

**PARTICIPANT REPORT**  
**HIGHER EDUCATION CONFERENCE MEETING, NAIROBI, 16-18 NOVEMBER 2011**

### **1.0. Background and Meeting Theme**

- Kenyatta University hosted the higher education conference in collaboration with International Association of Universities (IAU) from 16 to 18 November 2011.
- There were more than 200 participants at the conference from universities from all over the world, representatives of ministries of education in Africa, and representatives of international organizations and civil society organizations.
- Mr. Limbani Nsapato represented ANCEFA at the meeting as one of the voices from the civil society fraternity.
- The conference was held under the theme: *Strategies for Securing Equity in Access and Success in Higher Education.*

### **2.0. Key Events in Nairobi**

- Official welcome and opening events on 16 and 17 November 2011. Major focuses in key speeches was the equitable quality access imperative and need for countries to commit towards this goal in collaboration with various players at national, regional and international levels.
- Plenary sessions on 16<sup>th</sup> November, followed by limited participant comments:
  - a) Plenary Session I - Government policies, strategies and programs
  - b) Plenary Session II - Institutional policies and strategies
  - c) Plenary session III- Pan African University , and Higher Education Research Project
- Breakaway group discussions on 17 and 18 November on various themes including the following:
  - i. Outreach and Admission to secure equity (global success cases/lessons learned and possibly which would as well focus on issues pertaining more specifically to marginalized groups (disabled, gender, others)
  - ii. Alternative modes of access to Higher Education(Distance learning, OERs, E-learning, LLL, and more)
  - iii. Financing equity in access and success
  - iv. Support services(Academic and social support services for improved retention)
  - v. Institutional goal setting, Monitoring and Evaluation of equity in access and success
  - vi. Key actors for equity in access and success: role of faculty, staff, students and the private sector
- A round table discussion on 18 November afternoon on: Competitiveness (individual, institutional, national and international) and impact on equitable access and success in quality higher education.
- Key observations and recommendations from plenary, breakaway groups and roundtable discussions were as follows:
  - Inequity is real in access to quality education, and stakeholders should address this issue as a matter of concern.
  - Merit and university rankings should be reviewed to encompass other factors based on gender, disabilities and income factors.
  - Good practices should be promoted in expanding access to higher education especially for those that are marginalized e.g. those from poor remote areas, girls, people with disabilities or those left out on count of ethnicity, language or income.
  - Increased advocacy especially by CSOs and research institutions in ensuring expanded access and increased financing.

- Strengthened partnership and collaboration are key success factors.
- Side meeting on 17<sup>th</sup> November, 2011, with Alice Lamptey of ADEA/AU on partnership matters
- Side meeting on 18<sup>th</sup> November 2011 with Eva Egron Polak, Secretary General and Executive Director for IAU on participation of ANCEFA in the reference group of the IAU Higher Education EFA/MDG Research.
- SOTU consultation at heron hotel on collaboration around campaigns to do with implementation of the African union instruments/protocols and agreements, afternoon of 17<sup>th</sup> November 2011.

### **3.0.Meeting Outcome/s**

- Stakeholders debated and agreed on the need for stronger collaboration among countries, universities and international and local partners to strengthen advocacy for expanded equitable access to higher education, especially with attention to girls, people with disabilities and people from poor backgrounds and disadvantage groups.
- Initial verbal agreements reached for ANCEFA to work with IAU on the international research on EFA/MDGs following the meeting with Alice Lamptey, from ADEA/AU, and Eva Egron Polak, Secretary General and Executive Director for IAU. The collaboration with IAU will enhance ANCEFA partnership with AU HRST Department and ADEA on the second decade plan of action.
- Through a stakeholder meeting organized by SOTU for its partners, ANCEFA was recognized as a key partner for collaboration on future SOTU events around advocacy on African Union policy processes.

### **4.0.Follow up Issues**

- There is a weak civil society voice on higher education matters especially in relation to the campaign for equitable access to higher education in Africa. ANCEFA partnership with IAU and ADEA /AU on Higher education matters should be strengthened. Limbani needs to facilitate ANCEFA application to IAU to be in the reference group on the EFA/MDG Research.
- Support IAU in asking universities in Malawi and Zambia to be part of the IAU. Contact Vice Chancellor's of the universities in those countries to initiate dialogue with IAU.
- In addition ANCEFA MOU with AU HRST will help increased CSO participation in advocacy for Higher education on the continent.
- ANCEFA needs to follow up with SOTU leadership on the nature of collaboration on the action points on co-publication of the next SOTU report in 2012 and also the campaigns around the African Union January 2012 Summit.
- Limbani to update ANCEFA Management on the outcomes of the meeting in Nairobi within two weeks after the meeting.
- Upcoming events organized by IAU in 2012 and beyond should be noted. Frequent check on the IAU website would help.

### **5.0. Conclusion**

The meetings in Nairobi opened up opportunities for ANCEFA to collaborate with IAU on monitoring and advocacy around higher education issue in the continent especially in relation to EFA and MDGs. ANCEFA therefore needs to be strategic in making follow up on partnerships with IAU and other partners like ADEA, AU and AAU in order to well coordinate CSO voice on higher education matters and the right to education in Africa in general.

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