North-South Experiences of Doctoral Training for Development in Africa: The Impact of Partnership

TIDI Conference
7th November 2012
Higher Education for Development in Africa

- Research and management can help address the gap between low and high income countries and reaching the MDGs

- Increase in North South research collaborations aimed at improving research capacity

- Renewed focus on Higher education for development is encouraging

- PSC 2006: strengthened institutional capacity for development research and teaching in Southern Higher Education Institutes (HEIs)
Strengthening higher education in and for Africa

- Collaborative delivery with African partners of doctoral training focussed on students based in Africa
- Raising awareness and building development skills of Ireland-based doctoral students
- Analysis, evaluation and communication managed by a new institutional platform for development
- Co-funded by Irish Aid under the Programme for Strategic Cooperation between Irish Aid and Higher Education and Research Institutes 2007-11.
Requirements for doctoral training between rich and poor countries

- Lengthy consultation
- True partnership and negotiation
- Open discussions about ownership
- Explicit capacity building element – without patronising
- ‘Parity of Esteem’ even with different levels of input/resources
- Strong focus on research utilisation
- Building in a gradient of ownership transfer

(Mac Maclachlan)
Three partnership models

- **Multilateral** – *Indigo International Doctorate in Global Health*.

- **Bilateral** – *TCD and Makerere University (Environment and Medicine)*. One co-registered doctoral student from Makerere in the field of wetlands and climate change.

- **Africa-led** – *African Economics Research Consortium (AERC)*. TCD Teaching in the CPP.

The process of delivery will not only train researchers and future research supervisors, but also directly strengthen the capacity of the participating institutions through learning-by-doing.
Map indicating Indigo participating countries

- Ireland
- UK
- Switzerland
- US
- Ethiopia
- Malawi
- Nigeria
- Uganda
Current status

- **Multilateral**
  - 12 Indigo students now registered at TCD (6 funded by Irish Aid): from Ethiopia, Malawi, Uganda, Nigerian, Finland, Sudan, Ireland, Canada and United States.

- **Bilateral**
  - One student currently in his fourth year in Makarere and visiting TCD in September.

- **AERC**
  - Two students currently in their fourth year. TCD staff contributing in the CPP
Review

- Need to understand if adopted approaches are improving capacity etc
- Mamdani 2006 suggested that interventions may be actually damaging
- A review of the three models in order to understand their strengths and weaknesses and capture lessons learnt
- Semi-structured interviews with all partners, supervisors and students in all model.

- Multilateral 37, bilateral 5, African-led 11 and 11 Externals

- SWOT Analysis
## African - Led SWOT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strengths</th>
<th>Weaknesses</th>
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| Good partnership model  
Strengthens economics training in local universities in Africa  
Contributes to capacity building and economic development in Africa  
CPP Biannual conference  
Cost effective | Funding structure  
AERC strong emphasis on the course work (CPP) and not on the overall research process  
Non Standardisation of PhD  
Lack of adequate Infrastructure |

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<th>Opportunities</th>
<th>Threats</th>
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| Unmet demand for PhD in the South due to lack of resources  
Building on collaborative networks  
Knowledge exchange | Current Financial climate  
Enabling environment  
High management costs |
## Bilateral SWOT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strengths</th>
<th>Weaknesses</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Equitable partnership structure</td>
<td>Limited capacity of the programme</td>
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<tr>
<td>Supervision Model</td>
<td>Nature, timing and planning of the sandwich programme</td>
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<td>Student Centred</td>
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<td>Cost effective and a good sandwich programme</td>
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<th>Opportunities</th>
<th>Threats</th>
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<tr>
<td>Scale up and broaden the programme</td>
<td>Small scale of the programme</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Funding</td>
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## Multilateral SWOT

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Weaknesses</th>
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<tr>
<td>Innovative nature of the programme</td>
<td>Institutional Challenges</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sandwich nature of the programme</td>
<td>Managing partners and expectations</td>
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<td>Capacity building element of the programme</td>
<td>Financial Constraints</td>
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<td>Programme design and structure</td>
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<td>Need to build health research capacity in the South</td>
<td>Funding and research infrastructure</td>
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<td>Focus on Southern led initiatives and joint partnerships</td>
<td>Building and maintaining equitable partnerships</td>
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Recommendations

- The needs, motivations, and expectations of each of the groups involved in this type of programme should be articulated and attended to from the start.

- The systems within which the programmes are being established should also be understood and articulated including constraints and resources available.

- The added value of participating in a network, particularly an international network, beyond the individual student and supervisor was emphasised by participants across all models.

- The selection of students, supervisors and research topics are crucial stages and should be considered carefully.

- The selection of junior staff members who have existing positions in Southern universities to participate in PhD programmes is aligned with core objectives of research capacity building.
Recommendations

- The objectives of the programme should help determine the degree of input individual supervisors, students and a wider advisory group should have to the topic.

- Research topics should match the particular objectives of the programme.
- Good project planning and communication is crucial to the success of the programme throughout.

- All partners should be involved in the earliest stages of planning to build the foundation for equal partnership.

- Each of the models of partnership builds capacity and is a worthwhile investment in the development of African education systems.
- Continued investment is recommended.
Thank you!