



The Shifting Landscape of Development Cooperation: Repercussions for African Higher Education

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Abstract

The higher education system in Africa is typically an amalgam of European and American higher education models. The system was built through the conception, direct intervention and support of the colonialists before other important players, such as private foundations, joined in. By design, African higher education was expected to become part of the global higher education system – albeit marginally – and without the consent of Africans. Nevertheless, the dynamics of development cooperation has been evolving with the emergence of new global players, the diminishing influence of the North, and sustained economic growth in Africa. This article (i) explores prospects and challenges based on recent developments and past experience; (ii) analyses current and emerging global trends; and (iii) concludes, with views, on what Africa ought to be doing by way of higher education partnerships.

Key words: Africa, higher education, development cooperation, aid, partnership, funding.

Résumé

Le système de l'enseignement supérieur en Afrique est généralement un amalgame des modèles de l'enseignement supérieur européen et américain. Le système fut construit à travers la conception, l'intervention directe et l'appui des colonialistes avant que d'autres acteurs importants, comme les fondations privées, ne s'y joignent. De par sa conception, il était attendu qu'un système d'enseignement supérieur africain qu'il devienne partie du système

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mondial d'enseignement supérieur – quoique marginalement – et sans le consentement des africains. Néanmoins, la dynamique de coopération au développement a évolué avec l'émergence de nouveaux acteurs mondiaux, la diminution de l'influence du Nord et la croissance économique soutenue en Afrique. Cet article explore d'abord les perspectives et défis sur la base des développements récents et de l'expérience passée ; ensuite analyse les tendances mondiales actuelles et émergentes ; et enfin conclut, avec des points de vue, sur ce que l'Afrique devrait faire comme partenariats en matière d'enseignement supérieur.

Mots clés : Afrique, enseignement supérieur, coopération au développement, aide, partenariat, financement.

Introduction

With the declaration of independence and the consequent need to develop an indigenous manpower base to run their new administrations, African countries placed higher education at the top of their development agenda. For this reason, higher education institutions were generously funded ; classrooms, laboratories and dormitories were well furnished ; academics were well paid, and students received attractive allowances. Also, support from external sources – bilateral, multilateral and foundations – as well as national governments flowed in steadily during this period which could be termed the 'golden era' of African higher education (Ajayi and Goma 1996; Yusufu 1973).

Nevertheless, this enthusiastic support did not last long as the continent soon became engulfed in the political, economic and social upheavals of the 1970s and 1980s. Critical voices from higher institutions challenging the political leaders triggered negative reactions from governments which began to portray universities as irrelevant ivory towers whose costs were not being fully justified – a veiled reference to the flawed higher education policy discourse at the time (Leslie 1990; Samoff and Carrol 2004; Bloom, et al 2004, 2014). This development marked one of the lowest points in the history of African higher education.

The higher education system in Africa was built through the conception and direct intervention and support of the colonial authorities. It was after the system had been established that private foundations, such as the Carnegie Corporation, Ford and Rockefeller came in to play a direct role in shaping its development. Furthermore, development cooperation agencies from other countries, such as Canada, Denmark, Germany, Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, and the United States, among others, have also played an active role

in the development of higher education in Africa (Ajayi et al 1996; Teferra 2009). But the dynamics of development cooperation in higher education has not remained static. It has been evolving with the emergence of new global players following the diminishing influence of the 'historical' partners and the sustained economic growth in the continent.

This paper analyses global trends in development cooperation, particularly as they affect higher education in Sub-Saharan Africa. It further explores the scope and prospect of these cooperation dynamics from the past without delving into the complex discourses of development cooperation theories. The paper deliberately uses 'development cooperation' instead of 'aid' to describe this relationship.

The Molding Phase of 'Development Cooperation'

Higher education in Africa as we now know it is the product of a multitude of external players, organisations and nation states. The colonial powers, in particular, played a major role in formulating, funding and implementing policies they deemed appropriate for the cultural, social, economic and political vision of the system at the time. As Ashby (1966) notes, the British established higher education in a number of its African territories after the Second World War. Within a short period of time, a number of higher education institutions were established through the British government finance – facilitated by the Colonial Development and Welfare Acts of 1940 and 1950 – which made possible, what is largely known as the Asquith Colleges. These included of University College of Ghana, Legon (October 1948); University College, Ibadan (November 1948); Khartoum University College (1949); Makerere College (upgraded in 1949); and the University College of Sierra Leone (1960). Others included the Royal Technical College, Nairobi (founded in 1951); and the segregated University College of Salisbury (established in 1953, but upgraded two years later to become the University College of Rhodesia and Nyasaland) (Lulat 2003).

In Ghana, the University College – founded in 1948 as the University College of the Gold Coast on the recommendation of the Asquith Commission on Higher Education in the then British colonies – became an affiliate of the Inter-Universities Council, set up by the British Government to advise it on all matters relating to higher education in the new British Colonies. The Inter-Universities Council served the Gold Coast in advisory capacity, but the arrangements also enabled the College to seek support of the Council in obtaining funds from the United Kingdom Government (Acquah and Budu, forthcoming).

In Kenya, the first institute to provide higher education outside Makerere College in Uganda was the Royal Technical College of East Africa, established in 1956. It was founded through the Colonial Development and Welfare Fund with the support of the Asian community. It became the University College, Nairobi, in 1963, and together with the University College, Dar es Salaam, and Makerere University College, they formed the Federal University of East Africa. By 1960, running the Royal Technical College would entail a capital expenditure of £1.8 million and a recurrent expenditure of £500,000 per annum. The British Government provided £800,000 for capital expenditure, while the American Government and other bodies also provided funds, enabling the university college to be duly established in June 1961, with its name changed to the Royal College, Nairobi (Sifuna, forthcoming).

In an attempt to build a good foundation for the modernisation of Ethiopia by expanding the higher education system, Emperor Haile Selassie's government invited a team of educators from the United States to conduct a survey and help establish a full-blown university (Tadesse 1988 in Ayalew, forthcoming). A team of educators from the University of Utah conducted the survey with the financial support of the United States government. The funding support was tied to the development of infrastructure and recruitment of staff from the US to administer the university (Ayalew, forthcoming).

