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Capacity Development in Higher Education: New Public Universities in Ethiopia

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Working Paper

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Abstract

Higher education in developing countries faces tremendous challenges. Universities are expected to contribute to social and economic development by delivering quality higher education to a fast growing number of students. This requires both quantitative and qualitative capacity development of the higher education sector in developing countries to increase enrollment rates and improve quality of educational programs and graduates. Different roadmaps exist in different countries. This paper focuses on the Ethiopian situation and aims at describing how the Ethiopian higher education system was able to realize growth and what its future ambitions are. Also, characteristics and challenges of the higher education system are included. At the university level, specific attention will be given to the 13 new public universities: illustrative case studies from three new public universities are included describing history, current situation, results achieved, ambitions and challenges.

1. **Introduction**

This paper aims to describe and illustrate capacity development in Ethiopian higher education. The paper first describes the demographic and economic context of Ethiopian higher education (HE). Next, descriptions of laws and regulations, degree structure and HE organizations present a brief overview of the Ethiopian HE system. Also, performance, ambitions and challenges at the national level are presented. This part of the paper is based on desk-research and literature review. In the second part of the paper, illustrative case studies from three new public universities are included. These are based on inputs from resource persons from the universities.

2. **Context of higher education in Ethiopia**

2.1. Demographics

Ethiopia currently has a population of about 85 million people. After Nigeria it is the second-most populist country in Sub-Saharan Africa (World Bank 2013a). The population is still growing with a rate of approximately 2 – 2.5 % per year (Wordlbank, 2013b). In 2007/2008 45% of the population was under the age of 15 years. At that time the life expectancy at birth was 46.1 years (MoE[2], 2010).

2.2. Economy

Ethiopia is one of the poorest countries in the world. The per capita income is US$ 370, compared to a regional average of US$ 1257. The government aims at reaching middle income status (current threshold: US$ 1025) over the next decade. The past years have been characterized by strong and broad based economic growth: on average 9.9% compared to the regional average of 5.4%. Both agricultural and services sectors strongly contributed to this economic growth. Performance of the manufacturing sector was relatively modest. Demand side growth was based on both private consumption and public investments (World Bank, 2013a).

Ethiopia's development strategy aims at further economic growth, at least 11% per year (World Bank, 2013a) and is characterized as Agricultural Development Led Industrialization (ADLI). As the name indicates, agriculture plays a vital role in realizing economic growth. Agriculture needs to be modernized and gain efficiency and productivity in order to ensure food security, to create employment opportunities and to enhance foreign exchange earnings (MoE, 2010). Growth in agriculture should also

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[2] Ministry of Education

promote growth of the industrial sector, specifically focused on sugar, textiles, leather products and cement (World Bank, 2013a). Along ADLI, sector specific strategies have been developed in areas such as health, ICT, population and education (MoE, 2010). These educational strategies and plans are described in subsequent Educations Sector Development Plans (ESDP). The current ESDP IV covers the period 2010/2011 – 2014/2015. Previously, ESDP III ranged from 2004/2005 – 2008/2009. Elements of both plans will be described in the paragraph on performance and ambition of higher education. The next paragraph gives a brief overview of the Ethiopian higher education system.

3. Higher education system: characteristics

3.1. Laws and regulations

From 1994 onwards a succession of new policies was designed and implemented leading to major quantitative and qualitative changes in Ethiopian higher education. In 1994, the Education and Training Policy was the first framework for systems reform and transformation. The importance of higher education for country development was stressed in this policy. In 2003 the first Higher Education Proclamation was established, followed by a new version in 2009. This new Higher Education Proclamation 650/2009 (HEP) (FDRE[3], 2009) currently functions as the legal basis for transformation of higher education (MoE, 2010) and describes issues such as

− objectives of Ethiopian higher education (see box 1),

− establishment and status of higher education institutions (HEI),

− autonomy, values and responsibilities of HEI, degree structure,

− aspects of teaching and learning (curriculum, institutional quality enhancement, academic guidance and counseling),

− research and community service,

− staff and students (rights, responsibilities, tenure, admissions),

− governance, internal structures, budget and financial management of public HEI,

− specific rules for private HEI and

− powers and duties of executive higher education organs.

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[3] Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia

Box 1 HEP objectives of higher education (FDRE, 2009)

The objectives of higher education are to
- Prepare knowledgeable, skilled and attitudinally mature graduates in numbers with demand-based proportional balance of fields and disciplines so that the country shall become internationally competitive
- Promote and enhance research focusing on knowledge and technology transfer consistent with the country's priority needs
- Ensure that education and research promote freedom of expression based on reason and rational discourse and are free from biases and prejudices
- Design and provide community and consultancy services that shall cater to the developmental needs of the country
- Ensure institutional autonomy with accountability
- Ensure the participation of key stakeholders in the governance of institutions
- Promote and uphold justice, fairness and rule of law in institutional life
- Promote democratic culture and uphold multicultural community life
- Ensure fairness in the distribution of public institutions and expand access on the basis of need and equity

3.2. Degree structure

The Ethiopian higher education degree structure uses the following degrees (FDRE, 2009; MoE, 2012):

- Bachelor degree (BA/BSc); educational programs for bachelor degrees last either three, four or five years,

- Medical Doctor (MD) or Doctor of Veterinary Medicine (DVM) degree,

- Master's degree (MA/MSc); educational programs of two years and

- Doctorate (PhD) degree.

3.3. Organizations in higher education

Responsibilities and tasks in higher education are distributed amongst the MoE and higher education institutions (HEI). The ministry is responsible for implementation of the national higher education strategy and policies. In order to be able to do so, strategic plans of public institutions have to be approved by the MoE. On the operational level, the ministry also performs the tasks of admitting and placing students (FDRE, 2009). HEI's, both public and private, are responsible for education, research and community service. The HEP (FDRE, 2009) mentions four kinds of HEI: university, university college, college or institute. Only universities undertake research; tasks of the other institutions are limited to education).

Two higher education councils or organs support the work of MoE and HEI: HERQA and HESC. HERQA (Higher Education Relevance and Quality Agency) was established in 2003. It is an autonomous legal body with the task to evaluate the quality and the relevance of all higher education, both public and private. In private higher education institutions, the agency mainly engages in accrediting programs and institutions, whereas in public institutions quality audits at institutional level are conducted. Accreditation of public institutions and their programs are currently non-existing (Adamu & Addamu,

2012; MoE, 2010). The main role of the HESC (Higher Education Strategy Centre) is to contribute to the development of higher education policy and institutions (MoE, 2010) by means of developing national strategies and long-term plans, engaging in data-collection and –analysis, conducting research on policies, practices and results, act as a resource center for reform, change and development and give advice and opinions on higher education development.

4. Higher education system: performance and ambitions

4.1. Enrollments and graduates

Especially undergraduate education, both public and private, has shown a huge expansion from slightly above 200,000 students in 2006/2007 to almost 500,000 students in 2011/2012. Figure 1 illustrates the growth in undergraduate enrollment and graduates in the last five years. In 2011/2012, 55% of the undergraduate enrolments were regular students. The other 45% consisted of students in evening, summer and distance programs. About 15% of the enrolments were in private institutions. However, for regular students only 7% enrolled in private education, while for distance education 55% of the enrolments were in private institutions. Between 25 and 30% percent of students and graduates are female (MoE, 2012).
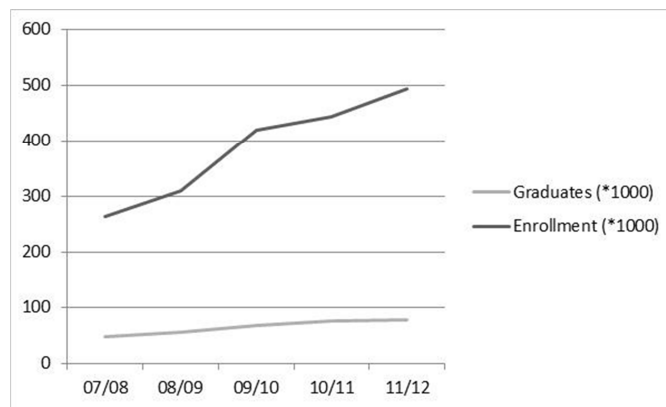

Figure 1 Undergraduate enrollment and graduates (based on MoE, 2012)

Graduate and post-graduate education (masters and PhD) is still very limited, growing from approximately 7,000 to over 25,000 students in the same period, an annual growth rate of 35%. Figure 2 illustrates the growth in graduate and post-graduate enrollment and graduation in the last five years.

