

Core Programme of Activities 2005 - 2009

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

1. During the last millennium, the 1970s and 1980s were characterized by a financial squeeze on institutions of higher education at a time when there was massive expansion in enrolments. Lack of support for these institutions had far-reaching implications for development in Africa. African countries lost out of numerous opportunities due to a lack of research and technical capacity, and financial resources. The 1976 UNCTAD support to developing countries for the acquisition of technology to facilitate manufacture of goods for export, and the UNCTAD Programme for streamlining credit facilities and making them accessible to developing countries, are cases in point.
2. However, the late eighties and nineties marked a turn around, with African intellectuals taking their place again in policy research and analysis especially in the areas of economic reforms and structural adjustment. The contribution of African scholars to the *Least Developed Country Reports* and the *UNDP Human Development Reports*, contributed substantially to global policies on debt and structural adjustment leading to major policies such as debt relief for the highly indebted poor countries adopted in 1996.
3. In response to the increasing role of African scholars in influencing global and regional policies, the AAU began developing a Strategic Plan in 1999 to enable it support African scholars to continue playing a crucial role in research and policy analysis.

Objectives of the Strategic Plan

4. The programme goals of the AAU as outlined in the plan are:
 - Strengthening capacity for knowledge generation and dissemination;
 - Enhancing the voice and recognition of African higher education institutions;
 - Strengthening leadership and management in higher education institutions.
5. The Strategic Plan takes note of the strengths of the AAU such as a wide continental membership cutting across the five sub-regions of Africa, unwavering support from its members, links with regional bodies and the capacity to provide services to a broad based membership. It also notes some of the weaknesses to be overcome such as lack of long term planning, weak financial management, outmoded structures of governance and over-reliance on donors.

Preparations for Implementation of the Strategic Plan and Core Programme 2005-2009

6. In preparation for implementation of the Strategic Plan and this Core Programme, the AAU Secretariat has been re-organized. A new Secretary General, Prof. Akilagpa Sawyerr was appointed in 2003. New heads of department have been recruited and staffing has been reviewed and rationalized. Restructuring started in 2003 and will end in June 2005 with among other things a new AAU Constitution. During the re-structuring the AAU Secretariat continued to run some of the programmes approved for the period 2001-2004. Under the Study Programme a meeting of the Scientific Committee was convened and awarded to two partner institutions in the year 2004. A Special Workshop on 'GATS and Its Implications for Higher Education in Africa' was organized in April 2004 and follow up country studies undertaken whose results will be presented to the General Conference in February 2005. Other programmes that continued operating at optimum levels include DATAD, Staff Exchange, Quality Assurance, Gender and HIV. The Communications and Services Department continued information exchange activities through the AAU website databases and newsletters.

Background to the Core Programme 2005-2009

7. The first three Core Programmes of the Association (1993-1997, 1997-2000 and 2001-2004) were

approved at the 8th, 9th and 10th General Conferences of the AAU, respectively. Consequently, the next Core Programme (2005-2009) is being tabled at the 11th General Conference for adoption and implementation. As with previous Core Programmes, the new Core Programme (2005-2009) aims broadly at assisting African universities to respond effectively both to the rapidly changing national and global environment within which they operate and to specific needs expressed by their communities.

8. The integration of information and communication technologies (ICT) into teaching, learning, research, information dissemination and management activities in tertiary education has been a priority issue in African higher education institutions for a number of years. The recognition of ICT, by both partners and stakeholders, as a strategic tool for enabling HEIs to achieve their missions has created a situation where there are now several actors who are involved in various ICT capacity building activities. The AAU took this up in 2001 when it launched an ICT programme titled, *“Study on the Use and Application of Information and Communication Technologies in Higher Education Institutions in Africa”*. Since then, there has been an increasing pressure on the Association to play a role in building the ICT capacity of member institutions.
9. In addition it has become very clear over the last four years that the success and failure of African economies will be determined among other things by the quality of higher education. Quality assurance is therefore given stronger emphasis than before in this proposed programme. Equally important is the issue of gender. In the last three programmes it was given space in other programmes and a lot of work has been done through the Study Programme and other programmes. During the period 2005 and 2009 the AAU intends to mount an independent Gender Programme. Against this background, the AAU has selected as its theme for the Core Programme (2005-2009): *“Networking of African Higher Education Institutions for the Renewal of the African University”*.

Implementation

10. The general strategy for the implementation of the Core Programme will have two main components: institutional cooperation with the AAU Secretariat as the coordinator, facilitator and monitoring body while the member institutions carry out the programme activities. This will create enabling conditions for AAU’s contribution to institution building and capacity enhancement at the level of its members. Second, the Secretariat will undertake follow-up activities at the level of individual institutions and report to the governance bodies of the AAU, mainly the Executive Board, the sub-regional Conferences of Rectors, Vice Chancellors and Presidents of African Universities (COREVIP) and the General Conference.

Monitoring and Evaluation

11. The AAU Secretariat carries out monitoring and evaluation through the following mechanisms: Internally, there are quarterly monitoring and evaluation meetings. These are supplemented by external reviews carried out by external consultants engaged every year to review performance and compile a report for the board. In addition three Executive Board members are normally asked to conduct a review and submit a separate report.
12. The Executive Board therefore gets three monitoring and evaluation reports: one from the Secretariat, another from the consultant and a third from the three selected board members. COREVIP also receives and considers reports that fall within its jurisdiction and the General Conference receives performance reports from the Executive Board. To ensure the proper execution and management of programmes and better fulfil the objectives of the Core Programme as a whole, the internal monitoring and evaluation and external review processes will be strengthened. In addition, a comprehensive annual report will be published.