In Francophone Africa, there was a near total absence of higher education until the 1950s. Thereafter the French became more cognizant of their higher education responsibilities in the colonies, prompted in part by the increasing cost of educating Africans in French universities and in part out of a conscious effort to do more to culturally bind the colonies to the metropole in preparation for the eventuality of some form of political autonomy in the colonies (Lulat 2003). France not only took care of staffing the institutions, but was also responsible for their financing, at least into the early part of the post-independence period (Ajayi, Goma, and Johnson 1996). The Portuguese have played quite a limited role in shaping higher education in its African colonies but left their indelible mark on the language of instruction.

In summary, modern day African higher education was conceived and exclusively molded by bodies of external forces – predominantly respective colonial elements – and consolidated through their funding. The rationale of funding the sector, however, is guided by a plethora of factors, but wholly in the interest of the colonial masters. [For a more in depth analysis, consult Lulat, 2003, 2005; Ajayi, Goma and Johnson, 1996.]

To be sure, however, higher education has been in existence in Africa since time immemorial: from Timbuktu in the west (Bagayoko and Diawara 2003), Egypt's Al-Azhar in the North (Said 2003), and monasteries of Ethiopia in

the East (Sergew and Tamerat 1970). The latter two have been in existence for thousands of years now. In fact, Al-Azhar is the oldest university in the world, having been established in the 970s. The aim of this paper is not to dwell on the history of higher education in Africa but to marshal unassailable evidence that while modern higher education in Africa is a product of colonial experience, knowledge citadels of higher learning have existed in Africa long before colonialism. The thesis of this paper, therefore, is that education in its 'highest form' – to make a distinction from 'higher education' – existed in the continent before the Europeans conquered the region.

Theoretical Framework

Donor agencies' commitment to the funding of higher education in Africa appears to have waned over time. The trend appears to be closely linked with the interplay of development ideology, the perceived role of education within that ideology, and the geopolitical position of Africa. Each of these forces has changed with the shifting political and economic climate of the world economy. As such, the reason why donor funding shrunk at some periods and increased at other times needs to be understood within the framework of evolving development ideology (Ilon 2003).

In examining development cooperation, it is instructive to recognise the different theories that shape the discourse. These include the Dependency Theory, Development Theory, World System Theory, and African Renaissance Theory – all of which could be invoked to interrogate the role of development cooperation in the funding of higher education in Africa. Furthermore, and more closely, the centre-periphery paradigm and the recent aid-effectiveness modalities could also be used to establish the argument. The paper is, however, consciously limited to examining the scope and practice of development cooperation in the funding of higher education in Africa without going into the respective development theories and paradigms.

Existing Higher Education Initiatives in Africa

It was once thought that Africa would become less attractive to the rest of the world with the cessation of hostilities between the Cold War rivals (Teferra 2012). Twenty years after, that prediction has proved to be wrong as economic and geopolitical realities have changed so significantly that they prompt the re-engagement of both 'historical' and emerging powers with Africa. As part of that development, higher education in Africa has also re-ignited interest globally. Several fruitful partnerships have been forged on higher education in Africa, including the ones briefly discussed below.

Africa-US Higher Education Initiative

In July 2007, a group of universities based in the United States and Africa met to launch a partnership to help strengthen the capacity of higher education in the region. Towards this end, the 2010 US Omnibus Appropriations bill committed US\$15 million to the partnership (<http://www.aplu.org>).

Canada-Africa Higher Education Partnership

The Association of African Universities and the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada (AUCC) also launched an initiative called 'Strengthening Higher Education Stakeholder Relations in Africa'. Its three components included strengthening African university outreach, maintaining strong university-industry linkages, and, strengthening AAU stakeholder relations working in partnership with AUCC (<http://www.aau.org>).

Southern Africa-Nordic Partnerships (SANORD)

University cooperation between Southern African countries and Nordic university cooperation, known as SANORD, is a partnership of 25 research-led higher education institutions from Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, and Sweden, and institutions in Malawi, South Africa and Zambia. SANORD aims to advance multilateral academic collaboration between institutions in the Nordic countries and the Southern African region (<http://sanord.uwc.ac.za/>).

European Commission-African Union Commission Partnership in Higher Education

The European Commission and African Union Commission are partnering in different schemes to vitalise the higher education sector in Africa. These include the launching of Intra-ACP Mobility Scheme, what is now called the Nyerere Consolidated Scholarship Programme, Harmonisation and Tuning Project, and the Pan-African University Initiative (AUC 2013).

Scandinavian Partnerships

Partnerships between Scandinavian and African universities are probably one of the most sustained and impressive cooperation initiatives so far. Norway and Sweden, in particular, have committed a large sum of funds on higher education development in the continent for several decades, even when support for higher education in Africa had been at its lowest.

Germany's DAAD

For more than two decades, DAAD has been a significant player in university partnerships in Africa. Currently more than 35 partnerships are reported. Ad-

ditionally, five new African centres of excellence and five new international centres of excellence with participation from African Universities are supported (<http://www.daad.de>). Germany, through one of its other organisations, called GIZ, has been actively involved in the Pan African University working closely with the African Union Commission.

Other ‘Historical’ Partners

Guided by a variety of objectives and interests, past and present, university cooperation between Africa and its other ‘historical’ partners abound. These include the Austrian Partnership Programme in Higher Education and Research for Development (APPEAR), University Commission for Cooperation with Developing Countries (CUD, Belgium), Irish African Partnership for Research Capacity Building (IAP), Netherlands Organisation for International Cooperation in Higher Education (NUFFIC) and United Kingdom’s Education Partnerships for Africa (EPA).