Between 10 and 20% percent of students and graduates are female. Over 95% of the graduate enrollments are in public institutions. The number of PhD students (as part of the total of graduate and post-graduate students) has increased from 258 in 2007/2008 to 1849 in 2011/2012 (MoE, 2012).
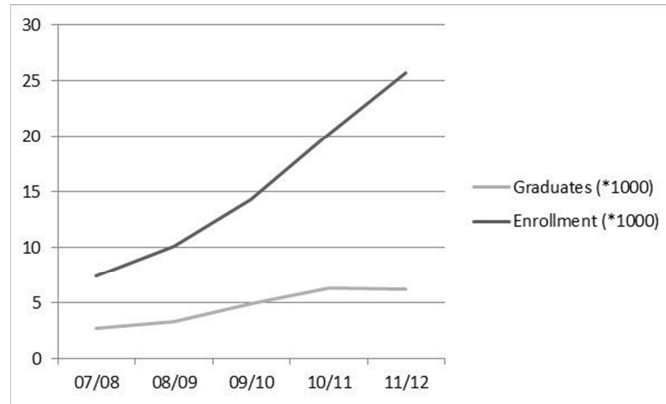

Figure 2 Post-graduate enrollment and graduates (based on MoE, 2012)

Expansion of higher education during ESDP III was realized both by expanding the existing eight universities and by erecting an additional 13 new public universities. Despite the growth in enrollments, targets of ESDP III were not completely met due to the delay of the construction of new buildings (MoE, 2010). Ashcroft & Rayner (2011:69) explain the selection of location for the new universities. The locations were "selected on the basis of a number of criteria, which largely took into account equity in geographic distribution relative to population and area, presumed size of the town in terms of population, accessibility, and the possibility of providing some services to students and staff of the institutions being established. They were not necessarily located in regions where the services would be easy and cheap to provide and where there was a ready supply of eager and well-qualified entrants and staff. In fact, some of the universities were located in towns (....) which had barely any infrastructure in terms of transport, ICT linkages, and security of water and electricity supply." At the end of ESDP III the Ethiopian higher education system faces still many challenges as illustrated in box 2.

4.2. Plans and ambitions

ESDP IV (MoE, 2010) outlines strategic objectives and key outcome targets for the period until 2014/2015. Six components have been identified. First, the enrolment capacity will be further expanded

Box 2 Main challenges at the end of ESDP III as mentioned in ESDP IV (MoE, 2010:63)

The main challenges of Ethiopian higher education are
−   Access to higher education remains relatively limited (GER[4] of 5.3% in 2008/2009) and admission targets have not been met
−   Post-graduate admissions are too low leading to serious constraints on the system in terms of local staff availability because of the rapid system expansion
−   Share of female academics remains low
−   Open and distance education remain hardly developed
−   Undergraduate enrollments evolve more rapidly than qualified teachers putting serious constraints on working conditions and the quality of education
−   Shortages of qualified staff particularly pronounced in science and technology areas where enrolments are expected to increase sharply
−   Academic staff is very young and only a small number has PhD
−   Constraints in tapping resources through the internet and sharing experiences
−   Private institutions relevance and quality is not in line with governments expectancy
−   Lack of strong technology transfer system which is based on the need of the industry
−   Higher education management and leadership system is not at the required level
−   Number of female teachers is limited

leading to a GER of 9.3% and to a further increase in enrollment in graduate and post-graduate programs, with a special emphasis on science and technology. Expansion is realized by enhancing enrollment capacity in existing universities (in particular access to programs in science and technology), by transforming four faculties of technology into institutes of technology and by constructing and equipping nine new universities. These new universities will have an enrolment capacity of 121.5000 students in 2014/2015. Figure 3 illustrates the planned and actual undergraduate enrollment expansion in public universities under ESDP IV.
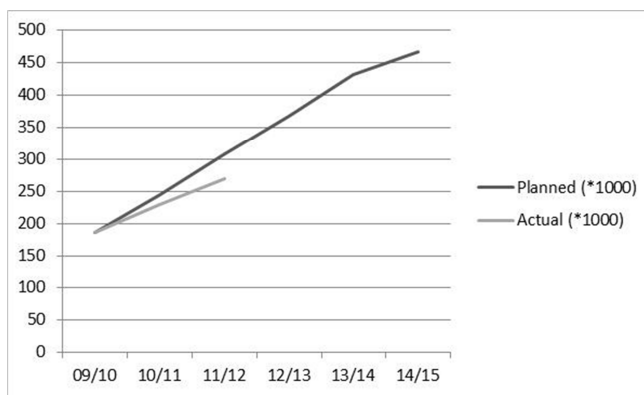
Fig 3 Planned vs actual undergraduate enrollment in public universities (based on MoE, 2010; MoE, 2012))

Second, attention will be given to human resources development. The aim is to improve student-staff ratios and to increase the share of qualified university teachers (minimum master's level). To contribute to the quality of teaching, certified training will be provided on teaching methodology for academic

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[4] Gross enrollment ratio

staff. The third component aims at improving the quality of teaching and learning in HEI. This should lead to an improvement in the graduation rate[5] from 79% to 93%. Activities foreseen at the national level are the development of a national system to assess professional competences of graduates, the establishment of a national system for identification and dissemination of best practices and the development of the higher education component of the Ethiopian Qualifications Framework. Also, universities will be equipped with libraries, laboratories, and ICT and teleconference facilities. Furthermore, at the level of HEI capacity for internal quality management needs to be established by means of installing HEI QA offices and by engaging in tracer studies and employer satisfaction surveys.

Fourth, equity remains an important objective. The number of females in leadership positions will increase, from three to 16. Also, shares of female enrolment and graduation rate will increase in the planning period. This will be realized by strengthening preferential access and by institutionalizing academic support programs for traditionally disadvantaged student groups. Also, implementation of effective gender sensitive rules and regulations and creating female-friendly environments in HEI will contribute to realizing the objective. The next component, number five, aims at increasing research and technology transfer capacity. In 2014/2015 a national research priorities framework will be available and also an evaluation system for quality and relevance of research. Also, universities and institutes of technology will be supported in establishing research policies, innovation funds, consultancy centers, technology transfer business units and incubators. Finally, the sixth component focuses on governance, management and leadership. EMIS[6] will be strengthened at the national and institutional level. Also, strategic planning and management capacity will be improved at the national and institutional level. Furthermore, mutual learning will be increased by facilitating the establishment of the Ethiopian HEI's Forum. Satisfaction level of students and academic staff with administrative services and number of approved gender sensitive strategic planning agreements will be used as indicators for monitoring.

4.3. Budgets and efficiency

The planned share of HE as part of the ESDP total budget was 24% under ESDP III and is 21.7% under ESDP IV compared to respectively 60.8% and 57.1% for general education and 8.6% and 8.0% for TVET (Technical and Vocational Education and Training) (MoE, 2010). The HE budget is divided in four categories. Salaries account for 12.1% of the budget. Other recurrent costs amount up to 43.0% of the

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[5] Graduation rate is calculated by dividing the number of graduates by the number of students admitted at the beginning of the program (similar to cohort survival rate).
[6] Educational Management Information Systems

budget. Another 1.7% is spent on sector administration and support. The largest part of the budget, 43.2% is capital spending (buildings etc. needed to realize further expansion and improvements).