Funding

13. Funding for the Programme will be generated through member university subscriptions, grants from African countries, the African Union, the African Capacity Building Foundation and through donor assistance. To cut down on implementation costs, workshops and seminars and similar activities will, whenever possible, be organised to coincide with major statutory activities, notably the Conferences of Rectors, Vice Chancellors and Presidents of African Universities.

CORE PROGRAMME OF ACTIVITIES 2005 - 2009

INTRODUCTION

The last two decades of the last millennium were characterized by a financial squeeze on institutions of higher education at the very time when there was a massive increase in enrolment. That squeeze had far-reaching implications for development in Africa. During the early years of the oil crisis, for example, many countries tried to find alternative sources of energy. African countries could not play a significant role in this search due to lack of research capacity and financial resources.

When in 1976 the UN Secretary General and UNCTAD launched a programme for streamlining credit facilities and affording developing countries access to them, African countries could not play an active part in the initiative because they lacked capacity for financial analysis, policy analysis, regulation and de-regulation. Asian and Latin American countries that had capacity to carry out the required analyses benefited from the initiative.

However in the late 1980s and 1990s, African intellectuals began recapturing their rightful place in policy research and analysis, especially in the areas of economic reforms and structural adjustment. The contribution of African scholars in the compilation of the Least Developed Country Reports and the UNDP Human Development Reports, though not properly documented, contributed substantially to global policies on debt and structural adjustments leading to major policies such as debt relief for the highly indebted poor countries.

Realizing the revitalized role of African intellectuals in shaping the African development agenda and giving it a local perspective in a global economy, the AAU started a process of developing a Strategic Plan in 1999. It set up a Planning Committee that carried out consultations and prepared a draft that was presented at the Executive Board meeting in Sebha, Libya, in January 2002. Three months later a draft Plan was presented to a broad-based workshop held in Tripoli, Libya while a second draft was presented to the Executive Board in Yaounde, Cameroon, in July 2002. The final draft was approved by Executive Board and adopted by the Conference of Rectors, Vice Chancellors and Presidents (COREVIP) in Mauritius in 2003 subject to suggested modifications that were later incorporated by the Executive Board.

Objectives of the AAU Strategic Plan (2003 – 2010)

The Strategic Plan (2003 –2010) spells out the programmatic goals of the Association as being:

Goal 1: *Strengthening the capacity of member institutions to play enhanced role in the generation, collation, dissemination and application of knowledge and in high manpower training, retention and utilization for Africa's development. This is to be achieved through the following objectives:*

Objective 1: Strengthen the leadership and management capacity of member institutions

Objective 2: Enhance collaboration in teaching and research by member institutions

Objective 3: Facilitate the generation, acquisition and application of knowledge

Objective 4: Promote best practices in quality assurance among HEIs

Objective 5: Sensitise member institutions to address crucial developmental challenges of the continent with particular reference to poverty alleviation, HIV/AIDS, gender mainstreaming, brain drain and the need for accelerated knowledge based development

Goal 2: *Provide effective mechanisms to achieve enhanced voice and recognition of African HEIs in*

Africa's development and the rest of the world. This is to be achieved through the following:

Objective 6: Achieve recognition and an effective voice in relevant continental and international bodies

Objective 7: Promote fruitful and enhanced interactions between AAU member institutions and the external academic community

Goal 3: *Strengthen the leadership, management and implementation capacity of the AAU's Secretariat in order to facilitate value-added cooperation among member institutions. This is to be achieved through the following objectives:*

Objective 8: Strengthen AAU capacity for initiation, management and implementation of programme activities

Objective 9: Assure sustainable funding for AAU governance, management, and priority programmes and activities through mobilization of resources from member institutions, governments, continental bodies and bilateral and multilateral agencies

In essence the Strategic Plan (2003-2010) seeks to strengthen the broad mandate and objectives of the AAU, and takes cognisance of the strengths and weaknesses of the AAU. The major strengths are its wide membership based in all the five sub-regions of Africa and the goodwill it enjoys from its members whose annual subscriptions currently cover the essential administration costs of the Secretariat. The Association also has strong continental and intercontinental links formalised in memoranda of understanding with major regional organizations such as the African Union, the African Capacity Building Foundation (ACBF) and the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). The Plan takes note, also, of the weaknesses of the past that are now slowly being overcome such as lack of long-term planning, weak financial management, outmoded structures of governance and over-reliance on donors.

While these weaknesses are being tackled, the Strategic Plan addresses some of the new opportunities. For example, the demand for higher education in Africa is on the rise and, apart from public institutions, private providers are entering the higher education sector. Additionally, some of the AAU development partners that had in the past played down the role of higher education have begun taking an interest in it again. Moreover, African governments have shown a new commitment to support higher education, while the formation and consolidation of the African Union as well as the launching of NEPAD have provided an opportunity for the AAU to reposition itself as the voice of higher education on the African continent.

Preparations for Implementation of the Strategic Plan

In preparation for the implementation of the Strategic Plan, the AAU Secretariat has been re-organized, in line with one of the objectives of the Plan. A new Secretary-General was appointed in 2003 with a specific mandate to restructure the Secretariat and revitalise the Association. He has set up a departmental structure and appointed new staff to head the new departments. A new financial management system has been put in place and staffing rationalized. The restructuring exercise is expected to continue till June 2005.