The World Bank

The World Bank, probably the most prominent player in the African higher education scene, is renowned not for its resources but its flawed African higher education policies. In complete contrast to its earlier position, it is currently involved in major initiatives in Africa building centres of excellence along with other credible national and regional organisations in the region. It is also financing 19 university-based centres of excellence in seven countries in West and Central Africa to the tune of US\$ 150 million (World Bank 2014a). Of recent, it has embarked on a new initiative called Partnership for Skills in the Applied Sciences, Engineering and Technology (PASET), and expanding the centre of excellence initiative to the rest of Africa (World Bank 2014b).

Japan

Japan is taking a strong interest in strengthening its strategic partnership with African countries driven, as some say, by the advanced strides that China and India have made in that respect. The Fifth Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD V), the largest international conference ever hosted by Japan, designed a framework for contribution to the growth of Africa, through the Official Development Assistance among other initiatives. The Pan African University support to the East African hub in Kenya is also part of this arrangement (JICA document 2013).

The Foundations: The Powerful Interlocutors

The most far-reaching and influential international education programmes after World War II were organised by three key institutions, namely, the Carnegie

Corporation, Ford Foundation and Rockefeller Foundation. The latter two have also been associated with a worldwide network of agricultural experiment stations, ranging from the Philippines to Mexico, Nigeria, and India. By the 1950s, the personnel of the three foundations had concluded that an important obstacle to Third World development was the dearth of trained indigenous leadership. These organisations subscribed to the idea that nation building in Africa, Asia, and Latin America required indigenous institutions, strengthening post-secondary education in a limited number of domestic universities in a few developing nations (Berman 1991: 259).

As the consensus for revitalising higher education was unequivocally made in the aftermath of the rate-of-return debacle – concurrent with major international players recognising its critical role for socio-economic development (Bloom et al. 2006), resources for – and sentiments – about higher education development in the continent have grown. One of the most visible initiatives had been the Partnership for Higher Education in Africa – a consortium of four, and later seven, US-based foundations including Carnegie Corporation, Ford, Hewlett, Kresge, MacArthur, Mellon and Rockefeller Foundations. From 2000-2010, the Partnership provided US\$ 440 million to nine African countries, namely, Egypt, Ghana, Kenya, Madagascar, Mozambique, Nigeria, South Africa, Tanzania and Uganda (PHEA 2010). This is probably the most significant and visible partnership support ever made to the African higher education sector and is somewhat comparable to the effort made soon after independence, when establishing national higher education systems was top priority (Teferra 2009). Whereas the partnership has ended, the impact of that outstanding collective support has been remarkable.

Despite the end of the partnership, some of the Foundations have continued in their individual pursuit of supporting higher education, including intervening in some critical African higher education issues. For example, the Carnegie Corporation has continued to play a visible role in supporting policy dialogue in doctoral education, management and governance in higher education, quality assurance, mobility of the intellectual diaspora, and higher education research and communication in Africa. It recently supported the African Higher Education Summit held in Dakar in March 2015. With a different strategic vision for the last half-decade, the Ford Foundation has been largely absent from the prominent position it once occupied in these areas; but a different course of action is anticipated with the new leadership.

The Eastern Connection: The Fading Track

The literature on partnership between countries in the former Eastern-bloc and Africa regarding the development of higher education is largely non-existence.

And yet, not only did hundreds of thousands of African students and academics travel to ‘freely’ study in the institutions of these countries, most typically, in the former satellite states of the former Soviet Union, such as Cuba, former German Democratic Republic (GDR), Hungary, Poland and Yugoslavia. But also many from these countries travelled to the region, as part of the solidarity brinkmanship of the time through the support of the respective countries in the East.

The Former Soviet Union

Between 1960 and 1961, the number of African students in the former Union of Soviet Socialist Republic (USSR) increased almost ten-fold: from 72 to over 500, eventually reaching some 5,000 by the end of the decade. By 1990, on the eve of dissolution of the USSR, the number of Africans in the country had risen to 30,000, thus representing about 24 per cent of the total body of foreign students (Gribanova and Zherlitsyna in Matusевич 2009). Khanga (in Fikes and Lemon 1992), however, puts the numbers at about 40,000 (1992: 22).

In a particular example, one of the stated objectives of the Peoples’ Friendship University of Russia – an educational and research institution in Moscow founded in 1960 as Peoples’ Friendship University at the height of the Cold War – was to help nations of the Third World, mainly in Asia, Africa and South America, by providing higher education and professional training. The USSR founded the Peoples’ Friendship University in 1960, which it later named after Patrice Lumumba – one of the icons of the African peoples’ struggle for independence – following his assassination. In the waxing and waning of contemporary politics, the University’s name changed again to the Peoples’ Friendship University of Russia on 5 February 1992 (PFUR 2013) with the cooling off relationship between Russia and its satellite countries in Africa.

In its intense desire to expand its global influence, the former Soviet Union had targeted higher education in Africa among the key sectors its concurrent strategies were meant to assist. It offered large-scale full scholarships to students from Africa, Asia and the Middle East and made a robust effort that indoctrinated many of them with communist ideology (Staar in Bervotes 2011).

Former German Democratic Republic

A large number of African students had also been sent to study in the former German Democratic Republic (GDR) as part of the ‘economic socialist assistance’, a preferred term than “aid” (Howell 1994). With a preference for countries with a socialist orientation and national liberation movements, the first students came from developing countries of North Korea and Nigeria. According to Heilmann, thereafter, numbers increased rapidly, rising from 5,000 in 1970 to 12,400 in 1989 by which time over 45,000 had completed

their studies (see Howell 1994). For example, Mozambican students accounted for 18 per cent of all African students in the GDR in 1987. The 'economic socialist assistance', which amounted Deutsche Marks 2.2 billion in 1988, committed a total of Deutsche Marks 114 million to 'training in higher and technical colleges' (Evangelische Akademie in Howell 1994).

In terms of academics, over 25,100 experts were sent through scientific-technical and cultural co-operation agreements between 1970 and 1988 to work in developing countries as government advisers, economists, doctors, paramedics, engineers, and teachers. Again, the countries to which experts were sent, such as Afghanistan, Angola, Ethiopia, Mozambique, and North Yemen, reflected the underlying ideological and political interests (Howell 1994). By 1988, the total amount committed to the deployment of these 'experts' abroad stood at Deutsche Marks 91 million.