It seems fair to conclude that the expansion in enrollments and graduates has contributed to an increased efficiency in Ethiopian higher education. Semella (2011) reports a decrease of annual unit costs from US$ 2434 in 2000/2001 to US$ 820 in 2004/2005. Also other authors mention similar, though slightly different, figures. Saint (2004) e.g. reports annual unit cost of US$ 860 when government provided food, lodging and health care is included and of US$ 636 when student welfare subsidies are excluded. This seems low compared to neighboring countries and to the minimum of US$ 1000 (Association of African Universities and the World Bank, 1997 and referred by Saint, 2004). Increase in efficiency is also reflected in student-staff ratio (SSR) development. In Sub-Saharan Africa on average SSR has gone up from 14.7 in 1990 to 20.6 in 2002. Previous underutilization has been replaced by overcrowding (World Bank, 2009: 89). In Ethiopia, SSR also has increased, from 13.7 in 2002/2003 to 28.0 in 2009/2009 (Semella, 2011). On the other hand, ratio of academic staff to non-academic staff seem to have developed less efficiently leaving room for improvement (Saint, 2004: 102).

5. Challenges faced by the Ethiopian higher education system

Higher education contribution to the knowledge economy requires the combined management of enrollment growth with sustainability in financing and preserving education quality (World Bank, 2009). However, in African countries, the World bank (2009: xxii) states: "too rapid an increase in enrollments, as has happened in the recent past, has eroded quality and is undermining the contribution of tertiary education to growth." This paragraph describes challenges faced by the Ethiopian public higher education sector based on literature review.

5.1. Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning practices greatly contribute to students' learning outcomes. Improvements in several aspects of teaching and learning could lead to higher quality education. First, on the educational policy level, universities seem to lack teaching-learning and assessment policies (HERQA, 2011). Second, a gap exists between learning outcomes (as realized by curriculum, pedagogy and assessment methods) and employee and stakeholder requirements. Employers emphasize need for graduates displaying self-confidence, initiative, inquisitiveness and creativity (Ashcroft, 2010). This would require active teaching

and learning methods such as cooperative learning, inquiry-based learning, discovery learning, problem-based learning and discussion methods. Also, teaching and learning should take an interdisciplinary, rather than a disciplinary perspective, should add practical learning (e.g. internships and guest lecturers) as complementary to theory and should make use of assessment through project work next to written examinations (Alemu & Schulz, 2012; Ashcroft, 2010; World Bank, 2009). However, faculty tends to rely on traditional teaching methods because of lack of time and resources to implement new forms of teaching, rigidity of time-tables, negative lecture attitudes and lack of instructional materials and administrative support (Alemu & Schulz, 2012). According to the World Bank (2009), this would require a shift in higher education institutional culture and its values and norms with regards to teaching. Also, assessment techniques as use of norm-referenced method of assessment, use of clear criteria for grades awarded and use of external examiners are not often practiced (HERQA, 2011).

5.2. Research en community service

Growth in higher education has focused on education. Community service is incorporated in universities mission statements, but not many institutions actually have understood and exploited the role of community service in teaching and learning. One of the exceptions is Jimma University, having adopted Community Based Education (Sijde, Popma & Tushune, 2012). Also, research is still at an early stage of development and staff needs to further develop its research skills. Ascroft and Rayner (2011: 235) state: "There is little quality research being undertaken in Ethiopia's universities, and consultancy and income generation through knowledge creation and transfer are at a developmental stage (although some have developed particular research strengths in areas such as medical sciences and forestry). A number of HEI intend to develop applied research and consultancy relevant to Ethiopia's development needs. (…) There does not appear at present to be any overall coordinating and overseeing body to ensure that the research undertaken by a sector as a whole is meeting the country' s developmental needs." A case study at Jimma University (Melese, 2012) confirms that university teaching staff is minimally or not engaged in research, despite statements in e.g. university regulation mentioning that every teaching staff should devote 25% of working time to conducting research.

5.3. Staffing

Shortage of qualified and motivated staff is a big challenge for Ethiopian HEI (Nega, 2012). Qualification of staff often is used as an input indicator of educational quality, assuming that higher qualified university teachers contribute to higher quality education. Ethiopian minimum requirements for staff

qualifications should be 20 % bachelor degree, 50% master degree and 30% PhD holders. Research by Semela (2011) among about 45% of all public universities found 42.3% bachelor degree holders, 36.8% master degree holders and 14.7% PhD holders. HERQA (2011) found similar percentages; respectively 50.7%, 44.1% and 13.1%. Only, Addis Ababa University was able to meet government requirements. However, despite the importance attached to staff qualification, there seems to be limited attention for faculty remuneration, working conditions and job satisfaction. This situation leads to discontent among academic staff impacting on their morale and motivation. Also, threats of brain drain are becoming real. Qualified staff not only moves to foreign institutions but also to better established and older Ethiopian universities; the so-called 'internal brain drain' (Semela, 2011). Also, Temessa (2009) signals growth has led to worsening working conditions, higher workload, extended working schedules of university staff. He argues this situation might lead to an increase of disempowering process among academic staff. However, expansion has also led to new opportunities for staff: increased job security, positions in university leadership and scholarships for PhD degrees (Temessa, 2009).

5.4. Quality assurance, external and internal

In external quality assurance of public universities, HERQA is involved. As part of its mandate, HERQA is responsible for conducting institutional audits for all public universities. Elements assessed in an institutional audit are: institutional vision, mission and educational goals, governance and management system, infrastructure and learning resources, academic and support staff, student admission and support services, program relevance and curriculum, teaching, learning and assessment, student progression and graduate outcomes, research and outreach activities, and internal quality assurance (Adamu & Addamu, 2012; Semela, 2011). The procedure, stemming from the Dutch and UK quality assurance systems, starts with institutional self-evaluation on these elements and an analysis of institutional strengths and weaknesses. A team consisting of peers from other HEI and HERQA professionals visits the HEI to verify the outcomes of the institutional self-evaluation and present recommendations for improvement (Ashcroft & Rayner, 2011; Adamu & Addamu, 2012). Some drawbacks and pitfalls in this system of external quality assurance are mentioned by several authors.

– HERQA's capacity to execute its mandate on institutional audits seems to be hindered by a shortage of suitably experienced and qualified staff both of HERQA's permanent staff and of peer reviewers (Ashcroft & Rayner, 2012). Semela (2011) indicates only nine universities have undergone an institutional audit; this is less than half of the public universities.

- Important HEI stakeholders as students and employers do not participate in the review process. Partly, this is related to the lack of organization of these stakeholders (Adamu & Addamu, 2012; Ashcroft & Rayner, 2011).
- No follow-up monitoring system exists to make sure the recommendations made are implemented. The impact of institutional audits on quality improvement in HEI therefore seems doubtful (Semela, 2011).
- HERQA's autonomy is questionable when the management board is headed by the Minister of Education (Adamu & Addamu, 2012; Ascroft & Rayner, 2011; 2012).
- Lack of HEI experience in drafting a self-evaluation (Adamu & Addamu, 2012).
- Accreditation for public HEI is not done at this moment, but could contribute to the assurance of a threshold level of quality and to fostering quality improvement in HEI. "Since accreditation requires the achievement of threshold standards of quality, it would have given public HEIs the opportunity to work hard and meet minimum standards set for accreditation" (Addamu & Adamu, 2012:845).

