



# 6<sup>TH</sup> INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE AND WORKSHOPS ON QUALITY ASSURANCE IN HIGHER EDUCATION IN AFRICA and

*GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE AFRICAN QUALITY ASSURANCE  
NETWORK (AfriQAN)*

**THREE EVENTS IN ONE YOU SHOULD NOT MISS**

**September 15-19, 2014  
Accra, Ghana**

**CONFERENCE THEME:**

***POST-2015: EMERGING DEVELOPMENTS IN QUALITY ASSURANCE IN HIGHER  
EDUCATION IN AFRICA***

## **Background**

Over the last ten years, the African higher education system witnessed a number of positive developments on the quality front, six of which provide noteworthy examples. In 2004, there were less than 6 national quality assurance agencies. By 2014, the number had increased to 23. Beyond the numerical gain, all 23 quality assurance agencies from Egypt in north Africa through Nigeria in the west, Kenya in the east to South Africa in the south, had improved their processes for assuring quality even in the face of increased number of institutions, programmes and students. Secondly, UNESCO, first through its Harare Cluster Office in 2006 and Bamako Cluster Office, in 2009, working closely with the Association of African Universities (AAU), the African Union Commission (AUC), the Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA), the Global University Network for Innovation (GUNI)-Africa and key partners, initiated the International Conference and Workshop series on Quality Assurance in Higher Education in Africa (ICQAHEA) which served as building capacity platforms for over 2,000 higher education professionals, researchers and experts in Africa to address capacity deficits in higher education quality assurance. Thirdly, the African Quality Assurance Network (AfriQAN) was inaugurated in 2007 to pursue its mandate of “assurance and enhancement of the quality of higher education in Africa through strengthening the work of quality assurance agencies and other associated organization with similar objectives.” Fourthly, the Association of African Universities (AAU) through a wide array of programmes and projects including

the Quality Assurance Support Programme for Higher Education in Africa and the African Higher Education Excellence Award made significant additions to the pile of efforts at ensuring that the quality of higher education in the continent does not regress. Fifthly, the Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA) through its Working Group on Higher Education (WGHE) was at the vanguard of efforts that are envisaged to lead to strengthening the African Higher Education and Research Space (AHERS). The sixth evidence of positive development is led by the African Union Commission which has vigorously pursued several initiatives towards the harmonization of higher education in Africa with a foundational strand on quality. More recently, the Institute for African Culture and International Understanding (IACIU), a UNESCO Category 2 Institute located at the Olusegun Obasanjo Presidential Library in Abeokuta, Nigeria, established in 2008 to promote implementation in Africa of the 2005 UNESCO Cultural Convention on the protection and promotion of the diversity of cultural expressions has taken initiatives related to accreditation and quality assurance in higher education in Africa. Indeed, IACIU has developed a concept note on the role of higher education in cultural development in Africa that will enable the Institute to play an important role in accreditation and quality assurance of higher education institutions involved in implementation of the UNESCO cultural Conventions in Africa.

In spite of these positive developments, the maintenance of quality standards in higher education faces tremendous challenges at the national and regional levels. Quality of graduates from universities continues to be a source of worry to employers calling for better quality standards. Quality of research is also compromised. The inescapable conclusion is that there are a number of things that would need to be done right or better than current practice if we need to stay competitive in an increasingly globalised world. Is it a matter of being more creative or innovative in how the higher education system is quality assured? Is it the case of pooling regional resources and sharing best practices that will improve quality? How can we match increasing access with better quality of products? How can we ensure that private and cross-border providers do not compromise quality? How can we better use emerging technologies to bolster quality of the traditional and non-traditional modes of higher education delivery? How can the efficiency of the system especially its management be improved? How can we fully harness the power of quality higher education to pull the teeming masses in Africa out of poverty? Collective effort brandishes huge leveraging power, so how can we mobilise continental initiatives at quality assurance (including accreditation) to inspire quality across African higher education systems, leaving no nation behind? These are important and urgent questions as we approach 2015.

The year 2015 is remarkable in a number of respects. It is the end-point year for the African Union Second Decade on Education (2006-2015). It is also the end-point of the target year for the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The year 2015 is also the year when the revised Regional Convention on recognition of studies, certificates, diplomas, degrees and other academic qualifications in higher education in African states also known as the Arusha Convention, approved in 2013, will be expected to pick up swing for ratification, domestication and implementation. No doubt also, 2015 will be a beginning year for higher education development plans of several countries in Africa.