As the geo-political dynamics brought the Cold War era to an end followed by the implosion of the Eastern bloc, whatever existing higher education relationships with Africa simply ended. It took more than two decades before any semblance of partnership with these countries could be established. It was spearheaded by Russia – the core power in the bloc.

The exception to the rule, in some aspects, however, was Cuba whose support continued despite the fall of communism. In its ongoing scholarships assistance programme, for instance, 'close to 1,400 South African students [were recently] studying medicine at Cuban universities, and 323 of the graduates from the Cuban programmes worked as medical doctors in various South African hospitals'. In 2012, the South Africa-Cuba Extended Cooperation Agreement in the fields of health and medical sciences was signed to increase the number of South African medical students studying in Cuba and this occurred in 2010 when South Africa announced the cancellation of Cuba's more than Rand 1 billion (USD 100 million) debt (Open Society 2013).

To be sure, the number of students who studied in the eastern satellite states, such as Bulgaria, former Czechoslovakia, and Poland were in thousands. While much of the effort by the East had largely been focused on attracting students – and, in the process, training and indoctrinating them – it lacked the deep engagements of the West in establishing, running and funding higher education in the continent.

Despite its massive support in training a large number of the African intelligentsia and also fully paying for it, the Eastern bloc did not successfully impact the African higher education culture in any meaningful way. It should be noted, however, that many veterans of the independence struggles predominantly supported by the East, still preside over governments with considerable political power – but their clout in higher education is limited.

The Emerging Players

Emerging economic and political power houses, such as Brazil, China, India and South Korea, are increasingly engaging in a host of university development support as well as capacity building efforts in Africa.

China

Much has been written about China and its interest in Africa. But most of the discussion revolves around material extraction, construction, business, finance, and diplomacy. Serious engagements in higher education have been flying under the radar. Perhaps the most influential and certainly least examined initiative is the Chinese government's mammoth scholarship programme, which has grown exponentially over the last decade (Allison 2013). Currently, there are an estimated 12,000 Chinese-government supported and 18,000 self-supporting African students in the country. This is an astonishingly high figure, dwarfing scholarship programs offered to African students by any other country. Furthermore, the central government is not the only driver of the scholarship program; local governments and companies are increasingly expanding their ties with Africa through scholarships.

One increasingly prominent strategy of extending 'soft' Chinese power is the expansion of the Confucius Institutes. As of September 2013, an estimated 435 Confucius Institutes and 644 Confucius Classrooms operate around the world (Confucius Institute 2013). In Africa, there are now around 30 such institutes located in the University of Cairo in the North, University of Ghana in the West, the University of Yaounde II in the Centre, the University of Dar es Salaam in the East and the Rhodes University in the South. Confucius Institutes operate in cooperation with local affiliate colleges and universities around the world and aim to establish 1,000 such Institutes by 2020 (Xinhua 2006.).

Confucius Institutes are sometimes compared to language and culture promotion organisations such as Britain's British Council, France's Alliance Française and Germany's Goethe-Institut. Unlike these organisations, however, Confucius Institutes, which some critics call 'a propaganda arm wrapped in culture and language education' (Bernstein 2014) do not claim to be independent from their government (Confucius Institute 2013).

In particular, the third Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) summit contained Beijing's pledge to build educational infrastructure projects in Africa such as the Ethio-China Polytechnic in Addis Ababa and the University of Science and Technology in Malawi. The fourth and fifth FOCAC plans of action, issued in 2009 and 2012, respectively, pledges to provide 100 African postdoctoral fellowships in realisation of China-Africa Technology Partnership Programme, the China-Africa Research and Exchange Programme, and

the China-Africa Think Tank Forum (Obamba 2013). China has also provided support to the Pan-African University.

In the face of massive scholarship schemes supported by the federal and local governments, fast-expanding Confucius Institutes, and the prevailing instruments of the FOCAC, the long-term significance of these efforts – on cultural, educational, economic and political relationship between China and Africa – are not that hard to imagine.

India

The Second Africa-India Forum Summit in 2011, held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, under the banner of ‘Enhancing Partnership: Shared Vision’ laid the foundations for a stronger partnership with the adoption of two key documents: the Addis Ababa Declaration and the Africa-India Framework for Enhanced Cooperation. The Framework and its Plan of Action adopted in 2010 were to give additional substance to the partnership with specific agreements to cooperate in a host of areas: from science and technology to research and development, from infrastructure to capacity building, and from culture and media to energy and environment (AAU, 2011).

It was at this summit that Manmohan Singh, the former Prime Minister of India, announced a mammoth US\$ 5 billion credit to Africa for various development projects, reflecting India’s growing ties with the resource-rich continent. Singh also declared an additional US\$ 700 million package to establish new institutions and training programmes across the continent, dwarfing any of the ‘historical’ players. Singh announced plans to establish an India-Africa Virtual University for African students to study in Indian institutions. He further proposed 10,000 new scholarships under this proposed University for African students on its establishment. It was at this summit that he expressed support to Life and Earth Sciences hub of the Pan-African University (PAU) spearheaded by the African Union Commission (India Post 2011) though reports indicate that India’s contributions as the so-called ‘Lead Thematic Partner’ has so far been absent. Just recently, India-Africa Partnership in Agriculture (IAPA) – consisting of Indian Council of Agriculture Research (ICAR), International Crops Research Institute for Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT) and International Agriculture Consulting Group (ICAG) – was launched in 2013 (Shrivastava 2013).

South Korea

The development cooperation of South Korea with Africa has been largely overshadowed by the dominance of China and India in Africa. But, of recent, it has increasingly become more visible. According to Kim (2013), South Korea has three key motives for establishing development cooperation with

Africa. First is economic interest, namely, the desire to diversify and secure raw materials and resource supplies and expand its export markets. Second, it seeks political influence in Africa through diplomacy. The third motivation combines the first two motivations and relates to the more recent issue of the role of emerging actors in development cooperation. Korea promotes its global standing and exerts its 'soft power' as a bridge between developing and developed countries through the provision of Overseas Development Assistance (ODA) and as an OECD-DAC (Development Assistance Committee) member. In 2011, Korea International Cooperation Agency's (KOICA) grants to Africa totalled US\$65.6 million, or 16.1 per cent of Korea's total ODA. In terms of sector expenditure, KOICA spent the largest share of its grants on education, followed by public administration, fishery and forestry, agriculture and health.