From the inception of the re-structuring exercise in mid-2003, the first phase of the Strategic Plan was implemented. In addition, the Secretariat implemented a limited number of programmes and projects approved for the period 2001-2004. The programmes and projects implemented during the period include the **Study Programme**, which forms the biggest component of the research programme. A Scientific Committee meeting was held to confirm the devolution of research project implementation to two partner institutions: the African Gender Institute based at the University of Cape Town, South Africa, and the UN Institute for Development and Economic Planning (IDEP) in Dakar, Senegal. A Special Issues Workshop on '*GATS and its Implications for Higher Education in Africa*' was organized in Accra, Ghana in April 2004 under the auspices of the Study Programme.

The *Staff Exchange Programme* continued to support academic mobility across borders and the *Quality Assurance Programme* completed its survey of the quality control systems in a selected number of universities. Research, awareness creation and advocacy on *HIV/AIDS* in tertiary education institutions produced good results, including research reports and a toolkit for training on the subject. Other programmes whose implementation continued include *DATAD*, the AAU's online database of African theses and dissertations, and scholarship grants administered by the Secretariat as part of the Ford Foundation's *International Fellowships Programme*.

The end of the restructuring exercise coincides with the end of the Core Programme (2001 – 2004) approved by the General Conference in Nairobi, Kenya in 2001. It is therefore incumbent to develop a new Core Programme in line with the Association's Strategic Plan (2003 – 2010) for approval and adoption by the General Conference. As will be seen in the proposals that follow, besides the Core Programme, other activities of clear relevance will be taken up.

CORE PROGRAMME (2005-2009)

The first three Core Programmes of the Association (1993-1997, 1997-2001 and 2001-2004) were approved at the 8th, 9th and 10th General Conferences of the AAU, respectively. Consequently, the next Core Programme (2005-2009) is being tabled for adoption and implementation by this 11th General Conference. The development of a coherent Core Programme gives a sharper focus to AAU activities and provides a framework for donors and others to contribute to the support of the Programme *as a whole* instead of supporting isolated activities, which has in the past tended to distort the balance of the programme as implemented. The strength of this approach is that it concentrates effort and resources within a determinate general theme, thereby improving the chances of making an impact, especially on the building of capacity within member universities in the areas identified under the general theme.

Theme

As essential as the adaptation and creation and dissemination of knowledge are, the movement of ideas is affected by factors such as physical infrastructure and communication systems. Recent developments in telecommunication, for instance, have lowered the costs of communication tremendously and have facilitated the development of communication networks in parts of the world where it would have taken decades, at best, before such systems could have been developed with the old technologies. Distance learning has been facilitated and is spreading rapidly under these new technologies.

This communication revolution, at the same time that it has made great strides in facilitating communication within countries, has also enhanced the ability of less developed countries to tap into the global knowledge pool. The integration of information and communication technologies (ICT) into teaching, learning, research, information dissemination and management activities in tertiary education has been a priority issue in African higher education institutions (HEIs) for a number of years. The recognition of ICT, by both partners and stakeholders, as a strategic tool for enabling HEIs to achieve their missions has created a situation where there are now several actors who are involved in various ICT capacity building activities.

The AAU took this up in 2001 when it launched an ICT programme titled, "*Study on the Use and Application of Information and Communication Technologies in Higher Education Institutions in Africa*". Since then, there has been increasing pressure on the Association to play a leading role in strengthening the ICT capacity of member institutions.

Against this background, the AAU has selected "*Networking of African Higher Education Institutions for the Renewal of the African University*" as its general theme for this Core Programme (2005-2009). As with previous Core Programmes, a number of sub-themes are developed around the general theme. Consequently, the following sub-themes have been selected:

- *Institutional Collaboration in Higher Education*
- *Leadership and Management*
- *Information and Communication*
- *Commissioned Research*
- *Special Issues*

Implementation

The general strategy for the implementation of the Core Programme will have two main components. The first is institutional cooperation, with the AAU Secretariat as the coordinator, facilitator and monitoring agency while member institutions carry out programme activities. This is to create enabling conditions for AAU's contribution to institution building and capacity enhancement at the level of its members. The second is for the Secretariat to undertake follow-up activities and report to the various bodies of the AAU, mainly the Executive Board, the sub-regional Conferences of Rectors, Vice Chancellors and Presidents of African Universities (COREVIP) and the General Conference.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The AAU Secretariat carries out monitoring and evaluation through a number of measures. First are the internally organised half-yearly monitoring and evaluation sessions at the Secretariat to assess the progress of each programme and project.

The Executive Board receives and reviews detailed annual reports on programme development and implementation. The COREVIP receives and considers reports that fall within its jurisdiction every other year, while the General Conference receives performance reports from the Executive Board. To ensure the proper execution and management of programmes and better fulfil the objectives of the Core Programme as a whole, the internal monitoring and evaluation and external review processes will be strengthened.

Funding

Funding for the Core Programme will be generated through membership subscriptions, grants from African governments, the African Union, the African Capacity Building Foundation, the private sector, where possible, and through donor assistance. In this connection, it should be emphasised that institutional, as distinct from project funding is considered vital both for maintaining the integrity and balance of the Association's programming and for enhancing its probable impact on the issues it seeks to address. For that reason, the funding strategy is to secure contributions *to the Programme as a whole*, or failing that, to one of the sub-themes or special services, or to the Endowment Fund. The Association expresses particular appreciation to donor partners, which have understood this concern and have been prepared to provide core or institutional support for the Association's work. It is hoped that others will appreciate the force of this strategy and adjust their support accordingly.