It will be recalled that the Arusha Convention, was adopted by African Ministers of Education in December 1981 in Arusha, Tanzania to promote academic mobility and international understanding. The implementation of the Convention was weak partly because by 2002, it was ratified by only 22 State Parties. In 2002 a process of revision of the Convention was initiated in collaboration between UNESCO and the Commonwealth of Learning. Since the inclusion of this activity in the African Higher Education Harmonization Strategy adopted in 2007 by the Conference of Ministers of Education of Africa (COMEDAF), the revision process was jointly overseen by UNESCO and the African Union Commission. The revision process has now been completed and an international conference for its

adoption and signature is scheduled to take place on 22-23 July 2014 in Addis Ababa. Implementation of the revised Convention requires human and institutional capacity building in quality assurance and development of mechanisms and tools required to ensure comparability and compatibility of qualifications and period of studies through transparent, fair and efficient assessment processes. It is agreed that some special efforts need to be made in order to rapidly move forward the establishment of a Pan-African Qualifications and Quality Assurance Framework; the development of a Continental Credit Transfer and Accumulation System and the creation of a continental online observatory on accreditation, quality assurance and recognition of qualifications. All these tools and mechanisms are required in order to ensure effective implementation of the revised Arusha Convention.

One of the projects for fostering implementation of the Harmonization Strategy is the Tuning Africa pilot project. This is a collaborative, highly-consultative process that involves major higher education stakeholders in specific subject areas in curriculum development in order to enhance student competences. It focuses on generic and subject-specific competences, credit transfer and accumulation systems, teaching and learning approaches and assessment and quality enhancement and intended learning outcomes and skills in five subjects areas: agriculture, civil engineering, mechanical engineering, medicine and teacher education. The Tuning project is expected to facilitate harmonization of programmes at subject level and will therefore contribute to the establishment of a Continental Credit Transfer and Accumulation System and consequently to the promotion of students' mobility. For the period from 2014-to 2017, higher education activities under the Joint Africa-EU Strategy will mainly focus on the Tuning project and accreditation and quality assurance as part of the implementation of the African Higher Education Harmonisation Strategy and the establishment of the African Higher Education and Research Space. The revised Arusha Convention will therefore play a major role in the implementation of these activities that will be coordinated by the African Union Commission (AUC), UNESCO, the Association of African Universities and the European Union Commission. The 6th ICQAHEA is considered as being part of the implementation of (a) the African Union harmonization strategy, (b) the Strategic development plans of the Association of African Universities; GUNI-Africa; the African quality Assurance Network and the work plan of the Institute for the African culture and international understanding related to accreditation and quality assurance. It is also a follow-up to the Harmonization of African Higher Education Tuning Workshop held on 25-27 March 2014 in Brussels, Belgium under the Joint Africa-European Union Strategy.

There is a heightened hope that the future beginning from 2015, will be bright for quality in the higher education systems in Africa. This hope is hinged on a number of developments that are on the starting block for take-off or in the early stages of development. What are these initiatives which will serve as catalysts for inducing a bright future for quality higher education in Africa? How can policy makers including ministers in charge of higher education, heads of higher education institutions, quality assurance practitioners, students, parents, the private sector, the media, development partners, indeed all stakeholders be part of development, refinement and implementation of these initiatives? How can quality assurance at the national and continent levels be strengthened to guarantee better quality products from higher education? These are some of the key questions that will be addressed at the 6<sup>th</sup> ICQAHEA.

## Objectives of the Conference and Workshop

The conference will

- review national and continental developments in quality assurance in higher education in Africa up to 2014;
- document best practices in higher education quality assurance from other regions of the world and draw lessons for the African context for the promotion of quality culture;
- forecast post-2015 developments in quality assurance in higher education in Africa from initiatives by bodies at the continental (e.g. African Union); and global (e.g. UNESCO) levels;
- deepen understanding of the concept and implementation paradigm of the African Higher Education and Research Space (AHERS) and the African Union Pan-African Quality Assurance and Accreditation Framework;
- foster the acquisition of skills in (a) the implementation of the revised Arusha Convention; (b) measurement and modelling of quality in higher education; (c) quality assurance of open and distance learning delivery systems; (d) strengthening effective implementation of LMD reforms; (e) quality assurance of emerging non-traditional higher education delivery systems; (f) setting up and running effective quality assurance units at the institutional level; and (g) Tuning and Credit Transfer;
- identify challenges to quality in higher education in Africa and propose sustainable solutions; and
- identify roles that all stakeholders should play in the implementation of the post-2015 initiatives in order to guarantee success.