Next to external quality assurance, internal quality assurance systems should be in place to contribute to quality education, research and community service. The HEP (FDRE, 2009) emphasizes the role of HEI in this respect. It mentions that every HEI should put in place a reliable system of quality enhancement. However, it seems "that quality assurance is still in the early stages of development in higher education institutions" (HERQA, 2011:56). This is supported by findings of Nega (2012). Little additional evidence exists of internal quality assurance systems, although in a limited number of HEI some encouraging initiatives can be observed, (Selema, 2011). For example, Adama and Addamu (2012) describe the Bahir Dar University procedure of internal accreditation compulsory for new degree programs in the institution. Another element of internal quality assurance at this university is teachers' evaluation by students, department heads and colleagues biannually. However, the evaluation is used more for promotion purposes than for enhancing teaching quality.

5.5. Gender

Semela (2011) shows that in less than a decade, enrollment of female students in the undergraduate program has risen from a proportional share of 15.2% in 2000/2001 to 29.1% in 2008/2009. Affirmative action[7] has contributed to this growth (Teferra & Altbach, 2004). However, proportions of female students in masters and PhD program are substantially lower. Also, gender inequality continues in the

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[7] Teferra & Altbach (2004) refer to Habtamu Wondimu (2003) describing affirmative action by lowering the cutoff in the grade point average required for admission.

high attrition rate among female students (Molla, 2013; Semela, 2011). Next to affirmative action, assertiveness training, guidance and counseling service for female students and establishment of Gender Offices in public universities have been promoted to enhance study success of female students. However, some authors argue that these remedies do not take into account more structural aspects of inequality embedded in institutions and society at large (Molla, 2013). In the Ethiopian culture women are not expected to question, speak up or challenge men. They therefore might lack the confidence to defend themselves to verbal or physical abuse by male students or staff in case of struggling for access to the limited available resources and / or sexual harassment (Lestrade, 2012). Also, many new universities under construction lack the physical surrounding and pastoral support young women need to adjust to their new situation (Lestrade, 2012).

The next paragraphs describe three new public universities case studies illustrating the above mentioned expansion and challenges at HEI level.

6. Jigjiga University

6.1. Introduction

One of the newly established Universities is Jigjiga University (JJU); operational as of March 2007 with a triple mandate of teaching, researching and community service delivery, a result of regulation number 226/2011 of council of ministers. JJU, the first and only university in Somali National Regional State, is located in Jigjiga city, the capital of the region. Located in the second largest regional state inhabited by pastoral and agro-pastoral community, JJU has an inherent extra mission of contributing towards the transformation of livelihoods of the pastoral and agro-pastoral communities of the region. Since 2007, the academic programs of the university increased, its enrolment capacity expanded and its geographic reach broadened. As a result, the university has more qualified faculties, higher number of academic programs for students to choose from, higher number of researches and community engagement activities are being carried out. This illustrative case study aims at reviewing briefly the history of Jigjiga University, its achievements so far, challenges faced and its ambitions. The paragraph is structured in such a way that achievements in the triple mandates of JJU would take precedence followed by challenges faced and JJU's ambitions in the future.

6.2. Teaching and learning achievements

Programs and colleges

Delivering quality education is one the mandates of JJU. For this to happen, JJU needs to have quality curricula, qualified faculties, and sufficient facilities such as laboratory and libraries. As a new public university, both the physical construction of the university and building the capacities of its human resources were undertaken simultaneously. The university adopted curricula of senior universities in the country and used labs and workshops of these institutions for practical educations in the initial years. In the last seven years, the number of academic programs offered has increased from 9 to 37; the university that started with only colleges of education and business and economics now have seven colleges and two schools. An Arabic language unit has been opened last year and it is offering basic Arabic for students and staffs of JJU. The university has also opened a Somali language and culture study institute and prepared a Somali language curricula to be offered at BA level starting next academic year. The president of JJU chairs a Somali language commission established as part of an African Union initiative of developing African vernaculars spoken in a number of countries. Figure 4 illustrates the increase in number of academic programs offered at JJU since 2007.
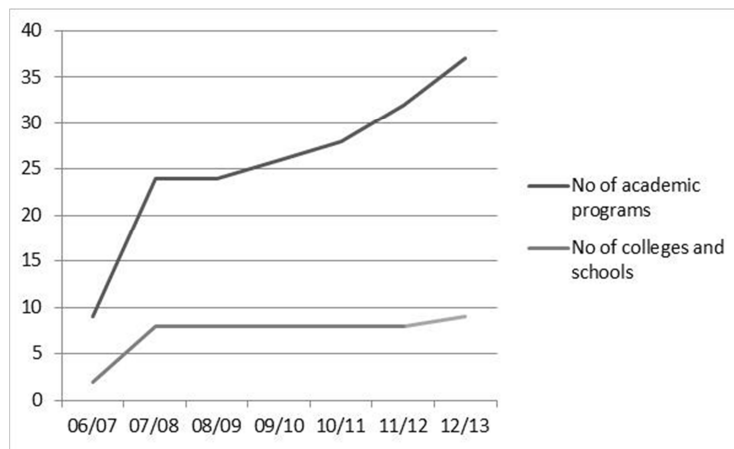

Fig 4: Number of academic programs and colleges/schools in JJU (source: Jigjiga University)

Students

Moreover, the geographic reach of JJU has broadened over the years. Initially, the university used to offer education for regular students only (these are high school graduate students who secured a pass-mark after sitting for national entrance exam for whom the university offers accommodation services besides education). Now equal numbers of students are studying in the evening, weekend, distance and

summer programs of JJU. Distance centres are available in Filtu, Hargeile and Gode towns; a weekend program is available in Dhagahbur town and an evening and weekend program is being offered in Jigjiga town. As a result the enrolment of the university has increased significantly. Figure 5 shows number of regular students enrolled in Jigjiga University and graduates from JJU. Differences in longevity of academic programs and attrition rate explain the gap between admitted students and number of graduates.
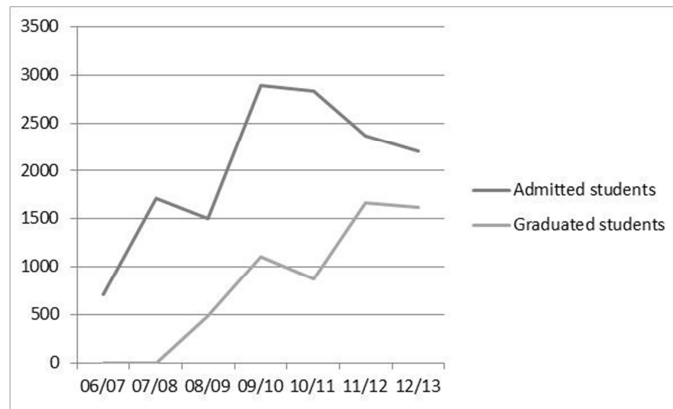

Fig 5: Number of students admitted to and graduated from Jigjiga University (source: Jigjiga University)

The university also offered scholarship opportunity for students from 'Somaliland' and 'Puntland'. Over 14,500 students are currently studying at JJU in regular, summer, evening and weekend programs. Table 1 shows the division of students over programs and male/female.