In February 2012, the Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA) held its 2012 Triennale in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, with a dedicated Korea-Africa Day that discussed extensively the future cooperation prospects between South Korea and Africa in education, training and research (ADEA 2012). The event helped to showcase the economic progress of the country and prospected the partnership potential of South Korea in the development of Africa – which historically had comparable economic status some 50 years ago. A large Korean delegation attended this meeting, which attracted several heads of state and other dignitaries. As a manifestation of the continued relationship, South Korea, in collaboration with other organisations, such as ADEA and AfDB, grants awards to African entities in education.

Brazil

In 2013, Brazil launched a major higher education cooperation initiative with Portuguese-speaking Africa called, Africa-Brazil Higher Education Programme. Under the initiative, educators and researchers from 20 Brazilian centres of higher education provide services in five Portuguese-speaking African countries of Angola, Cape Verde, Equatorial Guinea, Mozambique and São Tomé and Príncipe. The University of São Paulo is intended to offer a Master's degree in education for Angolans, while the federal centre of higher studies in Rio Grande do Sul participate in implementing the first course in agronomy at the University of Cape Verde.

The collaborative plan also includes awarding scholarships to African students from Portuguese-speaking nations to study in Brazilian higher institutions, according to a report titled *Brazil in Africa: Ambitions and Achievements of an Emerging Regional Power in the Political and Economic Sector*. The report also indicated that Brazil recently inaugurated a university in Africa, the International Afro-Brazilian Lusophone University – *Universidade Federal*

da Integração Luso-Afro-Brasileira, or UNILAB, which was expected to admit half of 5,000 students from Africa by 2014 (Sawahel 2013).

Brazil is not simply working with African countries within the sphere of the language divide. It is already in agreement with South Africa in a high-level human resource development, competitive research linkages and the internationalisation of the research platform. The agreement follows within the context of strong binational engagements between South Africa and Brazil (NRF 2013).

In effect, the extent of commitment and magnitude of engagement of the new and emerging development cooperation players are considerable – even unparalleled in some cases. The role, implications and significance of these players are yet to fully unravel in the higher education sector largely because of the language divide and also the general perceptions of these countries in terms of their status and hierarchy in the knowledge domain.

Turkey

Turkey is slowly in moving as a player in African higher education specifically in the Arab and Muslim countries. A cooperation plan was agreed at the First Turkish-Arab Congress on Higher Education held in Istanbul in mid-2014 which includes setting up an Arab Turkish universities network, mutual recognition of degrees and enhanced student and staff mobility. The plan also focuses on sharing information about trends and ways to strengthen higher education, and building cooperation between universities in Turkey and the Arab world's 22 states, which include eight countries in Africa, six in the Arabian Gulf and eight in Asia (Sawahel 2014).

Discussion

The Motives, the Regimes and the Players

The motives behind external support for higher education in Africa – either in the guise of aid, development cooperation or economic socialist assistance – are numerous, though they tend to be generally similar. When the colonialists saw the need for higher education in Africa, they established a number of institutions which they cast against theirs in the metropole. While they had their deep and strategic interests in molding the education system, it should be stated that any divergence from what was an established practice was not an alternative choice even by colonial entities themselves (Ajayi et al. 1996). To be sure, however, the central intention of the colonialists was not only to cultivate the present but also make sure that the future institutions and their intelligentsia would continue to operate within the general sphere and influence of the colonists.

Following independence, virtually all the colonial subjects remained within that very social, economic, cultural, language and educational spheres of the former colonial powers. To ensure that continuity, the former colonial powers continued their support using a host of ‘soft power’ avenues, including higher education.

At the climax of the Cold War, the fight for the ‘hearts and minds’ of the new African intelligentsia had escalated. The strategy used to achieve that goal both by the West and East had been somewhat different. The Eastern bloc, headed by the former Soviet Union, enrolled a large number of African students in their respective countries’ universities with ‘compromised’ selection criteria of students and poor backup plan on the return of graduates back home, thereby shaping the worldview of the new generation of the intelligentsia.

The Western bloc, on its part, used three approaches to achieve the same objective. These included: (i) Providing direct scholarships as the East did, but on a highly competitive basis; (ii) Capitalising on considerable diversity of programmes and institutions in the bloc riding on dominant international languages and existing relationship; and (iii) Engaging and even dominating the research and development efforts of the universities and think tanks of target countries through the provision of grants.

Following the end of the Cold War, the East abruptly withdrew from the geopolitical and cultural scenes. With the East effectively out of the picture, the other dominant forces started creeping aggressively into each other’s areas of influence while seeking new ones. For instance, France, which had a dominant influence in West Africa for many years, began to lose some ground in the region. By 1998, the United Kingdom entered West Africa, dedicating nearly half of its education aid there (Ilon 2003: 69). Some US-based institutions have also found accommodation in these countries, to the displeasure of the French.

Ilon (2003) has identified five phases of development cooperation engagements on higher education in Africa. Among these are: human capital, structural adjustment, management and governance, poverty and markets, and the knowledge economy. In the current phase of the knowledge economy, the development cooperation dynamics in African higher education landscape has changed considerably, both quantitatively and qualitatively.

It is in this era that the adverse economic challenges coupled with global hostility have engulfed the world for nearly a decade now. These developments have had considerable impact on the dynamics of development cooperation. For instance, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) countries, the main boardroom players of development cooperation, have been hammered so hard that they had to cut their funding support to this sector considerably.

