Tanzania (OUT), Tanzania</i>            Dr Amin Zuhairi, <i>Open University of Indonesia</i>            Mr Neil Butcher, <i>SAIDE, South Africa</i>            Ms Zeynep Varoglu, <i>UNESCO</i></p>	<p>The discussions will focus on current trends in student quality literacy, information needs and challenges. Discussions will also include presentation of existing tools in this area, and issues such as 'bogus institutions'. The objective of this workshop will be to identify areas where UNESCO can contribute to provide resources benefiting students directly in identifying quality courses of study and facilitating the recognition of their qualifications</p> <p><b>Chair:</b> Ms Nedzada Faginovic, <i>Ministry of Civil Affairs, Sector for Education, Bosnia-Herzegovina, President of MERIC Network</i></p> <p><b>Rapporteur:</b> Ms Nomvula Mapule Mabuza, <i>IPFS</i></p> <p><b>Speakers:</b>            Ms Hital Muraj, <i>CISCO Networking, Nairobi</i>            Ms Shruti Bakshi, <i>Genpact, India</i>            Ms Tanya Muller-Borges, <i>European Confederation of Junior Enterprises (JADE), Belgium</i>            Dr Jim Clayson, <i>American University of Paris</i>            Ms Arti Khanderia, <i>University of British</i></p>	<p>This workshop will identify issues and challenges, highlight examples of good practices in quality assurance policy and practice as seen from national, sub-regional and regional perspectives. It will look at processes of development and implementation. A discussion paper will consider the implications of the findings in relation to wider application of Quality Assurance for Teacher Education. It will suggest areas for further research considerations and identify possible ways forward.</p> <p><b>Chair:</b> Ms Caroline Pontefract, <i>UNESCO</i></p> <p><b>Rapporteur:</b> Ms Ramya Vivekanandan, <i>UNESCO</i></p> <p><b>Speakers:</b>            Ms Elizabeth Mattson, <i>IRFOL, UK</i>            Dr Komlavi Francisco Seddoh, <i>UNESCO</i>            Dr Fred Barasa, <i>ACDE, Kenya</i>            Dr Ramzi Salamé, <i>UNESCO Beirut</i>            Dr Mohan Menon, <i>Commonwealth of Learning, Canada</i></p>

Columbia, Canada

**Annex 2 - Parallel Thematic Workshops - Friday 14 September 2007**

<b>Workshop 1</b> UNESCO/OECD Guidelines and capacity building for quality assurance in higher education  Focus: Capacity Building	<b>Workshop 2</b> Quality assurance in distance education  Focus: New Developments	<b>Workshop 3</b> Students' perspectives on quality assurance and the recognition of qualifications  Focus: Recognition and HE Spaces	<b>Workshop 4</b> Quality assurance in teacher education  Focus: Quality Assurance for teacher education in Africa
<p>The panel will bring together representatives of some of the stakeholders targeted by the UNESCO/OECD Guidelines for Quality Cross-border Higher Education to review the implementation of the Guidelines two years after their adoption in 2005. The objective of the session is see to what extent the Guidelines have provided an international framework for quality in cross-border higher education and to propose further work in this area for UNESCO and its partners.</p> <p><b>Chair:</b> Mr Peter Materu, <i>World Bank</i></p> <p><b>Rapporteur:</b> Ms Alice Sena Lamptey, <i>Association of African Universities</i></p> <p><b>Speakers:</b>            Dr (Ms) Nadia Badrawi, <i>NQAAC, Egypt</i>            Mr Christoph Hansert, <i>DAAD, Germany</i>            Mr David Woodhouse, <i>INQAAHE</i>            Ms Stella Antony, <i>APQN</i></p>	<p>The discussions will focus on identifying the key areas to be addressed in this field, recognizing that distance education includes a continuum from mixed programmes to purely e-learning. The objective of this workshop will be to identify the main issues and key stakeholders in this field. What can UNESCO provide to its Member States to help them meet the challenges of this growing area?</p> <p><b>Chair:</b> Dr Olu Jegede, Vice Chancellor, <i>Open University of Nigeria</i></p> <p><b>Rapporteur:</b> Mr Neil Butcher, <i>SAIDE, South Africa</i></p> <p><b>Speakers:</b>            Mr Piet Henderixk, <i>EADTU</i>            Dr Luis Miguel Romero, <i>UTPL, Ecuador</i>            Mr Liu Wenfu, <i>Shanghai TV University, China</i></p>	<p>The discussions will focus on current trends in student quality literacy, information needs and challenges. Discussions will also include presentation of existing tools in this area, and issues such as 'bogus institutions'. The objective of this workshop will be to identify areas where UNESCO can contribute to provide resources benefiting students directly in identifying quality courses of study and facilitating the recognition of their qualifications</p> <p><b>Chair:</b> Ms Nedzada Faginovic, <i>Ministry of Civil Affairs, Sector for Education, Bosnia-Herzegovina, President of MERIC Network</i></p> <p><b>Rapporteur:</b> Ms Nomvula Mapule Mabuza, <i>IPFS</i></p> <p><b>Speakers:</b>            Mr Michal Przyborski, <i>IAAS</i>            Mr Sergej Godec, <i>IFMSA</i>            Mr Ray Asis, <i>ASA</i>            Mr Theo Bhengu, <i>CHE, South Africa</i>            Ms Rispa Odongo, <i>Commission for Higher Education, Nairobi</i></p>	<p>Discussions will highlight quality assurance issues for teacher education in Anglophone, Francophone and Lusophone Africa. The workshop will identify issues and challenges, highlight examples of good practices in quality assurance policy and practice as seen from national, sub-regional and regional perspectives. It will look at processes of development and implementation. It will consider the way forward in strengthening Quality Assurance for Teacher Education in Africa.</p> <p><b>Chair:</b> Ms Caroline Pontefract, <i>UNESCO</i></p> <p><b>Rapporteur:</b>            Ms Gabrielle Bonnet, <i>UNESCO</i></p> <p><b>Speakers:</b>            Ms Elizabeth Mattson, <i>IRFOL, UK</i>            Dr Komlavi Francisco Seddoh, <i>UNESCO</i>            Dr Fred Barasa, <i>ACDE, Kenya</i>            Dr Ramzi Salamé, <i>UNESCO Beirut</i>            Dr Mohan Menon, <i>Commonwealth of Learning, Canada</i></p>

