Higher Education in Africa
Crises, Reforms and Transformation

Working Paper Series

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Introduction

According to its mission statement, and as stipulated in its objectives, the Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa (CODESRIA) aims to foster and to promote research and the production and dissemination of knowledge in a social space that guarantees freedom of thought throughout Africa. It seeks to 'strengthen the institutional basis of knowledge production in Africa by proactively engaging and supporting other research institutions and their networks of scholars within its programs of activities'. Furthermore, it is stated that 'as part of this goal, the Council actively also encourages cooperation and collaboration among African universities, research organisations and other training institutions'. Given these objectives, CODESRIA is directly concerned with the state of the learning and research institutions in Africa, especially the universities, and the prolonged crises that African higher education institutions have been facing.

Undertaking research is a necessary tool to analyse and understand the social, political, and economic implications of the crisis in the African higher education institutions, and the possible action for a positive and constructive transformation of these institutions. Some of the pressing issues at the beginning of the twenty-first century were already identified and debated by the first generation of African scholars at the time of the inception of CODESRIA. That is to say the current problems have developed over several decades. Their full-blown stage has hindered an enabling condition for the African institutions of higher learning, thus making it difficult to function to their capacity and to play their role in contributing to promote social progress through effective and quality teaching and relevant research.

In the book produced by the Association of African Universities entitled *Creating the African University: Emerging Issues of the 1970s* edited by Yesufu (1973), African scholars, many of whom studied in higher education institutions located in former colonial powers and generally in industrial countries, articulated relevant issues for African institutions of higher learning. They thoroughly

and critically examined the issues from various disciplinary, sub-regional, and national perspectives. They were only in the beginning of the second decade after the process of independence of African countries started. Thus, these scholars rigorously addressed these issues, although at the time with a lesser sense of urgency. Indeed, they were still enthused by the euphoria of independence and had confidence in the potential capacity of these new African higher education institutions to contribute to the actualisation of the development projects throughout the continent.

In their debates, these scholars addressed specific questions of the role of African universities in development. They also discussed issues of research, the making of an African academic community, the need to Africanise the curriculum and to break the dependency link to the universities of the former colonial powers, and to imagine a mechanism for offering continuing and extra-mural education.

Using a methodology of case studies, new universities of Central, East, North, South, and West Africa were analysed to problematise the issues of the day and to present the prospects and challenges ahead. Given the nature of the historical period, absent from the case studies, were the existing universities of the Republic of South Africa. The country was still under the apartheid system. There were also the yet-to-be created universities of the countries still engaged in decolonisation wars in the Portuguese colonies, especially in Angola and Mozambique, and also in Zimbabwe and Namibia. In general, however, African political regimes had already formulated differing strategies and policies to deal with the pressing human resource needs.

At this present stage of the beginning of the Third Millennium—characterised by its fast pace—as illustrated by rapid changes, and related to the information and communication technologies, and the accelerated globalisation process, the problems that emerged in the 1970s have become part of major crises. The crises in higher education institutions have been further exacerbated by the challenges of the economic crisis and the Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs) and their direct and negative impact. It is also important to note that the emphasis in the above-mentioned study of the 1970s (Yesufu 1973) was on the universities rather than higher education in general.

It is necessary to define key concepts related to higher education that can facilitate the understanding of the nature and magnitude of the multifaceted crises that are confronted by the African higher education sub-sector, the type and range of reforms, innovations, and transformation that have been undertaken toward constructive prospects. While the terms 'higher education' and 'university' are, in some contexts, interchangeably used, they do not necessarily

cover the same reality. The university is a subset of the higher education set. Higher education has a more holistic resonance as it encompasses all post-secondary institutions. For a comprehensive analysis of the crises of African higher education and explorations of possible solutions to these crises, it is necessary to define higher education and to introduce the different types and the nature of the higher education institutions. This book is concerned with higher education in Africa, although, given their special roles, universities are emphasised.

Universities have historically played and will continue to play the largest and most central role in higher education, covering the scope of higher learning and production of knowledge. With a few exceptions, such as the *grandes écoles* in the French tradition, universities have been considered more prestigious than other institutions of higher learning. There has been a tendency to treat the university learning experience as the one that truly deserves to be considered an education, even contrasting it with knowledge acquired in technical/vocational institutions labelled as training. Conceptually, training connotes the acquisition of technical skills geared toward performing specific tasks without necessarily an opportunity or requirement for the learner to acquire competence in critical thinking, broader knowledge and character to understanding the wider educational and societal contexts.

> The term 'higher education' is taken to embody all organized learning and training activities at the tertiary level. This includes conventional universities (i.e. those with conventional arts, humanities, and science faculties) as well as specialized universities (like institutions specializing in agriculture, engineering, science, and technology). The concept also includes conventional post-secondary institutions (like polytechniques, colleges of education, and *'grandes écoles'*). Under the umbrella of 'higher education' come all forms of professional institutions... Even this wide spectrum does not exhaust the possibilities of forms of higher education (UNESCO 1994:7).

Given the historical development of the current higher education institutions in Africa, the universities have been at the centre of the higher education crises. The determinants and manifestations of these crises are complex, as they reflect historical and global processes of African societies and countries. CODESRIA argues, in the background that articulates the rationale for this green book, that these crises of diverse dimensions and intensity that afflict African higher education have invariably been linked to the main issue of funding. There are two dimensions of funding that are relevant in analysing African higher education. First of all, the availability, scarcity and absence of financial resources for higher

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education determine the capacity of institutions to function and fulfil their educational and societal missions.

The second important aspect is the sheer power that is vested in the allocation of financial resources for education, and in any other social institution that translates into full decision-making power and authority over all the aspects of the higher education bodies and their priorities.

The quantity, nature, and sources of the financial resources for African higher education institutions inevitably have major consequences on the learning and intellectual output, and the limitations of the production of knowledge and access to publications. Thus, the general economic crisis and the subsequent severe financial constraints faced by African institutions, learners, and academics have led to what has been referred to as 'the book famine' as the material intellectual base has been eroded, with decaying libraries, hence difficult intellectual production and low output.

> The level of academic research in Africa... remains weak. In 1995, the region was responsible for just 5,839 published academic papers (South Asia produced 15,995 published papers, and Latin America and the Caribbean 14,426). Only the Middle and North Africa produced fewer papers than Sub-Saharan Africa, yet the former's total had doubled since 1981, while Sub-Saharan Africa's had risen by one third (Bloom, Canning, and Chan 2005:6).

The legitimacy of the comparisons made by these authors may be questionable because they failed to take into account demographic factors by using raw numbers rather than per capita intellectual production and also, at least from CODESRIA's standpoint, by including North Africa in the Middle East. However there is no doubt that African scholars have been functioning in non-enabling structural conditions that have consistently led to limited intellectual output.

The severe limitations of resources and their impact on teaching, research and learning conditions have contributed to lowering the level of staff and student motivation. They have negatively impacted on curriculum development, the governance of the university and university life, the principles and practice of academic freedom, the capacity to hire, retain, and renew the teaching staff. They have created environments where routines of bare minimum in performing the respective tasks have become the norm, and which often shut off innovative impulses.

The learning process for students is characterised by limited exposure to the programmes designed to complete a specific cycle. The African higher education institutions since the 1970s have been generally characterised by the decline in

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the environment of learning. The national and sub-regional contexts of political instability and diminished state/governmental legitimacy have led to an overall shift in the structure of incentives in the wider economy and society, and higher education in general—and hence also the pursuit of advanced learning in particular. The list could be extended to reflect the different manifestations and indirect ramifications of immediate or long-term impact.

Education has different stakeholders, which on the domestic front include families and students of different social origins; states; teaching, administrative, and technical staff; policymakers from within and outside the education sector; public and private employers. Through their contributions to the funding of education in African countries, foreign powers have de facto and sometimes *de jure* also exercised the rights to participate in, or even to lead, the formulation of African domestic and national educational policies. These external powers in industrial countries in general, especially former colonial powers, and international institutions, lending agencies and foundations that have been playing determining roles in formulating and deciding African policies and directly or indirectly, have been setting priorities. For decades, the World Bank has been the most notorious example of these external agencies that profoundly influence African education policies in general and the consideration accorded to higher education through financial resource allocation.

Domestic and external responses to African educational crises have taken different forms and originated from various sources at different points in the evolution of these crises confronting African institutions of higher learning, especially universities. Perceptions or actual understanding of the nature of the problems and the types of solutions considered most appropriate, have also shifted over time among domestic and external players. The most contentious policies since the 1980s have been related to those that have been or have been perceived to be designed and/or promoted by the World Bank, supported by conservative academics including some Africanist experts located in the North. The reality or the perception of such policies geared to dismantling African universities led to the emergence of a spirit of resistance among students and teaching staff.

Issues related to the programmes of the universities, such target-groups as students and their affiliated social programmes and teaching staff and their salaries and working conditions, the top-down managerial and essentially un-democratic nature of the approaches used by the World Bank to reach the decision proposed or imposed, have contributed to increasing the tensions. The timing, phasing, and sequencing of the reform agendas have been at the heart of numerous contentions that have translated into passive resistance and protests

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and strikes by staff and students. Prolonged closures of the universities, and the massive emigration of experienced and qualified staff in search of stability to carry out their teaching and research agendas, are all different manifestations of the crises.

The hidden or open policy of downgrading the universities through diminished financial allocation, thus leading to dismantling them, was one among many other possible solutions envisaged by some external stakeholders and carried out by internal decision-makers. Various solutions targeting specific categories among the stakeholders or domains of the universities were proposed and even adopted and implemented at different periods. These solutions have been based on reforms that have been designed to change the entire university or higher education subsystem. Other types of changes, especially innovations, have focussed on specific levels, such as the institutions or academic units, or specific and critical areas, including formulation of the institutional mission and role, finance, relevance and quality of curriculum, governance, staff development, access and equity, student life, and formal linkage with the socio-cultural and business communities.

The scarcity of resources and its numerous social constraints tends to leave little time for the innovative impulse to be stimulated. Academics have to struggle to secure the means of living, as salaries lose their buying power, are irregularly paid, or are actually cut down, and cannot carry out their duties in a routine manner. The high student-to-teacher ratios tend to exacerbate their problem.

At the same time, in the most extreme cases of deprivation, as when the state has collapsed or in the contexts where armed conflicts have impeded any normal functioning, coping strategies have been devised by the universities and their staff and students. These strategies have had direct implications for the past practices, future development, and the philosophical underpinnings of higher education in Africa. When analysing the factors and experiences of constructive transformation, the lessons from these practices that, in their varieties and complexities, have been invented out of desperation, offer possible sources of inspiration and learning to be harnessed and emulated.

In formulating research topics on the crises, reforms, and transformation of African higher education, it is important to raise a few critical questions related to the different aspects including the following ones: How can one integrate the innovative and positive practices that emerged out of various situations of extreme constraints? How can they be used as an impetus for renewed reflections on the philosophical basis for creating and sustaining functioning higher education in Africa in normal contexts? What are the challenges and opportunities associated with the sustained high demand of higher education, which has led

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to what some observers have referred to as 'massification'? What lessons about what it takes to sustain the conditions necessary for building a credible academic community, the prospects for the emergence of a distinctly African knowledge system, and sustaining the university as a public good? How to factor in the emergence of private universities and non-governmental research centres? What role can Information and communication technologies (ICTs) play in facilitating knowledge transmission without leaning toward the 'marketisation' of higher education? What kind of higher education ought to be fostered in the context of globalisation to resist the disorienting impact of the external origins of external forces defining the direction? These are some of the guiding questions in this Green Book. The issues CODESRIA identified as critical areas that it hopes to address through its research programme on higher education are:

- Rereading the History of African Higher Education Systems;

- Shifting /Competing Perspectives on the Philosophical Foundations of Higher Education in Africa;

- Shifting/Competing Perspectives on the Role of the University in National Development;

- The University as a Public Good;

- Continuity and Change in the Relations between the State and the University in Africa;

- The Origins, Nature, and Dimensions of the Crises of the Higher Education System and their Policy Consequences;

- Shifting Perceptions of the Crises of the Higher Education System and their Policy Consequences;

- Coping Strategies Evolved by Universities and University Communities to Manage the Crises;

- Trends in Curriculum Development and the Administration of Exams;

- Continuity and Change in Campus Life: Violence, Secret Cults, and Militias;

- Trends in the Revival of International Exchange Programmes;

- The African Academic Diaspora and the African University;

- Issues in the Governance of the African Higher Education System;

- The Changing Nature of Student–Staff Relations;

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- Gender, Generational, and Disciplinary Issues in the Composition and Re-composition of the African Academy;

- The Content and Direction of Competing Proposals for Reform in the Higher Education System;

- University Autonomy and the Challenges of Financing Higher Education;

- The Rise of the Private University in Africa;

- Opportunities, Problems, and Prospects of the African Knowledge System(s); and

- Competing and Alternative Strategies for Overcoming the Problems of the Higher Education System.

As it was rightly pointed out in CODESRIA's background document on the terms of reference, this suggested list of issues to be tackled in future research is not exhaustive. Indeed, lingering and major issues such as the language factor in the higher education equation remain important. Emerging critical areas that need to be taken into account in any higher education research programme also include the accelerating new trend of globalisation and its specific implications for research and control over the world's natural resources and cultural wealth; the new information and communication technologies (ICTs) and their impact on distance learning and what has been referred to as the information age. The question of lifelong learning whereby those who voluntarily or by force inter-rupt their studies can resume them at different stages of their personal and professional lives, is equally important. There are ramifications for individual decision-making processes, demand, and opportunities for further learning re-lated to jobs or general improvement of knowledge acquisition.

In connection with the question of gender and equality of educational oppor-tunity, issues related to single-sex institutions, with the new all-women univer-sities — beside Sudan which was the only exception for a long time — deserve focus. Issues relevant to socially marginalised groups — ranging from people who are physically challenged to populations with non-mainstream lifestyles like nomads who stretch across national borders throughout the continent — constitute real challenges that need to be analysed. The point being made is that there are many relevant aspects of higher education that are not fully covered by the above list.

Instead of analysing, for the Green Book, the above issues under individual subheadings, my approach is to rather address them within a comprehensive analysis of the current state of African higher education and the perspectives

and possibilities for a research agenda that will call for various topics to address all these dimensions. Indeed, conceived as state of the art, this Green Book seeks to present, in historical perspective, African higher education as a social institution that reflects its socio-historical and global dynamics. It is important to explain that the use of a historical approach and the presentation of specific historical facts are not for the sake of reciting history. History, especially as it relates indigenous African experiences, is not meant to be a glorification of descriptive history. In the search for relevant change, the message given by using a historical approach and analysis is to make a statement that a phenomenon that came into existence historically can go out of existence or can be altered. History is, in essence, social. The historical perspective aims to provide refined literacy about the process of the African higher education's journey and critically rethinking the possibilities for introducing and carrying out planned change in the higher education system.

The state, prospects, and challenges of higher education institutions in Africa, conceived as a microcosm of the broader society, reflect those of the situation of global society at specific historical moments. As Sall (2002) rightly points out:

> ... the fortunes of the universities have been very closely linked to those of the state, and as the latter went through its phases of developmentalism, structural adjustment, and post-adjustment, the universities also went through the same experiences, and their position in the order of public priorities changed accordingly. However, despite the waning and now waxing of attention to the universities, recent research has shown that universities were always present as key sites of public concern and debate in most sub-Saharan African countries.

It is worth emphasising the fact that while there is widespread common knowledge of the colonial inheritance of current African institutions, this understanding does not suggest sufficient grasp of the nature of the process of the transfer, which makes the task of undertaking change monumental. A cross-sectional analysis of current institutions without sufficient sensitivity to the nature of the systems African countries have been emulating and the failure to critically examine the depth of the impact of the legacy can hinder the search for appropriate solutions. Thus, it is important to recall the roots of European education systems and the process and agents of their transfer to Africa, as a refined understanding of the past is necessary to fully appreciate the present, and adequately plan for the future. The arguments in this book are presented under eight major headings, including this introduction and an extensive bibliography.

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The first chapter, following this introduction, problematises the concept and various types of higher education. Given the European origins of contemporary African education systems, the European historical process that produced their institutions of higher learning is examined. The various types of higher education in African history, including those of indigenous and external roots, are presented. For the contemporary context, the typology of higher education institutions and the articulated social mission of post-colonial higher education are addressed.

The second chapter discusses the colonial and neo-colonial origins and contexts in which contemporary African higher education institutions have evolved. It examines, using the dependency framework, the mutually reinforcing continued processes of cultural imperialism exercised from former colonial powers and their proxies of international organisations, and African perpetuation of cultural colonisation 'by choice' from within.

The third chapter examines the educational crises by locating them within the general economic and global societal crises. The specific implications and manifestations of these crises for African higher education, especially the universities, are analysed. This chapter also analyses the aggressive policies that were formulated in the context of structural adjustment programmes (SAPs) by international financial institutions and that were implemented by African official policymakers, and which constituted a hindrance to the realisation of the idea of the university as an institution for national development.

The fourth chapter discusses the African awakening and the early wave of post-colonial internally driven reforms that aimed to tackle the problem of the colonial legacy. The new types of reforms, recent innovations, and transformation are then analysed. Unlike the first wave of reform, many aspects of these new changes are related to the increased involvement and complexity of major external actors. In addition to the former colonial powers, other industrial countries in bilateral or multilateral frameworks and various types of international organisations, (the most prominent being the World Bank) have had increased participation in the key decisions affecting African higher education.

The fifth chapter critically examines the new challenges within the global and local objective conditions. The sixth chapter examines the structural change, transformation, and localisation of higher education as a public good and the prospects for a rooted, African-centred, and invigorated, higher education that can facilitate social progress in Africa in the twenty-first century and beyond. This section also identifies relevant areas for reflection as possible research trails for CODESRIA's future programmes and networks on higher education in Africa.

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The conclusion summarises the main arguments. It points to possible research trails and topics for the full understanding of the dynamics of the local and global forces and the challenges and opportunities for the development of autonomous and holistic African higher education institutions with the universities as key sites for the production of relevant knowledge which is critical for African agendas of social progress.

Finally, the bibliography aims to inform about the existing sources and to help identify the gaps to be filled through future research.

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Chapter One

Origins and Mission of African Universities

This first chapter sets the historical stage of the emergence and trajectories of African higher education systems and institutions. It presents the types of higher education in Africa today. It is argued that while the contemporary institutions have originated from a colonial or neo-colonial framework, the idea and reality of higher education were not alien to the African context before colonisation. Thus, this chapter discusses the indigenous African higher education institutions and the origins and development of African higher education institutions in the colonial and early post-colonial periods. The idea of the university and the expected role of higher education in the socio-economic development of African societies are examined.

Diversity of Higher Education Institutions in Africa Today

The introductory note of the International Association of Universities' book entitled Differing Types of Higher Education (1977) stated that 'the internal structures of higher educational systems are causing serious problems' (International Association of Universities 1977:8), of which 'one of the difficult aspects... lies in special power of the attraction that universities exercise on students, on academic staff and on all the other forms of higher education' (International Association of Universities 1977:8). It is further argued that this power is embedded in the very nature of the university.

Universities derive great prestige from their history. They have been among the most privileged places for the advancement of thought and culture. They have been the principal agents for the growth of knowledge, particularly the scientific knowledge that has become the dominant force of the modern world. They embody, at one and the same time, the universality and the diversity of

the human mind. They are at the frontiers of discovery but guard the heritage of the past. They enshrine both hope and nostalgia. At a humbler level, they also are linked to ways of life which may be out of date but which, since they are collective stereotypes, continue to appeal to the imagination of the young and to guide many of their choices, rather like stars which are in fact extinct but which can still be seen (International Association of Universities 1977:8).

The historical reference in this quotation mainly applies to the European tradition and experience. These European roots of universities in Africa constitute one of the major problems faced by African countries in their efforts to use African universities as instruments for national development. As discussed later in this book, the key challenge is to find where African institutions fit in this European past. Another important point from the above quotation is that although the weight of history has conferred a privileged status on universities, the dynamics of socio-historical processes have also produced other types of institutions of higher learning which are the products of different historical moments and national/local contingencies. As Abdalla (1977:32-33) stated:

A university is but one of the institutions of higher education. It brings men and women to a high level of intellectual development in the arts and sciences, and in the traditional professional disciplines, and also promotes high level research. On the one hand, therefore, it is a community of persons engaged in study and research. On the other, it is a source of highly trained manpower (sic) for the professions. But it is not alone in this second role. There are other institutions of higher education which offer post-secondary education and training courses and programmes of instruction in technical and vocational subjects and practical fields of work, all geared to producing middle grade technicians.

Institutions of higher learning can be broadly categorised on the basis of their mission or goal, their main functions with regard to teaching, research, and service, the requisite qualifications of the faculty, the criteria for admission of students, the duration of the programmes they offer, and the types of degrees they confer. To understand national realities, it is important to analyse the various types of institutions, including the universities, to identify in which specific and national contexts they are designed to function, or de facto function, as disconnected sets of higher education or as subsets with intersections that maintain dynamic relationships. For instance, in many countries the universities and the other types of institutions are legally or physically separated regardless of their actual interaction, as for instance they may be under the jurisdiction of different ministerial cabinets, often with competing agendas and struggling to

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have access to the same limited resources. However, in Germany (the Federal Republic of Germany at that time) for instance, a 1976 higher education reform law adopted by the federal parliaments was geared to stop the process of 'further divergence in the development of institutions of higher education' (Kröll 1977:30). This led to the formalisation of the comprehensive universities. It is argued that the comprehensive university

> ... does not seek to diminish the attractive force of universities but rather, in certain ways, to canalize it. It integrates, within a single institution, both university education proper and all the shorter and middle-level types of training, by providing common basic courses which can enable selection to be made within its own structures (and not at the entry to higher education) and distributing its students among various 'streams' best adapted to their abilities (International Association of Universities 1977:9).

One of the underlying factors in articulating the diversity of higher education institutions is the nature of access. Indeed, the actual educational opportunity for the various population segments in any given country at any historical juncture constitutes the driving force of demand. There are conceptual differences in, and practical implications for, access.

Whether they are separate from, or are integrated into, the universities, the other higher education institutions present a great variety. In Africa, with or without the full range of higher education institutions, the countries experience shortages. Indeed, they still suffer from the insufficient or total absence of higher education institutions at independence. However, regardless of their objective situation at the time of independence, and in the immediate post-independence era, African states within their dominant ideological basis, namely nationalism, African socialism, Afro-Marxism, and political accommodation, gave generally common responses to the state of higher education in their respective national contexts. The universities and other higher education institutions reflect the educational and cultural traditions of the respective colonial powers—in former administered or settler colonies—that created or shaped the contemporary African education systems, with the recent but powerful imprint of regional and national dynamics. In terms of the status and types of higher education institutions, African countries have a combination of universities and other institutions.

It is important to point out that, in the search for solutions to higher education crises, it is appropriate to address education systems holistically by relating the issues and solutions of higher education to the other levels of the same system. Thus, even if the higher education is the focus of this book, it is necessary

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to deal with higher education on a comprehensive basis and to include and review the different types of higher education institutions that the dominant social paradigms have produced to date.

A typology of higher education institutions can be formulated based on a number of variables. Based on their statuses, the primary categorisation, which has been already referred to, is university versus other institutions. The notion of academic versus vocational and technical institutions has been used as a basis for differentiation. Some among the academic institutions (for example, liberal arts colleges) basically offer undergraduate education, while the universities also include teaching (broad specialisation) at the postgraduate level. The main functions of teaching and research are also a basis on which institutions of higher learning differ. Although historically universities have been primarily assimilated into the comprehensive liberal arts (academic) component of institutions of higher learning, there have been universities whose names and educational missions have suggested a focussed specialisation (for instance, university of science and technology, university of agriculture). Both universities and other institutions can also be classified according to their public versus private statuses.

The private institutions can, in turn, be classified in two groups: sectarian versus secular private institutions. The public institutions can be local, regional, national (national single-state countries or state and national/federal institutions in federal systems) institutions, or transnational ones. Private institutions can also have a similar basis of differentiation. As already alluded to, while some institutions are comprehensive, others focus on major fields such as education, as in the case of colleges for professional training of teachers of different levels in the system. Many other factors such as gender (co-educational versus single-sex institutions), the commonly called elite/selective versus popular institutions (directly or indirectly associated with social class) are important bases in the effort to find a typology of higher education institutions. In recent years, the advent and application to educational delivery of the information and communication technologies have led to e-Universities or open and mega-universities, which constitute a new basis of categorisation. Some among these e-Universities consist of a dual mode in which distance learning is designed as a supplement to the regular face-to-face learning within traditional brick-and-mortar institutions, while an increasing number of single-mode programmes of distance learning—for instance in open- and mega-universities—operate entirely as virtual institutions.

The main purpose for attempting to identify at least broad categories of institutions is to tease out the range of possibilities and grounds of individual and

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complementary contributions of these institutions in meeting demand from the population and the potential users in Africa. Substantively, identifying the types of institutions also serves the purpose of raising and addressing fundamental issues of pedagogy, social ethics, and institutional administration. Indeed, some of the relevant issues in the African contexts include the substantive gap between the different types of institutions and their connection to the different social categories and the practical organisation of these institutions within educational systems expected to serve particular local, national, regional, and transnational populations, and communities—all this with the stated or assumed expectation of promoting socio-economic development.

The book entitled *Guide to Higher Education in Africa* (Association of African Universities/International Association of Universities/UNESCO 2002) provides some useful information on the different types of institutions in each African country. These institutions are presented according to regional specificities and cultural or educational traditions and history. The general categories are based on the colonial legacy and the language of instruction: Portuguese, English, French, and Arabic. Although Ethiopia was not formally colonised, it has adopted English as the language of instruction in higher education and is, thus, included in the Anglophone countries. Equatorial Guinea has joined the Francophone model with an actual bilingual practice. These categories are not mutually exclusive as, for instance, several North African countries also share a Francophone tradition. There are also a few other exceptions. Thus, Cameroon, for instance, includes both French and British traditions. The diverse higher education institutions in the African countries are located in these broad categories.

For instance, in the Francophone system, higher education includes, besides the university, other institutions such as institut, institut supérieur, institut supérieur technique, institut national, institut polytechnique, école, école supérieure, grande école, école normale, école normale supérieure, école nationale, école nationale supérieure, école supérieure de technologie, centre supérieur, and centre universitaire. Lusophone countries have institutes, higher institutes, and higher polytechnic institutes. In Anglophone countries, the non-university institutions include: college (which may be located in universities), technical college, technical and vocational college, vocational and technical institution, institute, technical institute, teachers college/teacher training college, college of education, vocational training centre, polytechnic, and specialised institution. To this list the *technikon*, specific to South Africa, must be added. As indicated above, North African countries have in common Francophone traditions with *centre universitaire, école nationale, grande école, institut supérieur, institut supérieur*

des études technologiques, institut national, école supérieure, école normale supérieure, établissement de formation des cadres. There is also an Anglophone influence as illustrated by the name and pedagogical traditions of institutions such as teacher training institute, higher institute, higher institute of technology, teacher training institute, research centre, and military academy. The seminary (*séminaire* and especially grand *séminaire*) is a sectarian institution of higher learning—with a special and limited group, should be mentioned as well. The religious institutions, especially the Church, in specific historical contexts, have played major roles in creating both sectarian and non-sectarian institutions for the general public.

To the national institutions, several regional and transnational institutions must be added. These institutions deal with different functions of higher education. Some are full-fledged comprehensive academic institutions of teaching and research, while the main function of others is either teaching or research. Several countries with a relatively small population or severely limited budget still have no universities of their own. In these countries, domestic higher education institutions focus on technical and vocational training while for university education their students are sent to other countries inside or outside Africa. This is the case, for instance, in the Gambia and São Tomé and Príncipe. In Mali however, the absence of a university in the early years of independence was a political choice guided by a certain philosophy of education.