PLANNED ACTIVITIES

SUB-THEME 1: Institutional Collaboration in Higher Education

- *Study Programme on Higher Education Management in Africa*
- *Networking in Graduate Training and Research*
- *Quality Assurance*
- *Gender and Higher Education in Africa*
- *Staff Exchange and Academic Mobility*
- *Workshops, Seminars and Conferences*

1. *Study Programme on Higher Education Management in Africa*

Currently in Phase 3, the *Study Programme on Higher Education Management* was established by the AAU in 1993 to promote research into higher education management, and to collect, analyse and disseminate research results in order to facilitate the formulation and implementation of policies likely to improve the quality, cost-effectiveness and efficiency of higher education in Africa. It also broadly aims at enhancing the capacity and professionalism of selected African higher education researchers and policy analysts. This will widen the pool of such researchers and analysts and strengthen interaction and collegiality among them. From its inception, the *Programme* has had as one of its objectives, the bridging of the gap between researchers and policy makers by facilitating policy dialogue and the infusion of research-based knowledge into higher education policy-making and implementation.

Under the new Core Programme, the *Study Programme* is divided into two parts. The first, which is referred to as the fast track component, was launched to support a limited number of activities pending the securing of resources to fund the whole programme. The fast track activities involve two research projects: (a) one on gender and culture in the management of African universities, for which a grant has been awarded to the African Gender Institute of the University of Cape Town, South Africa; and (b) a research project on the impact of higher education on development in Africa, for which a grant has been awarded to the Institute for Economic Development and Planning (IDEP) in Dakar, Senegal. Another activity in the fast track component is a research training activity that will be organized for junior researchers on research methodologies and key issues in higher education research under a *Higher Education Research Training Institute (HERTI)* programme¹. The second part of the programme will be launched after funding has been secured and will form the main programme whose activities are outlined below.

Planned Activities

To achieve the stated objectives, the following activities are planned:

- Scientific Committee meetings to select proposals, award grants and oversee the technical progress of the Programme;
- Research methodology workshops;
- The identification and training of *new researchers* through the Higher Education Research Training Institute and the provision of *advanced training* for the best researchers in the previous Phase;
- The development or support of networks of higher education researchers and institutions;
- Stimulation of *policy debates* on issues of higher education management and finance through workshops, seminars and conferences.

¹ HERTI will be organized on two yearly basis and temporary research school for junior researchers. An existing institution specialized in education research will be given the responsibility to host the Institute and run the course under the coordination and guidance of the AAU.

Expected Outcomes

The activities described above are expected to have the following outcomes:

- An expansion of the pool of African higher education researchers and an improvement in their capacity and professionalism;
- The beginnings of community among African higher education researchers, with a greater degree of self-identification and self-activation, and explicit links to institutions involved in higher education work;
- A body of higher education material, based on indigenous research, published and disseminated through the print and electronic media, seminars, etc; and
- Increased engagement of researchers and their product with policy and policy-makers.

2. *Networking in Graduate Training and Research*

African Universities suffer severe resource shortages in terms of finance and human resources. It is difficult for each of them to run all essential courses without risking quality due to staff and resources shortages. It is more cost-effective to team up and offer joint courses in areas where capacity is limited. In the previous programme, AAU supported collaborative teaching and research networks, which, by pooling resources and leveraging, offered training and research activities to a variety of students and other stakeholders. Some of these networks have brought together students from the various sub-regions and also strengthened the gender component of training, in effect facilitating student mobility across national borders. The AAU will continue with its efforts to promote inter-university cooperation in graduate training and research in a number of fields.

The programme will be pursued through the establishment of more higher education networks in specific fields as well as the strengthening of existing networks. Already, the AAU is developing new network proposals, one of which is for the *African Great Lakes Universities Network (AGLUN)* for a joint Master's programme on Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution, involving universities from Burundi, Congo DRC, Kenya, Rwanda and Tanzania. The planned activities and expected outcomes from this are stated below. A similar MA Programme will be considered for a West African Universities Conflict Studies Network (*WAUNET*).

Planned Activities

The following activities are planned:

- Developing and establishing a sub-regional network in at least 2 sub-regions, in the first instance;
- Fundraising to support the networks;
- Collaboration by African universities in delivering these programmes; and
- Joint workshops on peace and conflict management and resolution

Expected Outcomes

- Resource pooling and joint resource mobilization by universities
- A critical mass of African experts on peace and conflict issues
- Generating knowledge of push factors for conflict and conflict resolution strategies.
- Staff and student mobility across language boundaries.
- Reduction in mobility of students to other continents;

3. *Quality Assurance*

At the COREVIP meeting in Zambia in 1997, the AAU was mandated to develop a quality enhancement system through selected pilot institutions. The 9th General Assembly of the AAU that same year resolved to put issues of quality management and assessment on the agenda. In response to these guidelines, the AAU launched a Quality Assurance Programme in 1999. Under this programme the AAU developed and administered questionnaires to several member

institutions and out of the institutions that responded, selected ten for support for self-evaluation. The Association then set up peer review panels and organized validation missions through which it developed a quality assurance guide to help in the self-evaluation exercise.

The exercise involved public universities, most of which were old and established with long running systems of quality control. Clearly, the challenge of quality assurance cannot be confined to systems of classroom or laboratory delivery of education. They need also to cover external systems of quality such as accreditation, visitation, eligibility for grants and quality of staff audits. In addition, the entry of private actors on the education scene and the increasing number of virtual institutions of higher education call for new ways of measuring quality and for networking across regions in search of appropriate indicators and best practices for measuring and maintaining quality.