### Summary of recommendations of the Third Global forum

Stakeholder/ Theme of Action	Areas for UNESCO Actions Capacity Building	Clearinghouse	Standard-setting
Cross-border Higher Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Establish policy dialogue involving all stakeholders and use tracer studies to bring in external perspectives, training in self-evaluation and of peer evaluators.</li> <li>▪ Provide incentives and sanctions to encourage quality improvement and remind stakeholders of their professional commitments</li> <li>▪ Support QA agencies and relevant associations and networks of higher education institutions to promote the use of the Guidelines as tools of 'good practice'</li> <li>▪ Assist Small States to develop regional and multi-state solutions for quality assurance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ In cooperation with OECD, enhance Governments' awareness of the Guidelines. Actions could include drawing attention to the Guidelines by identifying 'champions/patrons' for the Guidelines to promote them.</li> <li>▪ Create a platform/portal to improve information flow and access</li> <li>▪ Improve cooperation between national QA agencies and higher education institutions through increased dialogue and opportunities for collaboration</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Use existing standards, e.g. UNESCO/OECD Guidelines, ENQA Guidelines and Standards, INQAAHE Code of good practice as basis for developing robust QA systems for national and CBHE</li> </ul>
Distance Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <i>Developing an ODL framework in consultation with Member States</i> to support capacity building at the institutional level</li> <li>▪ Build capacity for instructional design skills in teaching staff working with open educational resources</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Make information on innovations accessible in different languages. In particular, exchange of information on institutional models and use of different technologies, with a focus on South-South collaboration</li> <li>▪ Support the sharing of materials concerning quality assurance of distance education</li> <li>▪ Facilitate the mobility of students through distance education</li> <li>▪ Advocacy to assist institutions in delivering quality programmes within the limits of their financial and human resources capacities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Develop an ODL framework in consultation with Member States <i>to support capacity building at the institutional level</i></li> </ul>
Students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Capacity building for students to involve them in developing and maintaining the quality of higher education</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Provide access to reliable and transparent information to guide learners in their choices and protect them from low-quality provision and disreputable providers (e.g. the UNESCO Portal of Higher Education Institutions, further work on bogus institutions and academic fraud etc.)</li> </ul>	
Teacher Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Capacity building to Member States in quality assurance of teacher education</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Convene forums for Member States to exchange experiences in quality assurance of teacher education</li> </ul>	Refine UNESCO instruments (Conventions, Guidelines etc.) to include quality assurance of teacher education

## LIST OF DOCUMENTS

N°	Document
1	Provisional Programme
2	Background Document
3	Dissemination and Implementation of the UNESCO-OECD Guidelines for Quality Provision in Cross-border Higher Education : a synthesis report
4	Regional and Multi-State Solutions for Small States for Quality Assurance of Higher Education: a synthesis report
INF.1	List of Documents
INF.2	List of Participants
INF.3	Abstracts
INF.4	Bibliography on Cross-border Higher Education in the Twenty-first Century
	RIQ Brochure