The status of some institutions may change over time, as for instance a *centre universitaire* is potentially a university and may acquire the status of university by law before or after it starts to fulfil the main functions of a university. The types, statuses, perceived and actual prestige, and so forth, vary among these non-university institutions of higher education. Some are highly specialised, for instance, the teacher training colleges/*écoles normales* and *écoles normales supérieures* that are designed for the education and technical training of teachers at different levels of the educational systems, especially the secondary and college levels. Although the prestige and attraction of the university have been emphasised, it should be added that some other institutions enjoy equal, if not higher, status. In the Francophone tradition for instance, the *école* or *grande école* are highly competitive and offer specific and specialised education, in comparison to the generally broader university education. In part, amidst pressure from demand, there are also new types of institutions that have been emerging.

In presenting the various types of institutions of higher education, it is important to ask how policies, practices, and facts of these institutions affect demand for education in the university or other institutions. The following questions serve as guidelines to localise the discussion on the types of higher education

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and to think of possible directions of relevant research to understand the dynamics in African societies and to search for pertinent solutions. How do universities and other institutions affect each other? As indicated above, universities have been enjoying considerable prestige and attractive power. Is this tradition perpetuated by certain policies and what are the objective conditions that sustain this status in African countries amidst the crises and their impacts on the functioning and delivery of the African universities? What perpetuates the perceived or actual greater prestige of the university? What is the interplay of resource allocation and market value of the diplomas earned from universities as compared to those from other institutions? What are the sources and meanings of pressure for university education? What are the quality and the relevance of education offered by universities and other institutions? How has demand for the different types of institutions evolved and how does that evolution fit into the traditional binary framework of argument of university versus all other higher education institutions? In the search for African solutions to educational challenges at the global level, how to factor in the changes that have taken place?

Before addressing these questions related to the nature of demand and the contemporary pool of institutions of higher education, it is appropriate to recall the historical process of the development of African higher education that led to the current situation.

Origins and Development of African Higher Education

The importance of recalling history is justified by the necessity of locating contemporary realities in the processes and the changing rationalities of the various internal and external agents that played major roles in shaping African higher education. Articulating the importance of history, Clarke (1996) stated:

> History is a clock that people use to tell the political and cultural time of the day. It is also a compass that people use to find themselves on the map of human geography. History tells the people where they have been, what they have been, where they are, and what they are. Most important, history tells the people where they still must go and what they still must be.

According to the philosopher Santayana, 'those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it'. History or collective memory does not mean fatalistic conception of predetermined experiences, ideas, and perspectives. Rather it provides a foundation that, like a springboard, can help a people to propel itself onto a chosen path for its future development. The mere fact that despite the

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prominent role it played in history until the middle of the fifteenth century, Africa was effectively reduced to its current weak and peripheral status in the world system, is an eloquent testimony that history is not destiny. If it had been the case, Africa would be among the world powers in this Third Millennium. Similarly, if by their will and actions the Europeans could successfully and systematically destroy and reconstruct African social institutions to primarily serve their interests, African people can change historical direction by their will, guided by their determination to serve the interests of the African people by resolutely undertaking the task of appropriation and reconstruction of their institutions.

For this reason alone, revisiting the past to learn from it and let it guide actions for the future would be a must. In the case of higher education in Africa, however, it is not just a past when analysing the challenges of continued neo-colonial agendas that are carried out by former colonial powers, their allies and their global proxies of international organisations such as the World Bank. Past policies set up in the colonial context are still being actualised. The very nature of education as a social institution that plays a major role in the process of social reproduction of colonial policies, further facilitates the reproduction of institutions rooted in the tradition and history of former colonial powers whose control is perpetuated, and whose search for a permanent presence is actualised. Why, while there is agreement about the importance of higher education, especially universities, in the development of modern societies, have the types of institutions that have been created in Africa in the colonial and post-colonial eras not been conducive to the people's expected socioeconomic and developmental output? To address some of these fundamental questions, it is necessary to make a serious effort to locate the contemporary situation in its broader historical context, including the indigenous experiences of pre-colonial higher education in Africa.

Indeed, historical facts attest to the ancient and indigenous roots and long experience of institutionalised higher learning in Africa, with variable coverage of the population and degrees of systematisation according to sub-regional specificities in different historical periods. It has been authoritatively articulated, based on history (Ajayi et al. 1996) that despite earlier arguments which denied systematic organisation of the higher learning space in Africa before the advent of Western colonial control, 'It is now clear that indigenous education involved far more than an inward-looking process of socialization', and composed elementary, secondary, and higher levels (Ajayi et al. 1996:4). These authors show that 'indigenous higher education produced and transmitted new

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knowledge necessary for understanding the world, the nature of man (sic), society, God and various divinities, the promotion of agriculture and health, literature and philosophy' (Ajayi et al. 1996:5).

Furthermore, 'the roots of the University as a community of scholars, with an international outlook but also with responsibilities within particular cultures, can be traced back to two institutions that developed in Egypt in the last two or three centuries BC and AD', with the Alexandria model and the monastic system with sophisticated knowledge production (Ajayi et al. 1996:5). The propagation and establishment of Islam in North and West Africa led to the emergence of renowned institutions of higher learning founded on Islam, for several centuries, among which the most famous were universities such as Karawiyyinn in Fez (Morocco) in 859 AD, Al-Azhar created in Cairo (Egypt) in 970, considered the 'oldest continuously operating University in the world' (Arab Information Centre 1966:282), and Sankore in Timbuktu from the twelfth century.

A refined interpretation of higher education leads to the conclusion that, although the Africans — and the Europeans for that matter — did not set up academic learning spaces that are similar to universities in the contemporary Europeanised societies, they had systems that fulfilled missions that, in their principles, were not essentially different. Addressing the case of Ancient Egypt, Lulat (2005) states:

> To be sure, the Egyptians may not have had exact replicas of the modern university or college, but it is certainly true that they did possess an institution that, from their perspective, fulfilled some of the roles of higher education institution. One such institution dating from around c. 2000 BC E was the per-ankh (or the House of Life). It was located within the Egyptian temples, which usually took the form of huge campuses, with many buildings, and thousands of employees (Lulat 2005:44).

This Egyptian case can be analysed in the broader framework of the Nile Valley Civilisation that started the Upper Nile regions, including Ethiopia. Even leaving aside the more ancient experience of organised higher learning, including the long experience of Ancient Egypt and the entire Nile Valley, centres for higher learning flourished in Africa before, or at the same time as, the most advanced parts of Western Europe. Given the role of European colonial powers in the creation of current higher education systems of African countries, especially the universities, it is important to recall the origins of these European universities in order to problematise their socio-historical location and to address issues of relevance to contemporary African institutions. Articulating the relationship between historical roots and the state of contemporary higher education in Africa

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resonates with the arguments that universities are guardians of 'the heritage of the past... enshrine both hope and nostalgia', and 'are linked to ways of life which may be out of date but which, since they are collective stereotypes, continue to appeal to the imagination of the young and to guide many of their choices' (International Association of Universities 1977:8). In Universities: British, Indian, African, Ashby (1966:3) stated:

> An institution is the embodiment of an ideal. In order to survive, an institution must fulfil two conditions: it must be sufficiently stable to sustain the ideal which gave it birth and sufficiently responsive to remain relevant to the society which supports it. The university is a medieval institution which fulfils both these conditions. The ideal — the disinterested pursuit of learning — which drew scholars to Oxford seven centuries ago still unites a guild of scholars in that city, and similar guilds flourish in hundreds of other cities. Yet the university has kept pace with the mutations of society; a college in California is as relevant to modern American society as the studium generale in ancient Paris was relevant to church and state in the Middle Ages.

In Europe, the development of centres of higher learning in the Middle Ages constituted the initial foundation of modern universities. Like the African institutions mentioned above, the nascent European universities of the Middle Ages emerged out of the leadership of religious institutions specifically the Christian Churches. Indeed, universities created in specific locations in Medieval Europe shared a common religious authority: the Catholic Church. The influence of the Church and the religious content and character of formal education grew and, finally by the eleventh and twelfth centuries, the goal of education became less unidimensional. The Church ceased to be the sole social system which controlled education for the use of its outcome. At that time, a growing urban population including an embryonic bourgeoisie understood the relationship between education and the economic system that they were controlling. In its search for an education that would help produce the needed human resources to meet their growing economic needs, that 'small bourgeoisie' contributed significantly to the creation of more schools for the acquisition of the knowledge they needed and that was not included within the sphere of control of the Church.

The domains that needed specialised knowledge included trade, administration, and law. This is the context in which more schools were created, many of them under the initiative of political authorities such as kings, princes, and authorities in the growing urban centres. The graduates of these schools had employment opportunities offered by the socio-economic structure of the time.

This constituted a key factor that triggered the motivation for wanting an education and the development of the urban middle class.

In France, for instance, where one of the European systems transferred to the African continent originated, the basic curriculum of the education that was taking its modern form consisted of the 'seven liberal arts' (grammar, rhetoric, and logic, which composed the trivium; arithmetic, geometry, astronomy, and music, which composed the quadrivium), while education in theology, law, and medicine represented the embryonic form of higher education. During the thirteenth century, the future educational system of France was set upon its foundations. As Chevalier et al. (1968:15) explain:

> Professor and students obtained autonomy from the state of the time and partially from the Church and constituted in bodies which took the name of universities provided with certain privileges and some independence. These universities provided themselves a four-faculties internal organization: faculty of arts distributing a kind of secondary education oriented around the study of liberal arts, which after seven years of studies, led to the final diploma, which from the 14th century, took the name of baccalaureate; the baccalaureate holders were allowed to enter one of the three other faculties (theology, law, and medicine) which, at the level of higher education, delivered the license and doctorate degrees and opened access to the profession of teaching, law, administration, and medicine.

The tandem of secondary school-university track, even when it was controlled and shaped by the religious groups, had broader social missions in educating the future leaders.

Another important characteristic of early European universities was the fact that they did not develop simultaneously in all European countries or in all regions within any given country. For instance, when in the Middle Ages universities were flourishing in other parts of Europe, particularly with the Bologna and Paris models, the area that is Germany today had no university. Yet, in the early nineteenth century, especially with the Humboldtian introduction of a model establishing a dynamic, dialectical, and mutually reinforcing relationship between teaching and research, German institutions became a model for what has become the contemporary research university in the United States — which in turn inspires other institutions around the world. Thus, there were countries from which European culture and institutions expanded, at different periods and paces, to the entire European continent, especially Western Europe, throughout the following centuries.

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It took centuries to consolidate European states and social institutions, including educational institutions, especially higher education with universities at their centre. In Europe, the dialectics between nation building, construction and refinement of an economic system of production, political processes, and the making of educational systems and of institutions of higher learning reflected continuity and internal contradictions of the European context. The key actors, decision-makers, classes, and various interest groups and agents of change grew out of this context and historical process. Thus, 'the past' and collective memories, regardless of whether those memories are full of 'nostalgia' or sorrow, are shared from within.

When the process of the foundation and development of the universities started, Western Europe was confronted with problems of underdevelopment and social fragmentation in the war-ridden nations-to-be. However, the social and religious groups that founded and shaped the universities did not spell out a clear societal mission in a way that is similar to the unison call of African leaders, who have been positioned to assign a specific mission to their higher education institutions, especially the universities. A perceived and actual initial social disconnection between European universities and their social environments led to the notion of the university as an 'ivory tower' wherein reflection becomes an end in itself.

This perception of the distance between the role of the university and the needs of its social and national surroundings is in part based on historical facts. However, the location of the learning space vis-à-vis global society, and the social characteristics of those who were in charge of knowledge production within the university at that time (i.e., professors and monks), should not literally be interpreted as sign of total isolation and lack of societal mission of these institutions. Indeed, in the nineteenth-century Europe—at the time of its formal colonisation of Africa—there was a clearly articulated connection between education and national development. As Craig and Spear (1982) argue, in nineteenth-century Europe

> ... one important, if not crucial link between the expansion of schooling and economic integration is the demand for predictable and universally understood modes of behavior in an increasingly complex and differentiated economy. The patterns or styles of behavior required in an elaborated system of social and economic exchange include the articulation of a universal body of norms that are shared by all participants in the exchange process.

Unlike Europe, however, Africa did not have yet the opportunity to consolidate and expand the various forms of institutions of higher learning throughout the

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continent or even in sub-regions of the continent where they were first set up and started to flourish. The process of African internal evolution was brutally interrupted by several centuries of disruption, destruction, and tragic human and social dislocation (of unprecedented magnitude and duration) especially with the transatlantic enslavement and its extension and culmination in colonisation in the nineteenth century. Indeed, the process of an internally rooted path of social advancement through the development of indigenous institutions ebbed. The dynamics of historical process were forced to change their paths and focus of their energy. Thus, one of the main features of the contemporary systems of formal education, especially in higher education, in Africa is the absence of socio-historical continuity and contemporary social connection between the existing institutions of higher learning and the prevailing modes of indigenous education, and the overall social surrounding.

The reaction of Africans in general, when European education was first introduced, was characterised by the overwhelming rejection by leaders and the general population. This rejection was a statement by the Africans of their refusal to be disconnected from their societies and history and their unacceptable submission to what Europeans considered to be the 'ideals' for the Africans. Figuratively and practically, the Africans wanted to be able to communicate, speaking the same languages in their respective groups, with the learning youth in their respective communities. They were affirming their rights to ownership as decision-makers in defining education for their future.

There was a major turning point in this resistance when, in the context of the struggle against colonial exploitation, discrimination, and subjugation, new and emerging African elites embraced European formal education whose lower level was first forced on the Africans and whose upper level was later demanded by the Africans. For the Africans, the colonial administrations (for example, the French), and the missionaries (for instance, various churches in British colonies and the Vatican in the Belgian Congo) that organised European education in the colonies, the value of European education changed drastically in a few decades.

From an instrument of total social control manipulated by the colonisers and perceived as such by the Africans at the beginning of formal colonisation, formal education soon revealed its potential as a powerful instrument for struggle in the hands of the colonised and the oppressed. Conceived first by the colonial administrations and the Churches also as a means for developing profitable use of the human resources of the colonies, it became the instrument through which the foundation of colonial domination was being questioned, by those who were schooled, by force, in European institutions. Considered first by the Africans as just another colonial institution geared to serving the interests of the colonisers,

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schooling became a source of genuine power in the colonial societies. It also appeared to be the most important avenue toward upward mobility on the new and Westernising socio-economic and political ladder, and a tool for self-determination. There was a perception of a linear and, positive correlation between formal education and the ability to climb the steps of the emerging Western-style social ladder.

From the 1930s to the 1950s, the demand from the new African Western-educated elite and nationalists to establish in African countries the full European system of education was articulated in all African sub-regions and countries regardless of the type of colonial power that was ruling. In the context of social policies defined by the ideology of colonisation, the mere fact that higher education was reserved for the colonisers was in itself a sufficient condition for the Africans who were fighting for social justice and racial equality to demand it. More important than proving that Africans and Europeans could be treated equally, the Africans themselves had realised the power vested in the European education in the Europeanising context. Their demand for Western education was substantiated by the arguments that if European education was good the Europeans, it was good for the Africans too. The argument advanced by the Africans to create higher education institutions placed the issues of establishing African universities in the context of an evolving colonial policy of neo-colonialism.

Despite the ancient experience of some African societies with universities or higher education in general, the overwhelming majority of African universities was created after 1960, when most African countries acquired their independence. Whether they were created before—albeit in embryonic form—or after independence, at their inception the African universities were characterised by structural dependence on, and submission to, the academic models and specific institutions of the former colonial powers. In contrast to the assumed and expected role of the post-colonial university in Africa as an institution with a social mission in economic development and nation building, the type of university that prevails in Africa has been struggling between the actualisation of its European medieval roots and colonial foundations, and the African history and contemporary social structure.

European education transferred to Africa is deeply rooted in Christian and Greco-Roman traditions. Before the building and consolidation of European nations, there was no group that systematically organised formal education to serve specific interests. In this relative vacuum, as indicated earlier, the religious groups were the first to organise the embryonic system of education using Christianity as the transmitter of ancient Western civilisations. Unlike the African

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countries, the European countries did not have any contemporary power that served as a model for them or that imposed its systems on them. This is not the case in the colonial and post-colonial contexts in Africa where, as it is examined below, period, pace, and types of institutions and their traditions have been determined by the different colonial powers that controlled the different countries. In order to gain a comprehensive and realistic appreciation of the ongoing situation and areas of further research in the search for solutions, it is useful to recall the contemporary socio-historical dynamics through which the systems came into existence in Africa.

The Creation of Higher Education Institutions in the Colonial and Early Post-colonial Periods

Even in the context of the proclaimed French philosophy and official policy of assimilation that was conceptualised for the colonies, it appeared quickly that in reality assimilation was incompatible with the exigencies of colonisation. Thus, for instance, despite the stated assimilation policy and its proclaimed openness and universalistic reach, it took longer to introduce higher education in the French colonies than in the British. To fully appreciate the nature and development of the higher education institutions in African countries today, the processes of their creation in the African contexts and the main features of the different traditions, and also according to some regional/inherited specificities, it is necessary to provide a background that can be useful in the analysis and understanding of the contemporary institutions. The rationale for the grouping of contemporary African higher education institutions under colonial origin or language, is to critically examine higher education institutions with common or different traditions that can be traced to sub-regional and cultural specificities or socio-historical experiences.

The Process of Setting up Higher Education Institutions in the British Colonies

The British colonial policy granted authority to the different churches to take up the organisation of education in the colonies. The subsequent competition among the churches, coupled with the realisation by the Africans—even those who rejected initially this education for different reasons—that it could be used to their advantage, contributed to increased enrolment in British colonies much earlier than in the other colonies. Even in the British-administered colonies, this

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phenomenon could be found as well. However, some settler colonies experienced less expansion of education for the Africans because of the resistance by the settlers, who realised that the Africans receiving European education could endanger their privileges.

Several institutions called 'colleges'—Gordon Memorial College in Khartoum (Sudan), Makerere Government College in Kampala (Uganda), Yaba Higher College in Lagos (Nigeria), and Princess of Wales School and College in Achimota (Ghana)—created between the end of the nineteenth century and the 1920s, were in reality, in their initial formats and contents, designed as secondary schools with vocational/technical functions. They did, however, with Fourah Bay College in Freetown (Sierra Leone), constitute the foundation of higher education institutions that gradually emerged in the educational landscape of the colonies in West and East Africa. This development followed a process in which the recommendations of various committees and commissions played a vital role in interpreting the interface of local demand and colonial exigencies. The British Advisory Committee on Education in the Colonies and the Phelps-Stokes Commission, which produced two reports, played vital roles in defining the future development of education in the British colonies and in Africa at large (Ajayi et al. 1996).

The views from the major British authorities involved in the definition and implementation of colonial policies were consistent with the articulated British philosophy of indirect rule and preservation of the native culture. They devised this philosophy not out of respect for African culture, but rather in the context of social Darwinism, which basically argued that culture is hereditary and that it would be a futile exercise to try to make the natives acquire the full British culture. The nature of the local resistance also contributed to the enforcement of the indirect rule policy. As a corollary, the assumed inability of the Africans to learn beyond the basic and secondary/technical/vocational levels at best was a major factor in the formulation of education policy for the colonised Africans. Of course, the awareness of the danger that education constituted was a factor, as accurately concluded by the European settlers. Indeed, besides being an instrument of control of the colonised, education, especially higher education, could become a tool for liberation in the hands of the Africans.

Hence, for instance, they implemented a policy for the use of African languages in the schools. In 1939 the British Governors of West African colonies discussed and agreed on the creation of a full-fledged West African university. They insisted on the importance of making sure that this institution (at Achimota) would be 'West African in spirit and reality as well as in name, and not a mere colourless

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imitation of a British University' (quoted by Ajayi et al.:52). Commenting on the Governors' other request for a necessary affiliation with one or several British universities to ensure quality as a prerequisite, Ajayi et al. (1996:52) stated:

> How affiliation with a British University was to produce a University that was truly West African and no colourless imitation, was not explored. Perhaps they set it as a conundrum to put off their critics. Perhaps it was an admission that they had run out of arguments to defend colonial obstructions to educational development in the colonies.

In spite of the hesitation and resistance of the British the time the decolonisation movement intensified and the actual granting of independence started, with Sudan in 1956 and then Ghana in 1957, there was also in place a solid set of higher education institutions at various stages.

French Francophone Traditions and Experiences

In a study focussing on the historical development of French educational strategies for Sub-Saharan Africa from 1815 to 1962, and the impact of these strategies on post-colonial educational policies, Bolibaugh and Hanna (1964) argued that French policy was characterised by a clear purpose, defined by planners of a grand strategy, and a certain continuity in the organisation. Not surprisingly, many issues identified in these contexts include the inability to adapt to the needs of Sub-Saharan Africa. The debates in France on education for the colonies did not really focus on whether to provide education. Rather the issue concerned the type of education and whether, within the official policy of assimilation, to transfer to all African colonies and for the Africans the same education offered to the French. The major question was how to use education for assimilation and whether to transfer the French system only partially, or even to adapt the system which would be transferred (Assié 1982). On that matter many people consider:

> ... the assimilationist attitudes of some French-policy makers as mere reflection of their ethnocentrism. Indeed it was the most progressive officials who advocated the creation of metropolitan forms of education in Africa, with the expectation that the barriers between African and European would thus be eradicated. Their fundamentally liberal orientation is too often forgotten, since their aim was that both groups should enjoy parity of opportunity and that merit, not cultural or racial origin, should be the primary determinant of social and economic status within the French community (Clignet and Foster 1966:8-9).

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This point is important, as it became a key element in the dependency trap in the post-colonial era. By and large however, higher education was not offered to the colonised Africans. This prevailing situation was well summarized by Ajayi et al. (1996) when they concluded that 'for the Africans, the French policy aimed to leave the mass uneducated, and to groom a select few as évolués, co-opted as loyal upholders of French culture and colonial rule, encouraged to complete their education in France and to feel more at home in Paris than in Africa' (Ajayi et al. 1996:39). Given this open and hidden policy of higher education of the French government, it is not surprising that the oldest among the contemporary institutions that were upgraded to the status of universities were really set up by the demand of the Africans themselves, toward the end of the colonial era. This is the context in which the *Instituts des Hautes Études*, which at that time constituted the only institutions of higher learning in the French colonies, were developed in Dakar and Tananarive and also in Abidjan shortly before the end of the en masse independence of French colonies in 1960.

North African Experiences

In their protectorates of Morocco and Tunisia and their main settler colony of Algeria, the French were not eager to develop higher education either. The French administration adopted different approaches in these two French North African protectorates of Tunisia and Morocco and the settler colony of Algeria in building such a key social institution—like education. For instance, according to Vermeren, the French education policy was more open in Tunisia than in Morocco, where the French practised a more 'Malthusian policy' (Vermeren 2002:19-32). However, as in the administered colonies, in the tension between the proclaimed policy of assimilation and the exigencies of the colonial ideology, the balance leaned toward control and limitation. There were pre-colonial century-old universities (Ez-Zitouna in Tunisia and Karawiyyinn in Morocco) that, because of the religious power and authority vested in them could not be dismantled by the French. Thus, with these few exceptions, by and large, universities in these countries were also created after their respective independence—in 1956 for both Morocco and Tunisia and in Algeria in 1962, following the bloody war of liberation during which most educational infrastructures were destroyed. In Tunisia, for instance, at the time of independence there was only the *Institut des Hautes Études* that functioned 'under the patronage of the University of Paris' and acquired its status as a university by decrees in 1960 and 1961 (Arab Information Centre 1966:260).

In Libya, although the British during their occupation that followed the Italians, expressed less resistance to the development of education at large, enrolment was limited and the University of Libya (now Al-Fateh University), which grew out of colleges set up in the 1950s, was established after independence. Several other universities have been created since then.

Although neither a colony nor a protectorate in conventional terms, Egypt is presented here, given some similarities in its experience with other North African countries. Its colonial status and arrangements for autonomy were unique. Also unique is its experience as the home of the Al-Azhar created in 970 and which, as indicated above, is the 'oldest continuously operating university in the world' (Arab Information Centre 1966:282), in addition to its earlier institutions dating back to antiquity. It also had the exceptional situation (excluding South Africa's equally exceptional situation) of having created several universities before the big wave of independence movements and concurrent university creation.

By and large, North African countries have larger numbers of higher education institutions, including universities, and many of them were created before those of other African countries. In addition, there are some sub-regional cultural specificities, for instance, the use of Arabic as a medium of instruction and more cases of pre-colonial and fewer colonially controlled institutions. Also in comparison to most other African countries, they have several post-colonial universities that were created earlier, a large number of them in the 1980s and a few more since the 1990s. One of the main questions to be asked is whether these variations also reflect differences in the crises and responses to change in the current context.

Belgian Francophone Influence and Higher Education

The emphasis in this subsection is on the Congo. After the status of the Belgian Congo changed from the personal property of Leopold II to a colony of the Belgian state, in order to maximise the chances of their exploitation of the Congo, the Belgians decided to avoid a transfer to the Congo of their domestic differences and conflicts between the Flemish and the Walloons. Thus, French was selected as the sole European language to be used in their colony. The Democratic Republic of Congo, and also Burundi and Rwanda (they were trusteeship territories administered by the Belgians) are among the countries with a Francophone tradition in the educational system, especially at the higher levels. The colonial policy of education, initially under the control of the Vatican following its agreement with Leopold II, focused on elementary education. Unlike

the French, it was not elitist in its philosophy. There was rather a policy of mass enrolment that led to the fact that when the process of independence started, the Belgian Congo had a far greater proportion (about half) of school-age children enrolled in school. This had powerful consequences for the near future. Indeed, close to the time of independence, the local demand for higher education led to the creation of one of the most impressive higher educational institutions in Africa at the time.

The universities in the Democratic Republic of Congo reflect the socio-political trajectory of the country with its special colonial journey. It was created as a colony with a unique status as the personal property of King Leopold II of Belgium until 1908, when it was transferred to the Kingdom of Belgium. By any standard, in terms of its size and exceptional resources, it represented a lion's share. King Leopold's and later the Belgian policy of education was marked by the deal between the Vatican and the King. The education system was totally under the control of the Catholic Church until the 1940s when the influence of a few Protestant denominations started to grow. Colonial education was characterised by widely spread basic education with no provision for higher education except for the male priest-to-be. Université Lovanium was created under pressure from the Congolese people and out of necessity at the time of independence. Its structures were built on the model of Université de Louvain in Brussels. Its first students were predominantly Belgians.

However, unlike the French colonies that were characterised by a very selective and limited number of primary school pupils, the Belgian colonial education produced a widely distributed basic education throughout the country. Given this large pool of potential applicants for the upper levels of education and also because of its size and population, some universities located in major regions were created soon after independence. Furthermore, a certain innovative impulse and private initiative sparked in the country, sooner than elsewhere, with the founding of Université Libre du Congo. Initially Centre Pré-universitaire de Luluabourg/Kananga, it was transferred to Kisangani, where it acquired its university status. All three universities—Université Lovanium in Kinshasa, Université Officielle in Lubumbashi, and Université Libre in Kisangani—were nationalised during the authenticity politics and thus, starting in 1971, were administratively merged into the single Université Nationale du Zaïre (UNAZA).

In the decades that followed and following the disintegration of the public services after years of the reign of terror of one of the most destructive authoritarian regimes, several other institutions have been created to meet the relentlessly

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high demand. Another reason why the DRC at this point presents a special interest is that indeed for years (almost for two decades), the state collapsed, and totally so, for a few years before the beginning of a timid process of recovery after May 1997, under the regime of President Laurent-Désiré Kabila. However, this process was cut short with the 1998 invasion and the subsequent war.