Building upon the achievements of the previous programme, a new programme is being developed that will lead to Phase II activities. The new programme will seek to support networking between various sub-regional systems of quality assurance and support institutions to develop common approaches to internal quality assurance and assessment. It will also seek to give support for internal self-regulation and information exchange on teaching methods in higher education. Broadly the planned activities and expected outcomes are outlined below:

Planned Activities

To establish a forum for exchange of ideas, information and best practices on how to improve the quality of higher education, the following activities are planned:

- Sensitisation of African university leaders about new trends and characteristics of quality management in higher education;
- Facilitation of the development of common indicators and benchmarks of quality assurance in teaching, learning, management of student time, organization of practical and field activities and examinations;
- Provision of support on request to individual members on how to develop and manage quality circles in universities;
- Undertaking of quality assessment on request by members;
- Liaising with accreditation bodies and other policy making and decision making institutions to facilitate staff and student mobility, equivalence of qualifications and transfer of credits across borders;
- Organising workshops/seminars on the art of curriculum design and innovation, and their place in quality assurance and relevance of training/research; and the exchange/review of information on good practices; and
- Capacity-building activities aimed at producing a cadre of African specialists in curriculum reform, design and innovation.

Expected Outcomes

- African university leaders who are sensitised to the imperative of continual curriculum reform and innovation and quality improvement in a world of rapid global change;
- Dissemination of information on quality assurance, management of quality circles within HEIs, curriculum design and innovation;
- A critical mass of African specialists in quality assessment and assurance, curriculum reform, design and innovation.
- Confident, efficient and competitive graduates trained to think and solve rather manage development problems.
- Harmonization of quality standards at sub-regional and regional levels.

4. ***Gender and Higher Education in Africa***

Between 2001 and 2004, AAU continued to support research projects on gender issues in the management of African universities. In 2004, the Study Programme, for instance, awarded a grant to the African Gender Institute at the University of Cape Town, South Africa, to enable it to coordinate a study of universities in six countries in relation to gender and the culture of management in African universities. However, the problem of gender imbalances in African tertiary institutions has attracted so much attention from researchers and policy makers to the extent that demand for resources for research and advocacy on the issue cannot be absorbed within other running programmes of the AAU. As a result a separate and independent gender programme is to be developed which will address key gender deficits and gaps in the management of higher education in Africa.

These gaps and deficits manifest themselves in the imbalances and inequities regarding access to educational opportunities on the part of female students and lower participation rates of females in management positions. The allocation of research resources and the orientation of research programmes in many institutions tend to be gender-biased towards male staff while the distribution of facilities, and amenities among students tends to allow male students more autonomy and flexibility. Gender-based violence and its impact on learning and teaching activities on campus are other areas requiring investigation, while the gendering of disciplines seems to put female students into pre-determined “ghettoes” reflecting the perceived roles women are expected to play in reproduction driven societies. The gender programme being developed by AAU seeks to provide opportunity for these and other issues to be studied and analysed and solutions found to make learning and teaching in HEIs an enriching experience for all.

Planned Activities

Supporting the development of a research network on gender and higher education in Africa:

- Promoting collaborative policy research on gender issues among academics, students and policy makers;
- Facilitating capacity building on research methods and advocacy strategies that are gender specific; and
- Organizing sub-regional conferences on gender balance in African tertiary institutions.
- Publication of research results.

Expected outcomes

The following outcomes are envisaged:

- A research network of specialists on gender and higher education;
- Advocacy activities on gender equity through on-campus seminars/workshops
- Establishment and operation of gender units in African tertiary institutions;
- Empowerment of more women in African tertiary institutions;
- Development of a database of gender instruments in African tertiary institutions and the identification/elimination of provisions which hinder the advancement of women within institutional hierarchies.

5. ***Staff Exchange and Academic Mobility***

Many African universities lack full capacity to operate all their academic programmes and this has adverse effects on their programmes. In any event, the exchange of staff among institutions enriches all parties – both institutions and exchange staff. Thus, in order to enhance the quality of the products/outcomes of academic programmes in African universities, inter-university cooperation, which is one of the cardinal objectives of the AAU, must be pursued. The AAU Staff Exchange Programme, which was begun in the 1980s, is designed to foster inter-university cooperation through the exchange of staff among African universities. This activity will be continued and expanded during the implementation of this Core Programme.

Planned Activities

- Mobilisation of funds from donors, the private sector and African Governments;
- Announcement to the member universities of the fellowships;
- Selection and support of fellows; and
- Participation of staff at seminars, workshops and conferences.

Expected Outcomes

- Staff exchange fellowships awarded;
- Missions undertaken by recipients of staff exchange fellowships; and
- Promotion of mobility of academic staff on the continent.

SUB-THEME 2: Leadership and Management

- *Leadership Development in Higher Education*
- *Leadership and Management Research*
- *Workshops, Seminars and Conferences*

6. Leadership Development in Higher Education

In the coming decades, African tertiary institutions will confront a host of difficult policy and management issues arising from changes in the domestic and global higher education environment. Against a background of continuing financial squeeze, the global knowledge “revolution” and international competition for local students and staff, African universities must reposition themselves to solve these problems and continue to discharge their primary functions of higher learning and cultural leadership. New avenues for raising revenue must be sought and Africa universities must constantly update themselves with theories and best practices in public management, public-private partnerships, collaborative delivery of services and packaging and marketing of their core services and products. This may entail entrepreneurial strategies that most of the managers of higher education will not have acquired from training. Critical to success in this task will be the calibre and effectiveness of leaders and managers at all levels of African universities.

AAU has so far organized nine workshops for senior management officials of its member institutions. From experience, it is clear that some of these workshops could be organized on a sub-regional basis. Furthermore, it was noted that university leaders and managers had differing needs, nor were they at the same levels. New Rectors and Vice Chancellors, for example, have their own special needs. Another factor is that, while AAU has been leading on continental workshops of this nature, other sub-regional bodies such as SAUVCA and IUCEA have similar interests. Moreover, AAU has not had the resources for organizing the thematic workshops planned for other levels of university management, such as development planners, research managers, student counsellors etc. The new thinking is, therefore, that AAU, IUCEA, SAUVCA and others would join efforts and organize continental and sub-regional programmes on leadership development and management training within a general Africa-wide framework.