## Sub-themes

- National and continental developments in quality assurance in higher education in Africa
- Post-2015 imperatives for enhancing quality in higher education in Africa
- Quality and Regional Harmonisation: Lessons from Other Regions
- Sustaining Quality through AHERS and Pan-African Quality Assurance and Accreditation Framework
- Implementation of the revised Arusha Convention
- Quality, ICT and LMD Reforms
- Accelerating and assuring quality in research capacity development, science and technology, private higher education and cross-border higher education

## Expected outcomes

The following are the expected outcomes of the conference:

- Participants who have deepened their understanding of post-2015 developments in quality assurance in higher education in Africa.
- Participants whose capacity have been developed to be change agents in the implementation of an agenda of improving quality in higher education in Africa for global competitiveness.
- Blueprint for supporting the implementation of post-2015 goals regarding improvement in quality of education as agreed by partners.
- Blueprint for supporting the 2014-2017 Action Plan of the African Union Commission in the area of higher education.
- Better trained quality assurance practitioners for national quality assurance agencies and a networking between them.
- Documentation of the refined perspectives on concept and implementation paradigm of the African Higher Education and Research Space (AHERS) and the African Union Pan-African Quality Assurance and Accreditation Framework.

- Communicate reflecting the conclusions and action plan arising from the debates and deliberations of the conference.

## Conference Package and Collocated Events

The Conference Package is made up of the following collocated events on the dates shown:

Date	Event
<b>Monday, September 15</b>	Arrival and Registration
<b>Tuesday-Wednesday, September 16-17</b>	Conference
<b>Thursday, September 18 (morning)</b>	AfriQAN General Assembly
<b>Thursday, September 18 (afternoon)- Friday, September 19 (morning)</b>	Six Capacity-building Workshops in three parallel groups of two.
<b>Friday, September 19 (noon)</b>	Closing ceremony of 6 <sup>th</sup> ICQAHEA/Excursion
<b>Saturday, September 20</b>	Special event and Departure

## Workshops

A rich menu of workshops has been carefully prepared to enhance knowledge and skills of participants. Each workshop will be hands-on and practical in delivery and each will run for four hours. Each participant will be able to select three over September 18 and 19. These workshops will build capacity of participants who will go back very well enriched with skills to be able to implement quality assurance practices at the institutional, national and continental levels. These workshops have formed a unique characteristic of ICQAHEAs over the years. Feedback from participants at previous ICQAHEAs have encouraged the organisers to continue with this tradition.

### Contents of Workshops

Workshop	Content	Facilitator	Language
<b>No. 1: Using AMOS Statistical Models to Predict Quality in Higher Education Systems</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Measurement of quality in higher education systems</li> <li>• Predictive models of quality</li> <li>• Practical work on using AMOS software to model quality in higher education</li> <li>• Using AMOS by quality assurance units of universities</li> </ul>	Professor Peter Okebukola & Dr. Michael Arove	English
<b>No. 2 Implementation of the revised Arusha Convention</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provisions of the revised Arusha Convention</li> <li>• Practical steps in implementing the provisions at the institutional, national and regional levels</li> </ul>	Professor Juma Shabani and Hassmik Tortian	French and English
<b>No. 3: Establishment and effective operation of quality assurance agencies/units at national higher education and institutional levels</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Structure, functions and legal frameworks of quality assurance agencies/units</li> <li>• Quality assurance of input, process, output and</li> </ul>	Professor Chiedu Mafiana, Professor Ignatius Uvah, Dr. Noel Saliu and Professor Anthony Arinze	English

	<p>outcomes in higher education</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Resources and funding</li> <li>• Challenges and Overcoming obstacles to success</li> <li>• Setting up and running effective quality assurance unit in a university</li> </ul>		
<b>No. 4: Use of the Tuning methodology for development and implementation of an African credit transfer and accumulation system</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Process of Tuning</li> <li>• Elements of the African credit transfer and accumulation system</li> <li>• Practical work on Tuning</li> </ul>	Professor Olusola Oyewole	English
<b>No. 5: Quality Assurance of Open and Distance Learning</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Setting minimum standards for open and distance learning</li> <li>• Quality assurance of courseware, delivery system, evaluation practices, research and student support</li> </ul>	Dr. Suleiman Ramon-Yusuf	English
<b>No. 6: Strengthening and Accelerating Implementation of LMD Reforms</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Status of LMD reforms</li> <li>• Impediments to reforms</li> <li>• Case Studies of best practices</li> </ul>	Professor Juma Shabani	French

## Grouping of Workshops

(Note: Participants are to register for one workshop from each group)

### Group A

No. 1: Using AMOS Statistical Software Models to Predict Quality in Higher Education Systems

No. 2 Implementation of the revised Arusha Convention

### Group B

No. 3: Establishment and effective operation of quality assurance agencies/units at national higher education and institutional levels

No. 4: Use of the Tuning methodology for development and implementation of an African credit transfer and accumulation system

### Group C

No. 5: Quality Assurance of Open and Distance Learning

No. 6: Strengthening and Accelerating Implementation of LMD Reforms

## General Assembly of African Quality Assurance Network (AfriQAN)

The African Quality Assurance Network (AfriQAN) located at the Association of African Universities (AAU) was setup to provide assistance to institutions concerned with quality assurance in higher

education in Africa. The network is the official platform for the cooperation of African quality assurance organisations and collaborates with similar organisations in other regions.