The capacity of these institutions to function after decades of this total collapse is one reason why they should be analysed with the assumption that they must have developed a special and creative capacity to survive against all odds. Despite institutional separate experience, the state is still the only agency that can open universities. According to the legal provisions, it can grant and renew (or terminate) an operational permit to non-public institutions. It has granted such authorisation in all provinces of the Congo with about ten private institutions of higher learning, some of which are universities in Kinshasa. Many other types of higher education institutions have been created.

The Portuguese

Portugal was a poor and weak colonial power with settler colonies that adapted its educational policy in the colonies to its objective conditions. Indeed, it adopted a policy of laissez-faire or full freedom for the missionaries to meet the need of the colonists and affiliated assimilados. Given the presence of a large number of settlers with limited resources and education who were eager to take up even the clerical jobs that in other colonies were left to the natives, there appeared to be no compelling reason for Portugal to upgrade its policy of education. Furthermore, having declared its colonies overseas territories in the 1950s, and assuming that such unilateral decisions rendered unnecessary any need to address the aspirations of the Africans, it did not set up any real higher education foundation when the struggle for liberation was stepped up and led to formal independence in the mid-1970s.

The Spanish and the Italian Presence and Experience

The Spanish, with a minimal presence in Equatorial Guinea and later Western Sahara (El Saharaoui Republic), did not develop any coherent educational policy. Italy had also relatively little presence in Africa to start with, given their initial defeat and short rule of the early 1930s in Ethiopia, their lack of significant impact in Somalia, where there was strong resistance against the missionaries that Italy wanted to use, and the near total absence of control in Libya (also addressed under the heading of North Africa).

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The South African Experience

Correspondence theory stipulates that educational systems produce the labour for the placement of individuals according to their social origins, and thus legitimise structured inequality. As has been articulated by this theory, education is but one of the major social institutions that are organised and kept under the control of the dominant class in order to reproduce social inequality. According to this theory, by means of socialisation all the classes in a given society are taught to consider and accept the existing inequality as natural. By the same token, the privileges of the dominant class are legitimised through rituals of promotion within the educational system from the lower to the upper grades and levels and granting of diplomas and degrees. While this analysis is applicable to all the European systems that were transferred to Africa, in the context of colonial domination, the dominant class (the Europeans) did not identify any compelling reason to conceal the actual role of education as a self-serving screening device in the hand of the colonisers.

The longest colonial rule in Africa, which formally structured the essence of colonial domination, was further solidified through the institution of social reproduction. It was stated that 'The Bantu must be so educated that they do not want to become imitators [of Whites, but] that they will want to remain essentially Bantu' (Quoted by Ashby 1966:346). Higher education, and more specifically university education, was established in South Africa in the nineteenth century with the founding of the University of the Cape of Good Hope in 1873, later changed into the University of South Africa. Throughout the first half of the twentieth century South Africa acquired several colleges (Cape Town and Stellenbosch). Several others that were initially affiliated with the University of South Africa (in Pretoria, Johannesburg, Bloemfontein, Grahamstown, and Pietermaritzburg) acquired the status of university (except Wellington, which was among the initial affiliated colleges). The University of South Africa continued a specialisation in distance learning which has made it one of the oldest and most advanced universities to make full use of information and communication technologies as the medium of its educational delivery.

The policy of segregation and racial inequality reflected the systematisation and reinforcement of the general policy of apartheid. After 1948, a series of laws concerning general education for Blacks was imposed. Other laws were passed specifically for higher education to ensure that education played its role in supporting the perpetuation of apartheid. Indeed, despite the tightening grip of apartheid policies even after the adoption by the white minority, in the early 1950s, of the exclusionist laws against the Africans, Indians, and Coloured peo-

ple, students continued to register at, besides a college for Blacks at Fort Hare, the existing institutions, especially at the universities of Cape Town and Witwatersrand and also at the University of Natal, albeit in segregated classes (Ashby 1966:345). However, a

> bill introduced in 1957 had in it clauses which struck at the very roots of the academic tradition. It excluded nonwhites from the existing teaching universities and it made it a punishable offence (a fine of £100 or six months imprisonment) for a non-white to register at a 'white' university without permission from the minister of Bantu Education. Another clause in the bill made it an offence, rewarded with the same punishment, for a white to register at a 'non-white' university college (Ashby 1966:346-347).

Thus for more than three decades the policy for separate and unequal education, that was instituted, profoundly carved its marks on education in general, with particular implications for higher education. Ironically, the period of the late 1950s and early 1960s that corresponded to the establishment of universities in newly independent African countries coincided with tighter apartheid and Bantustan policies. Thus, following a new 1959 law, 'Bantu' colleges were designed within the policy of forced ethnic concentration and segregation by living space and institutional affiliations. For instance, even the college at Fort Hare, which existed before and was affiliated with Rhodes University, was made to comply with the new policy and de facto for the Xhosa, while the new colleges were the North (predominantly for the Sotho, Venda, and Tsonga), and the college of Zululand (for the Zulu and Swazi). Other colleges, targeting the specific legally classified groups of Coloured near Cape Town and the Indians on the east coast, specifically in Durban, were created. The legacy of these policies in the post-apartheid era is enduring despite great strides.

The universities in Africa are usually located in the capital cities or other cities. Only in South Africa were universities created in non-urban elite centres. The relegation of some historically African universities in rural settings is indeed a metaphor for the significance of the stratification of higher learning within the socio-spatial structure and organisation. Namibia was under control of South Africa and became de facto its colony until the liberation war led to its 1990 independence. It was previously ruled as a South African province and thus was under colonial/apartheid rule from the end of the First World War. Following its independence, its higher education institution was transformed and a full-fledged university was created in 1992.

Higher Education in Liberia

Liberia, like Ethiopia, presents special situations, as it was not formally colonised by the European powers. However, through the various processes of the state formations, both became neo-colonial states.

Liberia, which was founded in the beginning of the nineteenth century (1821) by the American Colonization Society (ACS) with a strong support of the American government, for the return and settlement of freed enslaved Africans from the United States, became, with its independence in 1847, the first modern state in Africa to be created with a direct Western influence. With the creation of Liberia College in 1862, it became one of the first African states to have the foundation of a Westernised higher education institution, although it took nearly a century to have a real impact, when the institution (Liberia College) was upgraded and transformed into the University of Liberia in 1951. Cuttington College was created by the Episcopal Church, with roots dating back to the end of the nineteenth century but with long interruptions. It also began to function again in the same period, when it reopened in 1949. While, according to the motto of the Americo-Liberians, "the love of liberty brought" them back to Africa, leaving behind the American slave society, in reality, they created a caste-like society in which they were the Brahmins imitating their former masters. The social institutions, including education and access to higher education, reflected this social structure. Thus by the time the formally colonised countries of Africa started to acquire their independence and to address issues of access and relevance, the Liberia situation was essentially the same as that of the other African states.

Higher Education in Ethiopia

Ethiopia made history in the colonial context by soundly defeating (in 1896) Italy, which desperately attempted to carry out its ephemeral occupation in the early 1930s. Like Haiti under the leadership of Toussaint L'Ouverture in 1801 and the declaration of independence under Jean-Jacques Dessalines in 1804, Ethiopia represented pride and inspiration for people of African descent in the context of slave societies of the Americas and black people in general. Ethiopia and its victory symbolised the aspiration for self-determination. However, the process of establishing modern higher educations did not fully reflect its independence.

The period when the solid foundation of its modern higher education system was established in the middle of the twentieth century coincided with the inde-

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pendence movements across the continent and the intensified quest by Africans to establish higher education institutions. There was a relatively noticeable American influence at the University College of Addis Ababa (UCAA). In reality, however, UCAA and other smaller and specialised colleges that were created in the 1950s, were integrated into a single institution named Haile Selassie I University in 1961, which 'developed as an eclectic institution, without commitment to any single foreign culture, system, or doctrine. Although the incorporation of different educational traditions and influences including American, British, and German, into a single institution created serious 'problems of integration', at the same time 'it offered rich opportunity to develop an Ethiopian institution under Ethiopian leadership' (Wodajo 1973). Because its history at the time of the development of higher education was intertwined with that of Ethiopia following the 1952 UN-sanctioned federation with, and the 1962 annexation by, Ethiopia, Eritrea's earlier higher education matters were included in those of Ethiopia.

Problematising Higher Education and Its Role in National Development

All higher education programmes in Africa from the end of the nineteenth century through the 1950s reflected the major trends in philosophical discourse and policy debate among the major Western powers, namely the colonial powers and the United States. The question posed and discussed theoretically with practical policy implications was 'what education was appropriate for the colonised Africans in terms of relevance of the liberal arts type of education as opposed to a technical or vocational education, or the universalistic as opposed to a specific and locally adapted education?' Almost invariably, education in the colonies was more technical or vocational, and the concern for relevance focused on adaptation to the local milieu for immediate use and benefit.

Interestingly, this debate was taking place in post-bellum America where the arguments were framed in the opposing positions of W. E. B. Dubois and Booker T. Washington with direct implications for, and application to, the European colonies of Africa. In the nineteenth century, thus prior to the Dubois versus Washington debate, there was the 'Freetown debate', in which James Johnson and Edward Blyden advocated instead a liberal-arts-classical education for the Africans that would link contemporary Africa with ancient civilisation and the period in which African achievement loomed large on the world scale. Johnson and Blyden were critical of missionary education that they considered Eurocentric and limiting. For them the content of education on the period since the

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beginning of the transatlantic enslavement did not offer enlightenment but rather had been contaminated by the 'race poison' (Ajayi et al. 1996:20). He supported the idea of using African languages. However, when Blyden became the President of Liberia College, he produced and maintained a very strong classical European-type of curriculum. The gap between the strong belief by Blyden in the capacity of the people of African descent to establish solid African-centred institutions and the experience of Liberia College under his leadership, constituted a prelude to the major contemporary issues of entrenched neo-colonial influence in African institutions of higher learning.

The role of formal education in Africa, especially higher education, has to be defined and examined within the framework of the national strategies of development that were adopted in post-colonial Africa. By the time African countries were irreversibly engaging in the process of decolonisation, seeking to redress colonial injustices, and undertaking effective means to achieve socio-economic development, several development theories—modernisation theory, human capital theory, Marxist theory, dependency theory—were being articulated in industrial and Third World countries. Given the depth, breadth, and impact of these theories, there cannot be enough space allocated in this book to any of them despite their respective roles in educational and socio-political processes in the African countries at critical historical junctures. Only a few references are made to support specific arguments. Thus, given its focus on education and human resource development, particularly at the higher education level, human capital theory is discussed with an emphasis on its relevance to the development of education policies in Africa. Given the issue of the persistent ties between African higher education institutions and those of their former colonial masters, dependency theory is also briefly discussed.

Basically an economic theoretical framework that had earlier been articulated, especially by Adam Smith in the eighteenth century (Smith 1998), human capital theory experienced an unprecedented popular application to the field of education at the time when African countries were struggling to acquire their political independence with the concurrent goal of achieving socio-economic development. This theory provides an explanation for the relationship between formal education and the economy by articulating formal education as an investment in development. It stipulates that at the individual level, the greater the number of years of formal education, the more productive a person becomes as he or she acquires the knowledge that the process of education enables. As a result of the individual higher productivity induced by more education, those who have higher level training and thus are assumed to be more productive, receive higher income. At the societal/national level, the argument goes, the

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higher the aggregate level of education of the population, the higher the general national economic output and growth. In the 1950s and 1960s, the concepts of growth and development were considered synonymous, when the most common indicator used to measure both growth and development was the per capita gross national product (GNP). Since education was considered a process of increasing economic productivity and growth, it was thus conceived as a tool for development. The United Nations declared the 1960s the 'development decade'. Thus the global international context and the African internal impetus for social advancement led to the treatment of education as a powerful tool for social progress.

By the early 1960s, education had become the surest means for individual upward mobility. For the newly independent African states, it became an unavoidable instrument for national socio-economic development. Private and social rates of return and of the coefficients of correlation between education and earnings were calculated to support the theory. Furthermore, for the African states inherited from colonisation and their artificial boundaries, education was an invaluable instrument for nation building by exposing the enrolled youth to the same curriculum, formal learning, and common values acquired in the classrooms and also informally in school compounds, boarding school, and university campuses.

In his presidential address, delivered at the seventy-third annual meeting of the American Economic Association on December 28, 1960, in St. Louis, Missouri, Schultz (1977), a scholar who decisively influenced the United States' foreign policy and development assistance, considered appropriate 'assistance to underdeveloped countries to help them achieve economic growth. ... It simply is not possible to have the fruits of a modern agriculture and the abundance of modern industry without making large investments in human beings' (Schultz 1977:322).

Policymakers and citizens of Third World countries who were in search of the most efficient means to improve the overall socio-economic conditions found this theory convincing. For these Third World countries, the United Nations Organisation for Education, Science, and Culture (UNESCO) and other international organisations sponsored several regional meetings to assess the educational needs of those countries. In the case of Africa, the historic Addis Ababa meeting was held in 1961, preceding many more education ministers' periodic meetings in the decades to come. At that time, some key questions that were not consistently asked, including: What type of education for what kind of development? Education for whom? What kind of education for what kind of citizens? Does growth necessarily lead to development? Does equality of educational

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opportunity lead to equality of socio-economic opportunity and attainment? How can one prevent new forms of inequality from emerging while solving existing ones?

As indicated above, since their origins and more specifically in the Western world, universities have been considered repositories of 'universalistic' values. Beside certain criteria that can be considered Western, there are indeed 'universalistic' values that universities ought to transmit (Lumumba-Kasongo 1984) that cannot be claimed by one historical experience or civilisation. However, as Clark (1983:250) explains,

> In developing countries, the state wants from the higher education system: socio-economic relevance defined in terms of practicality and professionalization, cultural relevance referring to cultural revival and national identity, and political relevance defined as good citizenship and commitment to political goals.

Even in the case of Côte d'Ivoire, a country that distinguished itself by its reproduction of the higher education system of the former colonial power after nominal independence, President Houphouët-Boigny articulated the official mission of the National University of Côte d'Ivoire in a speech in which he exhorted the university to comprehend the national reality and 'needs' that should be reflected in its curriculum and organisation. To fulfil its social mission, the university must be culturally relevant, adapted to local needs, he stated (Faujas 1971:41).

Kuper (1977) argued that the university should be grounded in local development. Through a process of decentralisation, it would be possible to reach the desired goal of locating and linking academic teaching and research to the real society that it is expected to serve.

This link existed in all types and at all levels of education, including university education. The whole foundation of the human capital arguments by Adam Smith, later developed by other intellectuals including Alfred Marshall, T. W. Schultz, and others, is based on the assumed direct relationship between education and development. It calls for direct investment for future socio-economic development through education. The highly specialised economy of industrial societies requires highly specialised skills. One of the major problems that African universities still encounter and that must be addressed is precisely how to (philosophically and practically) cut the socio-historical link between European society and Africa institutions and how to root them in their own social structures.

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Yet Higgs (2002) criticises, in the case of the process of transformation in South African universities in the post-apartheid period, the expressed aim of defining the role and mission of the university in economic development and nation building. According to his arguments, an instrumental interpretation of the social role of the university is 'misdirected', and if it serves as the guideline for the ongoing process of educational transformation, it can have a destructive impact. For him, the university does provide service to society. However, in essence, if this role is to be well played, it must be confined to its specific sphere as 'a community of reason'.

This argument seems to assume that it is possible and desirable to produce decontextualised knowledge located at the realm of reason. It also implicitly makes a difference between the production of academic knowledge/education and technical education/training. The former may be acquired without national character—universalistic, transcending national and local specificities—while the latter can be acquired without philosophical content. Yet, as Crawley (2000) in 'The Myth of a European Identity: the Role of the Universities in the Formation of European Citizens' explains, in the case of the role of universities in formation of European citizens:

> The university is that place in our society where we come to an understanding of ourselves as individuals committed to specific projects within a community having a recognisable culture and a shared identity. This is the role, not so much for which the university was designed, but which it created for itself. From its origin in medieval society the university enacted a place to theorise the contingencies of the human situation, to assemble theory into the coherence and unity of science, and to initiate the next generation of scholars and citizens into the discourse appropriate to the engagements of society. Higher learning entails, in part, coming to see the commitment to individual projects as a form of participation in the expression and development of a society's culture (Crawley 2000:29).

Thus, Waghid (2002) challenges what he considers to be Higgs's ambivalent definition of what the university ought to do and what it should not be expected or forced to do in 'meeting the needs of society'. For Waghid (2002), it is possible for the university to retain its character as 'a community of reason' while fulfilling its social mission in the process of nation building. The binary and mutually exclusive reasoning in Higgs's argument echoes the old debate around divorcing the 'superior' intellectual pursuit from the 'inferior' physical considerations. With all the historical and contemporary facts about the philosophical foundation and agendas and challenges of European and African universities,

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such an argument can have only limited usefulness. Waghid rightly argues that the social role of the modern university must be framed within a complementary knowledge base, including both what he calls 'disciplinary knowledge' and 'socially distributed knowledge'.

The application of the binary and hierarchical conception of education is considered by Randall (1993) as a great danger for major educational achievement in the context of apartheid, that is, 'people's education'. He articulated, in anticipation of the task ahead after the formal dismantling of apartheid, that 'people's education' would be precisely relevant and necessary to the process of constructing a new society. He lamented that the notion of 'salvaging' the concept of people's education assumes a process of discarding it and replacing it with something different, for instance the 'skills paradigm', the notion of skills-based training for national development, or 'the new vocationalism', considered to have 'served its provisional utility' (Randall, 1993).

Ping and Crowley (1997) argue in the case of Namibia, that the young post-colonial University of Namibia has been developing similar challenges that are inherent to the nature of older universities. Based on their research findings, they make a case for ways to guide the governmental and academic leadership in ensuring that universities be responsive to national needs. They conclude that in order for higher education to fulfil this social role and mission in the development process, the counterproductive boundaries between the university and the polytechnic must be eliminated. Furthermore, they propose that, instead of importing and maintaining binary models, the roles of these two types of institutions should be merged.

This leads to the question of the type of colonisation that continues, after the formal/physical colonial occupation through education, especially higher education, of which the African policymakers are a product. Thus, the next chapter addresses the question of cultural dependence as a major constraint.

Chapter Two

Cultural Colonisation by Force and by Choice

This chapter addresses the question of the reproduction of European cultural domination of African societies and institutions, both in the colonial and neo-colonial contexts. It is argued that by force the colonial powers reshaped African education. In spite of their criticism of colonial education, African leaders who were influenced by this education displayed a mindset that viewed European education as good for the African. Thus, through the dynamics of European colonial education and African leaders' own well-meaning, but misguided, demand for the integral transfer of European education into their respective societies, African education was caught in a dependence trap. Thus, even the institutions created after independence have been modelled in the form of the systems of the colonial powers and their extensions in the West.

The Dependency Trap

The validity of a theory about social process is sustained by the reality that it helps explain. Dependency theory was born out of the broader conflict theory when its proponents came to the conclusion that classical Marxist theory explained development but not the underdevelopment of some nations. In the dependency framework that conceives resources as zero-sum commodities, the necessary condition for the continued and sustained development of countries in the centre is to maintain the countries of the periphery under control of those of the centre, using different means and mechanisms. However, despite the validity of dependency theory, it did not displace Marxist theory because the sociological reality that it explained back in the nineteenth century has been reproduced. Similarly, the social reality that made dependency theory refreshingly relevant from the 1950s to the 1970s has not disappeared. In fact, in Africa, there

has been an accelerated (and backward) process of impoverishment in the context of the implementation of full-force and barely disguised re-colonisation agendas and their procession of misery. The assault on the entire population following the measures adopted by the WTO, and the various effects of globalisation not only in the area of trade but also production, distribution, and access to knowledge, are showing this backward movement.

It has been argued that Africa has been isolated and that through globalisation it will have a better chance to compete with the others on the same ground. For instance, paragraph 28 of the October 2001 document that was adopted by African heads of state for the creation of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), stipulates that 'while globalization has increased the cost of Africa's ability to compete, we hold that the advantages of an effectively managed integration present the best prospects for future economic prosperity and poverty reduction'. In reality globalisation has the potential for serving as a formal mechanism for tightening the dependency grip. Globalisation is sometimes presented as a means of enforcement of old sets of rules and inventions of new ones that are defined and accepted by the people in the global village. However, what is not clearly articulated is that while there are rules that are being set, not all the members of this global village are free and have the prerogative of participating in defining them. In this context of widening gaps between and within nations, despite the illusions of positive returns of globalisation, the dependency theoretical framework acquires a renewed relevance and legitimacy. Dependency best captures the post-colonial general situation and education, especially higher education in post-colonial Africa.

According to Altbach (1977), for instance, there are three major types of influence of developed countries on Third World countries which can be articulated as: (i) 'normal' dependency from a historical standpoint in the sense that industrial countries are ahead in education specifically in the areas of research, educational facilities and publishing (Altbach 1977:196) and also in the political, military, and economic domains; (ii) 'centre-periphery' relationships, on an international scale, between and within countries, with industrialised countries constituting the 'centre' where all the elements of a modern technological society are found and which control the distribution of wealth and education (Altbach 1977:196), while the Third World countries are the 'periphery', relying on various goods and services provided by the centre; and (iii) neo-colonialism characterised by the 'conscious policies of industrialized nations to maintain their influence and power over the Third World' (Altbach 1977:205), deliberately working to control them with some degree of consent by Third World countries.

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Dependency and Education: A General Framework

In the specific domain of education, it is a fact that the nature of the educational relationship between African countries and former colonial powers or the industrial countries is shaped by both dependency and neo-colonialism. The theoretical framework of 'centre-periphery' or 'metropolis-satellite' as the main characteristic of the relations between developing countries and former colonies and industrial countries and former colonial powers has been articulated by many scholars and development analysts such as Gunder Frank (1970), dos Santos (1981), Vengroff (1977), and Rodney (1972). Cardoso and Faletto state:

> We conceive the relationship between external and internal forces as forming a complex whole whose structural links are not based on mere external forms of exploitation and coercion, but are rooted in coincidences of interests between local dominant classes and international ones, and, on the other side, are challenged by local dominated groups and classes (Faletto 1979:xvi).

In this variance of dependency theory, the dynamics that are engendered from internal and external forces seem to be at the centre of their argument. Another variation of dependency has been defined by dos Santos:

> Dependency is a conditioning situation in which the economics of one group of countries are conditioned by the development and expansion of others. A relationship of interdependency between such economies and the World trading system becomes a dependent relationship when the countries can expand only as a reflection of the expansion of the dominant countries, which may have positive or negative effects on their immediate development (dos Santos 1970:231).

Dos Santos makes a difference between conditioning and determining factors, asserting that the accumulation process of dependent countries is conditioned by the position they occupy in the international political economy and determined by their own laws of internal development. Cockcroft, Frank, and Johnson consider that:

> Dependence is a situation in which a certain group of countries have their own economy conditioned by the development and expansion of another economy, to which the former is subject. The relations of interdependency between two or more economies, and between these and the World trade, assumes the form of dependence when some countries (the dominant) can expand and give impulse to their own development, while other countries (the dependent) can only develop as reflection of this expansion (Cardoso 1979:xvi).

This dependent relationship is characterised, on the one hand, by a positive and vital connection for the industrial countries whose development is sustained by the continued flow of resources from the naturally endowed developing countries, and on the other hand, by a negative and debilitating connection for the developing countries whose resources are drained and for whom the rules for trade are decided by the industrial countries. Thus the development of industrial countries or former colonial powers is achieved at the expense of developing countries within the economic assumption that resources are zero-sum commodities, which means that the more resources are appropriated by one set of countries, the less will be available for the other group. This dependency is a result of unequal economic interactions that have occurred between many countries or nations and the Western capitalist world. These economic interactions have created economic peripheries which cannot be understood without reference to the economic drive of advanced capitalist economies (Cardoso 1979:xviii).

Amin (1976, 1997), Wallerstein (1986, 2004) and other dependency theorists tend to emphasise that dependency is a result of the unilateral and forced integration or incorporation of a non-capitalist economy into the world market or international economic system. While in some parts these economies have not been fully integrated, the partial or total integration or incorporation processes were dictated by the capitalist ideology. In Africa, in the beginning of the twenty-first century, these processes and the politics around them are still shaping the behaviour of the states. There is a further drainage of financial means from all segments of the population of African countries, leaving them little basis for capital accumulation.

As it has been well documented by many scholars, including Amin (1976, 1997) and Rodney (1972) the former colonies serve primarily as providers of raw materials, labour, and markets. Dependency is both an external factor and a conditioning situation. As an external factor, it manifests itself in various forms: transnational operations, economic aid and assistance, cooperation, ideology, culture, scholarship, values as imbedded in the educational content; as a conditioning situation, it is perpetuated in the domestic policies of the developing countries where it fosters classes and sustains conflicting class interests in which the local elites usually constitute the natural allies of the external forces.

There are several earlier and recent variations and nuances in the articulation of dependency and neo-colonial arguments that, for the purpose of this book and to locate the educational issues in the dependency and neo-colonial context, may not be well reflected in this brief reference to the dependency school of thought. It must suffice to summarise the general characteristics of dependent

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countries from the variations of dependency school of thought with the following points:

(i) They play a negligible role in the decision-making of their own economies;

(ii) They depend culturally, financially and militarily on industrialised countries;

(iii) Despite the fact that their resources contribute significantly to enrich the industrial countries, they tend to internalise a beggar mentality, and as such, they are unable to determine the course of their actions and policies by their own will;

(iv) They play the role of imitators and producers of raw materials without questioning and practically challenging the relationship between the commodities they produce for industrial countries and the continued control exercised by the latter over them;

(v) They are unable to articulate that the industrial countries are in need of their resources, and to search for relationships that could be characterised as interdependent and equal;

(vi) They lack a long-run vision and cannot or do not realise that they have to take into account the immediate and future consequences of their action on their respective societies.

Neither industrial countries nor developing countries represent two monolithic and homogenous groups. Indeed, there are regional and national specificities that make the nature of dependency vary from country to country and from the historical culture of each country and the peculiarities of the colonial powers or international systems which determine it. Although this school of thought tends to downplay some aspects of internal weaknesses of the developing countries, it is class struggle, and internal alliances of power that may be used by the external forces to advance their interests. This provides a framework that gives several interesting theoretical dimensions such as: holism versus particularism, external versus internal factors, sectarian/regional contradictions versus class contradictions, underdevelopment versus development, and voluntarism versus determinism. These theoretical dimensions are useful in analysing African higher education, especially the universities in light of their historical, cultural, and economic ties to and dependence on international financial institutions and metropolitan countries. The main arguments have been articulated in an earlier work (Assié-Lumumba and Lumumba-Kasongo 1991).

Dependency and African Higher Education

In this framework African leaders (politicians, policymakers) and chief academic officers of higher education institutions have limited power and accept decisions made in the centre through the technical advisers from industrial countries and experts from international organisations. In the specific case of higher education, Mazrui (1975) compares African universities to subsidiaries of multinational corporations, as they function like extensions of European metropolitan institutions where decisions are made, transferred to, and reproduced in African countries. These multinational cultural subdivisions continue to follow, or are expected to follow, the dictates of parent institutions from the former colonial powers and their industrial extensions. Mazrui (1975) points out the paradox between the role of formal education, especially universities, in providing the impetus for political liberation within African countries, and their contradictory role of perpetuating cultural dependence. According to Mazrui (1975), the longer the Africans stay in the Western formal education system—particularly higher education—the more culturally dependent on the higher education system they become. Paradoxically, 'the same education which has produced nationalists eager to end colonial rule and to establish African self-government has also perpetuated cultural colonialism' (Mazrui 1975:194). The process of dependence started when African universities were modelled on overseas institutions, with some being official extensions of universities in Britain, France, and Belgium with instruction, evaluation, and policy matters being decided or approved by the parent institution in Europe. Also African universities were responsible for producing the appropriate human resources and 'redefining the market through acculturation' for multinational corporations, thus serving to consolidate economic dependence rather than independence.