Planned Activities

- Two workshops a year for top university executives especially *new* Rectors, Presidents and Vice-Chancellors. These workshops will alternate between Anglophone and Francophone/North African members;
- Thematic workshops for specialist officers; and
- “Training of trainers” and case study writing workshops for the preparation of curricula and course materials for the leadership and management workshops;

Expected Outcome

- Increased awareness of management and leadership issues and the sharing of experiences among senior university people, thereby enhancing the management capacity of university leadership;
- Improved networking among university leaders across the continent;
- Responsive and innovative institutions of higher education; and
- Better strategic planning in higher education institutions.

7. *Leadership and Management Research*

To strengthen leadership and management capacity in the face of current challenges, there is need for research on key issues related to management. These include access and equity, student affairs, resource mobilization, fundraising techniques, private–public partnerships, cooperation in the delivery of higher education services, innovative teaching techniques, new public management, human resources management, curriculum planning and innovation, quality management, etc.

Planned Activities

- Planning meetings;
- Project development;
- Resource mobilization; and
- Research activities.

Expected Outcomes

- Funded Project Proposal;
- Research activities; and
- Research reports that can be used in leadership development and management training workshops, as well as to inform policy-making.

SUB-THEME 3: Information and Communication

- *ICT Curriculum Development*
- *Improving Access to African Scholarly Work and Expertise*
- *Workshops, Seminars and Conferences*

8. *ICT Curriculum Development*

The AAU launched an ambitious programme on the use and application of ICT in African higher education institutions to analyse the use of ICT in universities and other institutions of higher education in Africa, evaluate the internal policies and structures, the on-going development strategies and projects related to ICT, evaluate the needs of the universities and higher education institutions in the use of ICT for information dissemination, teaching, learning, research and management, and define the role of the AAU, its members, other organizations involved in higher education in Africa and the stakeholders in the promotion of the use of ICT.

The first Phase of the four-phased programme was implemented prior to the 10th General Conference in 2001 and involved a literature review commissioned by Carnegie Corporation of New York, an online discussion forum involving 30 African experts and a meeting of a Working Group of experts in Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania which produced a guideline for self-assessment of ICT maturity in HEIs in Africa as well as a questionnaire for a survey of the status of ICT in African HEIs. The Programme came to an end in August 2001 with the publication and dissemination of a guide titled: “*Towards the Introduction and Application of Information and Communication Technologies in African Universities*” published in English and French. Since then, lack of funds has made it impossible to follow through the other phases

of the original programme.

The AAU has decided to launch a new ICT programme that takes careful stock of ongoing initiatives to promote ICT capacity in African HEIs, and the diversity of the needs and levels of ICT maturity of member institutions. Under the programme, the Association will also endeavour to strengthen collaboration among members by the development and exploitation of a VSAT communication technology to connect them to the global Internet network. The idea is to establish a niche for the AAU and enable it to develop and implement a programme that brings focus to the many disparate initiatives on this important issue to the benefit of member institutions. To this end, a study has been commissioned to guide the development of a carefully targeted ICT programme.

Planned Activities

- A technical meeting of ICT experts and representatives of donor agencies to deliberate on the report of the Consultant;
- A stakeholders' conference involving the AAU, its members and development partners on the Final Report;
- Enhancing existing university-wide networks and connecting them to the global Internet by collectively purchasing bandwidth;
- Development of a coherent programme by the AAU for the strengthening of institutional capacities of African higher education institutions in the acquisition and use of ICT; and
- Fundraising.

Expected Outcomes

- Production of a comprehensive ICT programme for AAU;
- Better coordination of ICT initiatives for the benefit of AAU members;
- Enhanced collaboration among AAU members through the use of ICT; and
- Improved quality of research in higher education institutions through wider access to information.

9. *Improving Access to African Scholarly Work and Expertise*

In its efforts to enhance access to African scholarly output as well as African expertise, the AAU has developed two complementary but distinct database-related programmes: a) the Database of African Theses and Dissertations (DATAD), and b) Roster of African Professionals (ROAP).

a) DATAD

Through its DATAD programme, AAU makes available to Africa and the rest of the world dissertations and theses produced in African universities. Recognition of the wealth of research information contained in theses and dissertations motivates the AAU through its membership to advance the DATAD programme. The DATAD project ran a pilot phase from 2000 to 2003, resulting in an online database with 15,000 records from 11 contributing institutions. A transitional phase, within which a DATAD Business Plan and Copyright Guide were developed, ends in February 2005. DATAD maintains a page on the AAU Website with extensive information on workshops, reports and other important information (<http://www.aau.org/datad/>).

Planned Activities

The DATAD Business Plan outlines a plan of expansion through the following activities:

- Strengthening capabilities at the 11 DATAD partner universities for managing locally produced intellectual property and knowledge products;
- Increasing the number of participating member universities by 3 each year for the next 4 years;

- Enhancing and expanding the DATAD database to be the principal source of information on African theses and dissertations and to serve as a clearing centre for access to full-text contents of same;
- Promoting the electronic submission of theses and dissertations at African universities generally and by providing centralized hosting, data management, and rights management services for full members;
- Diversifying its financial base to include the private sector and African Governments; and
- Organising periodic workshops for participating institutions.

