

**ACCESS TO SUCCESS**

Fostering trust and exchange  
between Europe and Africa

# Enhancing Europe-Africa University Partnership: A contribution to development cooperation

28 September 2010, Belgian Senate, Brussels, Belgium

# The partner consortium

- European University Association (EUA)
- Association of African Universities (AAU)
- Flemish Interuniversity Council for development cooperation (VLIR-UOS)
- Norwegian Association of Higher Education Institutions (UHR)
- European Access Network (EAN)
- European Student's Union (ESU)

# The Project in brief

**Funded by the European Commission - Erasmus Mundus**

**Action 3:**

- Enhancing the 'attractiveness' of European higher education

**Access to Success – Fostering trust and exchange between  
Africa and Europe (2008-2010)**

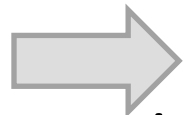
- Enhance Africa-Europe institutional cooperation and partnership
- Promote the role of universities in development
- Foster dialogue between institutions, policy makers + donor organisations

## Special project attributes

- Brought together different actors with intertwined agendas: universities, government, donors, agencies
- Examined the overlap of development agendas and HE modernisation/internationalisation
- Focussed on institutional development rather than disciplinary or sectoral capacity building: perspective of the entire institution
- Bi-regional approach (as opposed to bilateral), with a focus on regional political actors and the Africa-EU Strategic Partnership

## Project activities

- Parallel institutional surveys on access and retention issues in Europe and Africa
- Dialogue meeting of university leadership
- Student focus groups
- 3 thematic workshops: Addis Ababa, Oslo, Accra



**white paper** on supporting university partnership  
in development cooperation

# Strategic project themes

- Access and Retention
  - Universities in their social environment
  - How to respond to a growing and increasingly diverse student body
- Mobility
  - Inter- + intraregional academic mobility: prospects for regional HE integration
  - Brain drain: realities, risks and strategies to mitigate
- Cooperation
  - Partnership models: Provision, structure and principles
  - Exchange and coordination between development actors

# Why access and retention as a starting point?

- Fostering mutual understanding of the challenging social, economic and regulatory environments in which universities operate
- A foundation for discussion capacity building partnerships
- No teacher, no learner- rather all partners are teachers and learners

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## Workshop 1 Access and Retention in Europe and Africa, Addis Ababa, 17-20 Nov 2009



## Workshop 2: Towards a coordinated vision of Europe-Africa higher education partnerships: Supporting institutional capacity building in Africa



Oslo, Norway

24-26, February, 2010

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## Workshop 3: Intra & interregional mobility



Accra, Ghana, 3-5 May,  
2010



## Some observations

- Enthusiasm from European institutions and agencies (including 'new' actors from Eastern European countries), demonstrating the demand for regional level dialogue
- A clear hole exists between regional policy processes and institutional engagement-
- University associations can be stronger partners in development policy making

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*The white paper*  
**Africa-Europe Higher Education  
Partnership for development:  
Meeting Regional and Global  
Challenges**

# Structure

1. The contribution of higher education to development and the role of universities in Africa
2. Africa-Europe university cooperation
3. Strengthening intra-African cooperation in higher education and the Africa-EU Strategic Partnership
4. The Way Ahead: An agenda for future action by actors responsible in both Africa and Europe

# Premise

- Higher education is of critical importance to the long term development of knowledge societies
- Africa and Europe need each other
- Governments, donors and universities have to reconsider their role as development actors in light of changing relationship between higher education, research, development cooperation and capacity building

## Recommendations: governments

- Invest in education holistically, across levels, with a view toward building knowledge economies
- Utilise bi-regional policy vehicles to underpin policies and programmes (Africa-EU Partnership)
- Develop concrete measures to mitigate brain drain (incentives for researchers and infrastructure, programmes for exchange and capacity building, tracking/ working with expatriated scholars)
- Collect and publicise data on HE

# Recommendations: development cooperation agencies

- Enhance concrete collaboration with other agencies and develop joint European-level projects
- Staff capacity building and leadership training are two areas where many different agencies have programmes- seek to combine forces
- Develop needs based, flexible partnership programmes (that entail mutual benefits and *reciprocity* in student/staff exchange)

# Recommendations: universities

- Integrate development cooperation into internationalisation strategies
- Consider innovative partnership models with long-term strategic perspectives (including joint-degrees) to strengthen N-S and S-S collaboration - The financial/resource challenges assumed in managing such programmes need to be addressed by funders
- Develop institutional strategies to combat brain drain and engage the diaspora

# Recommendations: university associations

- Develop dialogue platforms to engage universities in the Africa-EU Partnership and provide a stronger, regional HE stakeholder voice in this process
- Develop collaborative, bi/multi- regional projects specifically in the field of graduate/doctoral education
- Support both the internationalisation of universities and promote development cooperation as an important component

# Recommendations: EU and AU Commissions

- Clarify and promote the role HE in the Africa-EU Strategic Partnership
- Support regional HE integration in Africa through bi-regional collaboration
- Programmes should financially benefit institutions in the South and the North
- Provide and promote more opportunities for European mobility to Africa
- Support national structures for follow-up of the Arusha convention

## Key questions for discussion

- How can the EU development agenda energise the university community?
- How can universities and higher education actors be more active partners in it?
- What concrete steps can be taken to improve the flow of information and collaboration between development cooperation actors and HE actors?