In another publication, Mazrui (1992) argues that in order for Africa to build a new society that is conducive to social progress, the objective conditions must be critically analysed and the hindering factors acknowledged and properly dealt with. He presented some of the impeding factors that derived from the syndrome of cultural dependency. He identified seven functions of culture, arguing that culture provides: (i) 'lenses of perception and cognition' as people's world view is shaped by 'cultural paradigms'; (ii) 'motives for human behaviour'; (iii) 'criteria of evaluation'; (iv) 'a basis of identification'; (v) a shared 'mode of communication' of which language is the 'most elaborate system'; (vi) a 'basis of stratification'; and (vii) 'a system of production and consumption' (Mazrui 1992:96). Mazrui contends that there is a 'new international cultural order' (Mazrui 1992:96) within which Africa is characterised by dependency on

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the former colonial powers. Education and more particularly universities constitute a channel of cultural transfer. Education is a determinant in the process of producing and reproducing culture and in shaping people's understanding, acceptance, and critical assessment of this culture. To elucidate the interface of education and African renaissance, it is important to first review African educational experiences.

In the 1975 article, Mazrui concluded by proposing three strategies for development: domestication, diversification, and counter-penetration.

In the first strategy, domestication, the initial task of decolonising modernity must be to balance the influence on university policy with that of the West through local participation. In order to domesticate African educational systems successfully, three major areas should be redefined:

(i)   University admission requirements and their implications for primary and secondary curricula;

(ii)   Criteria for faculty recruitment; and

(iii) University organisation.

The second strategy, diversification, requires that the cultural content in the modernisation process be diverse. 'In terms of culture, reliance on one external reference group is outright dependency; reliance on a diversity of external civilizations may be the beginning of autonomy' (Mazrui 1975:206).

Finally, counter-penetration is essential for the successful domestication of modernity and the diversification of African cultural content.

During the colonial era European formal education was defined by the Europeans. To the Africans, anything that the Europeans reserved for themselves and prevented the Africans from having access to was de facto of superior quality and value. At the time when Africans demanded a transfer of the metropolitan educational systems to the colonies, given the historical and global context, they made their decision as logical and right for the cause of justice and equality of access for Europeans and Africans. At that time even among the Europeans, it appeared politically correct, contrary to the argument of adaptation, to advocate a transfer of European systems to African enrolment and of African youth into them. Thus considering education as an instrument of colonisation and control through culture, Africans in general and especially African leaders were calling for colonisation by choice, and education decision-makers were, without careful consideration of the long-run consequences, engaging themselves, their countries, and future generations on the track leading to a dependency trap.

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One important illustration was the Université Lovanium in the DRC. The educational policy of Belgium during the entire colonial era was to avoid creating any secular institution of higher learning as a pre-emptive method to avoid challenges to the colonial system by college-educated Africans based on the idea of 'pas d'élite, pas de problème' (Lumumba-Kasongo 1981). By the Concordat of 1906 the Catholic Church dominated and received full financial support from the colonial administration. The Vatican with full support from the colonial state and Protestants, albeit with no public funding, formed the religious educational monopoly in the Congo. Like many objective and critical observers, Ashby (1966) referred to Université Lovanium as 'by any standards an astonishing institution to find in tropical Africa... an educational epic' (Ashby 1966:357) and at the same time recalled the symbolic, practical, and eloquent signs of structural dependency when he stated:

> In September 1954 a stone from the wall of the most ancient part of Louvain University was laid in the foundation of the science building on Mont Amba. This together with the new university's name, are vivid symbols of the ethos of Lovanium. In constitution, in standards, in content of curriculum, Lovanium was to be a replica of Louvain (Ashby 1996: 359).

Even after the first wave of change, educational institutions and processes remained the same in substance. As Ashby recalled in this case of Lovanium, '...even since independence, although the constitution of the university has been revised to bring it within the influence of the Congolese government, it remains a satellite of Louvain' (Ashby 1966:359). As in the case of the first universities in former French colonies that had Frenchmen as rectors, Lovanium also had a Belgian as its initial rector. In addition, although it was officially a secular institution, it was dominated by the Catholic Church as half of the members of its board were Catholic priests and an archbishop was chair.

In the case of former French colonies, each new university had special ties with a specific University of France. In the case of the National University of Côte d'Ivoire the 'mother institution' was the Université de Bordeaux which was involved particularly in key policies and decisions of orientations, examinations, diploma preparation and awarding. Reforms adopted in France have been routinely applied in Côte d'Ivoire. For example, the reforms of the 1970s, which led to the transformation of diplomas hitherto offered at the end of the second year of university, were applied in Côte d'Ivoire. This has been the case in many other respects, including the three years required for the Doctorat du 3e Cycle, with one year of courses which leads to the DEA (Diplôme d'études approfondies), as opposed to the past when the degree could be finished in two

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years and the students were less formally supervised. Although with mixed feelings, the policy of a single doctorate similar to the PhD instead of two doctorates—Doctorat du 3e Cycle and Doctorat d'État—adopted in France is being applied.

In *African Universities and Western Tradition*, Ashby (1964), and in 'Autonomy and Academic Freedom, in Britain and in English-speaking countries of Tropical Africa', Ashby and Anderson (1966) and in other publications at the time when African higher education institutions were being built and when only a handful were functioning as full-fledged universities, these authors pointed to these far-reaching and future consequences of their historical colonial ties. These ties still constitute, not an insurmountable, but objectively a monumental, stumbling block.

Within the nature of formal dependency relationships, generally African universities started with neither the freedom nor the will to make major changes without the consent of the parent institution. In some cases, until the African university is allowed to grant certain degrees, even if the courses and the examinations take place in Africa, the degrees are those of the parent-institution. The issue of equivalence of the degrees granted, played a major role in maintaining the dependency framework. An important degree of similarity in the curriculum and the organisation of two systems is a sine qua non for unconditional equivalence. As those systems do not relate on an equal basis, that of the subordinate country is the one that is modelled after the dominating country's. This dependence was eloquently illustrated by the decision to have degrees (earned from an African university), be granted or guaranteed by the universities of European countries.

As Atkinson (1994) argues, even after the first wave of inconclusive transfer systems of former colonial powers, the same policies continued. Thus, while Zimbabwe gained its independence about two decades after the first wave of independence in the 1950s and 1960s, and despite many socio-political changes since the colonial era, as in other African countries, the structure of its educational institutions has been built on colonial foundations.

Despite the similarities in the educational policy development and implementation of institutions of higher learning in post-colonial Africa, Nieuwenhuis (1996) rightly points out, based on his study of eight Eastern and Southern African countries, that the education system within each specific national context is the result of interacting forces in the unique historical development of that country. Similarly, countries in specific sub-regions or countries that share the same colonial experience and inherited educational traditions, have specific trajectories that are important to recall as they help analyse the crises and must

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be taken into account in the search for new solutions. Furthermore, there are cases that, even if they fit into the neo-colonial and dependency framework, have relatively distinct experiences and trajectories in the creation of their institutions of higher learning. This is the case of Ethiopia and Liberia, for instance. The states of higher education of countries can also be analysed from the perspective and influence of their respective socio-political and socio-economic situations as they affect the nature and magnitude of the crises and the solutions proposed. The state of higher education of different countries and its responsiveness to future change is influenced not only by shared challenges and prospects, but also by individual experiences, ranging from success stories through the spectrum of turbulent socio-political tendencies, from sporadic and localised crises to large-scale or prolonged conflicts.

In the dependency framework, it is not necessary for the metropole to be physically represented in the periphery by its own citizens. The elite, known also as the comprador elite, in the periphery, which shares the values and interests of the metropole may well ensure the application of the dictates from 'headquarters'. The elite may not, for example, try to promote changes in the local system of education unless such changes are initiated or approved by the centre.

Given the broader context of African location in the global system as articulated for instance in *Capitalism in the Age of Globalization: The Management of Contemporary Society* (Amin 1997), *The Dynamics of Economic and Political Relations Between Africa and Foreign Powers: A Study in International Relations* (Lumumba-Kasongo 1999), and *Africa's Persistent Vulnerable Link to Global Politics* (Agyeman 2001), African higher education in general and the universities in particular entered a period of crisis. This crisis diminished the initial euphoria created by the expectation that education, and primarily the universities, would constitute an effective means in the battle to achieve socio-economic development. The crisis that started in the 1980s still has a profound and enduring effect in the beginning of the twenty-first century. The next sections address this issue.

Clark argues that universities depend on immediate environment, the 'immediate structural setting' (Clark 1983:183-184), for change. To have the ability to promote change, the African university must enjoy autonomy. Students and teaching staff have been pressing for 'autonomy' (as evidenced by numerous strikes by faculties and students at various periods to oppose government decisions); but it cannot be said that the institution enjoys academic freedom and independence from the external world. The rector is appointed not only as a professional bureaucrat (Assié-Lumumba 1993a). He or she is supposed to be able to understand and to interpret the needs of the country as they are perceived and defined by the political leaders, the state, or the ruling party. He or she must

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translate them into choices when making decisions regarding the allocation of resources, the curriculum, selection, evaluation, and so forth.

Despite the initial limitations of contemporary higher education in Africa due to the dependency trap, in the 1960s the intellectual and policy arguments of the role of higher education in national development were powerful and compelling. They were firmly guiding educational decisions and planning in Africa and developing countries in general.

With regard to the development of higher education, there were some differences; the two polar cases being the relatively earlier development of some form of higher education in British colonies (for example, Makerere and Achimota) and the total absence of post-secondary institutions, with the exception of a few Catholic seminaries, in the Belgian Congo until independence. The centralised and assimilationist French system fell in between, with embryonic forms of higher education (for instance, Senegal and Madagascar) before independence. The different colonial policies and practices led to the emergence of different post-colonial models, with a near monopoly of the state in former French colonies, a large public sector in the former British colonies with some openness to private participation, and the emergence of the private model in the former Belgian colonies, especially in the Congo. In this case, despite the nationalisation of the educational institutions by the Mobutu regime, the collapse of the state and the non-delivery of the services in the context of increasing demand for education, contributed to create the condition for the re-emergence of private initiatives in higher education institutional building.

Despite these differences, however, the studies of the 1980s and 1990s on the state and the future of African education have stressed the similarities of the objective conditions of African higher education, particularly the universities, and the challenges they face as they were preparing to enter the twenty-first century.

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Chapter Three

The Crisis, Its Consequences, and the Call for Change

This chapter discusses the general economic crisis and the educational crisis with a particular significance for higher education, especially the universities in Africa. It is argued that the loss and absence of the economic power of African states and their reliance on loans from the international financial institutions to fund their national programmes led to further loss of sovereignty. They de facto surrendered their ability and rights to make autonomous decisions to these international institutions. The latter were positioned to make African domestic policies. However the solutions they prescribed and which targeted higher education for drastic budget cuts exacerbated the crisis. Several studies on the crisis were undertaken. Some of the key recommendations of these studies are presented in this chapter.

Profile of the Current Situation

There has always been high enrolment in primary education, but the number of students progressing further to secondary education is far less. Egypt, Mauritius, and Tunisia maintained high enrolment ratios from 1965 to the present. World Bank records indicate that in South Africa secondary enrolment increased from 58.1 percent in 1986 to 94 percent in 1994. The secondary education enrolment ratio has a positive correlation to higher education enrolment. Egypt, Mauritius and Tunisia had the highest higher education enrolment ratio in Africa in early post-colonial era. In the 1990s Egypt, Morocco, Tunisia and South Africa had the highest higher education enrolment, and correspondingly they had high secondary enrolment during this period. Botswana, Mauritius, Namibia, Republic of Congo, and Swaziland have the highest secondary enrolment, but this is not yet reflected in higher enrolment.

Table 1: Gross Enrolment Ratio as Percent of Total Eligible
for Primary, Secondary and Higher Education

	Primary	Secondary	Higher Education
1965	53.4	6.3	0.8
1970	58.2	9.0	1.0
1975	69.93	12.9	1.7
1980	80.99	19.7	2.4
1985	79.0	22.5	2.9
1990	79.8	26.5	3.8
1995	83.9	31.2	4.8
1996	81.3	39.1	3.8
1997	92.0	35.1	2.3

Source: Africa Database. World Bank, 2002

Overall, higher education enrolment has increased from 1965 to 1995 by only three percent of total enrolment. In 1965, higher education enrolment constituted only one percent of total enrolment in Africa, and four percent in 1995.

Table 2: Public Expenditure on Education as a Percent
of Gross Domestic Product (GDP)

1966	2.5
1971	2.8
1976	3.4
1981	4.0
1986	3.6
1991	3.7
1997	3.7

Source: Africa Database. World Bank, 2002

Government expenditure on education as percent of GDP slightly increased from the 1960s to the 1990s, when it stood at about 3.7 percent compared to 2.5 percent in 1966. Higher education is more expensive and capital-demanding than primary and secondary education. The expenditure per student in higher education as a percent of GNI per capita indicates that higher education demands up to ten times more investment than secondary education. The expenditure per student in higher education as a percent of GNI per capita has drastically fallen, from 1490.8 percent in 1965, to 820.8 percent in 1980, to just 107.2 percent in 1997. This is another indication that government investment in higher

education is on the decline. Currently, the governments of Malawi and Comoros have the highest expenditure per student in higher education as a percent of GNI per capita.

Table 3: Expenditure per Student in Primary, Secondary, and Higher Education as Percent of Gross National Investment per Capita

	Expenditure per student (% of GNI per capita)		
	Primary	Secondary	Higher Education
1965	18.4	130.8	1490.8
1970	15.6	90.5	901.2
1975	16.7	72.5	793.5
1980	16.0	51.8	820.8
1985	15.3	74.3	469.1
1990	14.3	51.1	352.8
1995	14.9	34.7	513.2
1997	20.2	35.2	107.2

Source: Africa Database. World Bank, 2002.

Africa has been able to increase the number of universities from a very small number before 1960 to 250 in 2000. There were over four million students enrolled in higher education in 1996, representing some five percent of such students in the world. This represents just a fraction of the number of persons who were qualified for enrolment that year (Ekhaguere 2000).

The Local/Global Nexus and the Conditions for Crisis

In this section, the crisis of higher education is examined within the parameters and assumptions of the functioning structures of the world political economy in the specific African context and also within the framework of how the African conditions have responded to the caprices of the world system. Thus, the analysis focuses on how higher education has been performing as part of the global economic and financial reforms that have been recommended, prescribed, and introduced by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), whose policies have been shaped by the Bank's conditionalities.

Given the determining factor of the economy and its impact on the available resources and the amount and proportions that may be allocated to education, it is important to locate the educational crisis in the broader economic and societal crisis. Still, at the beginning of the twenty-first century, as indicated in the ADEA 2001-2002 study on innovations that is presented in more detail later, 'it was evident from the site visits that the universities are under immense pressure to

increase access even though funding from the state was generally shrinking. Mauritius was the exception, being the only university not to report immense financial constraints' (Ng'ethe 2003:34).

Indeed, the prolonged economic crisis started to manifest itself toward the 1970s, and subsequently measures were prescribed by the international financial institutions, namely the World Bank and the IMF, through their Structural Adjustment and Stabilisation Programmes, respectively. Although there has been considerable discourse on the Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs) and their negative connotations in the African context, it is important to recall their substance and policy implications in order to locate the specific impact of the economic crisis and of SAPs on higher education.

Following the optimistic outlook for socio-economic development of the 1960s and 1970s, by the early 1980s, the positive perspectives had ebbed. African economies are based on agricultural and mineral materials exported to industrial countries in their raw forms. The agricultural commodities produced for the contemporary capitalist system were developed in the context of colonial economy whereby the African countries export to the colonial powers or industrial countries raw materials, and import manufactured products. The prices of both the export and import products have been set by industrial countries.

Since the beginning of the 1980s, the global economy of African countries in the international market has been characterised by declining commodity prices and increasing prices of imported goods (African Development Bank 1995), while new expenses in food imports have increased budgetary constraints (Assié-Lumumba 1997). Thus, the states' diminishing financial resources led them to rely more on borrowing from the international financial institutions to keep their public sector operational; hence the escalation of a huge debt crisis (Fall 1997). The increased debts have, in turn, led to even more intervention from these institutions through structural adjustment and stabilisation programmes that have restricted public expenditures and defined the boundaries between acceptable and unacceptable areas of expenditures in education. Thus began another phase of the attempt and process toward the privatisation of the African state.

Even some Africans who have been located within, and adopted, the dogmas of the international organisations that proclaimed de facto their power and authority to define Africa, were very much involved in the formulation of the concept of good governance as it was applied to Africa. For instance, in *A Governance Approach to Civil Service Reform in Sub-Saharan Africa*, Dia (1993) summarised, from a World Bank perspective, the African governance problems:

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After independence, most successor regimes generally supported the concept of a strong, central government, which would ensure economic equity to all citizens. Without the necessary checks and balances, this resulted in the emergence of highly centralized and all-powerful patrimonial states characterized by the following features (Dia 1993:1-2).

Dia listed specific features that characterise the dysfunctional situation: 'lack of accountability ... lack of the rule of law... disabling regulatory burden on private sector development... distorted resources mobilization... [and] bureaucratic budget management'. After the diagnosis, Dia prescribed what was considered necessary to eradicate all these problems as:

> The aim of a comprehensive approach is to affect the structural and functional changes needed to correct the patrimonial distortions affecting the institutional environment, incentives framework and the performance of core government functions. The different components of the reform are those described in the analysis of the patrimonial environment. An administrative adjustment SECAL would be used to support this reform (Dia 1993:2).

The massive loans that were granted to the peripheral states, including the most brutal and long-lasting dictators, the most notorious being Mobutu in the Congo, were aimed at securing continued control of the West on the African countries, amidst the Cold War, by perpetuating the role of the African peripheral economy as suppliers of raw materials for the economies of the centre. The IMF and the World Bank played a key role in literally subduing the countries of the periphery, causing them in effect to relinquish their sovereignty. These institutions have played a catalytic role as key financial institutions with the power to influence and, in the case of the World Bank, to design and impose education policies through the conditions attached to its loans, which basically aim to (i) facilitate the structural reforms imposed by the structural adjustment and stabilisation programme; and (ii) ensure the repayment of the debt contracted. The indebted African countries (like other countries of the periphery) were reassured that if they regularly repaid their debts they would qualify for new loans, including the possibility of private borrowing through the financial markets. Thus the debt gears were set in motion in the early 1980s. As the conditionalities of the SAPs did not favour support of social programmes such as education and health care, no structurally adjusted country could achieve and sustain significant growth to fund its social programmes autonomously. Even for basic education, which was declared a more deserving level of education, the policies of imposed fees were forced on the countries. Throughout Africa, the funding of higher education suffered further austerity which deprived it of basic funding for faculty and

institutional development and expansion to respond to the steadily increasing demand.

Yet it was not inevitable for African (or any other) countries to be caught up in the gears of debt. The Cuban case can be used to illustrate at least some of the arguments of the non-inevitability of the debt trap and vicious cycle. A study entitled 'The Cuban Education System: Lessons and Dilemmas' Gasperini (1999), described what has been sometimes referred to as the Cuban paradox in the following terms:

> The record of Cuban education is outstanding: universal school enrolment and attendance; nearly universal adult literacy; proportional female representation at all levels, including higher education; a strong scientific training base, particularly in chemistry and medicine; consistent pedagogical quality across widely dispersed classrooms; equality of basic educational opportunity, even in impoverished areas, both rural and urban. In a recent regional study of Latin America and the Caribbean, Cuba ranked first in language and math achievement. In many ways, Cuba's schools are the equals of schools in OECD countries, despite the fact that Cuba's economy is that of a developing country.

Gasperini (1999) summarises the factors that have 'allowed Cuba's education system to perform so well, even under severe resource constraints': the organisation and delivery of early childhood education linked with the provision of health care; universal access to education of quality at the basic, primary, and secondary levels; the organisation of non-formal literacy and adult education linked with the formal component of education; functional mechanisms and strategies for community involvement in the management of the school; catering to students in rural communities and generally those with special needs; the value attached to the development of qualified teachers with a high priority for their initial and in-service training, general caring for their professional development and holistic well-being, and assurance of support and reward for their innovative undertakings; the value attached to the inputs of the teachers and students in the development of nationally and locally adapted curricula; and instructional materials produced at low cost but with high quality. There are systematic strategies to link education and work, to promote students' capacity to strive for individual achievement through some competition but within the ethos of collective well being. On the whole, the education system and populist philosophy is convergent with the egalitarian model of society (Assié-Lumumba 2000:92-93) thus giving a true meaning to the 'no one left behind' motto.

Despite a World Bank disclaimer on the cover page of Gasperini's paper, part of the interest in this assessment of the Cuban educational system is that the paper was produced as a contribution to the Latin America and Caribbean Regional Office of the World Bank and circulated in a series by the World Bank's Human Development Department paper series.

At the United Nations Expert Group Meeting on 'Sharing of Experiences and Practices in Social Development' that was held in Havana (Cuba) on 12-14 June, 2002, in his presentation on 'The Social Dimension of Sustainable Development: Notes on the Cuban Experience', Madruga (2002) emphasised the following:

(i) An integrative approach to social development is conceived as a multidimensional process in which economic, social, and environmental sustainability interacts and reinforces the attainment of the collective development goal. This goal must be set with a long-term perspective and consistently aim for intra-generational and inter-generational equity.

(ii) The fundamental role of the state in social policies is indispensable. In formulating and implementing policies, it is necessary to acknowledge, and systematically work within the synergies between the basic areas of human development such as education, health services, and food security. On the governance front, he emphasised a stable political environment, responsible government, and social values oriented to equity as key factors for achieving the goal of social development.

Madruga (2002) also argued that in spite of the severe economic constraints exacerbated by the severance from Soviet support when the eastern bloc collapsed, Cuba managed to pursue its funding of social programmes, namely education and health. Although the country suffers from other sources of severe economic limitation, as it has not borrowed any money from the international lending institutions and thus, has not been under any structural adjustment regime, it has enjoyed the liberty of defining its priorities and funding them according to its financial abilities within the economic and political systems and the model of society chosen. This Cuban case illustrates the importance of the relationship between national sovereignty and the freedom to set national development priorities and domestic policies. It suggests the importance of engaging major issues of freedom and agency without which economic and financial dependence will continue to jeopardise any efforts to resolve the crisis of higher education.

A case in Nigeria (Bako 2002) illustrates this point. A dispute arose between the Nigerian Ministry of Education and the World Bank with regard to the final

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priorities for the allocation of a World Bank loan to specific areas and activities within the Nigerian University System Innovation Project (NUSIP). He explains that:

> without creating conditions for such a discussion or engaging any of its stakeholders on some assessment of its clearly disastrous and failed programme, the Bank had battled for two years to push for another year but, ironically, harsher and tougher programme of total restructuring and deregulating articulated within its $102.4 million programme called Nigeria university system innovation project (NUSIP), which the academic union and stakeholders of higher education in Nigeria challenged gallantly to a halt (Bako 2002:2).

The struggle for control over who defines national priorities for African higher education is further illustrated by the disagreement between the World Bank and the Nigerian Government. Bako (2002:15) states:

> In the request, the government wanted the Bank to eliminate these activities from NUSIP: (1) the demand responsive innovation fund for teaching and learning; (2) the development of electric networking and internet connectivity; (3) management skills development; and (4) capacity building for distance learning. In the place of these activities, the government proposed to substitute: (1) a national virtual library ($20 million); (2) three national higher education pedagogical centres ($18 million); (3) a national curriculum review process ($ 2.5. million); (4) facilities upgrading fund consisting of a procurement entitlement of $1.5 million for each federal university ($36 million); and (5) training in equipment fabrication and maintenance ($2 million). However, the government retained these components in the original NUSIP: The National University Commission ($4.3 million), the graduate fellowship for women ($2.8) and the HIV/AIDS responses ($2.0. million).

Based on the process of the decision-making regarding this case, the author concluded that the business-as-usual attitude of the World Bank was in contradiction to 'its so-called new democratic posture of allowing stakeholders to participate and determine the bank's project, which is simply a façade' (Bako 2002:16).

The role played by international financial institutions in African education policy formulation and priority settings by virtue of their economic leverage, is presented in the following section.

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Prescriptions of the Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs)

This section of the book borrows from an earlier work, also done for CODESRIA, entitled 'The Impact of Structural Adjustment Programmes on Higher Education in Africa' (Assié-Lumumba and Lumumba-Kasongo 1996) as part of the CODESRIA's network on an African Perspective on the Structural Adjustment Programmes.

As it was articulated, since the early 1980s, the World Bank has systematically been involved in Educational Sector Lending for Policy Reform (ESLPR) in many countries of Africa. In 1995, it directly or indirectly stood on 'the critical path' of nearly 75 percent of total capital flows and debt relief to Africa. Several types of loan schemes have been operationalised, including: (i) Investment Loans, which include (a) specific investment loans (SILs) and (b) sector investment loans (SECILs); (ii) Sector Adjustment Loans (SECALs); (iii) Hybrid combinations of an investment component like a SIL or SECIL with an adjustment component like a SECAL; and (iv) Structural Adjustment Loans (SALs) which focus on macroeconomics and are not intended to address sectoral concerns, except as these concerns influence general economic stability.

Given the role and the place of higher education in the state and nation building in Africa, the study of the SAPs' impact on this sector is an important agenda. While in most countries in Africa the Bank-supported macro-adjustment loans have been adopted and implemented before or simultaneously with other types of loans, there were a few cases in the 1980s where SIL, Hybrid, and SECAL were implemented in education without prior implementation of the SALs; for instance, in Madagascar, Mali, and Nigeria. It has been assumed that higher education problems in Africa could be addressed or solved by some direct foreign investment or sector adjustment loans alone. However, it is argued that one cannot fully understand the implications of the sector or specific loans in higher education without relating them, not only to macroeconomic imbalance arguments and to the nature of the African state, which is plagued by what Claude Ake called 'a crisis of legitimacy', but also to the national social conditions.

As discussed earlier, the model of higher education that most African states inherited from the European colonial powers was the state control model. Thus, the structures and objectives of higher education in Africa cannot be fully examined and understood without looking at how they relate to the processes of state building. State building, as the main objective of the African political elites of the first post-colonial generation, was a process in which legal, social, and political institutions were constructed and consolidated to articulate what was consid-

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ered to be social development and national reconstruction, following intensive colonial exploitation. It was a process through which political elites philosophically and territorially imagined the characteristics of sovereignty and citizenry. Although the processes of state building were established locally or nationally, state building in Africa has important international dimensions, which are related to the dynamics of the world economy and education, particularly higher education.

It should be emphasised that higher education was *l'enfant chéri* of the newly established African state. The state control model was characterised by the state as nearly the sole agent of subsidy of higher education: full scholarships, including travel expenses, local transportation, health care, boarding, lodging, and monthly stipends and living expenses to all students who, in theory, were 'qualified' or those who had family or personal connections to attend universities. In most cases, this was done within a broad sentiment of nationalism and was accompanied in some cases by, if not a sense of unlimited resources, at least no limit to the efforts to be made for investments that were assumed to bring the highest possible returns in the struggle for socio-economic development.