Expected Outcomes

- Extension of the geographic coverage of the DATAD; and
- Wider online access to research information produced by students and researchers in African higher education institutions.

b). ROAP

The Roster of African Professionals (ROAP) is a multidisciplinary and comprehensive online database of African higher education experts. It provides a free medium for promoting the international visibility of African higher education professionals; provides an opportunity for enhancing academic mobility; facilitates networking and/or collaboration with peers within and outside Africa; and provides better opportunity to benefit from AAU programs and services, including AAU-generated information on higher education.

The Roaster was launched by AAU to facilitate easy access to a rich diversity of African expertise for its member institutions, African governments, regional and international organizations, and other partners who seek consultants, advisors, teachers, external examiners, researchers, resource persons, and other professionals.

Planned Activities

- Expanding the database through online networking; and
- Continuous processing of profiles for the database

Expected Outcomes

- A free medium for promoting the international visibility of African professionals;
- An opportunity for facilitating academic mobility; and
- A channel for easy networking and collaborating among peers within and outside Africa;
- Increased dissemination of higher education information.

SUB-THEME 4: Commissioned Research

Research is key to development, and one of the core functions of universities. Despite the existence and activities of policy-oriented research organizations, public policy decisions seem not to have benefited from relevant research input. Major pitfalls in the research-policy nexus include gaps in policy initiation, lack of demand orientation in most research programmes, limited utilization of research findings, total absence of marketing and commercialisation of research results, inventions and innovations, individualization of research initiatives, funding d uncertainties and inadequate linkages between research institutions on the one hand and these institutions and the demand sectors on the other.

The AAU has started new initiatives aimed at reducing gaps between researchers and policy makers. In April 2004 a specialized workshop on ‘GATS and Its Implications for Higher Education in Africa’ was held in Accra. It brought together ministers, Vice chancellors, researcher and staff from accreditation bodies. It was resolved that a research programme be launched to give further insights into cross-border provision of higher education services. The AAU commissioned studies on this issue in six African countries. The findings will be presented at the General Conference in Cape Town in February 2005.

AAU will continue commissioning research on special issues including private provision of higher education on the continent. It will also continue to enrich the research outputs of universities and other higher education institutions towards community engagement. The primary aim is to identify and build the capacities for teamwork and promote policy dialogue on major areas, including the following:

- *WTO /GATS and Higher Education in Africa*
- *Management of HIV/AIDS in Institutions of Higher Education*

WTO/ GATS and Higher Education in Africa

The General Agreement on Trade in Services provides for a framework under which services can be provided across national borders without barriers provided agreement is reached between countries concerned. But once such agreement is reached between two countries the GATS envisages that other countries cannot be refused the right to negotiate provision of similar services. This creates challenge to developing countries with limited capacity to negotiate. It also raises questions about the impact such agreements on the right to education and the objectives of the Millennium Development Goals that aim at free primary education for all by the year 2015. In the area of higher education concerns arise about the impact of such an agreement on access to higher education and equity in terms of availability to and affordability of such services by all.

To address these and related issues, AAU developed a project on “***The Implications of WTO/GATS for Higher Education in Africa***”. The main components of the project were (a) a special workshop on GATS and higher education (held in April 2004); (b) a research project starting with six country studies on cross-border provision of higher education in Africa; and (c) a symposium on the same topic to be held on the occasion of the AAU General Conference in February 2005. It is proposed to develop a full research proposal on cross-border provision of higher education and its implications for Africa.

Planned Activities

- Development of a proposal;
- Fund raising;
- Identification of researchers and countries and conduct of studies;
- Research methodology and dissemination workshops; and
- Policy dialogue and advocacy.

Expected Outcomes

- Research reports and publications;
- Increased awareness of advantages, disadvantages and policy implication of cross-border provision; and
- Evidence-based inputs into African policy on the implementation of the GATS.

Management of HIV/AIDS

The HIV/AIDS pandemic has now become a key variable for social differentiation and stratification into people living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHAs), persons affected by HIV/AIDS and the non-infected and non-affected persons. The United Nations General Assembly Special Session on HIV/AIDS (UNGASS) Declaration and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) both acknowledge the strong links between the fight against HIV/AIDS and current efforts to achieve human security and overall human development. There is no doubt that one of Africa’s greatest challenges in the 21st century is the AIDS pandemic. People living with HIV/AIDS, like other persons, need a range of care and support in order to lead healthy and fulfilling lives. Essential support services that should be available, accessible and affordable to PLWHAs including antiretroviral drugs, treatment of opportunistic infections, care, counselling, social and political empowerment, legal protection and supportive policies against stigma and discrimination and entitlement to welfare benefits among others.

Since 2001 when AAU and the ADEA/WGHE disseminated the results of a study on “Challenging the Challenger”² at the 10th General Conference of the Association held in Nairobi, Kenya, surveys have shown that African Universities have intensified efforts to create awareness about the impact of the pandemic on their institutions and those who work and live in them. Many have developed HIV/AIDS institutional policies and put in place interventions and formed partnerships to mitigate the impact of the disease, partly as a result of the AAU/WGHE interventions. It is clear that an expanded response is required for dealing with the HIV/AIDS epidemic. This calls for an integrated approach, including investigations into claims of cure using herbal medicine. AAU will continue efforts to support universities to strengthen their internal policies on HIV/AIDS, as well as to contribute to general knowledge and policies about HIV/AIDS.

Planned Activities

- Mobilizing of higher education institutional leaders and managers to address the threat of HIV/AIDS within their institutions;
- Mobilising resources to support member institutions in dealing with the impact of HIV/AIDS;
- Promoting the integration of HIV/AIDS into university curricula; and
- Networking member institutions to carry out research, documentation and sharing of good practices in HIV/AIDS prevention and mitigation.