Table 1: Number of students currently enrolled in various programs of Jigjiga University (source: Jigjiga University)

	Regular	Summer	Evening	Distance
Male	5236	3619	1571	595
Female	1924	617	825	96
Total	7150	4326	2396	691

Following the government policy of focusing on science and engineering streams and to increase number of students attending science and engineering to account for 70% of students, the proportion of students attending academic programs has changed significantly. Using data of last three years, duration of policy implementation, figure 6 shows the influence of the policy.
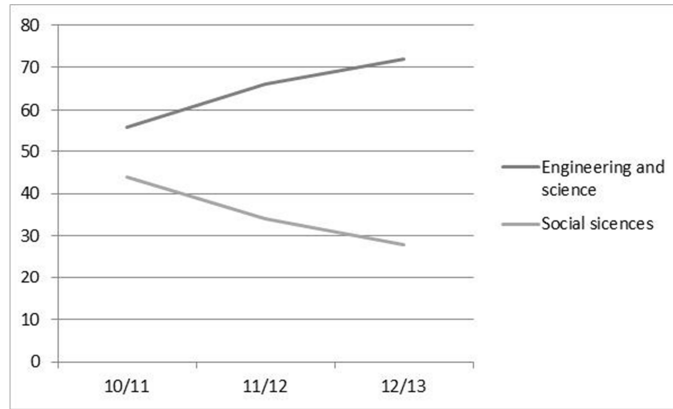
Fig 6: Changing proportion of students attending science and engineering academic programs (source: Jigjiga University)

Staff

JJU started teaching with 55 academic staffs in 2007, most of them BSc/BA holders selected based on their academic performance with little or no teaching experience. Basic pedagogical training was offered to these new recruits before dispatching them to teaching roles. They were also sent for further studies both inside the country and overseas. Over the year the number and qualification of faculties has increased as figure 7 shows.

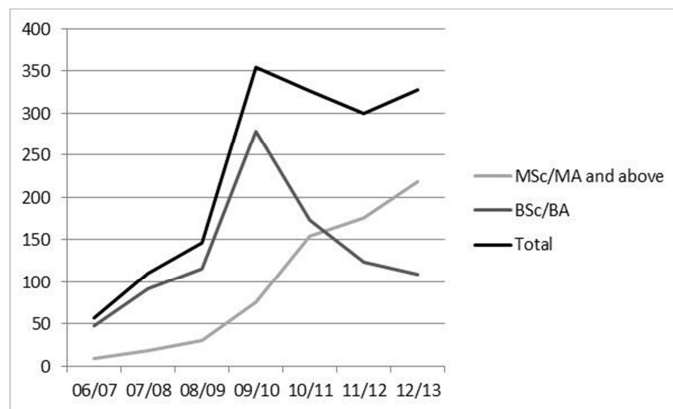Fig 7: Number and qualification faculties on duty of Jigjiga University since its establishment (source: Jigjiga Universitty)

The number of academic staffs on study leave is also very high showing an active human resource development effort of the university. Currently 248 academic staffs of JJU are in study leave studying for their second and third degrees both inside the country and overseas.

Facilities

In terms of availing facilities, the number of libraries has increased from one to four; more laboratories and workshops have been built and availed and the university now has a research centre at Chinaksen. The university still depends on neighbouring senior universities for some of practical education facilities and part-time faculties in some disciplines especially in engineering. To address the problems of book shortage, an electronic library, eBooks are now available for students.

6.3. Achievements in research

Various researches have been conducted in JJU mainly over last four years. The focus of the majority of studies is on themes related to pastoralism such as livestock health and livestock marketing; rangeland degradation and rehabilitation; traditional knowledge and institutions of pastoralists; education quality, coverage and equity in pastoral setting. Various governmental and non-governmental organizations have sponsored some of the studies conducted at regional level. To mention few: a school mapping, micro-planning and UPE (Universal Primary Education) project, sponsored by UNICEF, aimed at accessing existing coverage, quality, equity of primary education throughout the regional state and coming up with a plan so that the region meets education sector MDG set for 2015; DFID also sponsored study on factors affecting female students' education in the regional state, a study on economic challenges of regional youths and their knowledge, attitude and practice towards HIV/Aids, UNICEF sponsored this one too. The university so far conducted one international workshop on Somali language, two national workshops on pastoral development and livestock marketing. Two research proceedings have been published so far. Figure 8 shows increasing trend of studies being conducted in JJU.
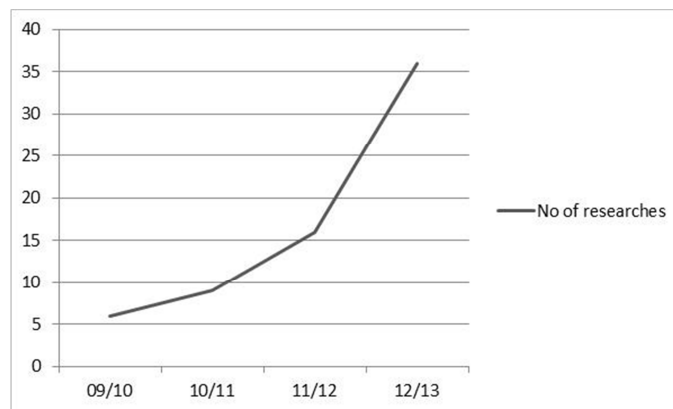

Fig 8: Number of studies conducted in JJU sponsored by the University itself.

6.4. Achievements in community service

As mentioned earlier, JJU is established in Somali regional state, a region located not only in geographic peripheries but also in socio-economic and political peripheries of the country. Helping the regional government meet the needs of its electorates through capacitating the civil servants of the region and conducting demand-driven researches geared towards priorities of the regional population is the responsibility of the university. To this end, accessibility of tertiary education has increased through distance, weekend, summer and evening programs of JJU. Half of JJU's students are currently in one of these programs. In collaboration with various sector bureaus of the regional state, the university is upgrading capacities of civil servants from diploma to degree level. To mention some:

– In collaboration with regional health bureau the university has trained 250 health professional in public health, clinical nursing and midwifery nursing.

– Sponsored by regional livestock and rural development bureau, the university have trained over 593 livestock health assistants, together with regional water bureau the University is training 80 hydraulic engineers.

– The law school is also training over 200 prosecutors and lawyers pooled from different districts of the region.

Furthermore, the school also has legal aid centres in Jigjiga, Babile and Dhagahbur to help the poor especially women who could not afford to hire their own lawyers. Also, the high schools of the region lack basic laboratories of science educations. Natural and computational sciences college of JJU has been reaching out to nearby high schools and prepared various lab demonstration programs and also helped in preparing students for national entrance exams. The university distributed over 30,000 books it got from Canadian NGO for twenty high schools of the region.

Challenges

Weak Leadership

The university's performance so far in coining and communicating a common vision and translating this vision into practicable day-to-day activities is poor. Routine activities which took the biggest chunk of top-leadership time, quick turn over of middle leadership; weak communication among university community and unattractive financial incentive mechanisms partly explains the challenge.

Human, financial and physical resources constraints

In comparison to standards of MoE the profile of faculties in universities need to be second degree and above. Though the profile of faculties at JJU in this regard has improved significantly when compared with where it was in 2007, the challenge is still there especially in engineering fields. Similarly availability of basic facilities and educational support materials such as ICT, laboratories, latest publications, educational software, demonstration rooms, workshops, classrooms and conference hall has improved but still not enough to fulfill the needs of university community.

Limited engagement in research and outreach services

Number of researches and outreach activities has increased in the last three years but still a lot could and should be done. Lack of experienced faculties and financial limitations were the major bottlenecks in this regard.

Weak partnership and resource mobilization capacity

The university has a director to lead efforts towards creation of partnership with sister institutions within and outside the country and soliciting resources to realize university mandates. Partnership has been created with universities in Korea, Austria, USA and Somaliland. Partnerships created so far are very few and strength of these partnerships is weak. This is one area where the university needs to work harder.

6.5. Ambitions

The university has set a five-year strategic plan and started implementing it this academic year. At the end of the strategic plans period: the university envisions having two more campuses and five centres for teaching, research and community engagement; intake capacity of regular students to reach 11,000; release of at least 80 researches outputs annually and to reach over 5,000 individuals annually through our community engagement programs. The profile of academic staffs would be 15% first degree, 75% second degree holders and 10% would be PhD faculties.

6.6. Conclusion

Since 2007, Jigjiga University has diversified its academic programs, increased its admission capacity, undertaken various researches and community engagements activities and raised the profile of its faculties and availed more facilities for its community. Still the university has a long way to go as

indicated in its five-year strategic plan. Building on its strengths with readiness to tap on opportunities, addressing its weaknesses with readiness to face tomorrows' threats; JJU would not only be able to solve today's challenges but would also be able meet ambitious goals it set in its strategic plan.