The importance of education, especially higher education, toward the promotion of social progress of any country has been recognised by African states since the Addis Ababa conference in 1961. Against the colonial policies which provided a limited (or no) higher education for Africans, newly established national governments for many years decisively promoted higher education as the most vital objective of their social policies. The Harare conference and each of the other conferences, attended by ministers of education and those responsible for economic planning, that were organised by UNESCO from June 28 to July 3, 1982, reiterated the importance of higher education in research and training as an irreplaceable and integral part of the national education system. As Hinchliffe (1985:2) indicates:

> With a growth rate of over eleven percent a year since 1960, higher education enrolments in African countries average around one percent of the relevant age group. As a proportion of the total population, they are less than a quarter of those in Asian countries. Despite its small size, however, expenditure on the higher education sector averages one fifth of total educational expenditure which in turn accounts for one fifth of all central government expenditures.

Among the African countries, Côte d'Ivoire for instance, even when it was already experiencing signs of economic distress, continued to allocate high proportions of its gross national product and public expenditure to education. In

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1965, public money allocated to education represented 7.4 percent of the GNP and 31.7 percent of public expenditures in 1973 and 10.0 percent and 45.0 percent in 1981 (Assié-Lumumba 1995). Other countries also spent between 25 percent and 30 percent of their GNP on education, with a larger proportion on higher education, during the time of relative political stability and relatively high economic growth in the 1960s and the early 1970s.

The policies of heavy emphasis on higher education have been explained by objective conditions. Because colonial powers, despite some differences in their policies, prevented the full development of higher education (particularly classical university education) in Africa and reserved it for Europeans, the expansion of higher education enrolment and institutions during the first post-independence decade was an unprecedented phenomenon.

Bloom, Canning and Chan (2005:3) made an incorrect reading of African experience when they stated that:

> For several decades, African countries and their development partners have placed great emphasis on primary and, more recently, secondary education. But they have neglected tertiary education as a means to improve economic growth and mitigate poverty. The Dakar summit on 'Education for All' in 2000, for example, advocated only for primary education as a driver of social welfare. It left tertiary education in the background.

Brock-Untne (2000, 2003) rightly pointed out that in the context of the 1990 Jomtien conference and the adoption of Education for All, 'the emphasis on education for all has, in reality, meant that donors willingly, and African government unwillingly, have given a priority to investing in primary education, resulting in often drastic reductions in higher education funding' (Brock-Untne 2003:31).

Thus, following the crisis of the global economy, African reliance on the World Bank led to the unwilling neglect of higher education. African intellectuals (Mkandawire and Soludo 1999), students and government officials interpreted the education policy of the World Bank Group as a deliberate effort to dismantle or qualitatively restructure this sub-sector, which was perceived by the World Bank Group, from a functional and purely market point of view, as inefficient and unproductive. The cost of the management of higher education or of its rehabilitation was considered to be too high, while higher education yielded only limited monetary returns. Indeed, higher education was perceived to consume too high a share of the education budget, and its rates of return were lower than those of other educational levels. From the Bank's point of view, the

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African educational systems were developed along relatively high-cost lines that could not be sustained in the face of the economic deterioration in the 1980s.

While few would disagree with the Bank's description of the objective indicators of the crisis in African higher education, there is a disagreement with the arguments and assumptions of the Bank that are considered to be narrowly monetarist and technically market oriented, but not necessarily developmental: The Bank's position on the key issues and its recommendations for change are viewed as philosophically and politically imperialistic.

For some, the fiscal and budget-balancing policies do not necessarily lead to development activities. The issues of equity and social distribution of resources are also important factors in a social policy debate while they have not been intrinsically a part of the Bank's concerns. However, it should be noted that the popular criticisms directed at the Bank and its philosophical assumptions have not consistently or fundamentally influenced the African states' policy choices, their political behaviour, and their deontology. Indeed, despite the controversial nature of those programmes and the considerable resistance from many states for several years before adopting them, as of 1996, more than thirty-five African states, of different ideological stands, had partially or fully adopted the SAPs.

Given the centrality of higher education, both in economic and political terms, it became one of the key items of debate in the metropolitan countries and within the international and regional financial institutions, as well as among many African professional and social groups. For instance, after 1989, the Donors to African Education (DAE, which is now the Association for the Development of Education in Africa, ADEA), in its numerous working groups, particularly the Working Group on Higher Education (WGHE), raised issues, posed many important questions, and has been undertaking studies about the sustainability or progress of this sector. However, despite critiques from various actors and institutions to address issues of the quality, philosophy, and economics of higher education, it has not been possible for the states to consider dismantling higher education in Africa. On the contrary, new institutions of higher education have been established since the beginning of the 1990s. Hallak (1990:123) wrote of this concern:

> The higher education sector in general, and the university in particular in Africa, is the object of a good deal of criticism. But the expenditures and the growth rates in enrolment of the past 20 to 25 five years fully demonstrate that this sector is given very high priority. They demonstrate, too, how difficult it is to discourage social demand for tertiary education.

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How much have adjustment policies and financial reforms affected higher education in Africa? How have these effects manifested themselves in the functions and structures of higher education?

The Full-Blown Crisis in the 1980s and 1990s

From the late 1970s to the 1990s, higher education, especially university systems, in Africa, was characterised by a great instability, as indicated by numerous lost years (*années blanches*), strikes by both students and teaching staff, and confrontations between students, faculties, administrations, and governments, often followed by sporadic or prolonged closures. At the same time, the demand for higher education kept increasing each year. Thus, while higher education enrolment in Africa is lower than in other regions of the world, this sub-sector has been growing disproportionately faster than the national economies, including the offer of jobs in the labour market and other supportive infrastructure and institutions. Although there is a disagreement concerning criteria for measuring the level of intensity of the crisis of higher education in different countries, there is a consensus that this sub-sector has been suffering from a multiplicity of factors. This crisis is philosophically and economically reflected in its 'dysfunctionality', as Blair (1992:1) notes:

> Inadequately financed, inefficient and expensive, the universities suffer from poor staff morale, and steady loss of staff to the private sector or to universities in other countries, which will increase as the 'new' South Africa comes on-line. Common problems are poor maintenance of buildings, grounds and equipment, outdated and deteriorating library resources, inefficient access to hard currency, inefficient management, severe disruption through student action, and chaotic relations with their governments, particularly in financial matters.

The above problems have also been identified and critically examined in a study on higher education in Anglophone countries by Coombe (1991), who warned against any over-generalisation and oversimplification when he wrote that:

> [I]t would be unwise for external agencies to write off the African universities as hopelessly and irretrievably in decline. It would also be unfair, considering that the main conditions which have brought the universities low have not been of their own making. Situations vary so greatly, country by country, university by university, faculty by faculty, and department by department, that a universal judgment would be simplistic and absurd (Coombe 1991:1).

Nevertheless, as the situations of the higher education institutions reflected the general objective conditions and economy of the countries, the fact was that these institutions were facing considerable and similar challenges and experiencing severe crisis. Thus while Coombe captures the general conditions in these terms, he later relates an experience at one Anglophone university:

> These scenes from the life of one African campus cannot be taken to represent all, but the elements are familiar enough in most universities: the student accommodation squeeze, the failure or decline of municipal services, the financial privation of students, crowded classrooms, teaching reduced to chalk, teachers who must hustle for additional income, libraries whose acquisition votes have been nominal for years on end (Coombe 1991:1-2).

This situation was not unique in Anglophone countries. In a study of Francophone Africa, specifically in countries south of the Sahara, it was noted:

> Higher education in Francophone Africa south of the Sahara is suffering from a decline in the financial resources provided by the State, heavy pressure of student enrolments on the teaching process, overburdened and obsolete or worn out infrastructure, high failure rates in various faculties, deteriorating living conditions for the majority of students, and constant disruption of the academic year as a result of conflicts between the State and the university community, particularly students. The entire population and all the interest groups concerned are directly affected by one or more aspects of this crisis (Assié-Lumumba 1993:64).

The World Bank itself defined the importance of higher education in Africa and the foundation of its crisis from its own perspectives. How much has the Bank contributed through the SAPs to comprehensively address the questions that have been raised in the above statement?

From the middle of the 1980s through the 1990s, the crisis in African higher education, and more specifically in the universities and their various manifestations, was described and analysed in the media, and in unpublished and published technical reports and academic works. Although it was devoted to the entire education system, the 1988 publication of the World Bank following its meeting at Dijon (France) in 1985 aimed at analysing and defining African future educational needs. In the case of Francophone countries, Tedga (1988) appropriately titled his book *Enseignement supérieur en Afrique noire Francophone: La Catastrophe*? In the case of the Congo/Zaïre, Verhaegen (1991) echoed this sentiment in his article: 'L'enseignement supérieur: vers l'explosion'. In the specific case of Algeria, Mairi (1994) posed a question in a book, also with a revealing

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title: *Faut-il fermer l'université*? In this book, the author analyses a litany of indicators of a major social calamity evidenced, among numerous factors, by:

- Absenteeism among all the different internal groups: the administrators, students, and teaching staff;

- The crushing teaching load in terms of the number of hours and inadequate high student-teachers ratios; and

- Obstruction to the circulation of information.

In *Vers une approche didactique de l'enseignement des sciences économiques à l'université marocaine*, Magdoud (1999) identifies similar factors that constitute an indication of a major crisis of universities in Morocco (Magdoud 1999:208). In *La formation des élites marocaines et tunisiennes: des nationalistes aux islamites*, 1920-2000, Vermeren (2002) analyses the period of 1975 to 1999, referred to as 'the generation of the crisis'. According to this author, this period is characterised by a transformation in the educational system with the adoption of the policies of arabicisation conceived as a response to the crisis. The return to private higher education and a dual system of selection whereby some 'tracks of excellence' (*filières d'excellence*) contributed to create an elitist system for an increasingly rigid and closed class reproduction, leaving study abroad as the only alternative for those who want to escape this dual system. As a matter of fact, in the period following independence, in the early 1960s, the government resorted to a policy of sending students abroad for education in scientific tracks.

The study by Ajayi et al. (1996) was located in the context of undertaking systematic efforts to analyse the crisis with the purpose of understanding the phenomenon and devising ways to contain it and redirect higher education toward its development mission. African countries individually, and institutions such as the Association of African Universities (AAU), became part of the higher education interest groups involved in the collective efforts to study, analyse, understand and possibly seek solutions to address the crisis. Other institutions involved in such efforts include international organisations such as UNESCO in general or its regional office for Africa in Dakar; many institutions of industrial countries, in the context of bilateral cooperation of public development agencies; and private foundations for their individual policy purposes or as members of collective entities such as the ADEA. This is the context in which many countries, sub-regional, and regional studies were undertaken. A comprehensive review of these studies is beyond the purpose and space for this Green Book. Suffice it to briefly recall that these studies with a focus on a selected few must encompass the issues, themes, the main findings and recommendations.

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Of particular relevance is the set of eight studies (Abegaz 1994; Aina 1994; Assié-Lumumba 1994; Gaidzanwa 1994; Mohamedbhai 1994; Mwiria 1994; Negrao 1994; and Sawadogo 1994) that were commissioned by DAE-WGHE (Donors to African Education Working Group on Higher Education) and published as a set in 1994, serving as background papers for the Joint Colloquium of the Association of African Universities and DAE-WGHE on 'The African University: In the 1990s and Beyond', which was held on 16-20 January, 1995 at the National University of Lesotho. A summary of the main issues and recommendations of the eight papers that was first presented by this author at this colloquium was later published (Assié-Lumumba 1996) in the *South African Journal of Higher Education* whose Editor-in-Chief has graciously granted permission to use a modified version of the article.

The purpose of the studies was to join in the collective effort of critically analysing higher education throughout Africa in search of a better understanding of the state of African higher education from the 1980s to the 1990s, particularly that of the universities. The studies aimed to search for solutions and to offer alternatives for higher education geared toward promoting and sustaining social progress in Africa. The process of the production of the studies offered a special opportunity for wide consultation from brainstorming among the researchers and the DAE coordinator of its Working Group on Higher Education to data collected in various national contexts that gave the opportunity to obtain relevant data, viewpoints, and perspectives on the selected topics.

The papers were critically reviewed by the coordinator and a large number of external readers including academics, policy analysts, and policymakers. The researchers also critically read each other's work. This process led to a comprehensive coverage of the relevant issues analysed with the ultimate purpose of contributing to policy design and implementation, to foster globally planned and positive change and to promote enabling contexts for innovations in African higher education. Therefore, the summary of these studies encompasses the key areas and major issues that are considered vital to the survival, development, and raison d'être of African higher education with forward-looking recommendations. For the purpose of the summary produced before, and for that of this Green Book, the focus is on the issues raised with an interest in identifying specific avenues to be explored in order to revitalise the universities, and higher education in general, and to search for ways of actualising their mission and promoting an improved and sustainable quality of life for the African people. The papers identified and addressed specific areas deemed critical for reflection, analysis, and action through which the institutions of higher learning, particularly the universities, can be repositioned as agents not simply of human

resource development and research for their own sake but of the ultimate goal of broad socio-economic development. These themes are:

(i) The broader and fundamental questions of the future mission and roles of the African Universities;

(ii) What has been and what ought to be an appropriate response to the persistently high demand amidst the economic crisis and increased unemployment and the policies of access and equity for the relevant social categories?

(iii) The quintessential question of the quest for a quality education that is relevant to the development agendas of the countries;

(iv) Recognising and taking the appropriate action to ensure a central role for science and technology in development;

(v) Diagnosing the structural problems of governance and devising solutions for improved management to make African universities viable;

(vi) Enhancing or establishing linkages between the higher education institutions and the business community, governments, and with the wider society;

(vii) The provision of adequate and sustainable funding for African higher education institutions for implementing their educational and societal mission;

(viii) Tackling the challenges and taking advantage of the opportunities of international cooperation.

The studies recognised and emphasised the fact that the crisis in African universities was a reflection of the broader crisis in the economy and the political process in African countries. There was a call for social design and political reconstruction from years of economic failures, stagnation and even regression, political violence and wars with a central role to be played by higher education. However, all the aspects of educational systems and processes had been affected by the general crisis. Nevertheless, it is argued in these studies that the crisis should not be a call for continual lamentation, lack of action, and awaiting doomsday. Instead, recognising the crisis and its manifestations, analysing critically, without any complacency or excuses, its historical and contemporary causes should be a wake-up call to start anew by learning from past mistakes, and by creating and taking advantage of new windows of opportunity, no matter how few they are or how scarce they may become at home, in the new international context, and in the broader global environment. The papers, as a set, emphasise the need to recognise and critically analyse the crisis in African higher education, particularly at the university level, and to provide guidelines in the search

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for solutions. Their foci and arguments echoed those made by other comprehensive studies (Coombe 1991; Saint 1992; Assié-Lumumba 1993; Ajayi et al. 1996).

It was remarkable that from the critical academics to the officers of international organisations, especially the World Bank with predominantly technical perspectives, all made a similar assessment of the objective conditions of the African universities. The fundamental difference was in the types of solutions proposed, given the differing models of society that the recommended institutions — reformed existing institutions or newly created — would contribute to foster and sustain. Many other publications analysed different aspects of the education systems and processes. In 'The University in Modern Africa: Toward the Twenty-First Century', Sherman (1990) conceptualises the African university by emphasising the need to link the institutional and broader contexts, to actualise its societal mission, and to contribute to solving Africa's ever-pressing problems.

These studies point out that in the post-colonial period, some of the specific objectives of African universities, such as increasing the number of students and graduates at the higher education level, were at least partially achieved, as enrolment drastically increased in the 1960s and 1970s. However, when the crisis started, there were still lingering major problems of enrolment and unequal educational opportunity. These problems were worsened by the crisis and the SAP solutions. Access in the post-colonial period has been determined by old factors (for example, race, gender, ethnicity, region, area of birth and residence) and new or newly reinforced ones (social class, rural versus urban dwellers), most of which are actually proxies for social class, as ability to pay in conjunction with limited supply and lack of affordable alternatives became major determinants.

In the case of gender, it can be said that even during the first two post-independence decades (the 1960s and 1970s) of rapid educational expansion, universal primary enrolment was not achieved, nor was gender parity. Educational statistics in African countries in general reveal consistent patterns of female under-representation in the distribution of education. The uneven representation of the female population in the educational system becomes sharper from the lower to the upper levels. Retention and dropout rates are still high, significantly and consistently higher for girls than for boys. As a result of lower enrolment rates and higher attrition rates among females, the gap between males and females increases considerably from the primary to the tertiary levels. Furthermore, at the tertiary level, especially at the university, there are an even smaller proportion of female students registered in fields such as science (Beoku-Betts and Logan 1993) in comparison to the disproportionately large number of

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students registered in the humanities and social sciences, creating asymmetrical gender representation in the labour market and occupational structure.

On the whole, many national and international factors have contributed to hamper women's participation in higher education. For instance, in 'The Impact of Structural Adjustment Programs on Higher Education in Africa' (Assié-Lumumba and Lumumba-Kasongo 1996), it was found that the economic crisis and the policies of the SAPs of the World Bank and the Stabilisation Programmes (focussing on fiscal policy) of the IMF had been a major impediment to the enrolment of female students in higher education institutions. A study of World Bank policy trends conducted from within the World Bank itself concluded that in the Africa region, in comparison to the 1970s, gender in higher education received decreasing attention in the 1980s and early 1990s (Subbarao, Raney, Dunbar, and Haworth 1994). As an illustration of this actual policy that contradicted their officially stated policy, the proportion of the World Bank's education projects acknowledging gender was 28 percent for the period of 1972-1981, while the proportion of total investment in education projects acknowledging gender was 16 percent for the same period. In comparison, from the 1980s to the early 1990s, there was a clear 'regional shift' in favour of South Asia, where the number of projects increased from 12 percent to 38 percent, while the investment in these projects also increased, from 8 percent to 65 percent. On the whole, the 'total investment in higher education projects acknowledging gender in the Sub-Saharan African region during the 1980s decreased to a mere 6 percent from 16 percent in the 1970s' (Subbarao et al.:32). According to findings of a recent study (Assié-Lumumba 2000), there is relatively strong positive correlation observed between female enrolment ratio and gross domestic investment and gross national savings, and a negative correlation with labour force participation of females as a percentage of population of all ages in labour force. Other economic parameters of interest are: public expenditure on education as a percentage of gross national product, and public expenditure on education as a percentage of government expenditure (Assié-Lumumba 2000:113).

The challenges that emerged in the two decades that followed, especially in the 1990s, called for a critical examination of actual policies and practices, amidst a growing gap between the vision set earlier and the actual course of action taken by the policy makers and the accomplishments of the institutions. The critical issues that were presented as necessary to be addressed in the search for a renewed commitment to implementing the mission, included the recognition of the dysfunctional nature of most institutions of higher education. One of the key issues then concerned the anachronistic and alienating nature of the

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governance structures that were historically set in place by using European or Western models.

There are various local and international interest groups that have been involved in African higher education. Even those groups that may have made official choices of focussing on the other levels of the educational system (for instance, basic education), realised more and more that all these levels must be dealt with in a comprehensive manner. Although these groups may have divergent views on some aspects, they all agreed that African higher education was in dire need of a critical assessment of past policies and their results in order to mount a massive mobilisation of ideas, resources, and actions to meet the demand for human resource development in critical thinking—and technical skills—for the twenty-first century and beyond.

Following the beginning of the economic crisis, many African countries experienced, in the early 1980s, stagnation and, in some countries, an unanticipated decline in enrolment rates from the primary level to the university. However, these trends were reversed, and the social demand for education thereafter continued to increase. The main issue to be tackled then was how to meet this demand and how universities could best prepare the type of human resources needed within the future local and international contexts. Given the shrinking budgetary resources because of the economic crisis while demand was increasing, the obvious questions raised were: How can learning institutions competently train larger numbers of students with fewer resources? How can universities meet the demands of students and their families of varying social origins? What educational philosophy and new policies could take into account the interface between gender, social class, ethnicity, region, age, area of residence, and race—in countries that were settler colonies—by considering the individuals who belong to these groups as both beneficiaries and actors in the decision-making process? How is gender, the most universal variable and basis of differentiation, taken into consideration and responded to?

It was argued that one of the main reasons why the African universities were not well prepared to respond to societal needs was their alienation from the broader society and the business community. Indeed, despite populist discourse in terms of the mission of the university as an agent of development for the entire society, at the time of their inception, African 'universities and the governance structures were elitist' (Gaidzanwa 1994). Despite an increase in student enrolment, the university had persisted in its tradition of having been designed, not only as an ivory tower, but as deriving from metropolitan institutions that grew out of the historical processes and social contexts of Western nations reproduced in Africa. Thus, the African university was characterised by alienation as

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it was unable to connect with the broader society and, thus, could not meet the needs of the population in order to fulfil the mission of development (Sawadogo 1994; Mwiria 1994).

Alienation also existed within the university itself, since students were barely, or not at all, represented and included in the decision-making processes affecting various aspects of their own social and academic lives. The administrative practices at all levels of the institutions were typically characterised by chronic inefficiency. Although African universities have copied the structure of Western universities, they neither borrowed from their former colonial masters, nor created their own system of modern management in which professional staff could work with a consistent sense of efficiency (Gaidzanwa 1994).

The context of lack of efficiency was created in part and maintained by state control of top officers of administration, organisation, and management. The centralised state control of university administration in the political climate characterised by an absence of democratic culture and practice and the lack of communication channels among the different constituencies within the university, contributed to increasing tensions that made instability an inevitable if not intrinsic part of the university. In this case, confrontation was not simply caused by positively conflicting ideas that should in fact be part of a healthy and productive academic environment where academic freedom is respected. Rather, it contributed to creating an atmosphere of permanent and destructive antagonism. The highest administrative officers—vice-chancellors, rectors, chancellors, presidents—usually appointed by the head of state, lacked autonomy and were perceived to give precedence to a political role at the expense of more efficient managerial services and leadership roles to ensure the function of the universities as academic institutions.

Thus, the notion of academic freedom becomes irrelevant, since the discourse within the university realm is monitored by, and expected to respond to, guidelines of the government. What is taught, even how it is taught, what local and international issues faculty and students decide to engage in, etc., are of immediate preoccupation to the government. Who is hired, not even on the basis of what he or she thinks or teaches but simply on ascriptive factors, becomes a factor of contention. The Mafeje Affair during the apartheid period is an excellent illustration. Indeed, the appointment of Mafeje in 1968 as senior lecturer in the Department of Social Anthropology by the Council of the University of Cape Town was nullified following a threat by the apartheid regime, although despite the myriad of laws and acts that codified the rules for behaviour of people and institutions, there was no law forbidding the university from hiring an African (Hendricks 2002).

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The firing of faculty for teaching the 'wrong' or 'subversive' subject or lecture topic was common. For instance, from its inception to the 1970s, the discipline of Sociology was not allowed at the Université d'Abidjan. While unofficially articulated, it was treated as a discipline that would produce perceived 'trouble makers' who through the process of their education would acquire critical thinking that might be used to assess and challenge the existing regime. That is to say that the students' rights to have access to knowledge and the professor's rights to teach were curtailed. However, in the case of Côte d'Ivoire, for instance, at the time when sociology as a discipline was not allowed at the university, sociologists—nationals trained abroad and expatriates—were functioning in many state development agencies. Otherwise, knowledge that can be used quietly did not pose a problem. However, the reproduction of critical knowledge through students was perceived as a threat and triggered actions from the political authorities.

Throughout Africa, students and academics were targets for the limitation of academic freedom, from the seemingly democratic regime of President Senghor in Senegal to the most brutal regimes, such as the governments under apartheid in South Africa and Mobutu in the Congo (Wanzila 1992). The regimes of these two countries were notorious for their massacres of students (for example, Soweto, Lubumbashi). Following the proclamation of the 2005 elections and the subsequent protest, the Ethiopian government has revived this notorious tradition.

Yet it was through critical thinking that students played crucial roles in the struggle for decolonisation throughout the continent. The new trends that African leaders in general have been emulating has been to define education in its economic instrumental terms as a means to secure jobs only, thus aiming to create new generations of careerist Africans who would be concerned about the lack of jobs but would not have the critical insight to connect their internal situations to the global system or to the nature of the regime in place. In this sense, most African leaders play the game of the colonial and post-colonial powers and international agencies such as the World Bank.

In *Academic Freedom 1990: A Human Rights Report,* Fernando et al. (1990) argued, based on their findings, including African cases, that from the 1970s to the 1980s, there was a considerable infringement on academic freedom and drastic deterioration of universities' autonomy. They stated:

During the past two decades, there has been a growing tendency to undermine, restrict or suppress academic freedom and university autonomy. This tendency has had a direct relation to a contracting system of higher education, justified most often in terms of economic austerity and/or political expediency. An unsympathetic public image has been created of universities in

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many countries in a context of huge growth in the number of educated unemployed. The most alarming aspect has been the increasing tendency to violate the human rights of teachers, students, researchers, and writers by socio-political systems of all kinds. Whenever governments have resorted to dictatorial means of exercising power, university professors, students and researchers have been the first to be dismissed, arrested, killed or eliminated (Fernando et al. 1990:5).

In the case of African countries, it was in this context that under the sponsorship of CODESRIA the November 1990 Kampala Declaration on Intellectual Freedom and Social Responsibility was adopted. Following this Kampala Declaration, African universities felt empowered to organise debates and undertake activities to restore, reclaim, and protect these rights and responsibilities as exemplified by cases like Ghana with the 1994 conference and publication on Intellectual Freedom in Ghana (Anyimadu 1994).

Autonomy and academic freedom have been infringed upon not only by local political leadership, such as brutal military regimes as eloquently analysed in *Nigerian Academics Under Military Rule* (Jega 1994), *ASUU-Government Conflict in Nigeria: An Investigation into the Roots, Character and management of ASUU Strikes* (Obasi 1991) or even self-proclaimed progressive governments and the like (Oloka-Onyango 1992), but also by some external powers. Most notably, with their financial powers institutions like the World Bank do not accept challenges to their decisions (Bako 2002:16-17).

Generally, the university started to reflect social and political conflicts, such as party affiliation, which was exacerbated then by the one-party systems and the lack of space for alternative political discourse and conceptualisation of alternative social development programmes. The absence of a permanent mechanism of consultation and of a democratic culture, which prizes consensus building rather than irreconcilable antagonistic positions in governance and policy making, was reflected in the behaviour of the university. Permanent confrontation was manifested in the forms of student and teacher strikes, to which the government responded by university closures, thus shortening academic years, making it impossible at some times and in some contexts to know when the previous academic year ended and the new one started. The universities became breeding grounds for physical violence instead of enlightenment, with bloody face-to-face confrontations and destruction of educational facilities and equipment. The end result was shorter learning periods that tended to worsen the problem of low-quality education and inefficiency.

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As the overall society went through the period of shattered hopes in the early years of independence amidst economic uncertainty and political instability, students have been going through the global search for comfort and confidence. In relation to, and maybe in part as a feeder of, violence on campus, some new phenomena have emerged. Among them is the emergence of secret societies on some campuses. According to the main findings in a study on *Impact of Secret Societies on Higher Education: A Case Study of the University of Nigeria and Enugu State University of Science and Technology* (Oti 1994:89-90):

> Campus secret societies are caused by factors associated with adolescence, poor student home upbringing, societal corruption and inadequacies of the university authorities. Operations of campus secret societies are character-ised by secrecy. Members of the societies use various techniques to sustain secrecy. They also wield injurious weapons such as axe, dagger and acid. Activities of secret societies adversely affect some educational parameters in the universities. These include tutorial staff, students, facilities and human activities in the universities (Oti 1994).

Such activities feed on violence in the broader society. Considering that students are expected to receive a solid education as the future generation that will hold positions in all spheres of society, such experiences are not conducive to con-structive learning and readiness for leadership and responsibility in society. In immediate terms, such activities feed on violence on campus.