According to a 2013 survey carried out on a donors group involved in higher education funding in Africa (leading up to this study), most respondents stated that their development cooperation funds had declined. In the case of Netherlands, for instance, while its funds declined by more than 30 per cent generally, its commitment to Africa declined by between 15 and 30 per cent. Only in two countries has there been an increase by more than 15 per cent. Similarly, only a German organisation reported considerable growth: €69, 75, and 90 million for higher education development partnership in 2010, 2011, and 2012 respectively.

It thus seems, then, that the high point of development cooperation between Africa and the Northern hemisphere has come and gone. This could be attributed to a number of factors, including the following: (i) The economic decline of the North/West; (ii) The emergence of new players in the game; and also (iii) The sustained economic growth in Africa. The implications of these developments on higher education are many. Among them are: (i) A large number of scholarship opportunities were made available to African students in China and India; (ii) Postgraduate and research opportunities (nationally and regionally) were expanded; (iii) Higher education in the region was expanded remarkably; and (iv) A number of African countries were unable to pay the sticker price for overseas studies (Nigeria and Botswana were affected to a limited extent now).

In the past, only a few organisations like the World Bank played a central role in defining and shaping the development path of higher education in Africa – and with disastrous consequences. As Woodhall (2003) puts it, the conclusion of the ‘seriously flawed’ study in *Financing Education in Developing Countries*, which guided the World Bank policy for several decades, ‘were widely quoted and had considerable influence, not only on the World Bank lending policies but also on investment and aid strategies of other international agencies and donors’ (p. 45). It took several studies, public debates, policy documents and publications that include its own seminal work as *Constructing Knowledge Societies* (World Bank 2000, co-sponsored with UNESCO) to undo the heavy damage as well as recalibrate the mindset of political leaders who read from the old script.

The World Bank, though much diminished, still remains an important player in African higher education scene. In mid-2013, it established a centre of excellence initiative in West and Central Africa. As of recent, it has started similar centres of excellence initiative in Eastern Africa. This would be a parallel initiative to the one undertaken by the African Union Commission supported by several old and new development players, such as the European Union Commission, Germany, Japan and China.

The leverage of the World Bank on the development discourse, at least as regard higher education in Africa, seems to have diminished for a number of reasons. First, the playing field of development discourse, once dominated by the Bank – once dubbed as ‘Knowledge Bank’ by President Wolfensohn and now ‘Solutions Bank’ by Jim Yong Kim – is now claimed by many. The Bank no longer has a monopoly on higher education discourses as in the past. Second, the Bank’s credibility capital has diminished by the flawed study which is yet to be formally and explicitly acknowledged. To this day, many Vice-Chancellors recall the irresponsible statement of a bank staff at a meeting in 1986 who advised closing universities in the region and training graduates overseas (Brock-Utne 2000). Third, the increasingly assertive and powerful players in the new East – to make a distinction from Eastern bloc of the Cold War past – continue to displace the organisation considered by many as institution of the West. Fourth, the era of only a few flagship universities, where it was easier to dictate a discourse has gone with thousands of institutions – public and private – populating the African higher education landscape.

Critiques on policies, regimes, and outcomes of development cooperation abound. Development cooperation partners – as complex and diverse as they are – have, over the years, manifested different responses to these criticisms and concerns, some with considerable sensitivity, and others with minor and cosmetic adjustments, largely because the primary driver of the support they offer is not altruistic (Teferra 2009). The Paris Declaration (2005) and the Accra Accord for Action on Aid Effectiveness (2008) have become increasingly standard procedures of international development cooperation, directly and indirectly affecting the higher education landscape (OECD 2005, 2008). While the Paris and Accra Accords do not directly touch on higher education, the general framework of the accords governs issues which include ownership, sustainability, accountability, and orientation to result. But, much as Paris and Accra Accord speak to these outstanding and inherent problems, their significance – i.e., their implementation – has been so far limited (Penny and Teferra 2010).

Furthermore, many countries in the West are moving politically to the right with a propensity against development cooperation. Contrary to that, the new East is opening up a host of avenues of cooperation and partnership on the heels of a fast growing Africa – compounding the dynamics even more. It is simply a matter of time before the whole picture of development cooperation changes for good – with direct implications for higher education.

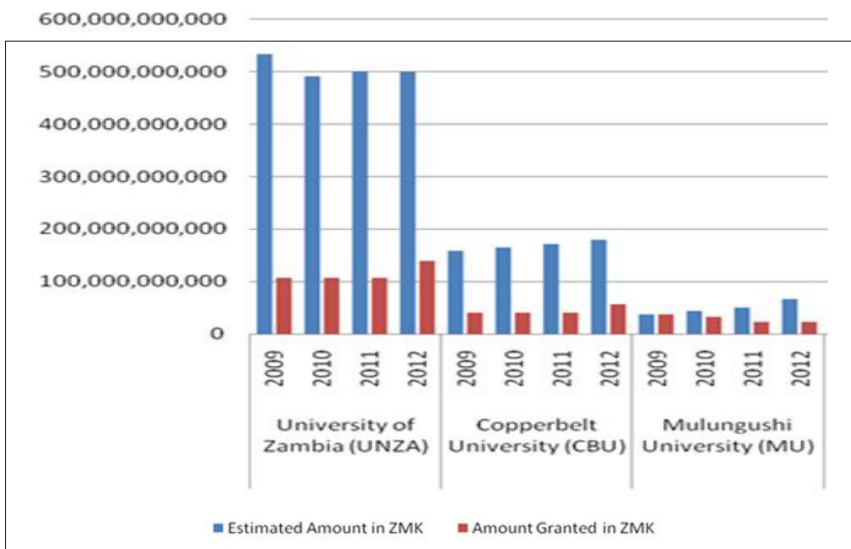
Dependency: Out of Vogue and Out of Sync

Higher education in Africa has witnessed phenomenal expansion both in the public and private spheres (Teferra 2013). This growth is not expected to

diminish in the foreseeable future due to the prevailing demography in the African continent – and the insatiable appetite for higher education. Accordingly, many governments have made huge capital outlays to fund expansion to meet the growing demand; and there are attendant overstretching of resources in many countries (Graphs 1 to 4).