7. **Aksum University**

7.1. Introduction

Aksum University is one the 13 new public universities established under ESDP III. It is located in the historical city of Aksum which is the home of one of the most impressive archeological and historical heritages in the world. Aksum University is established with the social purpose of creating ethical and competent professionals, undertaking problem solving research and providing community services in a bid to contribute its part in accelerating and integrating the overall socio-economic progress of the nation. The university began construction May 2006 and completed in 2012. The teaching and learning process, however, commenced right after two weeks of the inaugural ceremony on Feb.16, 2007.

7.2. Growth

Upon commencing operation the university was organized into five faculties and ten offices. The number of academic and supportive staff at this time was 60 and 150 respectively. The university's intake capacity for regular and continuing education in 2007 was 746 and 95 respectively. Aksum University since then has registered remarkable and fast growth both in diversity of its programs and enrolment capacity. It is now organized into six colleges, fourteen departments and thirty six programs. The undergraduate enrollment capacity of the university to date is close to 10,000 regular and 9,000 distance and continuing students. By 2015, the enrollment capacity of the university will be approximately 25,000 (15,000 regular and around 10,000 CEP students).

7.3. Human Resource Development

Aksum University from the outset recognizes the importance of pooling competent academic staff in providing quality education, research and community services. The university holds the fact that its mission remains unaccomplished if staff is not developed mentally, emotionally and economically. In putting this goal in to effect, the university developed short and long term staff development plan. In realizing a mentally developed staff through implementing the plan the university aspires to reach the

target 0:75:25 ratios of graduate assistants, Masters and PhD staffs by 2015. This appears at the first glance ambitious when one looks at the human resources inventory of the university up on establishment. In 2007, close to 95% of the academic staff of the university were graduate assistants. But, currently due to the special attention and commitment of the management this figure has shown remarkable progress. The university is staffed with 123 BA holders, 244 masters, 3 PHDs and 273 and 61 masters and PhD staffs on study. This shows in the coming two years academic staff with BA degree will reach zero level. In other words, the university is characterized by high staff dynamism and as some had to assume administrative positions the university is facing the challenge of having a stable management. In the presence of dynamic management it is challenging to provide up to standard educational, research and community services.

The other aspect of the policy is to ensure that the staffs are emotionally connected with the university and its top priorities. In doing this the university has set strategic objectives in two areas namely organizational culture and leadership development. Aksum University aims at instituting an organizational culture that promotes good governance, academic freedom, unity within diversity and professionalism. Besides to this, a strategic objective is set in developing leadership that is capable of visioning, disciplined execution of strategies, leading by example, empowering and promoting team spirit. By achieving these objectives Aksum University believes it can create conducive work environment- a key requirement for connecting staff emotionally and thereby accomplishing the very reason of existence of our university.

7.4. Teaching and Learning

Teaching and learning is one of the key mandates of Aksum University. The effectiveness of the teaching and learning activity depends on a number of factors. One of these factors is discussed earlier i.e human resource development. In other words, there cannot be an effective teaching and learning process without having satisfied and motivated staff. The presence of satisfied and motivated employees is the prerequisite for developing an effective and efficient teaching and learning process. The idea behind this issue is that satisfied and motivated academic staffs can take the initiative to promote efficient and effective learner- centered teaching process, enhance the student promotion, registration and retention process efficiency, and enhance curriculum revision and development and effective execution of national education policies. In the view of Aksum University, such system will help to improve continuously the quality of existing curriculum, develop demand driven curriculum and provide student centered education. Consequently, Aksum University aims to develop students fit for employment,

entrepreneurship and problem solving which eventually boosts the satisfaction of our students and there by places the university in a position to execute its strategies, accomplish its mission, and realizes its vision of becoming a first choice university.

7.5. Management of students

Admissions

The Ministry of Education provides particular emphasis to science and technology education at higher education on its 70:30 mix placement practices. The placement practice encourages universities to admit 70% of the students in science and technology fields of study while the remaining 30% are encourage enrolling in the social science streams. Students join university after having completed national examination managed by Examination Agency. Students passing the national examination are made to fill forms to choose colleges and university. The national examination agency then places students according to their preferences (colleges and university) based on their national examination performances. This information is communicated to students and universities according to which universities admit students for teaching and learning. Aksum University admits students through its central registrar and informs colleges. Students admitted in colleges are placed in departments and/or programs after having indicated their choices of study. Aksum University is a student centered university which aspires to maximize student satisfaction. In effect, the choices of students to a large extent are respected to the extent that some programs may not admit students if they are not chosen.

Student administration

Students admitted in each program are then given teaching learning services in their respective department and/or program. To ensure the provision of quality education quality assurances centers at a directorate (accountable to the vice president for academic affairs) and offices (at college level) stay focused in ensuring that classes begin at the first day, continuous assessments are administered, teaching and learning is student centered and exams are timely and properly administered. Exams are administered at a program level where an exam committee first evaluates the contents and diversity of the exam paper submitted by each academic staff. More to come, student grading system is harmonized recently nationally to ensure uniformity. Student records are maintained both by relevant programs and the central registrar to ensure check and balance. Students graduate up on the approval of college council and the university senate as stipulated by the senate legislation. After having graduated students are presumed to be tracked as alumni; a process that is currently un-functional due to capacity reasons.

But the underlying rational for tracking alumni is the quest for obtaining feedback from employers which can be used as input in revisiting the curriculum following the information. Aksum University believes that its mission is accomplished if it delivers its services as per the expectations and standards of its stakeholders.

Student services

Aksum University also provides dormitory and cafeteria services. This service is managed by student service director who is also among other things responsible for making sure that rules and regulations of the university are observed and if violated takes appropriate disciplinary measures.

7.6. Management of finance, infrastructure and facilities

The university cannot achieve its mission in the absence of effective and efficient system for managing finance, infrastructure and facilities. Finance in Aksum University is managed in accordance to the guidelines and directives of the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development. The Ministry of Finance and Economic Development has recently introduced program based budgeting system i.e budgets are allocated to programs. Accordingly, there are three programs eligible for funding namely administration, academic affairs and, research and development programs representing three vice president offices of Aksum University. On the other hand, capital budget is administered by the president of the university in addition to effecting transfer of budgets from program to program as appropriate. Each program budget is then allocated to each department, program and operational offices according to agreed up on budget formula. The central finance, procurement and property administration directorate and the central audit directorate are responsible for supervising the utilization of budgets in accordance to the national financial, procurement and property administration guidelines. In ensuring a check and balance system the university is also audited by federal auditors.

7.7. Planning and control

The ministry of education provides as a framework of thinking as to what higher education objectives should be to start with. But, it should not be missed that the planning process by itself is a complex process that need to take into account a number internal and external factors. For this reason, Aksum University first scans the bigger environment in understanding the emerging threats and opportunities. It also analyses its own strengths and weakness to seek ways for reinforcing its strengths and avoiding its weakness. Through conducting systematic SWOT analysis and due consideration of its current and

future resources it crafts strategic plans for the whole university. Planning in Aksum University is orchestrated through what is widely known as Balanced Scorecard. Planning is coordinated by the center for institutional planning and performance monitoring led by a director who is accountable to the president. The corporate strategic objectives are then cascaded in to an individual level and performance is traced against these objectives. Performance is measured on the basis of reports generated and through on site verification and survey from the center. However, there is still a great deal of confusion if appropriate performance indicators are in place in each operational unit down the hierarchy.