Thus, 'peace and stability on the campuses were also recognized as critical for the sustainability of the university' (AAU 1995:10). Yet, at a students' meet-ing in Accra in 1998, they did not (at least as shown in the report) deal with the issue of the right to learn within a context of academic freedom. They did, how-ever, address students' roles in maintaining 'social peace and stability' (UNESCO 1998). Although the commitment to dialogue rather than physical violence to express differences is welcome, the students did not connect the violence on campus to a broader socio-political context.

One of the key issues in the crisis related to the question of quality, and also relevance, was conceived as the inability of the African university to provide an education that could help position themselves and play a vital role in address-ing the need for quality of life in the specific areas of relevant cultural and eco-nomic production.

In 'Confronting the Burden of the Past: The Historical Antecedents of the Present Predicament of African Universities', Lulat (2003:595-96) rightly points out that besides the spectacular accomplishments in terms of enrolments between

the early 1960s and mid-1990s, African universities were also offering high-quality programmes:

> Qualitatively too, there was as a time when the quality of undergraduate teaching and learning (graduate education was and is still relatively undeveloped) in African universities was internationally comparable. Whatever criticisms there were of African universities in the past, they rarely (if ever) included those about quality... The fact is that the remarkable quantitative progress that African higher education has registered to date sadly masks a proportionate qualitative degeneration on a massive scale (Lulat 2003:596).

More generally, the African university had not generated the human resources that could provide the knowledge and leadership for meeting basic human needs by helping produce food and providing much-needed and quality health care and housing services. When articulating decisions regarding the quality and relevance of African universities, it becomes clearer that one must pose the question of how to create a broad context of democratic culture that the university needs in order to function effectively and which is at the same time part of the outcome of the university in its teaching, research, and service orientation toward the satisfaction of the African people's needs, not the needs of a select few (Aina 1994).

How should one ensure the accountability of the universities to the wider community, composed of taxpayers from whom students are drawn, and guarantee that they pay something back to their communities by contributing to their development, using the knowledge acquired in these institutions? Accountability is especially important when, as is the case in some countries, taxpayers not only support the university through public revenues, but may be asked to pay additional fees for education. How should one repair the damage to the public's perception of the university as poorly managed and a place of constant confrontation between administration and students for political matters? There are also more specific questions concerning the need to improve student welfare.

University-government relations were the tensest between two camps: the university at large or specific constituencies, mainly the teaching staff, and students or a coalition of students and teaching staff versus government ministry/decision makers. In many cases, the highest-ranking university administrators usually sided with the government. This polarisation of the university environment became a significant source of instability.

With regard to the question of the fields that require special focus, it was considered that African universities could play an important and more active role in promoting science and technology for the socio-economic development of

African societies. The question posed was: Given the weak capacity of African countries in science and technology personnel, how can one ensure that African universities produce the relevant and needed human resource base in science and technology, with the expected role that science and technology will play in the fast technology-prone development process that started at the end of the twentieth century and has reached an accelerated pace since the beginning of the twenty-first century? In addressing the development of science and technology in African universities, various aspects need to be considered: enrolment and graduation, relevance of the institutions and the training offered, science and technology graduates and the labour market, and research (Mohamedbhai 1994).

Negrao (1994:9-10) found that even in industrial countries such as Japan, Germany, Sweden, and France, the government contributes an average of 84 percent of the incomes of public universities, which is similar to the average of 85 percent in Anglophone African countries. Although the corresponding figure for institutions in Francophone African countries was even higher, at 93 percent, African countries did not constitute an exception in receiving the overwhelming proportion of their revenues from the state.

Even major private research universities in the United States receive considerable public funding, although the mechanisms and conditions for receiving public funding vary. While in some European countries, as in Northern Europe and France, there is a direct allocation of funding based on enrolment, in the case of major private institutions in the United States considerable public funds are transferred by means of mega-grants awarded on a competitive basis. Many units, particularly in the Sciences and to a much lesser extent in the Humanities, receive major public financial support this way. In these institutions, students' tuition fees constitute the key source of revenue.

In terms of the internal distribution of the revenues allocated to education, one major distinction regarding African institutions in general was their relatively low operating cost and high proportion of their budget allocated to student welfare programmes that included housing, food, and health services, while tuition fees constituted a negligible source of revenue. The main difference between African and industrial countries in terms of the source of their funding is the vulnerability of the revenues and limited sources in African countries in general given the weakness of their national economies, leading to shrinking resources while the needs were increasing (Noumon 1999; Diagne and Daffe 1997; Aninpah 1997; Saffa 1994).

Another major issue related to finance was the linkage between financial source and the locus of power and authority. Thus, it was considered in the

short life of African contemporary universities, given the overall political culture, one of the surest ways to acquire and sustain academic freedom and university autonomy was to diversify the sources of revenue of the universities. The immediate and long-term challenge was then deciding what ought to be done to ensure sustainable sources to meet the needs.

What actions should be undertaken in the university to foster and maintain an enabling institutional capacity for quality and relevant teaching, research and community services, satisfying social demand for education, and the promotion of regional and international cooperation? Even the most benevolent external support cannot realistically and efficiently be planned unless there is a serious local funding base to meet immediate and projected needs. How can the pressing needs be tackled to respond to demand in the context of diminishing resources in relation to the needs of a growing general and school-age population?

The issue of scarce and shrinking resources, the need to admit that a real problem exists, the role of the various actors, including 'experts' from various countries and cultures, and possible solutions which require input from the inside and outside (cooperation) must all be critically addressed. The mission of African universities cannot be properly accomplished in isolation.

The major issue is how to expand cooperation while decreasing intellectual dependency on former European colonial powers and increasing this cooperation not only with other industrial countries, but also among African institutions (Abegaz 1994). The most general but fundamental question asked is what the role and mission of African universities should be to prepare African countries to function effectively in the new world order amidst severe and persistent economic crises. How can the African university be a decisive asset instead of a major development liability?

Recommendations and Search for Solutions Articulated in the Studies

Recommendations for change derived from various studies in the 1980s and 1990s (Fernando et al. 1990). Despite the similarities of the national situation, due to variations and constant changes that take place, the applicability of general recommendations may vary according to national and institutional contexts.

A commonly accepted conclusion and recommendation was that, contrary to the prescriptions of the SAPs, in African countries the state could/cannot disengage itself while expecting higher education to provide solutions for social

peace and socio-economic progress. It was remarked that despite some negative implications of state administrative and financial control, in the context of the economic crisis, and structural adjustment programmes, some of their conditionalities and the shaky financial base for most of the African population, it would be neither just nor realistic to expect African families to meet their need for education solely with their own resources through payment of tuition. To meet the demand for higher education for the majority, public institutions and funding for needy population segments would have to continue to play a major role in comparison to private ones.

It was concluded that there was a need for a strong policy designed to address society's immediate pressing needs with a vision for the twenty-first century and beyond. Leaders' visions of what institutions and countries should do and be long after they are gone will contribute toward reorienting higher education. Although politicians are motivated by short-run survival that often dictates their actions, their vision of a long-term future for their society in seeking a way out of the crisis and searching for new alternatives was considered a necessary part of the foundation for society and African higher education. It was observed that demand was likely to increase in the future. Thus, realistically, policies that aim, directly or indirectly, at reducing demand or restricting access would be counterproductive and would lead to social explosions. Furthermore, social progress in the twenty-first century will even more strongly require a critically literate and technically skilled population.

It was recommended that higher education policies regarding demand, access, and equity be dealt with in relation to the primary and secondary educational levels that feed post-secondary institutions. It was also recommended that the classical universities be reformed to contribute to meet this high demand and to effectively deliver a quality and relevant education. Short-cycle institutions or short-stream programmes within the universities were considered an important component of the higher education as they could contribute significantly to meet diversified and increasing demand. If quality in these institutions was assured, they could attract a diversified clientele which would contribute to relieving pressure on universities so that they could deliver more effectively their specialised services in teaching, research and provision of policy leadership. Otherwise, they would be relegated to the needy proportion of the population and would also likely stir up unrest (Assié-Lumumba 1994). Thus, the creation of such programmes and institutions must fit future requirements to strive for excellence. The emphasis in the effort to build a viable institutional capacity requires a comprehensive higher education including not only universities, but also alternative tertiary short-cycle institutions. A healthy future for all African

higher education lies mostly in such new public and private short-stream institutions. Indeed, by taking the pressure off the universities, they can begin to strengthen long-cycle programmes that would provide the opportunity for improvement of the quality, internal efficiency, and external efficiency as well. Even if these programmes and institutions were to emerge, the universities would still be needed to play the roles they are better suited to play in teaching, research, and service.

As demand was not likely to decrease, vigorous measures taken to meet it had to go along with ensuring efficiency. While the university in Africa remains central, higher education would be well served by getting rid of the attitude of imparting a higher status to the classical university, while looking down on other institutions of tertiary education.

There are pressing needs for the training of practical and versatile technicians in applied sciences to provide services and create 'small- and medium-scale industries' for self-employment using local resources (Mohamedbhai 1994) with the goal of improving living conditions, especially in rural communities. Incorporating practical training in polytechnics into the university and other institutions is strongly recommended. Without neglecting 'pure' science and face-to-face learning, increasing enrolment in science and technology needs to be promoted in part through institutionalisation and development of distance education, and a change in enrolment mix (proportion of students in science fields within general enrolment and also within science students leaning toward applied science). The new conception of higher education that relates courses to the African social context requires revision of the curricula.

Flexible age requirements for access that allow anyone who meets academic and other entrance criteria to have a chance to resume her or his education at any time, can also contribute to alleviating the pressure on institutions and on people who try to secure higher education at a younger age, usually right after secondary school. Such a flexible policy will help decrease the immediate demand for higher education from secondary school graduates. The assurance of future chances to pursue their education, whenever they decide to do so, would most likely lessen the urge to continue their education non-stop, ideally to the terminal degree.

Tackling the key issue of female under-representation in the educational system of most countries requires vigorous and consistent inclusion policies for women on all committees, commissions, and the like, at both local and international levels where policies and important decisions having gender and global implications are made. The adoption of a consistent affirmative action policy can constitute the starting point for equal opportunity at all levels of education.

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However, rather than applying simple 'quota-like solutions' as a permanent remedy, more efforts will be needed to create favourable structural conditions, such as providing housing facilities, especially for students who are of low socio-economic status and for those who do not have access to adequate means and living conditions.

Courses and seminars on gender issues can contribute to increasing awareness. A required multi-disciplinary introductory course and seminars open to a larger audience could sensitise current and future policymakers, teaching staff, and students to these issues. Even universities that might already have 'women's programmes' are likely to benefit from such an initiative in the search for solutions to gender inequality in educational access, results, outputs, and outcomes. But it is not enough to sensitise people. Policies on the promotion of more gender-responsive structures and allocation of resources are needed to make a decisive step forward. International institutions can make a difference by encouraging and supporting local initiatives for gender parity through the targeted allocation of scholarships and fellowships to support female representation. Such gender-focussed policies can be applied while taking into consideration as key variables other socially significant determinants of gender inequality in education.

Programmes aimed at raising the consciousness of the entire population to the social necessity for equality of opportunity can further lead to positive results. Workshops and seminars intended for decision-makers and the general population can play a vital role in changing attitudes. Women faculty members and administrators organised in research and support groups or networks, for example, with workshops and seminars providing a forum to share research findings and information with the purpose of influencing policy, can contribute to increase women's visibility, attract more female students to specific fields and help professional women advance in their research and work. Giving more chances to girls and women, and to the entire population, is giving a chance to Africa to educate and make full use of all its vital resources to promote quality of life and social progress among all social categories.

Recently, the creation of women's studies units and programmes in several universities, especially in Anglophone countries like Uganda, Nigeria (Mama 1996; Assié-Lumumba 2006) has been conceptualised as an effective strategy. While Sudan was an exception for a long time as the sole country with an all-women university, recent initiatives such as Kenya appear to open new avenues for dealing with gender inequality. However, the creation of such institutions should not be conceived only in terms of access. Other relevant issues include the overall educational experience to be offered in terms of access to knowledge,

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contribution to knowledge production, the type and substance of the curriculum. There is considerable opportunity to start conducting some research preferably with a longitudinal methodology in order to understand the comparative contribution of these new institutions.

University women who acquire more information on the status of the law with regard to gender and who push for positive legal changes can contribute to actions that will foster more female enrolment and promotions (Mlama 1998; Makhubu 1998; Juma 1998; Meena 2001). Despite the barrier that social class may create, it is essential for women who succeed to have a consciousness of their duty toward others. Highly educated women remembering their social privilege might be inspired to pay something back. They might remember, for example, that little girls and women (and boys and men, as well) most of whom have never had a chance to attend school, produce agricultural commodities in rural communities which support the economy of their respective countries that make it possible for socially privileged families and fortunate individuals from impoverished families to take advantage of school and university facilities. Being concretely committed to increasing enrolment and survival in the school system is a positive starting point with the ultimate goal of making the acquired education meaningful for society and the people.

The vision of the African university, as stated by the founders of AAU, as a development university, needs to be re-examined in order to take into consideration the dynamic process involved in development. Conceived in a dynamic frame, the university can continually adapt to new local and global conditions so it can pursue the fulfilment of its mission toward a new vision with sensitivity to the requirements of each era (Aina 1994).

The new definition of this university in terms of its objectives, priorities, and mission must be made the concern of all by giving the opportunity to the public to discuss them and evaluate their performance. Specific groups, including governments, university communities, business and professional communities, NGOs, women's groups, and other relevant interest groups must participate in the production of ideas and guidance for the running and direction of the university to function efficiently. As support staff have been reduced because of the introduction of technology, focussing on training and using quality staff is paramount in raising the quality of university production, while securing an improved environment of rebuilt infrastructures, facilities, and management.

A democratic structure with a high commitment to efficiency can be achieved through the appointment of university administrators on the basis of merit and through the decentralisation of power. An open system of checks and balances ensured by a good representation of the different constituencies of the university

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should include not only teaching and administrative staff, but students as well. More autonomy for the university as a public good is essential for organisation and functioning, being guided by efficiency rather than loyalty to political authorities that have reserved the privilege of appointing top administrators. In this context, all the constituencies would work using consensus building rather than destructive confrontation or undemocratic means in the decision-making process.

Through regional cooperation, costly duplication can be avoided and considerable economies of scale can be achieved, which is especially desirable in the context of shrinking resources and increasing needs. For many practical reasons (for instance, cost, communication services), the most intense cooperation among universities can start at the regional level, with a focus on neighbouring countries. The development of technology can facilitate communication. Several models of institutional development for regional training, research, and publication were suggested. Besides the traditional ties with Europe and North America, and the expected increased cooperation between African countries, serious efforts are required to establish fruitful collaboration with other industrial countries, including newly industrialised and industrialising countries in Asia and South and Central America.

A special call was made for the systematic use of African nationals who, for political, economic, and other reasons, reside outside the continent, especially those who live in areas and work in institutions which have advantages in resources. They can contribute significantly to the revitalisation of African institutions from the outside. Despite the problems related to the 'brain drain', these Africans abroad constitute a real untapped asset and can make considerable contributions to the revitalisation of African higher education in general or in specific areas, as they effectively do in the financial and economic sectors of their communities in Africa.

However, the research mission, for example, of African universities is in particular need of renewed, improved research facilities and trained personnel, through formal links between African institutions and overseas institutions, without having African scholars leave their own institutions. By offering support to African personnel based in African institutions or who leave for a limited period only, it will be possible to ensure a direct link between research and the African environment. Donor support can be most beneficial when not only immediate concerns are dealt with, but also when a long-term development plan for institutional capacity strengthening constitutes the thrust of their policies.

In the search of a better needs assessment within a regional framework, it was recommended that consultations be made not only at the national level but

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also at sub-regional and regional levels 'to draft a national, sub-regional and regional agenda for university development in Africa' (Abegaz 1994).

Peace and stability are the sine qua non for productive cooperation. A whole strategy to establish a new relationship between the university and the outside world is recommended. A series of outreach programmes (extension programmes, teaching in related institutions such as junior colleges and advanced secondary systems, 'A' Level, second cycle in the French system), in-reach programmes (use of public expertise such as indigenous knowledge in various areas for instance in science, medicine, and music), and specific teaching and research activities for NGOs and 'mature students' in training in evening and vocational programmes, can constitute some of the concrete actions that are needed to relocate the university in its real social space.

A public relations office to improve communication at the university can help keep channels of communication to, and from, society, actively and constructively open. New strategies of human resource development would be enhanced by involving the business community in the universities that, after all, produce the majority of the human resources it uses. Coordinating committees can help the university use the expertise of businesses and form a university-business sector. More university staff can be involved with advisory boards of the business community, which would receive ideas from the university while workshops and seminars organised by the business sector for university staff and students could enhance the readiness of the university to respond and adjust better to the market. In linking the university and the broader social environment through research, a number of concrete suggestions include creating technology parks where the university and businesses develop in close proximity, and share human resources, ideas, and equipment. More systematic linkages can be developed on the basis of consultancies and development consortia that would contribute to development research and disseminate their findings. In this context, packages aimed to retain the 'best researchers' are needed (Mwiria 1994).

As for the specific collaboration between the university and the government, strengthened buffer bodies whose role it is to mediate between governments/states and universities should be developed on a permanent basis for consultation and conflict resolution. A process of de-linking the universities' highest administration from the heads of states would contribute to greater autonomy.

In the context of the ongoing economic crisis, it would not be realistic to look for a 'single solution or universally prescribed remedy'. A number of options must be explored to make the most appropriate choices, some of which may be generated by local or national specificities. In searching for adequate and

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sustainable funds, the university must be conceived as a 'partnership' (Negrao 1994) institution with recognised vested interests and support of the government, private sector, non-profit organisations, and the community at large, all sharing costs. Several key areas and diversified sources need to be worked on in the search for controlling the funding and financial viability of universities. The conditions for access to student support services (for example, scholarships, housing) and staff housing must also be re-evaluated in this new context.

As demand is not likely to decrease, options geared toward reducing unit costs through higher internal efficiency could be explored in part by increasing distance education, twinning, and multiple partnerships in training. The government, private sector, donor community and local philanthropic associations, tuition, income-generating activities, investments, and endowments must all be explored to avoid the high proportion of the state contribution which is risky, especially given the financial crisis of the state and its tradition of tight control of universities.

There is a need for creating new positions, especially for problem-solving and development purposes, such as for communication between the various constituencies, a dean of students to handle the rising number of new students, and a dean of development in charge of identification and the raising of funds.

Finally, it is important to stress the strong common message from the studies of 1980s and particularly the 1990s that the magnitude of the crisis called for immediate action. Thus the next chapter deals with the second wave of reforms and new innovations.

Chapter Four

Waves of Reforms
and Recent Innovations

In part because of the lack of higher education commensurate to the needs articulated by Africans during the colonial era, in post-colonial Africa the emphasis was on increasing supply at all levels, especially higher education. However, early on there was a quest for change, in addition to the simple increase in enrolment. Reforms and innovations have been the major forms of change that have been articulated, formulated, and in some cases implemented, from the 1960s to the present. Following the first wave of post-colonial reforms that were either halted or rendered ineffective by the crises that started in the 1970s, new planned changes were undertaken in African higher education. Before discussing the specific types of reforms and innovations that have taken place, some general and conceptual elements of change are addressed.

Conceptualising Educational Change

Both reform and innovation are components of the larger set of planned changes. To appropriately address their applications and concrete cases in African higher education, it is useful to recall some of the basic distinctions between the types of reform and innovation that the educational process in Africa has involved.

Reforms and innovations have common characteristics as well as differences. All reforms are planned and although most innovations are also planned, some innovations are the result of a fortuitous discovery or of the cumulative effect of minor and non-systematised modifications of various aspects of the education process. Reforms apply to the entire system of education or at least a subsystem, while innovations concern specific elements of the system, such as aspects of the curriculum, textbooks, and method or technology of delivery. According to Altbach (1982:5), the difference is one of scale:

> University reform and innovation are processes related to planned change in higher education. The term *reform* usually applies to change of a basic nature: smaller alterations in the curriculum or in the means of instruction are more properly called *innovations*.

It has been argued (Assié-Lumumba 2000) that reform of any social system is planned change that is designed according to an articulated programme with the purpose of promoting new functions and mechanisms of improvement to transform the structure of the system. A fundamental rationale for undertaking a reform or a planned innovation is the assumption or fact that the existing system is unable to achieve previously targeted objectives or is inadequate to advance or support new objectives. The probability of the implementation of reform and planned innovation is influenced by the 'level of congruence or incongruence between the system of education embodied within the proposed reform and the structure of the social formation significantly' (Assié-Lumumba 2000:92). Furthermore, it was found in another study (Assié-Lumumba and Lumumba-Kasongo 1991) that, although factors such as monetary resources are important, a reform that clashes with the political system is not likely to be implemented. Indeed, implementation of educational reform is a political, not a technical, matter. Carnoy (1976) argues that historical facts prove that educational reforms are an efficient device that contributes to 'preserving social order' and 'maintaining an inequitable class structure' rather than fostering equality, even when the agents that initiate reforms genuinely intend to promote positive change. The privileged groups in society can in fact use reform as a direct mechanism of preserving their privileges. This has been the main point articulated by Bourdieu and Passeron (1979) when they argue that the educational system cannot be expected to change social inequality as students enter and exit the system of education according to the social structure and their location in it. Bray et al. (1986) also argue that in Africa, while reforms may be wrapped in progressive language and contain stated objectives of promoting a more egalitarian system, in reality they are:

> … often resisted by influential sectors of society, for while changes may be very desirable for the majority, they are usually to the detriment of a minority. In this case, we must realize that governments are composed of individuals who are themselves members of a social élite... Indeed, in some cases, so-called reforms are no more than ways in which the élite increase their power rather than the opposite.

The stakeholders in African education include, as anywhere else in the world, all the national and local interest groups: students, families, decision-makers,

and professional staff, particularly the teaching staff and administrators. As dependent states whose 'persistent vulnerable link' (Agyeman 2001) is perpetuated through education as a social institution, international organisations and industrial countries — especially the former colonial powers — in the framework of regional and bilateral cooperation through their international development agencies have remained central decision-makers in African educational policy matters.

Given the fact that reforms in theory concern changes in the entire system, it is usually the state that has the power and authority to initiate them. In contrast, the actual and potential agents of innovations may be from any of the above-mentioned categories of stakeholder interest groups and may be individuals who hold positions at the level of the system or specific institutions, the official decision-making bodies in public agencies and private institutions, specific schools, departments, centres, and other programme units within an institution. These different types of agents of innovation are similar to those in industrial countries. However, in the case of African countries, another major category of concern is international organisations and their representatives, including consultants and technical assistants, largely from industrial countries. In the case of international organisations and industrial countries, their role may theoretically be simply to advise and recommend. However, when these proposals come with badly needed financial resources, whether grants or loans, for impoverished and desperate countries, they constitute prescriptions.

The major conflicts that have plagued universities, opposing students and teaching staff to the state or to specific international institutions, primarily the World Bank, constitute an eloquent reminder that stakeholders may have conflicting interests. In situations of conflicting interests, if the purpose of reforms and innovations is to improve an existing situation, it is legitimate to ask whose criteria and norms are used to design the reforms and innovations, and what is considered a better situation. Even in situations of deep and prolonged crises such as African universities have experienced, and in which all actors who intervene by way of reforms and innovations aim to participate in the search for solutions for improvement, the reality is that the goal targeted may not be unanimously accepted by all the groups as positive. It is worth mentioning that among the international organisations that exercise pressure or dictate policies, there is not a single and unanimous voice. Indeed, while the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund have promoted a policy of austerity and state disengagement, including the introduction of school fees, privatisation, which in effect eliminate the neediest segments of the population, UNESCO (although with

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less financial power) has continued to promote its policy of equality of access to education and the consistent promotion of higher education as an investment in social development. The analysis of the reforms and innovations undertaken in African higher education requires that this complex social context and multiplicity of voices and positions that influence the objectives and processes of planned change be taken into serious consideration.

The First Wave of Higher Education Reforms in Post-colonial Africa

Given the central role that education in general, and higher education in particular, was expected to play in the national project of socio-economic development, issues about the type of education for this project were addressed at different moments of the post-colonial period, within the broader framework of political ideologies, ranging from those that made a clear choice of a pro-Western liberal ideology and capitalist system (Botswana, Côte d'Ivoire, and Togo), to those that opted for Marxist-Leninist or socialist ideology (Benin, Algeria, and Zimbabwe), to the ones whose leaders made an official choice of the path of African socialism (Mali and Tanzania).

Regardless of their ideological and political choices, they made a general assessment of the lack of relevance of European education imposed on, or even hitherto requested by, Africans and the need for change recognised in all reform documents. However, in Africa a few reforms were adopted by regimes with leaders who intended to transform the entire education system and use it as an instrument in broader social projects aimed at promoting structural change to create a more egalitarian society. For instance, Guinea, Mali, Tanzania, and Algeria wanted to use education as an instrument for a more global undertaking of social transformation or even revolution. Immediately after their respective independence in the 1950s and 1960s, these countries embarked on major educational reforms. One of their main characteristics was also their holistic nature, as they encompassed all the levels of the educational systems. Indeed, the entire inherited system in each country required re-conceptualisation and restructuring. The different levels were conceived as interdependent. Furthermore, these early post-colonial educational reforms were conceived as part of the national project and political system, and targeted global social structural change that included the various social groupings.

In addition to internal factors that explained the quest for change, the earlier reforms were also motivated by international organisations through different fora, including conferences, conventions, and laws. Indeed, the first wave of

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educational reforms in the early 1960s were, without any doubt, influenced by the conference sponsored by UNESCO and the World Bank which was held in 1961 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. This meeting was designed to provide a forum for the definition of education for the economic development needs of the newly and soon-to-be independent African states. Specific resolutions were adopted at this conference, including one concerning the conception and treatment of education as the first among several burning social issues. The new African ministers of education, and other official delegates in general, returned to their respective countries with the slogan that education was the 'priority of priorities'. This phrase appeared in subsequent legal educational documents, including the ones on reform.

Guinea Conakry preceded the international call for redefinition of African education. Under the leadership of President Touré, an uncompromising labour unionist and nationalist fighting for the unconditional independence of African countries, Guinea acquired its independence from France in 1958 after voting 'no' to the 1958 referendum proposed by the French President, General de Gaulle, for membership in the *Communauté Française*. There was an officially stated commitment to achieve socio-economic development that led the Guinean leaders, particularly President Touré, to create a holistic vision of the need for social change and progress for the people in Guinea and Africa in general. In this context, the educational system inherited from the French did not fit and had to be replaced. Thus, a reform of the system was initiated (Touré 1961). Indeed, the Guinean leaders embarked on a deconstruction of the inherited system and a reconstruction of an African-centred system with a holistic vision as articulated in '*Le développement de la réforme de l'enseignement*'. Higher education was designed to be integrated in the social milieu to serve the people better.

Under the leadership of the late President Kéita, Mali adopted a radical path as well, one close to the Guinean and Tanzanian options. Kéita demanded and obtained independence for Mali in 1960, and he opted for African socialism, which called for an educational system that was philosophically different from the French one. In 1962, a reform law was submitted to the National Assembly, and a new educational system was thus adopted. The defined objectives of this system, which was expected to be the instrument for development of the country as an independent African state, were articulated as follows (Yena 1978):

- To provide quality teaching to the masses;
- To provide teaching which could cater, with the maximum economy in terms of time and money, to the requirements of the country for its various development plans; and

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- To provide teaching that decolonised the minds and rehabilitated African cultural values.