Expected Outcomes

- Increase awareness among higher education leaders and managers, and competence in the management of HIV/AIDS;
- Integration of HIV/AIDS into the university curricula;
- Training in the use of the AAU HIV/AIDS Toolkit; and
- Documentation and dissemination of survey reports on the response and contributions of African universities to the HIV/AIDS pandemic.

SPECIAL ISSUES

ADEA/Working Group on Higher Education

The Working Group on Higher Education continues to support networking for the improvement of higher education in Africa. The networking activities include research and analysis, advocacy and capacity building on key issues affecting higher education on the African continent. During the period 2005-2009, the Working Group will intensify activities aimed at increasing its visibility. It will use workshops and conferences to strengthen links between the ADEA Working Groups, namely, Education Sector Analysis, Distance Education and Open Learning, Education and Finance, Communication for Education and Development (COMED) and Forum of African Women Educationalists (FAWE).

AAU and NEPAD

The AAU has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD). Broadly, the AAU would help the dissemination of research results on matters that fall within the main goals of NEPAD, namely,

- Eradication of widespread and severe poverty;
- Promotion of accelerated growth and sustainable development;
- Halting of the marginalisation of Africa in the globalisation process; and
- Restoration of peace, security and stability.

² *Challenging the Challenger* is available at the WGHE web page of the ADEA web site at www.ADEAnet.org and AAU website at www.aau.org

Scholarships and Other Support Grants

a. The Ford Foundation's International Fellowships Programme (IFP)

The Ford Foundation's 10-year International Fellowships Programme is in its mid-term and expected to end in 2010. The AAU manages and will continue to manage this fellowships programme for West Africa, covering Ghana, Nigeria and Senegal during the duration of this Core Programme. These fellowships are geared towards graduate studies in development-oriented programmes and are tailored for students from disadvantaged background who have leadership qualities and community service experiences and commitment. It is significant that physically challenged candidates are prioritised for selection. A look at the academic reports and transcripts of the Fellows indicates that the West African IFP Fellows are excelling in their academic work.

Sixty-five percent (65%) of the West African Fellows who completed their academic programmes as of June 2004 have returned to their countries to serve their communities. A further 10% are continuing to the PhD level. This is of particular importance in the face of fears expressed by various stakeholders that Fellows will join the brain drain trend. A number of the Fellows have in addition to their degree certificates, received other awards.

b. Building on a Niche

Africa's developmental problems are myriad. Even though the continent is one of the most endowed regions of the world, it remains today the poorest continent, with not less than half of its peoples living below the poverty line on less than one US dollar a day. The continent is also the most aid-dependent, most indebted, and most marginalized in the world.

As a continental higher education institution, the AAU places a high premium on the mobility of academics among African universities. To that end, the Association intends to institute scholarship schemes and awards, with support from donor agencies and African Governments, in priority areas for the rapid development of Africa. The awards will go to brilliant and promising students pursuing postgraduate courses in both the sciences and humanities, but particularly into the following:

1. *Science and Technology*
2. *Environmental Studies*
3. *Agriculture*
4. *HIV/AIDS Management*
5. *Gender and Development*

The proposal is to award a total of 20 scholarships to promising students from each of the five sub-regions. While the AAU would be largely responsible for sourcing funds for the awards, sub-regional institutions of higher learning, with support from the AAU, would be involved in the selection of candidates. Monitoring of awardees' activities would be undertaken by the AAU Secretariat through these sub-regional bodies.

CORE PROGRAMME BUDGET ESTIMATES (2005 – 2009)

The major components of the sub-themes and budget estimates of the Core Programme are as follows:

<u>SUB-THEME</u>	<u>BUDGET (US\$)</u>
<i>Institutional collaboration in higher education</i>	5,300,000
• <i>Study Programme on Higher Education Management in Africa</i>	1,200,000
• <i>Networking in Graduate Training and Research</i>	1,200,000
• <i>Quality Assurance</i>	1,000,000
• <i>Gender Mainstreaming in Higher Education</i>	900,000
• <i>Staff Exchange and Academic Mobility</i>	500,000
• <i>Workshops, Seminars and Conferences</i>	500,000
 <i>Leadership and management</i>	 1,800,000
• <i>Capacity Building in Leadership and Management</i>	1,000,000
• <i>Leadership and Management Research</i>	500,000
• <i>Workshops, Seminars and Conferences</i>	300,000
 <i>Information and Communication Technologies</i>	 3,900,000
• <i>ICT Curriculum Development</i>	500,000
• <i>Networking of African HEIs - Bandwidth Programme</i>	1,500,000
• <i>Improving Access to African Scholarly Work</i>	1,200,000
• <i>Roster of African Professionals</i>	300,000
• <i>Workshops, Seminars and Conferences</i>	400,000
 <i>Commissioned Research</i>	 2,000,000
• <i>HIV/AIDS Management</i>	1,200,000
• <i>Workshops, Seminars and Conferences</i>	500,000
• <i>GATS & Higher Education</i>	300,000
 <i>Special Issues</i>	 3,200,000³
• <i>ADEA/WGHE</i>	---
• <i>AAU and NEPAD</i>	200,000
• <i>Graduate Scholarships (Ford Foundation)</i>	2,000,000
• <i>Scholarships and Other Support Grants</i>	1,000,000
 <i>Sub-Total</i>	 16,200,000
<i>Monitoring and Evaluation (1% of total budget)</i>	162,000

³ ADEA's budget is not yet known.

AAU Endowment Fund

4,000,000

Grand Total

20,362,000