7.8. Research

Research is the second most important mandate of Aksum University. Research at Aksum University is viewed both as incubation center for researchers and real world problem solving organ of the university. Research activity of the university is managed by the vice president for research and development. Under the vice president, the research and development directorate is organized which works with all colleges. Each college has its own research and publication officer responsible for coordinating the college's research duties. Research is conducted by both individuals and cross functional team of researchers. Internal research funds are granted based on merit which is divided in to two categories seed grant and thematic areas. The thematic areas are identified by the university on the basis of comparative advantages and the community's research needs. Research in Aksum University is at its infancy stage due to insufficient internal grant and academic profile of staff as has been indicated in the preceding sections. Despite this, remarkable progress has been made in research which shifted the attention of many bureaus of the Regional Government of Tigray State for their research needs.

7.9. Community service

Perhaps community services as university mandate has been largely ignored by Ethiopian Universities. However, Aksum University has been playing a leading role in providing community service. It argues that the presence of the university and its affinity for the community has serious socio-economic implications. The university has been conducting systematic analysis of the community's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to devise appropriate community service interventions. This has won the university nationwide appreciation despite its inadequate financial endowments. The university's community service provides special attention to the farming, industrial, teaching and above all the student community.

8. Wolaita Sodo University

    8.1. History

The rapid expansion of higher education access in Ethiopia in the last 7-8 years, with the opening of new universities, has born the current Wolaita Sodo University (WSU) in 2007. WSU, the result of capacity building schemes undertaken by MOE, found in the Southern Nations, Nationalities and People's Region (SNNPR). It is located at Wolaita Sodo, which is around 330 kilometers from Addis Ababa via Hosanna to Arbaminch. The university began its operation of learning and teaching with its first batch, 801 (609 male and 192 female) students in four faculties and sixteen departments on March 27, 2007. In the past few years the university has witnessed tremendous expansion in terms of fields of study and facilities. In 2008, for instance, the formerly Faculty of Education came apart in to two faculties namely Faculty of Social Science and Humanities and Faculty of Natural and Computational Science. And, the School of Law was added at the same academic year. A year later, the School of Engineering was opened by department of civil engineering. The university, currently, has six colleges, three schools and 38 departments. It offers course in regular, weekend and summer programs.

The university is functioning in two campus premises. The main campus of the university, Gandaba, is situated at the southern foot of Sodo city. It is where majority of the academic units are running their duties. The Otona campus, around 7 kilometers away from Gandaba in the same town Sodo, is meant for the college of medicine and health sciences. It is where a teaching referral hospital of the university is found.

The other landmark within the short history of the university is the commencement of postgraduate programs in the year 2011/12. Curricula of Masters Programs on four disciplines: Agricultural Knowledge Management and Communication, Rural Development and Planning, Public Health, Educational Leadership were opened in 2011/2012 and additional curricula; Agronomy, TEFL, Health Nutrition and Animal Nutrition were developed in the 2012/13 . Thus, these programs have dully opened training students both at regular and weekend basis. Currently, in all the programs the university enrolled about 18,000 students.

    8.2. Current situation of Wolaita Sodo University

The main purposes of Ethiopian universities are to teach, to research and to give community service (especially for the community which the university situated nearby). In this regard WSU has expanded its academic departments into 38 within seven years and has given chances for Ethiopian students to

learn. The University has given legal aid service for more than 10,000 poor without payment, consultancy in HIV/AIDS and Environmental protection as a community service.

Teaching and learning

Currently the Wolaita Sodo University(WSU) runs its undergraduate program in six colleges and three schools; college of Agriculture, college of Business & Economics, college of Engineering, college of Health Sciences & Medicine, college of Natural & Computational Sciences, college of Social Sciences & Humanities, school of Education & Behavioral Sciences, School of Law and School of Veterinary medicine and about 38 departments. The University has enrolled about 18,000 students in all programs; regular, weekend and summer. The university comprises of six colleges (College of Medicine and Health Sciences, College of Agriculture, College of Business and Economics, College of Engineering , College of Social Sciences & Humanities and College of Natural and Computational Sciences), and 3 schools: school of Veterinary Medicine, school of Law and school of Education and Behavioral Science. The university offers 38 undergraduate programs, and 8 graduate programs. The current students' population of the University is about 18,000 regular in the programs. To facilitate the learning and teaching process, the university has 59 classrooms, 10 lecture halls, 12 seminars with 8class rooms 8 lab buildings with 19 class rooms 12 laboratories, 8 computer laboratories, 3 engineering workshops, one GIS laboratory, one language laboratory and 5 demonstration sites. New 20 class room building is began and getting faster to services at the beginning of year 2014. The university has four libraries three of them working for 24 hours whereas the remaining one is working for 12 hours a day. Three of the libraries are situated at the main campus; Gandaba and one is located at Otona campus where the referral hospital is located.

Research

Since the university is young, there is no intensive research endeavor in the past. But as of the academic year of 2011/12, there are eminent research engagements among the staff. This trend is believed to persist as the academic staff members are highly motivated to engage in research though there are some shortages in terms of facility. The colleges and schools are engaged in research undertakings in their respective fields. A number of comprehensive researches, particularly focusing on the socio-economic problems of the area where the university is situated were conducted and the results are disseminated to the stakeholders and users. Moreover these results were published by the university proceedings and many researches are being undertaken. And the university involves in divergent

mainstreaming community service practices and has gained considerable achievements, particularly in environmental protection and pro poor empowerment practices.

To enhance the research undertakings, the university has established a research center. In carrying out research, the university has been collaborating with different institutes even though it is not sufficient. The university's research and community service core process coordinates the various research activities and it has disseminated some research outputs so far conducted by the staff. The research and community services core process is organized at the directorate level and it has got research coordinators at college/ school level. Moreover, there are research/module teams at departmental level.

The university awarded 34 research projects in 2011/12 fiscal year. The number is tremendously increased in the year 2012/13 to 50, as conducting research has already become customary among the university community. The maximum limit of grant allocated for each research project depends on the nature of the research and the budget request of the researcher/s. The total budget allocated for research has shown a good improvement.

Community service

Wolaita Sodo University is currently delivering different community services such as community health through its own referral hospital, continuing education in weekends and summer semesters, free legal aids and clinical services. The hospital is serving approximately more than 1.8 million people in a quality and continuous manner. Currently the hospital has 160 beds which are very low as compared to the present demand for the service. Since 2007 the university is providing a continuing education service for the community. Currently the program is offering undergraduate education for 4918 students from the nearby community. Moreover, legal aid service to poor community members who cannot afford hiring legal representatives on court is provided by the school of law. The university plans to increase its community service endeavors in the future.

8.3. Management of students

Students Services

Wolaita Sodo University provides three different types of students' services organized at the students' dean office with a total number of 791 employees of which 211 are permanent and the remaining 580 are temporary employees. These services include hostel services (dormitory and cafeteria services), sport and entertainment, and health care and counseling services. Cost sharing support service is newly

introduced to students' support services. The university provides in-campus dormitory services for all students. The design capacity of the current permanent dormitories is about 10,000 students, 6 students at each room. The university provides catering services for students at two functional dining halls with designed capacity of 9,000 students in aggregate. There are two entertainment centers (canteens), four TV halls and TV rooms at each dormitory building dedicated to students' recreation. There are playgrounds for soccer, volleyball, basketball and one gymnasium. Furthermore, the university has established clubs run by students concerned mainly with extracurricular activities.

Guidance and counseling services are being provided with the help of full-time staff. It is a recent development that the university has newly organized HIV/AIDS resource center providing basic counseling services. This center also provides the platform for students to make peer discussion on gender and related issue and thereby it tries to enhance students' awareness regarding HIV/AIDS, reproductive health, sexually transmitted diseases and the like.

Admission and result record

Regular basis students are mainly assigned to the university by the Ministry of Education. The students assigned to Wolaita Sodo University wait the call for admission date and must apply to the university registrar and alumni directorate office. The office admits students assigned to the programs in WSU are just register in their respective department and their achievements are recorded in the registrar office till the graduate from WSU. The registrar office is run by main and associate registrars. The associate registrars manage both the registrar and the examination. Recently the university registrar introduced a new registrar system with data base that is expected to simplify the job of record workers.