As it was further articulated (Yena 1978), teaching quality for the masses is concerned with:

- Firstly, the horizontal development of education for the whole population so that they are able to integrate themselves within the process of economic development... each pupil in the fundamental schools, by doing manual work in schools, in fields, in fishing, in workshops...should be a 'producer' at the end of the second phase of basic teaching.

- Secondly, the development of education on a vertical basis is provided for the best of the pupils completing their fundamental education. While following general secondary schooling and advanced schooling, these students have to ensure a harmonious balance between the socio-economic and socio-cultural sectors of the country.

Thus, the stated fundamental objectives of the educational reform include 'quality' education for 'the masses' and the decolonisation of the minds and the rehabilitation of 'African cultural values'.

Nyerere (1968) defined the philosophical foundation of the educational reform in Tanzania, following the choice for socialism in the Arusha Declaration. In one of the key documents that assessed the inherited system and defined the country's vision for the future, he stated that 'the three most glaring faults of the educational inheritance' were: (i) racial distinctions; (ii) an insufficient number of facilities; and (iii) the irrelevance of the curriculum and the values instilled into the formally educated Africans. In the philosophy of *Education for Self-Reliance* Nyerere (1972) states that although realistically the majority of the pupils are not expected to go beyond primary education, they must be equipped with skills so that they can exit and be productive contributors to social development regardless of their levels. As for the 'few' who move up in the system:

the only true justification... is that it is needed by the few for the service to the many. The teacher in a seven-year primary school system needs an education which goes beyond seven years; the extension officer who will help a population with a seven years education needs a lot more himself (sic). Other essential services need higher education—for example, doctors and engineers need long and careful training. But publicly provided 'education for education's sake' must be general education for the masses. Further education for a selected few must be education for the service to many. There can be no justification for taxing the many to give education to only a few (Nyerere 1972:17).

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Botswana adopted a reform in 1977, which stipulated that 'any education system must relate to and reflect the values of the society of which it is a part' (Hussein 1977:23). The National Assembly of Côte d'Ivoire adopted a reform document in 1977 which aimed at achieving equality of educational opportunity at all levels, including higher education in general and technical and professional institutions as well. The need to draw inspiration from the African cultural heritage was stressed in most educational reform documents. Thus, in the context of the reform in Côte d'Ivoire and its objective of cultural relevance of the curriculum, even the highly Westernised and Francophile president of the country, Houphoüet-Boigny, stated in a speech that the official mission of the university, which was composed of one national campus at the time, was to comprehend the national reality and 'needs'. These (reality and needs) should be reflected in the curriculum and organisation of the institution even at a time when the rector of the university was a Frenchman. His argument highlighted the social mission of the university as he stated (Faujas 1971:41):

> Our university will have to be an integral part of our society. Actually, it will be the highest cultural expression of the society. We cannot afford to let it be exclusively oriented toward a western culture. It will have to ensure the continuity of our cultural heritage and of the African community on every ground: religion, philosophy, linguistics, arts, literature, and music.

Generally, the first wave of reforms that immediately followed the independence movements of the 1950s and 1960s aimed to address problems of the entire educational systems, especially given the fact that higher education, especially universities, were in their infancy in most countries or had not yet been created. Several of these problems that the proposed reforms aimed to address were raised in the aforementioned book appropriately titled *Creating the African University: Emerging Issues of the 1970s*, edited by Yesufu (1973). They concerned the general quest for ending the dependency of the African universities on external models, the 'Africanisation' of higher education curriculum in terms of its relevance, and the inclusion of indigenous knowledge to end the practice of transferring to African universities integral courses designed in Europe for European universities, especially the French. Africanisation also referred to the faculty at a time when a large proportion of the teaching staff was composed of expatriates from the former colonial powers. Another dimension of the proposed changes was the attempt to establish vocational and professional educational programmes, thus offering greater subject choices.

In response to high and increasing demand, the state resolved to expand access to the greater population, especially to under-represented social groups

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such as women, youth of rural origin, and people from educationally disadvantaged regions and ethnic groups. The increase in student enrolment was expected to respond to the quest for equal educational opportunity and at the same time to produce needed human resources, especially in the fields of science and technology.

In the 1970s, a few countries, for instance, Nigeria, which as an oil producer was positively affected by the oil crisis, had the economic resources accrued from its oil revenues to launch a major programme of creating a large number of new universities. While the enrolment was indeed increasing at many national universities, in most cases, there were limited facilities with one campus, usually located in the capital city. Amidst the persistence of the problem of mismatch between the education offered and the needs of the society, and given the limited intake capacity of the existing universities, changes to absorb the new and increasing pool of students contributed to the establishment of a few new universities or new campuses of national universities in countries with large geographical spread, as well as specialised universities in fields such as technology and agriculture. The opening of many of these new campuses and universities was delayed in part because of the economic crisis that severely limited the financial resources and independence of the African states. In addition, the prescriptions of the international financial organisations were geared toward limiting the number of students enrolled, not toward accommodating more students and instituting more equitable access to higher education. The issue was spuriously raised in terms of mutually exclusive efficiency and increased access. Yet, African countries had the lowest ratio of students to the general population in the world.

Table 4: Gross Enrolment Ratio as Percent of Total Eligible
for Tertiary Education

1965	1970	1975	1980	1985	1990	1995	1996	1997	2000
0.8	1.0	1.7	2.4	2.9	3.8	4.8	3.8	2.3	2.5

Source: Africa Database, World Bank, 2002

The most recent statistics show that still:

Enrolment rates in higher education in Sub-Saharan Africa are by far the lowest in the world. Although the gross enrolment ratio has increased in the past 40 years - it was just one percent in 1965 - it still stands at only five per cent... [Statistical evidence] shows that... the absolute gap by which it lags behind other regions has increased rapidly. The region's present enrolment

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ratio is in the same range as that of other developing regions 40 years ago. Moreover, gender disparities have traditionally been wide and remain so (Bloom, Canning, and Chan 2005:5).

While the issues of relevance and quality were most pressing ones in those countries that had only one national university with one or two campuses, some of the larger countries responded to the challenge by creating new universities to deal with the social demand for education. Some of the newly created universities were conceived as specialised institutions, defining their mission and areas of specialisation in response to the looming crisis and to address new challenges.

Post-independence reforms became literally a '*passage obligé*', almost a ritual for all countries once they acquired their respective nominal independence. Thus, in the 1970s, like the countries that acquired their independence in the 1960s, while the persistent neo-colonial wars dragged on until the 1990s and interfered with the process, Angola and Mozambique managed to maintain the foundations of their institutions that were characterised by the earlier progressive and egalitarian policies that formed as a reaction to the colonial policy of racial and gender discrimination. Following independence in 1980 in Zimbabwe, 1990 in Namibia, and with the formal ending of apartheid culminating with the majority-rule election of 1994 in South Africa, these countries underwent the same process of questioning and attempting to change the received education system. For instance, in February 2006, the Ministry of Education of South Africa organized a 'National Conference on the Strengthening of African Studies in Africa and South Africa in Particular'

Even in some of the countries that acquired their independence earlier, reforms were adopted through the 1990s to address old and new problems. Recently, in search of an illustrative success story, not so much one originating from Africans' trials and errors, but one that arose from recommendation and support from some international institutions in need of validation—Uganda, specifically Makerere University, has been hailed as the new model institution. Although one must look critically behind, beneath, and even above the success story to locate it in the proper national and global perspectives, it is fair to say that as an institution in a country that was devastated by years of conflict and war, any improvement must be acknowledged, whether it is in the restructuring of the institution, the curriculum, or the increased gender and equality discourse and programmes.

In terms of increased enrolment and institution creation, by any standards African countries reached unprecedented success over a short period. However,

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given the initial discrepancy between supply and demand, especially in higher education where in many countries there were few institutional bases or pro-grammes, demand continued to exceed the capacity of the state. Despite high annual rates of increase, supply was falling behind demand. Furthermore, the reforms designed to address other key issues such as quality, relevance, and external efficiency, were not implemented when the crises started to reach un-bearable magnitudes. In the 1990s, new reforms were undertaken.

Generally however, Obanya's earlier remarks about reforms appear to apply to the later ones. He argued that reforms undertaken until the 1970s had not been successful, which explains at least in part the crises of the 1980s and 1990s. He contends that in Africa in general, although there have been many claims made, with great fanfare, to establish systems that could 'meet the needs of independent nations', the production of reform documents with catchy titles has been almost an end in itself. To showcase them with fancy titles such as 'Education for Self-Reliance', 'Education for Kasusumo', 'New National Policy on Education', '*Éducation du Peuple*', and '*Éducation Nouvelle*', created high ex-pectations (Obanya 1979:333) but delivered little.

Craig (1990) also concluded, in a review of three hundred articles that dealt with educational reforms in Africa, that the determining causes of the failure to implement educational policies are the policy process, which includes both con-tent and strategy, as the most important factor, followed by institutional factors such as the teachers, the 'clients', and the resources. Ginsburg, Cooper, Raghu, and Zegarra (1991:5) argued that educational reform can be considered part of 'symbolic gestures designed to indicate governmental... awareness of problems and sympathetic intentions, rather than serious efforts to achieve social change.. They also (Ginsburg et al.:7) indicate, like Simmons (1983:85) that the determin-ing (although not the sole) weight of political and economic factors is the ex-pressed need for, and design of, educational reform. They argue that the impor-tance of the political factor is not often recognised while in contrast, technical, administrative, and efficiency factors have been considered more important. Carnoy (1976) argues that the efficiency factor can be convenient, as it can be easily presented as a neutral factor while in reality it is ideologically loaded, bearing major political consequences in the conceptualisation, formulation, and implementation of educational reforms.

Even in industrial countries where there is less of a problem of administra-tive efficiency, at least in comparison to African countries, reforms have failed to lead to the stated goals of equality, as in the United States and France since the 1960s when education was declared 'the great equaliser'. Given the meagre results, some authors have referred to the 'broken promises'. Baudelot and Establet

in France (1971) and Bowles and Gintis (1976) in the United States have argued that educational reforms cannot lead to profound structural change since education is just an instrument used by the dominant class to legitimise its privileges and for the reproduction of social inequality.

In the case of Côte d'Ivoire, it was found that the 1977 reform was not implemented (Assié-Lumumba and Lumumba-Kasongo 1991) and although factors such as monetary resources were important, the reform was not meant to change the political system and thus was not effective. Indeed, these authors argued that contrary to the assumptions that guide the policies prescribed by some international organisations, implementation of educational reform is essentially a political rather than a 'purely' technical matter. In this specific case, it was argued that the structure of the Ivorian society, tightly entrenched in the dependency framework with a continued strong connection with the French system or at least under some consistent external control, helps to explain the unrealistic expectations surrounding the reform.

Many post-colonial reforms in Africa, as well as in other national and various historical contexts, have proven unrealistic as they aim to achieve objectives that are in contradiction with the societal structure. This explains why gender inequality, for instance, persists. When gender is analysed not as a biological entity but rather as a social construct, the life experience of people is mainly determined not by the mere fact of being female or male but rather by being a member of a specific social category such as class and, in countries with significant European settler traditions as in Southern Africa, race, which in some contexts is a proxy for social class.

The absence of congruence between the philosophy of education and the stated intent of the reforms that are often progressive and sometimes idealistically articulated as democratic and egalitarian on the one hand, but which contribute to the unequal model of stratification of society on the other, helps to explain the failure. Furthermore, regardless of internal class structure and conflicting interests, within the lingering dependency framework, national agents do not have the full liberty to formulate and implement, with the necessary resources at their disposal, the type of educational policies that they consider to be appropriate and needed. Even in the case of Tanzania, which offered the most comprehensive, daring, and inspiring philosophy and policy of educational change for social progress in post-colonial Africa, the external pressures precipitated the end of the implementation process of the reform. Indeed, the revered Nyerere was caught between his commitment to pursue the provision of major social services including educational distribution based on equal opportunity, and the application of SAPs that, given their cost recovery policy, would

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inevitably eliminate the neediest segments of the population. In the 1980s, the economic crisis reached a difficult level for most African countries, which appeared trapped in a weak position, having envisaged no consistent alternative solutions to preserve any independent and autonomous decision-making.

Tanzania was one of the countries that were receiving most of the 'foreign aid', especially from Nordic countries. Nevertheless, in the context of the pressure for adjustment under the terms of the international organisations, in 1985 Nyerere called it quits, as he refused to submit the 'education for self-reliance' to the SAPs' treatment, but did not have the means to support it.

Even when a given situation or condition is satisfactory, there can be a search for closing a positive gap. Although in the concrete social context it may not be possible to reach a perfect situation, actors who are satisfied with a situation may undertake actions with the goal of improvement to maximise their satisfaction or to reach the optimal situation. When the situation is not satisfactory, there are good reasons to search for solutions. Thus, given the realisation of meagre results from the reforms undertaken by African countries and institutions of higher education, while the problems they were designed to address had been persevering and new challenges emerge, the quest for change became more pressing. Despite the continued broad nature of the higher education problems faced by the African countries, more and more since the end of the 1990s, innovations rather than more global reforms appear to gain interest as an approach for educational change. The new efforts resulted in various innovations that have been the focus of recent studies, some of which are briefly presented in the next subsection of this chapter. The innovation approach aims to focus on specific aspects or elements of the system. Thus, there has been a paradigmatic shift from a global and structural vision through reforms to innovations that aim to promote change in specific elements of the system and instruction practice.

Recent Reforms and Innovations

At the time of independence there were few formally educated Africans, especially those with higher education degrees. Also, the dependency framework was in place and further reinforced by the physical presence of a plethora of advisers and technical assistants from industrial countries, primarily from former colonial powers, who were granted the power and authority to make key policy decisions. However, with fervour and euphoria and enthused by the promise of independence, and for some who did not perceive clearly yet the process and danger of the dependency trap in progress, Africa's first generation of post-colonial Westernised elites genuinely expressed the need to reform the inherited

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systems. They had a varying degree of conviction that through reforms they could adjust these systems to the needs of the African societies, actualise their aspirations, and exercise the ownership that was so vital to the future reproduction of the model of society they were aiming to build. These first reforms were also conceived on a pre-emptive assumption of preventive problem solving and using the systems as tools for national development.

In contrast, the reforms and innovations since the 1990s have been conceived on a curative basis, following the crises that have been taking place and the new problems and challenges that have emerged, some either as a direct result of the economic crises or as an indirect result of its effects. Many of these changes have been framed in reaction to the crises and as a response to recommendations and prescriptions of the regional and international organisations and industrial countries that provide grants or support the awarding of various forms of loans. This is not to say that genuinely independent and autonomous ideas of change have been totally lacking since the economic crises. However, the constraints related to the economic crises have weakened the position of the Africans to have an impact on the identification of priorities and mechanisms for solving the problems. It should be emphasised that in the real social milieu and dynamics, it is not possible to find clear delineations between actions that are triggered by internal agents, regardless of external influence, and those that are specifically initiated or directly influenced by international organisations.

Furthermore, these historical moments of the design of educational change are useful for analytical purposes. Yet when the educational systems and processes of the whole continent are taken into consideration, there is not a single period when some sort of planned change has not been taking place. However when the magnitude, intensity, and frequency of reforms and innovations are taken into account, then these moments can be justified.

In the case of Ghana, as Sutherland-Addy (2002:2 and 4) explains:

It was in 1984 that a decision was taken to assess the extent of the crisis in education in Ghana. For a country which from 1957 up to the mid 1970s had built an enviable reputation in the field of education, it was a sobering realization that along with the economic down-turn beginning in the late 1970s had come a crisis in education affecting areas such as teacher availability, relevance and quality of educational offerings, funding, access, management and supervision and public confidence. The educational reform initiative was a bold step at a comprehensive re-evaluation and refocusing of the system... In the specific area of higher education... the University Rationaliza-

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tion Study undertaken between 1987 and 1988 [was] commissioned by the Ministry of Education with the support of the World Bank.

The study led to the 1991 Government White Paper on the Reforms to the Tertiary Education System, a medium-term tertiary education programme that covered all higher education institutions, and the 'Tertiary Education Programme... that was funded... within the context of the Tertiary Education Project negotiated with the World Bank and the African Development Bank' (Sutherland-Addy 2002:5).

By the late 1980s and early 1990s, countries that had already expanded their higher education systems, as in north Africa, for example Algeria and Morocco, were still under pressure from the demand side to further open the system. Thus a new wave of universities arose in the 1990s, some of which were pre-existing institutions whose status changed and which were transformed into universities. Among these transformed institutions and newly created universities are: Université Al Akhawayn Ilfrane and Jâmiât Mohammed El Khâmiss Rabat in Morocco; Saint Louis (Gaston Berger) in Senegal; Bouaké and Abobo-Adjamé in Côte d'Ivoire; Buea, Douala, Dschang, Ngaoundéré, and Yaoundé II in Cameroon; Mahajanga, Nord Madagascar, and Toamasina in Madagascar; Université Libre de Tunis in Tunisia; University for Development Studies and University College of Education of Winneba in Ghana; and the Hubert Kairuki Memorial University, the International Medical and Technological University, and the Open University of Tanzania in Tanzania. In Zimbabwe with the exception of the University of Zimbabwe, the other institutions (Africa University, Solusi University) have been created since the 1990s. Mali, which was hitherto one of the few exceptions and made a deliberate choice of not creating universities, joined the other countries by transforming its set of *écoles supérieures* into the Université du Mali in 1993. Namibia has created its universities since its independence in 1990. In South Africa, since the formal end of apartheid, the challenge and priority have been inclusion and equal access into all the universities, and upgrading the universities that had been hitherto under-funded and historically segregated on the basis of race.

Unlike older or single-campus national universities that included all the disciplines and fields of study, many of the new universities tended to be assigned a disciplinary focus, with several of them focussing on various combinations of science, technology, and agriculture. They were created with the deliberate aim of responding to labour market needs, thus trying to be better prepared to meet the developmental mission of the post-independence universities.

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Some of these universities were earlier institutions that were upgraded or were given new names and/or specialised functions to match new needs. Several examples can be cited: the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology; the Bright Star University of Technology in Libya; University for Development Studies at Tamale, and University of Education of Winneba in Ghana; Kigali Institute of Science and Technology in Rwanda; and Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology in Kenya. In Nigeria, there are several state universities, including Bagauda University of Science and Technology, Enugu State University of Science and Technology, and Rivers State University of Science and Technology; several federal universities of technology, including University of Technology at Federal University Akure, at Minna, at Yola, and at Owerri; and another set of universities specialising in agriculture, including the University of Agriculture at Abeokuta, at Makurdi. Other examples include the University of Venda for Science and Technology in South Africa; the Mbarara University of Science and Technology in Uganda; the National University of Science and Technology at Bulawayo in Zimbabwe; University of Science and Technology of Oran and University for Islamic Sciences of Constantine, both in Algeria; Université polytechnique de Bobo-Dioulasso in Burkina Faso; and the Université des sciences et techniques de Masuku in Gabon.

Another type of university created in the 1990s focuses on technology as a means of education delivery. These are universities that have joined the oldest distance-learning university, the University of South Africa in Pretoria, which predates many classical post-independence universities on the continent. These include the Zimbabwe Open University and the Open University of Tanzania. This sector is likely to experience a fast expansion.

Other public, private secular, and sectarian—some with religious components or foci—higher education institutions, some of which have the status of universities, have also tended to reflect their interpretation of the labour market in their programmes. Examples include the Medical University of Southern Africa at Medunsa in South Africa. Several other types of higher education institutions focussing on either teaching or research also exist. They may target local, national, sub-regional, continental, and international audiences. CODESRIA, for instance, has played a leading role in critical research, articulating African perspectives through its networks on major topics. Many training activities including its institutes (for example, Governance, Gender) provide opportunities for African researchers and especially, but not only, the young to sharpen their methodological skills, to be exposed to literature and paradigms, and to take part in academic debates and knowledge production. Other new research institutions addressing issues of higher education have been created. For instance

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the activities, including publications, of CEPARRED (Pan-African Studies and Research Centre in International Relations and Education for Development/ *Centre Panafricain d'Etudes et de Recherches en Relations Internationales et en Education pour le Développement*)) have focussed on research on international relations and education, particularly higher education, in Africa.

The creation of the new universities was part of the implementation of the new reforms and belated and partial implementation from the first wave of reforms. In her assessment of the recent educational changes in Ghana, Sutherland-Addy (2002) argues that 'process-wise, many of the current innovations derive their impetus and full import as down stream strategies and activities generated from the national reform initiative described above' (Sutherland-Addy 2002:6). The innovations that were analysed in the Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA) study must be located in the broader reform as in Ghana. Thus some of the recent innovations should be analysed within their broader context of the reforms that were initiated as a response to the educational implications of the crises that started in the 1970s. These recent innovations must be analysed in a perspective of continuity. This fact is also applicable to other national situations and institutional experiences. Thus, reforms have provided broader enabling national and institutional contexts for innovations. This perspective constitutes an appropriate approach in analysing educational changes that have taken place in African countries and institutions since the beginning of the crises and particularly since the 1990s.

A series of studies of some of these innovations have been undertaken in several countries between 2001 and 2002. These studies that were carried out by a team (of which this author is a participant) of African scholars with expertise in higher education, were commissioned by ADEA and specifically its Working Group on Higher Education (WGHE). As indicated earlier, throughout the 1990s, the ADEA/WGHE was associated with, or initiated, several studies on the crises of African higher education. These studies provided a critical assessment of these institutions. As indicated earlier, a considerable number of recommendations were made for the revitalisation of the universities and higher education in general.

African institutions and their leaders and constituencies realised that they had to address these challenges in order to survive, and to become vibrant social institutions with a central mission within the national development agendas. Amidst the severe crises, institutions had been undertaking various new initiatives to respond to the challenges identified. Thus, at the beginning of the new millennium, the ADEA/WGHE proposed to the newly formed foundation partnership on African higher education to undertake a study that would identify

the 'transformative innovations' that African higher education systems, institutions, and faculties have initiated and to provide the space for discussing and sharing them, to provide a basis for support in fostering further 'transformative innovations'.

These specific studies on recent innovations were carried out under the guidance of the ADEA/WGHE and in consultation with the Association of African Universities. They were funded by the Foundation Partnership for African Higher Education, which was formed in 2000 and that initially included four foundations: the Carnegie Corporation of New York, the Ford Foundation, the Rockefeller Foundation, and the MacArthur Foundation. It has expanded and sponsored varied activities, which is an indication of the increased interest from foundations in higher education that was marginalised and even chastised for about two decades, particularly by the World Bank.

These innovation studies focussed on Africa South of the Sahara, which is narrower than the CODESRIA or AAU continental coverage. However, many of the issues and findings raised can be of relevance to all the institutions on the continent and can help achieve one of the objectives of the Partnership, which is to provide the analytical explorations to engage stakeholders, stimulate debates, and enhance their understanding so as to guide the funding of reform activities and subsequent efforts to foster transformative change within African higher education systems and institutions.

Four regional foci and selected countries within these regions constituted the basis of the studies: Anglophone West Africa, East Africa, Francophone Africa, and Southern Africa. These studies were conducted between 2001 and 2002. For the purpose of this Green Book, a few of their findings at regional or national and institutional levels are discussed. The innovations were studied at three specific levels: systems, institutions, and faculties, and for eight areas considered key to the transformation of higher education in Africa.

Strategic Institutional Vision, Mission, Role, and Focus: What are, if any, innovative approaches that have guided the institutions in defining (for new institutions) or redefining their mission focus and areas of specialisation in addressing persistent problems, new challenges, and new opportunities?

Financing: Innovative approaches in achieving increases in the amount and diversification of more stable sources of revenues to finance higher education and institutions.

Governance: Innovative processes and mechanisms adopted to improve internal institutional governance, including the adoption of a participatory method of

decision-making, professional rather than personal criteria for appointment, and election to office, increased sense of accountability, and transparency.

Curriculum/Quality: New curriculum development and adoption of innovative approaches to the delivery of the new and old courses with the possibility of using new technologies for teaching and learning, as well as new means to monitor and assess teaching and learning, to promote and maintain quality.

Staff Development: Design, adoption, and use of innovative approaches to human resource development, whereby new policies or practices are consistently applied in training of new staff; and retooling and upgrading of the staff already on the job with the objective of improving and strengthening the quality of the teaching staff with the ultimate goal of retaining qualified and satisfied teachers in the higher education institutions and combating the 'brain drain'.

Equity: Innovative ways to increase access and better living and learning conditions with the ultimate objective of improving performance and increasing retention toward parity based on general, national, and local socially significant ascriptive (gender, race) and social/contextual (for example, economically disadvantaged people) factors.

Relevance: Innovative response to the quest for external efficiency in the institutions' capacity to help meet social needs by providing courses that correspond to relevant areas of need; by producing research and graduates with the appropriate knowledge for improved quality of life, and by providing services to the communities.

Student Life: Innovative approaches to the provision and maintenance of living and learning conditions that are conducive to improved academic performance and that enrich the socio-political and cultural experiences of students.

There are other innovations that are important but might not have been captured by the above specified eight categories and which, generally or in specific national and institutional settings, contribute to new ways of providing an enabling context for the delivery and attainment of the educational and societal mission and goal of higher education institutions.

The main findings of these studies include the following salient aspects: The data collection process was characterised by reluctant participation of institutions and a low response rate after a period of a year or longer following distribution of the questionnaires. Fifty-three institutions, or 39.6 percent, responded out of 134 institutions to which the questionnaires were sent. This response led to a total of 453 innovations, for an average of 8.5 innovations per institution (Ng'ethe 2003:22). There was a wide range among institutions, from only one

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innovation reported to two dozen, most of which tended to cluster in one of the three identified levels, namely the innovation at the level of the institution; innovation at the faculty level (often applications of broader innovations), and at the level of the system.

In terms of the specific innovations, the studies found similar tendencies across countries, despite institutional specificities and differences. In neighbouring countries and even in different institutions within the same country, the specific factors or objectives - albeit in the same global context - that trigger the need for initiating change vary. As concluded in the study of Francophone countries:

> There is also a need to take into account the national and individual institutional trajectories. There should also be some caution in systematically assuming regional/colonially inherited homogeneity and thus ignore considerable differences between regions and countries and even within countries. Therefore, while lessons can and should be learned across regions, countries, institutions and faculties/departments it would be a mistake to attempt to simply transfer solutions that, although they have been successful in one context, may not be given the internal dynamics between different social, linguistic, religious, cultural, and socioeconomic factors within the global context. The appropriate research instruments must be designed to capture those internal processes instead of trying to fit all the national and institutional situations in one technical and simplified mold (Assié-Lumumba 2002:68).

For instance, in his study in Eastern Africa, Ng'ethe (2002) reported that to the question: 'What conditions foster and drive innovation?' eight out of sixteen universities that responded to the questionnaire

> … indicated that the innovations were the result of both internal and external circumstances. To KIST [Kigali Institute of Science and Technology], it was the need to position the institution in the context of national reconciliation and emergency manpower needs following the Rwanda genocide. The University of Mauritius was responding to changed manpower needs in light of new development conditions. Dar-es Salaam has been driven mostly by an institutional will to reform and by societal conditions friendly to a new university vision. St Augustine has been driven mostly by internal funding requirements while Uganda Martyrs has been driven, like KIST, by the need for national reconciliation. Shandi in the Sudan has been responding to the well known problem of community-university relations, while Moi and the JKUAT [Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology] in Kenya devel-

oped their vision/missions and strategic plan in the case of Moi, as part of their original mandates from society (Ng'ethe 2002:30).

If innovations are, as they should be, treated as permanent corrective tools (Assié-Lumumba 2002:67), then 'especially at the institutional level, many aspects of ongoing change, such as new programmes development, are regarded as innovations when in reality they are normal aspects of institutional growth' (Ng'ethe:72).