Africa still depends largely on external sources to develop its capacity and excellence in research. Many institutions in Africa, including the so-called flagship ones, have virtually no resources for research. The case of Burkina Faso is most typical: more than 90 per cent of research undertaken by the University of Ouagadougou in 2003 was funded from external sources (Traore 2004).

Graph 1: Funding Patterns in Zambia Public Universities (Zambian Kwacha)*



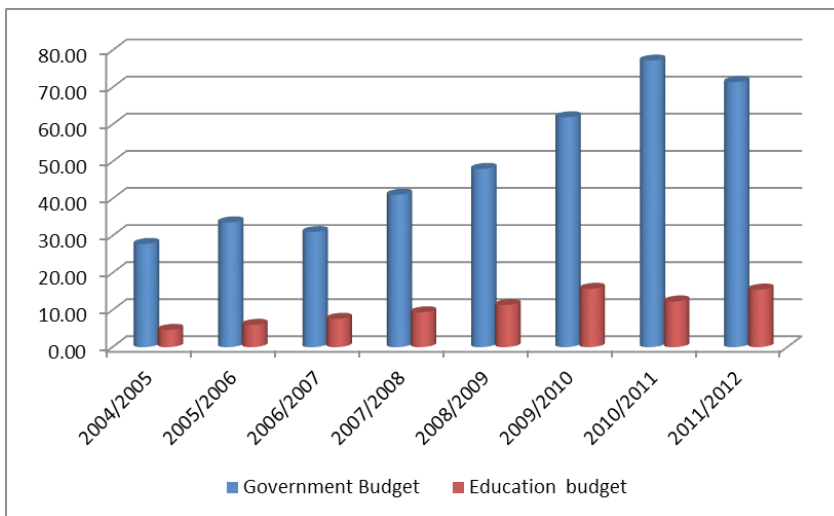
Source: Masaiti, 2013.

* 1 USD is equivalent to 6.5 Zambian Kwacha.

Many countries and institutions don't get much research outcomes for the hundreds of millions of dollars spent on higher education (Graph 2). Funding of research is pretty dismal at best, and non-existent at its worst in most cases. It is this critical gap that the development cooperation agencies come in to

fill. In Addis Ababa University, Ethiopia's flagship university with some 2,200 faculty and student population of 19,000, the research grant was miniscule compared to the total institutional budget. Of the total annual budget of US\$ 74 million earmarked for AAU in 2010/11, only US\$150,000 was allocated for research and development (Yigezu 2013) though this has been recently beefed up. With such a meagre provision, dependency on external sources for research funding remains inevitable.

Graph 2: National vs. Education Budget in Ethiopia
(in billion, Birr)*

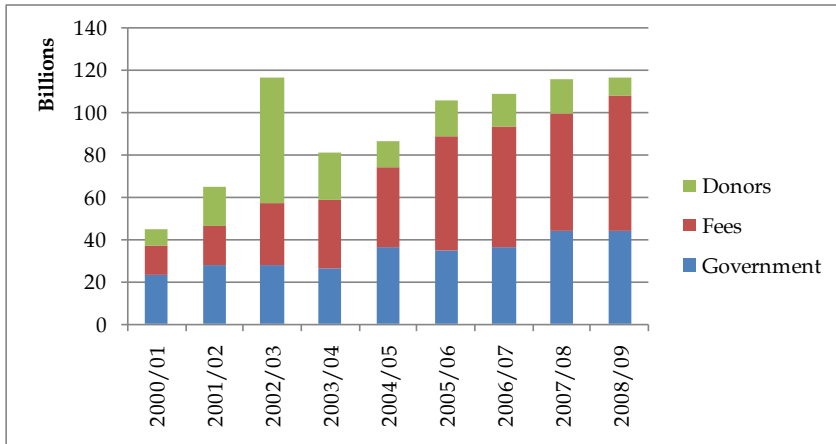


Source: Ministry of Education – Ethiopia, 2011 in Moges 2013

* 1 USD is equivalent to 20 Ethiopian Birr.

Samoff and Carrol (2003), hold that foreign aid to education in Africa is a small animal with a loud roar (Graph 3). For nearly all African countries, the major source of funds for education is the national treasury. With a few exceptions, foreign funding is a very small portion of total spending on education. And yet, new initiatives and reforms often require external support, compelling further dependence on the agenda and preferences of the funding agencies.

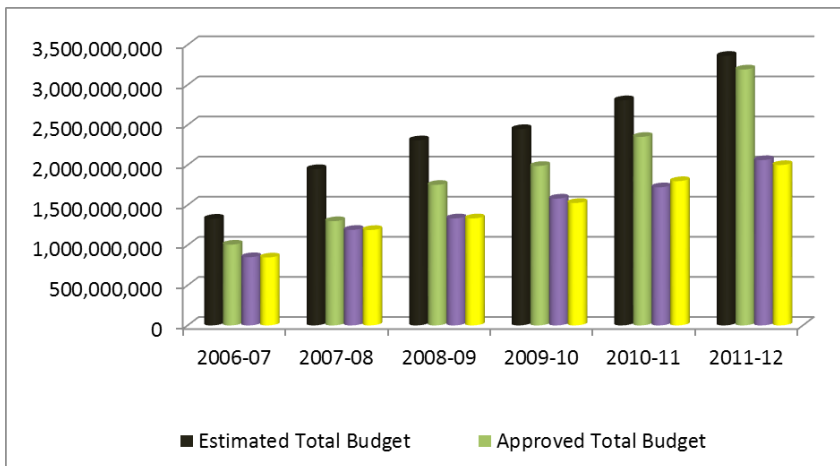
Graph 3: Makerere University Funding Sources, 2000-2009
(in billions, Ugandan Shillings)*



Source: Ssempebwa and Ssegawa 2013.

* 1 USD is equivalent to 2,670 Ugandan Shilling.

Graph 4: Funding Patterns in Malawi
(Malawian Kwacha)*



Source: Dunga 2013.

* 1 USD is equivalent to 420 Malawian Kwacha.