In April 2009, AAU organised a stakeholder's workshop in Dodowa, Ghana which came up with a declaration, the "Dodowa Declaration" that emphasized the importance of the network to foster collaboration and linkage among the quality assurance bodies within Africa. Accordingly, an interim AfriQAN committee was elected whose efforts led to the development of a draft AfriQAN constitution. At the first general meeting in Accra, Ghana, from 25<sup>th</sup> to 27<sup>th</sup> November 2009, the founding members of AfriQAN, met and adopted the AfriQAN Constitution. In September 2012, a number of constitutional amendments were suggested, which were subsequently approved in June 2013 in Libreville, Gabon. The agenda for the 2014 meeting will include an update on the AfriQAN activities and projections for the future; subscription and membership dues; and election of the new AfriQAN Executive Board.

## Expected Participants

The conference will be of interest to all stakeholders in quality assurance in higher education in Africa as well as policy makers and practitioners in quality assurance from other regions of the world. Participation is open but not limited to:

- Ministers in charge of Education/Higher Education/Science and Technology/ICTs and Labour
- Permanent Secretaries/Directors-General of Education and Senior Officials
- Heads and management teams of national and regional quality assurance agencies
- Vice-Chancellors, Rectors and Provosts of higher education institutions
- Officers and Members of AfriQAN
- Officers in charge of higher education at the African Union Commission
- UNESCO officials from headquarters in Paris and at the regional and multi-sectoral offices in Africa
- Quality Assurance practitioners
- Experts in ICT, teaching and research in higher education
- Civil society
- Staff Unions
- Students and Students' Associations
- Professional associations
- Employers or employers' associations
- Development Partners including the ADEA and the European Union
- Stakeholders in education in Africa
- Stakeholders in higher education from other regions of the world

## Conference, Workshop and General Assembly Dates

- **Arrival:** Monday, September 15
- **Conference:** Tuesday-Wednesday, September 16-17
- **AfriQAN General Assembly:** September 18
- **Workshops:** September 18-19
- **Special Event and Departure:** Saturday, September 20

## Exhibition

A limited amount of space will be available for commercial vendors' displays/exhibits during the conference.

## Working Languages

The working languages of the meeting will be English and French.

## Partners

- Association of African Universities(AAU)
- Global University Network for Innovation (GUNi-Africa)
- African Quality Assurance Network
- African Union Commission
- University of Ghana, Legon
- Institute for African Culture and International Understanding of the Olusegun Obasanjo Presidential Library
- Okebukola Science Foundation
- More partners are encouraged

## Conference Fee

A conference fee of \$250 (two hundred and fifty US dollars) will apply to all non-student participants. Students will be expected to pay \$50 (fifty dollars) for registration.

## Venue

The conference will hold in the Centre for African Wetlands, University of Ghana, Legon.

## Accommodation

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

- Ford Foundation/University Guest House
- Yirri Lodge
- Erata Hotel
- Nearby guest houses in North Legon
- International Student Hostels
- Nearby guest houses at North Legon

Please see room rates on the conference website

## Call for Papers

Papers or posters on issues falling within the sub-themes outlined above may be submitted as contributions to the conference. Persons who wish to present a paper or poster at the conference should submit an **extended synopsis** (in English and French) of 800 words (i.e. two A4 format pages



of single spaced typing or the equivalent, including any tables or diagrams and a few pertinent references) together with completed Form A for Submission of a Paper and the Participation Form B (both on the conference website) on or before **30 May, 2014**. In addition, the synopsis should be sent electronically to the Conference Secretariat, email: [j.shabani@unesco.org](mailto:j.shabani@unesco.org); and [pokebukola@yahoo.com](mailto:pokebukola@yahoo.com).

Authors will be informed **mid-July** whether their paper/poster has been accepted for presentation by the Programme Committee. A subset of papers presented at the conference will be published subject to peer review. Further details will be provided after the extended synopses have been reviewed.

### Conference website

The conference website is located at [www.okebsf.org/2014icqahea](http://www.okebsf.org/2014icqahea). Please visit the site to register and receive updates on the conference, workshops and the AfriQAN General Assembly.

### For Further Information

For further information please contact:

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