8.4. Governance, leadership and organization

Currently, the university is implementing its business process re-engineering to provide customer centered service. It is compulsory to develop a new organizational structure that can fit with the newly designed business processes. Hence, the university has developed its organizational structure recently structured by two vice presidents, two core business processes and two supporting processes. As a result 4 directors and 8 officers are assigned in addition to the two vice presidents. With regard to accountability, offices such as learning and teaching process, research and community services, registrar, library and documentation and quality assurance are accountable to the vice president for academic and research. Offices such as human resource management, procurement, finance and property administration service, students support service and office of security are under the vice

president for administration and development. Offices such as planning and program, public and international relations, technical and engineering services, audit department, the gender and HIV/AIDS mainstreaming office, ethics office and legal services are accountable to the president.

8.5. Management of finance, facilities and infrastructures

As it known all public universities in Ethiopia are financed by federal government; the source of finance for WSU if also federal government. Apart from students assigned by MOE, self sponsored students pay their tuition fee for the university in semester base. The revenue generated form this payment is used as internal revenue and the university can use it for the capacity building of its units. Finance from both sources is managed by the director for budget and finance who is accountable to the vice-president for development and administration. Wolaita Sodo University generally follows FDRE government's procurement rules and regulations in carrying out procuring and purchasing activities.

ICT is one of the basic infrastructures for the growth of an academic institution. In cognizant of the fact the university has been exerting a relentless effort to develop its ICT services through its director. The internet service is available for all working units in the university. On top of this, the university has already bought different network infrastructure devices and the internet fiber backbone was installed for all buildings and has begun giving full service. The university has two digital libraries.

The university is supplied with the Wolaita city municipality water sources. It has also its own water wells which supply water for the university. With respect to electricity and energy supply, the university is predominantly using hydroelectric power and three diesel generators. The university has cobblestone road of 20 km road within its Gandaba campus and 2km in Otona campus.

8.6. Staffing and human resource management

At the establishment of the university every academic staff was recruited by Ministry of Education till 2008. After some settlement the mandate to recruit for master's holders and above was passed to the university. Masters holders and doctors are hired by the university whenever there is a need from each academic unit. Now the university human resource development and management directorate is responsible to hire and manage both support staff and academic at Wolaita Sodo University. Moreover, the director for academic programs developed academic staff recruitment directive and it was approved by the senate of WSU in 2011. While recruiting staff, female candidates have got default additional 5 points over male.

With regard to academic staff population, the university has a total of 779 of which 129 are female. The number of expatriate staff is 10 of which only 1 is female. To improve the capacity of the academic staff, the university is exercising the staff development activities. Hence, currently 176 instructors are on study leave.

Currently, the university provides a housing allowance to the academic staff based on academic ranks ranging from Et.Br.300 to Et.Br.700 per month. The university has bought 237 condominium houses from the zone's house development agency and the finishing is underway. The university has allocated large amount of money for the finishing purpose so as to make the houses well-furnished and thereby make them conducive for living. When the finishing task is completed, the houses will be given to the academic staff.

8.7. Quality assurance

During the first five years of its function there was no idea about quality assurance in Wolaita Sodo University. But by the year 2011 the university aggressively worked towards the quality audit and quality assurance of its teaching and leaning process and research outputs. The formerly called Academic Program office is now changed to Academic Programs and Quality Assurance directorate and decided to launch quality assurance guide line for its academic unit's performance. The policy applies to current and planned programs, research and the support services given to the academic and research processes. All academic programs are subject to internal and external review on a regular cycle, according to pre-set criteria. In general, the objective is to assure quality of teaching-learning, research and community service through continuous academic staff development, assessment and evaluation in order to perform its function to the level expected.

WSU is committed to ensure that appropriate standards are achieved and maintained in its educational programs and that it is offering a high quality education consistent with national standards. The standards (set in another document) and performance indicators described in the policy are based on a number of principles about quality assurance both internal and external to higher education.

8.8. Planning and control

The planning and preparation office of the university is in a directorate level and accountable to the president. Each working unit of the WSU develops its own plan that enables its workers to perform towards pre-determined goals. The head of college/school and directors are responsible to plan and report their performance every three months to the office of planning and preparation director. The

directorate has a planning officer and a monitoring officer. The plan of university in each year is collected from each working unit through the planning office and compiled thereby to be approved by the management council of the WSU. The approved plan of the university then is dispatched to the units for implementation. In a similar way the performance report in each quarter is collected by the office and presented to the management council for further comments and evaluation of performance. In general, the directorate of planning and preparation is responsible for university plan and control the performance of approved plan.

8.9. Ambitions of WSU

The university has developed a three years strategic plan that is aimed to put it in better position at the end of planned time. The strategic plan is in line with countries GTP and comprises all the development aspects. Wolaita Sodo University has its own goals to be achieved and that will contribute to the development plan of the country, Ethiopia. The vision of WSU is to be one of the best universities nationally and recognized internationally by 2020. The mission is to provide quality education, conduct problem solving research and deliver need based community services. The core values are:

- Academic freedom and autonomy; WSU will uphold and defend academic freedom and institutional autonomy so as to ensure that its education and academic pursuits are not subject to undue intervention.
- Performance, ethics and professionalism; WSU will strive for exemplary performance with the highest possible standards of professionalism and ethics and seek to provide high quality services at a reasonable and affordable cost.
- Customer first: WSU gives high attention to its students and it also gives special attention to female, disadvantaged and people with special needs.
- Good governance; WSU is committed to uphold good governance practices in all its affairs. It will strive to install the values of accountability, transparency, participation, consensus, efficiency and effectiveness, rule of law, equity and responsiveness
- Partnership and collaborations; WSU will strive to link to the international network of universities and to support international links of economy. As such, the university will continuously undertake all supportive and training actions to enable students and staff on all levels to interact easily in the university's working and teaching language English.

- Social responsibility and cooperation; WSU will strive to fulfill its social responsibility. As such, the university will facilitate the participation of its staff and students in community development activities and public services.
- Commitment and involvement; in WSU, all the academic, managerial and support staff is committed to the mission of achieving academic excellence in a professional context. As such, all the compass community gives priority for hard work, willingness and commitment. "Every job in this organization is essential and important: I do make a difference".

Capacity development plans

From the above mentioned strategic plan each college/school or unit developed its own plans and the achievements are measured accordingly. One of the transformation tools the university is practicing is applying balanced score card system for all of its working units. Also, because of the ambition to always run for better performance in all its missions, the university launched business process re-engineering in all its core process.

8.10. Challenges WSU faced and expects to face in the future

Despite its efforts to strengthen the capacity of academic staff in order to deliver quality education in the various programs and conducting need based (problem solving) researches, the university is facing critical shortage of senior staff members. There is shortage of qualified man power both in leadership and in teaching, research and providing community services. As Ethiopia is a poor country and universities are financed by federal government, the budget issue is one of the challenging factors to achieve the goals and full fill all the necessary resources.

The research and community process issues ethical clearance certificates per annum for those research protocols, which involve human subject participants after thoroughly screening by ethical review board of the university. The university disseminated its research outputs through publications, organized conference and seminars.

9. Concluding remarks

The Ethiopian higher education system has realized an impressive expansion in the recent years. Current educational plans at macro level include a further increase in student numbers.

This paper illustrated how this quantitative growth has been realized. It also showed, both at the system and the university level, the challenges that come along with quickly expanding student numbers; challenges that refer e.g. to quantity and quality of human resources, to availability of financial resources and facilities and to leadership, management and organizational capacity. Challenges that can be summarized as the overall challenge to maintain the balance between on the one hand expansion in student numbers and on the other hand quality education.

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