In the world of the twenty-first century, where every nation strives to build universities and nurture their growth – as a survival strategy and pursuant of global competitiveness – Africa paradoxically, and dangerously, continues to depend on foreign funding for research and innovation – with direct current and future implications and consequences. It is only in a few countries, such as, Botswana, Ghana, Kenya, and Nigeria, that some encouraging signs are observed.

One of the popular approaches to revitalising higher education in Africa, and particularly promote research, has been through what is now a buzz word in the sector – Partnerships: Regional Partnerships, South-South Partnerships, North-South Partnerships, North-South-South Partnerships, and North-North-South-South Partnerships. To be sure, partnerships are vital for capacity building in teaching, learning, and research. Joint research activities play an important role in fostering research capacity, nurturing research culture, pushing the frontiers of knowledge, as well as benchmarking quality. Meticulously developed long-term joint research partnerships have shown successful results. In Ethiopia, for instance, inter-university cooperation sustained through the support of the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA) and VLIR-UOS (Belgium) have shown good results: a large pool of PhDs have been produced; numerous programmes have been developed; and sustainable capacities have been put in place. The same could be said of Tanzania through the Norwegian Agency for Development (NORAD) support which provided some NOK 750 million for over four decades (Teferra 2011). Many agree that such results would have simply been impossible without the financial, logistical, and human resources made possible through long-term joint commitment.

In numerous ways, the world today is different from what it was some two decades, or even a decade, ago. In economic terms, the global centres of economic superpowers are diversifying, if not shifting. While much of the rest of the world, most particularly the developed world, has been reeling from the economic catastrophe, Africa, once dubbed as the ‘Hopeless Continent,’ according to *The Economist Magazine* (2000), now has the largest number of countries with sustained high economic growth. The magazine was forced to revise its opinion a decade later by announcing ‘The Hopeful Continent: Africa Rising – Africa’s Future Illuminating’ (*The Economist*, 2011). In the light of all these developments, Africa’s continued dependence on external development actors for its higher education – specially research – is simply unwarranted.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Development cooperation has often been the subject of passionate political and academic debate of numerous schools of thoughts. As earlier discussed, it was in the light of this long and often acrimonious debate that the Paris and the Accra Accords were adopted. Though these declarations did not have in mind university partnerships in particular, the basic tenets governing them such as predictability, mutual accountability, ownership, alignment, and harmonisation are all relevant and applicable.

The development cooperation landscape is changing with the entrance of new, more assertive and more informed players and stakeholders. Even at its altruistic best, it is in the nature of external funding to be unsustainable, unstable, and foreign. The Paris Declaration and the Accra Accord for Action on aid effectiveness were declared with the hope of purging development cooperation of these undesirable traits.

When capacity building in the context of university cooperation is often invoked, the perceptions are that the Southern partners are the predominant, if not the sole, beneficiaries of cooperation. Indeed, this perception is often internalised by the Southern partners themselves. Though the extent of the benefits to the Northern/Western partners have not been explicitly documented, their gain is rather obvious. Even without regard to the immediate and visible benefits of partnerships, the very exercise of engaging in global issues, without doubt, generates institutional and national knowledge capital for the North/West. In the current global realities, where the global is local and the local is global, the mutual benefits from such cooperation should not be underestimated or overlooked.

As the number of institutional partnerships continues to grow, their impact on institutional resources – time, funding, and infrastructure – and institutional dynamics – cohesion, complementarity, and priorities – may be considerable. This may be particularly so in countries with a few institutions that can be partnered with in the region and which tend to attract more development support.

Whereas the modality and scope of partnerships, particularly higher education partnerships, are diverse, complex, and numerous, they however, are not always successful, nor are they effective. In many cases partnerships do not simply live up to expectation for a number of reasons. These range from paltry financial resources to weak logistical support, from poor planning to substandard execution, from bad policy to cumbersome guidelines, and from unstable leadership to inconsistent follow up (Teferra 2011).

To be sure, only a few ‘altruistic entities’ operate in the development cooperation game on the account of true global citizenship. This makes it even more compelling to ensure that Africa depends on its own resources while

expanding and consolidating the partnership schemes on its own terms. The huge investment that Africa has made in higher education needs to be systematically consolidated by strategically investing in its knowledge citadels – to create, innovate and develop knowledge – so as to base its current economic success on solid ground.

Furthermore, it is imperative that the marketplace of partnerships discourse in the region is guided by well informed, responsible and pragmatic stakeholders in Africa and elsewhere. At the end, it is in the best interest of all the stakeholders, both in the North and the South, to have a sustained impact and meaningful outcome in the (re-)engagement with Africa. However, Africa has a lot more stake in it to leave it to the whims and goodwill of external partners most of whom, with or without official declaration, are not in it for purely altruistic reasons.

African higher education has been dependent on foreign sources since its inception – and that practice continues unabated despite changing geopolitical and economic realities. With the expansion of higher education and the overstretched resources of national governments, reliance on foreign sources may not unfortunately change considerably anytime soon as more students are enrolled in the countries, while the education pie is growing smaller. The wisdom, however, remains in making strategic decisions that identify the few institutions and building their capacity effectively through own and external sources.

Finally, as the aftermath of the global economic crisis on development funding has proved, Africa must depend on its own resources and its own policies to build its critical pillar of sustainable development. This is particularly imperative at a time when the region has recorded sustained economic growth while its historical development partners have suffered economic turmoil (Teferra 2013). According to *The Economist* (2011), six of the world's ten fastest-growing countries over the past decade were African. Also, in eight out of the past ten years, Africa has grown faster than East Asia, including Japan. Even allowing for the knock-on effect of the northern hemisphere's slowdown, the IMF expected Africa to grow by 6 per cent – about the same as Asia. Thus the continent must strategically convert this sustained economic success towards consolidating its knowledge institutions – the universities – by minimising its dependence on any particular development cooperation player – North or South, East or West, new or old – to ensure a more 'equitable' partnership as espoused in the Paris Declaration and Accra Accord.

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