Some questions about what really constitutes an innovation still remain. There is no agreement, especially when it comes to responding to the fundamental question of what is innovative compared to what institutions ought to be engaged in to ensure regular adaptation and responsiveness of the institution to its mission while taking into account the global and local environmental changes.

[T]he purpose of innovation in the context of African higher education is to contribute toward national development goals and through this to improving the human condition. In the light of this, semantic deliberations about definitional boundaries run the risk of becoming counterproductively 'academic' in the derogatory sense. These preoccupations are less interesting than focussing on the purpose of innovation. For these reasons, it may be more productive to focus on transformation, change and change management and effectiveness of this through monitoring and evaluation, than on the more slippery notion of innovation. The really useful findings of this study are those which illuminate the challenges of change management in implementing and institutionalising good ideas which bear the promise of effecting purposeful change toward the development priorities of the continent (Subotzky 2003:95).

Some have questioned the nature of transformations that result from changes that either are induced or logically flow from the policies of the international financial institutions, especially the World Bank. In an article entitled 'The Development Ideal in Higher Education: The Experience of Kenya and Tanzania', that preceded the World Bank type of change, Court (1980) argued that the challenge was, in the context of the economic and higher education crises, to convince African governments and populations to make an investment in training minds and a thinking society, if development must take place.

In 'Higher Education Transformation and Academic Exterminis', Chachage (2001) writes:

These 'institutional transformations' have introduced notions of 'viability', 'relevance', 'equity', (couched in the language of trade-offs between investment in literacy and that in research and development!) and 'efficiency'. The

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tying of education to the apron strings of the 'market' is essentially an imposition of restrictions on those forms of knowledge that aim at raising larger social and political issues. These 'transformations' demand that higher learning institutions must work with the governments to produce 'person power' for the economy — an essentially technicist conception of education. The fundamental objectives of the university — scientific inquiry, pursuit of knowledge and the search for the whole truth in the interest of social transformation — are increasingly being relegated to the position of what cynics of institutions of higher learning consider to be mere 'ivory tower' ('elite', 'luxury' and 'esoteric') activities (Chachage 2001:8).

During interviews with university chief academic officers while conducting earlier research (Assié-Lumumba 1993) they expressed similar concerns and outrage in some cases about the negative consequences of SAPs on the possibilities for the Africans to harness institutions that can engage in critical thinking and inquiry. While there is no static social system, it is indeed important to ask: What transformation is needed for which kind of institution and model of society? Are the recent changes taking place in spite, or because, of the SAPs? What is the nature of change and how is change related to or induced by SAP policies to implement their broader agendas? Are there unreported changes that might be taking place? Can substantive changes take place on the historical foundation and within the structures that were set up for interests where Africans were either nonexistent or marginal? In the following chapter, some of these fundamental and pressing questions are addressed in reflecting on action to be taken in the effort to make higher education institutions play their central role of providing human resources and knowledge to design relevant policies and generate actions that will substantively and cumulatively improve and help sustain the quality of life for Africans of all social categories.

Chapter Five

New Challenges within the Global and Local Objective Conditions

This chapter focuses on the new challenges of global scale and unprecedented magnitude that the African continent has been facing in the post-colonial era and which constitute additional hindrances to education, while at the same time a relevant education with a solid higher education system is needed. The globalisation phenomenon and the burden of the debt cycle, the destruction caused by violence and armed conflicts that wipe out achievements and engage countries and entire sub-regions into set-back motion, the debilitating impact of HIV/AIDS, all constitute the most visible among the major challenges that impact on African higher education and call for its vigorous role. With globalisation at an intensified pace and its corollary of increased competition and what has been characterised as the knowledge society, African countries need education systems that can provide a solid education and educated people who can competently participate in the production of knowledge not for its own sake but which can be relevant in addressing these challenges and promote broad societal advancement.

Globalisation and the Relentless Cycle of the Debt Burden

Some of the issues discussed have been incorporated into the other headings in this book. However, these are raised to show how they relate to the debt issue. To the old African problems that call for urgent solutions, new challenges have been added. These problems are compounded by the major factor of globalisation and Africa's continued vulnerability in the global system. Since the collapse of the Eastern Bloc, some have argued that there is a process of global power restructuring, changing from the former bipolar East-West and the current unipolar world dominated by the United States toward a multipolar system whereby Japan, the European Union, China, and also India would constitute the counter-

forces for a new balance of the world order. In this new restructuring, Asia appears to gain the most momentum.

Whether purely speculative or realistic and highly probable, none of the envisaged scenarios has included Africa as a foreseeable regional force to be reckoned with on the world scale. Since Africa lost its world stature at the beginning of the modern global power restructuring that has been shaped by the capitalist and colonial systems in the context of the European expansion since the fifteenth century, it has been caught in the cycle of dependence and external control. It will be realistically difficult, though not impossible, for Africa to be substantively positioning itself as a regional world power, in the near future, within the new restructuring in the framework of natural evolution. The cycle can be broken only if there is a deliberate, vigorous, focussed and consistent action at all levels of African society as a whole. African higher education institutions that form the minds and thus shape critical thinking out of which actions flow, have a daunting role to play in this process given the fact that the global systemic inequality remains firmly in place.

Globalisation has been promoted with its corollary of privatisation as the possibility for all nations to thrive in green pastures amidst the rules of one competitive global market. In order for Africa to enhance its stature and position in this global system, solutions from various perspectives have been proposed. Selected aspects of education, especially higher education, that have been addressed within the search for relevant means to empower Africa are briefly discussed. For the purpose of this Green Book, the project of the African Capacity-Building Initiative (ACBI) can be used to illustrate some of the types of solutions considered and their potential as well as their limitations and contradictions. The main reason for selecting this case is to substantiate the argument that some of the solutions proposed are based on the same premises that created Africa's marginalisation and are likely to perpetuate it while creating an illusion for the Africans that will delay their realistic assessment of the magnitude of the challenges and their own initiatives in the search for appropriate solutions.

In his foreword to *The African Capacity Building Initiative: Toward Improved Policy Analysis and Development Management in Sub-Saharan Africa* (World Bank 1991), Edward Jaycox, then the Vice President of the Africa Regional Office of the World Bank, made a statement on the non-existence or weakness of 'indigenous African capacities - skills, knowledge, and institutions (World Bank 1991:iii). He went on to recall that the Bank's study on Sub-Saharan Africa *From Crisis to Sustainable Growth* (World Bank 1989) pointed to the lack of 'human and institutional capacity' in 'virtually all sectors and countries' (World Bank 1989), and

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although governments and donors had been working on solutions, the efforts hitherto made were not yet sufficient to cover the needs. He stated:

> In particular, a vital gap is not being adequately filled: capacity in economic policy analysis and development management. Despite the achievements in education and training in Africa during the past 30 years, most countries still do not have a critical mass of top-flight policy analysts and managers who can help pilot their economies through the storms and turbulence that must be faced daily. It [the study] called for a radical reappraisal of technical assistance strategies for Africa and for substantially increased investment in indigenous human capital and institutions. The African Capacity Building Initiative (ACBI) offers one of the first opportunities to respond directly to this challenge... The ultimate objective of the ACBI is clear: 10, 15, or 20 years from now, Sub-Saharan Africa will have its own professional policy analysts and managers and its own institutions for the training and advice in policy analysis and development management. There will be much less dependence on external technical assistance. Africa will be more in control of its economic destiny (World Bank 1991:iii).

It is worth asking how the specific types of human resources produced would connect with the real, complex, and multidimensional society. Were they expected to be trained as pilots who would take into account only the clear skies as they navigate in the still blue sky above the clouds, ignoring the vagaries of the weather that constitute the reality that people must deal with on the ground? Further discussion of the process and the elaboration of the ACBI can provide some understanding as it focuses on training human resources of the highest level.

Paradoxically, education as a main field for training, research, and policy formulation in itself and which, furthermore, should constitute a determining factor in capacity building, was barely mentioned in the document that defines ACBI. This cannot be considered benign neglect. Indeed, as discussed earlier, higher education in general was openly under attack by international organisations at that time, especially by the World Bank and some industrial countries referred to as the 'donor community', regardless of how they had addressed higher education issues in their own societies. African universities were declared bankrupt, and there was a literal call for their closure. Despite these critiques from various actors and institutions, however, it was not possible to dismantle higher education institutions in Africa.

The managerial, technocratic, top-down approach and the method of designing the World Bank's macroeconomic policies, whereby a group of experts

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design what is assumed to be needed for the African societies, was the mainstream choice. The process of the ACBI initiative and its organisational and operational structures are indicators of the philosophical framework that defines the relationship between the World Bank and African state and educational institutions. For example, it was symptomatic that the process of creating ACBI started as follows:

> An initial World Bank review contrasting policy analysis capabilities in Africa with those in other parts of the world began a process of internal staff discussions on the breadth and depth of Africa's human resource and institutional capacity problems (World Bank 1991:8).

The point is not to suggest that an initiative that originates from an institution outside Africa cannot at all be beneficial to African development, but rather that World Bank's initiatives are inevitably framed within its philosophical foundation of macroeconomic policies designed by its experts who assume to have authoritative and unchallengeable knowledge of the African conditions and to be able to interpret Africa's needs and priorities and identify the most relevant solutions. In all fairness, by and large, the objective description of the African conditions and the manifestation of many social problems made are competently done in the World Bank's documents. Nonetheless, the interpretation and the analysis of the relationship between the variables and social contexts and thus the conclusions and recommendations for policy bear the World Bank's assumptions of the expected transformation of growth into improvement in the living conditions of the African people whose viewpoints and concerns are overlooked.

The mere fact that the major meetings that led to the creation of the ACBI, with the exception of one that was organised in June 1988 in Kenya, took place in industrial countries (in New York, at Dalhousie University in Canada, and twice in Paris), is a clear indication of where African perspectives fit in the definition of the capacity that is expected to be African. There is a good reason to raise doubts about the real possibility of appropriation of such an institution by the Africans and the possibility of eliminating the initial political and philosophical birthmark of the World Bank, despite the few recent elements of self-criticism initiated under the administration of James Wolfensohn.

The purpose here is not to analyse the evolution of the ACBI, but to rather discuss how the relationship between ACBI and education has been perceived and dealt with. A wide range of institutions is targeted as potential beneficiaries of ACBI support: national institutions, regional training centres, government policy units, as well as fellowships, in-service training, and local consultancy.

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However, the selection criteria are set by the ACBI. Under these conditions, how can it meet the actual complex needs of Africa that require multidimensional targets in the African social context? The view that competent macro-economists from neo-liberal school of thought are firmly in command of the economic vessel from their perch above the clouds, not having to deal with the cultural factors that are imbedded in the local economy, is problematic. Although the ACBI's document does recall the importance of higher education, it does not mention educational research and indeed does not consider building capacity to address questions of education. The market seems to be the driving force.

Yet, whether as a human right or an investment, education has been declared a priority in African countries despite the persistently high proportion of illiteracy and school-age children not enrolled in school. How can research inputs generated from the actual contexts, instead of technical reports, (often written from comfortable hotel rooms and offices and based on data sometimes with doubtful origin and accuracy) be part of the quest for the re-dynamisation of African learning institutions, not only at the higher education level, but throughout the entire system? How does the World Bank conceptualize the relationship between the ACBI's search for first-class economists and the delivery and accessibility of primary, secondary, and higher education?

There have been consistent patterns of deliberate neglect in developing a vigorous and objective policy for educational analysis and development. This is the background of, for instance, the October 1996 Annual Meetings of the World Bank and International Monetary Fund during which the African ministers of finance transmitted a formal request from their governments to the World Bank and IMF for genuine support to help 'strengthen African institutional and human resource capacities'. James Wolfensohn officially concurred with the need to re-centre education in development agendas. At the same time, the International Finance Corporation, which is part of the World Bank Group, continued its aggressive mission of promoting the private sector, which is presented as an effective means to promote the policy of 'poverty reduction'.

Given the increasing number of private higher education institutions, it is important to recall some of the assumptions, the logic, and the envisaged applications of the type of privatisation policies promoted by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. As stated by the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (1989):

> The poor performance of public enterprises in Africa has been used in orthodox stabilization and adjustment programmes as a justification for wholesale, indiscriminate, and doctrinaire privatisation. However, the presump-

tive superiority of private over public enterprises has no theoretical foundation. There is also the incorrect assumption in the argument for privatisation that the indigenous private sector is strong enough to take over state enterprises. In African countries, where this generally is not true, privatisation could lead to the take-over of these public enterprises by transnational corporations, thereby deepening further their external dependence. What is worse is the substitution of the profitability criterion for the social welfare criterion in vital areas such as, water supply in a continent where the majority of the population have no access to potable water (UN-ECA 1989:19).

The continued debt crisis and increasing general poverty suggest that privatisation in itself will not solve the problems of Africa's educational institutions. Within privatisation is embedded the assumption of healthy and positive competition that forces institutions to increase their efficiency and effectiveness in attracting clients by the quality of the service they offer. In doing so, they supposedly foster a social environment in which the actors, both those who supply the services and those who use them, strive for excellence. As Lumumba-Kasongo (1999) argues, 'the concept of a "perfectly competitive society" is ahistorical even in the United States' despite the rhetoric of 'small government' or 'take the government off the people's back'. 'Contrary to the arguments related to the laissez-faire principle of realists, the United States government, for instance, has significantly intervened in mobilization of resources and sponsoring development projects including banking systems between 1944 and the 1970s' (1999:11).

The weight of the debt burden and the payment of foreign debt, to which the domestic debt must be added, despite the rhetoric of debt relief, continue to take their toll. There has been a large movement toward debt cancellation around the world. For instance, in December 2000, one of the Jubilee 2000 meetings took place in Dakar, Senegal. The argument was that there is no green pasture that opens avenues to new opportunities - including the new information and communication technologies - to all countries around the world. African countries have a particular burden of history, a history of devastation caused by centuries of enslavement, the weight of colonial legacy, and the cycle of debt. The call for debt cancellation is based on the assumption and facts that poor indebted countries cannot break the cycle of dependence and poverty unless they are given a chance for a fresh start. For instance, in October 2000, the United States Congress approved $435 million for the reduction of the debts of the so-called Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC), and voted to approve the use of a modest portion of the IMF's existing financial resources for debt reduction. A year earlier, the Congress appropriated $110 million for the same purpose. Together, the

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richest countries (the G8) and the international financial institutions (the IMF and WB in particular) that constitute their extensions started by providing debt relief for HIPC (for twenty-two countries so far). However, considering the total mass of debt in relation to their revenues, especially taking into account the vulnerability and variation of their export commodities, the debt of African countries is many times greater than the amounts proposed for relief. The HIPC alone are making payments on an estimated debt of over $220 billion.

Congress also approved a provision requiring that representatives to the IMF, United States, World Bank, and regional development banks, vote against and oppose any loan agreements that include 'user fees' on basic education and health care for poor people. This was indeed a breakthrough given the attention slowly being paid to critical high social costs (conditionalities) that for years usually accompanied aid and loans: sharp cuts in government spending for education, health, and other basic needs. For a long-term positive impact in the social sector, this is an encouraging start. It is worth mentioning that in June 2005 the G8 Finance Ministers announced with great fanfare the cancellation of the debts of 18 countries (out of which 14 are African countries) by the IMF, World Bank and the African Development Bank (AfDB). However, a more massive and global effort and consistent commitment must be put in place. Furthermore, in addition to the global economic outlook, the political climate has changed since the events of September 11, 2001, the cost of the war on Iraq, and the global impact of increased military spending at the expense of the quest for knowledge and enlightenment at the service of humankind. Unprecedented budget deficits in the United States and further disengagement and decrease in ODA do not offer any realistic grounds for a positive outlook regarding external support. If, in addition, the main logic of debt relief is to clear the way for further borrowing, then debt relief is part of the logic and framework for the perpetuation of, or long-term entrapment in, the cycle of debt. This cannot provide a source for independent, strong, new social institutions, including higher education institutions.

The process of privatisation as recommended by the liberal economic policies and the takeover of state agencies by external private corporations are related to another debilitating major challenge that Africa has to address: violence and political instability in the presence of which higher education institutions cannot function and deliver in their key areas.

The major challenges that African institutions of higher learning face include aspects of the globalisation phenomenon. Indeed, the agenda of the General Agreement of Trade in Services (GATS) is to speed up the process of controlled internationalisation of higher education institutions within the liberalisation framework. While African universities have been essentially extroverted, given

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the history and contexts of their creation, leaders were still able to at least officially articulate the African university as an institution that must promote national development. The GATS and the new form of competition promoted threaten the relative autonomy of the higher educations institutions given the fact that the African states have been already further weakened since the economic crises and the SAPs. Research on African higher education must include the impact of globalisation, and strategies to counter its destructive impact.

In the two edited volumes on *African Universities in the Twenty-first Century*, Zeleza and Olukoshi (2004) and the contributors forcefully and insightfully articulate the issues of globalisation and the fast-paced technological change and their impact on African universities. These authors address fundamental issues and critically examine what ought to be the new roles and missions of African institutions of higher learning. The focus of their analyses include the quandary of competing demands for striking a positive balance between Africanisation or indigenisation, while continuing to participate in the international and global scholarship, expansion in part to promote equity while striving for excellence and efficiency. The expected empirical studies on higher education sponsored by CODESRIA will tackle these issues in specific regional and national contexts.

Violence, Armed Conflicts, and Higher Education Development in Africa

All societies have their forms of internal contradictions that constitute real factors that can be artificially manipulated by self-serving forces, whether external, internal, or a conniving mix of both. As of the first quarter of the year 2003, there were "20 African countries with serious forms of social and political conflicts', and 'the magnitude of the conflicts in the Great Lakes Region of Africa, especially in the Democratic Republic of Congo has its implications beyond the geopolitical area of Great Lakes Region or Central Africa' (Lumumba-Kasongo 2003:1). Angola and also Mozambique, until its regular post-colonial elections, did not have any respite from formal colonial wars. The cases of Sudan, Uganda, Liberia, Algeria, Sierra Leone, Rwanda, Burundi, Congo-Brazzaville, Central African Republic, Chad, Ethiopia and Eritrea, and the Democratic Republic of Congo - the worst in terms of the magnitude and human loss given the estimated four million casualties—illustrate various forms of internal and international conflicts. Border disputes, more than 80 of them since the 1960s, have led to armed or near-armed conflicts in countries such as Burkina Faso versus Mali in the 'war of the poor' in 1985, Ethiopia versus Eritrea, and Nigeria versus

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Cameroon. Countries like Niger and even Senegal, which has been legitimately exhibiting great pride in its democratic tradition and political stability, have internal conflicts that require serious attention. The interaction of local and global factors can ignite and transform conflicts, hitherto considered unimportant or localised and contained, into full-blown wars. Thus, for instance, the latent political conflicts in Côte d'Ivoire led to the 1999 military coup, the subsequent turmoil under the military regime, the unusual and limping democratic elections, and full-fledged war that started in September 2002.

Africans can play a direct role and have a direct responsibility as agents of African history-in-the-making by exercising their ability to freely choose to be either nationalist, contributing to the construction of the their countries through their institutions including higher education, or to side with the external forces of exploitation and destruction. Without negating the existence of local conflicts and actors and the Africans' ability to make these choices, it is still important to place their role in a broader context. Thus, the search by predators from the West and industrial countries for the control of resources on and underneath the African soil, from the transatlantic enslavement to the colonial and post-colonial periods, has led to the formation of local elites and a lumpen proletariat that connive with these forces in exchange for some short-term benefits, whether real or illusory.

Thus, it has been argued (Assié-Lumumba 2001) that the combination of the three 'big Gs': gems (and all that they stand for, including resources from the soil and other forms of natural wealth, and which can be extended to human resources—enslaved Africans were reduced to ebony), greed, and guns continue to hinder any real effort to promote growth and decisively engage on development paths in Africa. Indeed, while in other societies and periods natural, physical, and human resources have historically constituted assets for socio-economic development and progress, in Africa, for the last five hundred years, its resources have constituted a liability. From the transatlantic enslavement of African men, women, and youth to the diamond wars in Sierra Leone, the combination of excessive greed and selfishness of external forces, and the leadership vacuum and absence of vision and commitment on the African side have been the source of relentless destruction. The Democratic Republic of Congo constitutes the most eloquent illustration of this irony and the contradiction of extraordinary wealth holding the people hostage to the Western industrial powers and multinational corporations, from the era of terror under Leopold II (Hochschild 1998) to the ongoing war. Massive looting of unprecedented magnitude in the post-colonial period has reduced the people to mere irrelevance. Illegal exploitation of diamonds and other natural resources plunged Angola into another war. In short,

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with a few exceptions, the greater the endowments of African countries, the worse off their people. From the informal colonisation prior to the Berlin Conference to the formal colonial and post-colonial eras, African leaders who have committed themselves to standing for the rights of their people and social progress of their respective societies have been mercilessly eliminated by the ferocious worldwide predators with the complicity and assistance of local groups and individuals who in recent years have conveniently take various euphemistic names such as 'rebels'.

As Nyerere stated at the 1998 African head of states meeting in Atlanta (Georgia) in preparation for the National Summit on Africa that was held in February 2000, in Washington, DC, the same greedy external forces of former colonial powers, imperial forces, and their multinational corporations will continue to work toward control of African resources by inventing their rebels and manipulating the internal contradictions and shortcomings (for example, the absence of good governance, lack of democratic rule, ethnic/religious/regional differences) to destabilise regimes and occupy zones of targeted resources. The development agendas of African countries require that educational systems in general and more specifically higher education institutions function effectively to create a new mind that is free of the seeds of self-destruction and that can use knowledge for the construction of a solid African society. Higher education institutions cannot function effectively and productively in the context of constant social and political turmoil in which students and faculty constitute major actors.

The reference to global violence is important as it has had a profoundly negative impact on the learning space of higher education institutions. Students, particularly in universities, have historically constituted a major political force. While they were a welcome group on the side of the African leaders in the struggles for independence, in the neo-colonial context they generally became a group adversarial to the governments although some are successfully co-opted. Students, as a social group, are transient in nature, despite governments' effort to co-opt and control them. The case of South African students during the struggle against apartheid illustrates the tradition of African student involvement in politics. The struggle against colonial forces, united students, and professional politicians also created a relatively homogeneous group around the common cause of fighting colonial forces.

As mentioned above, given their role as a socially significant group, efforts are made by regimes to co-opt or control students. However, in the post-colonial era, campuses have become a microcosm of the structural problems in society. In lieu of healthy and constructive clashes of ideas and debates in auditoriums, classrooms, cafeterias, and other places in the educational space, students have

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espoused the causes of opposing political camps that are often engaged in the use of violent means to acquire and maintain power. Dilapidated living conditions that resulted from the economic crises and policies of the SAPs offer little support, inspiration, and hope. Despair and hopelessness have triggered a cycle of violence on campuses among students in different countries. The idealistic tradition of the search for truth through enlightening debates, scientific inquiry, and thoughtful consideration of critical voices has given way to intolerance and violent physical confrontation. In their search for grounds for hope and to at least have a sense of being in charge of their lives, some students have turned to cults and obscure practices. These practices have not contributed to the search of broad solutions.

Human Resource Loss: HIV/AIDS and the 'Brain Drain'

Despite the unemployment problem, given the development needs, and regardless of the issue of education as a human right, no one can seriously argue that Africa does not need to increase its human resource base of higher education graduates. African societies need to boost the capacity of the population to have access to knowledge that, even in the absence of jobs, can help analyse and understand the structural matters that affect the continent, its people and societies.

Yet, in addition to the inability of the existing institutions to accommodate all students, two different phenomena have been depleting the actual (workforce) and potential (students) human resource base of many African countries with debilitating proportions in some sub-regions and countries: HIV/AIDS, and also the 'brain drain.'

During the first three decades of the post-independence period, even during the 1980s when the impact of the economic crisis started to have its full impact, the population segment that related to higher education and that is primarily composed of teaching staff and students, was considered the most privileged. With access to medical services and generally better living conditions compared to non-formally educated, and especially rural dwellers and those in growing urban peripheries, they had better protection against diseases and resources and facilities for curative measures. In most university spheres, the death of a member of the teaching staff or of a student was often an exceptional and shocking event. In contrast, 'With unfortunate regularity universities in many parts of Africa are faced with the reality of loss and sadness, as word goes around the institution about the death or funeral of yet another member of staff, yet another

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close relative of one of the staff or students, and yet another student' (Kelly 2003:2).

The hitherto relative privileged position and the enduring sense of security, or social status, explain the failure to make a thorough and realistic assessment of the magnitude of the HIV/AIDS challenge that led to inadequate responses. Indeed, 'many institutions have regarded HIV/AIDS as, essentially, a health problem and student problem' (Kelly 2003:2) and thus failed to provide preventive and curative services. It was found in recent studies on innovations that, even in countries that have the highest rates of infection, HIV/AIDS was not mentioned as a matter of urgency requiring immediate and massive action. There are only a few exceptions (Subotzky 2003:16-17):

> Surprisingly, only two submissions related to initiatives which address the HIV/AIDS epidemic. The Solusi University has introduced a *Community Outreach Programme around HIV/AIDS*. Students of the University are taught about the disease and how to prevent it and are challenged to spread this information within their communities. The Programme consists of talks sponsored by the Departments of Family and Consumer Sciences, and Health and Environmental Sciences. In addition, the Department of Development and Public Relations occasionally organises AIDS walks and bicycle ride campaigns. In the light of the limited success of many HIV/AIDS awareness campaigns, the Faculties of Economics and Management Sciences, Medical and Health Sciences, and the Sciences at the University of Namibia, are developing 'new approaches to promoting awareness of HIV/AIDS'. These involve the development of new policy, community-based care, research, and new methodologies such as computerised modelling and its relevance for national policy. The initiative also intends to involve traditional healers.

Yet, there is no doubt that this pandemic, on top of the traditional killer diseases such as malaria, constitutes a major medical, social, and economic challenge that must be tackled with vigour and a long-term focus. Indeed, the devastating effects of HIV/AIDS have been shortening the life expectancy of the labour force, which has dropped to 38 years in some countries irrespective of educational attainment. In one study, the International Labour Office (ILO 2000) provided ample evidence of the devastating impact of HIV/AIDS, resulting in the projected sharp decline in the strength of the qualified labour force in many countries in the next twenty years, particularly in Sub-Saharan Africa. The insufficient intake capacity of existing higher education institutions, primarily universities, the high social demand, and the urgent need for public and private employers to take measures to replenish anticipated labour force attrition, have

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all been translated into an expression of the need to expand the supply of higher education.

Some of the problems of dealing inadequately with HIV/AIDS in African universities and higher education institutions in general are related to the broader issues of limited research output and the relevance of research and the curriculum. The reforms and innovations undertaken since the outbreak of the HIV/AIDS pandemic do not reflect any systematic and massive efforts despite some slow and limited improvement in some contexts.

In addition to the collective effort to eliminate the possibility of future infections and the further spread of the disease, how can the relevant research community which, in Africa is mostly concentrated in universities, play its vital major role in meeting the challenge of finding the cure to HIV/AIDS and other debilitating diseases? This is the type of question that can guide the search for effective means to foster African higher education renewal that can contribute to breaking the cycle of underdevelopment.

The erosion or instability of the African available human resources are also related to the loss through large-scale emigration of the population segment that has benefited from higher education in African countries or abroad. Although not final like HIV/AIDS, 'brain drain' constitutes another major source of depletion of human resources in Africa. The brain drain has an immediate impact on African universities, where by definition there is the highest concentration of the most highly educated segment of the population; but if it were carefully tapped it could yield some benefit for Africa. Indeed, while HIV/AIDS cuts across all social classes, the brain drain affects primarily the most formally educated segments of the population in each country.

It is important to recall that Africa has the world's lowest ratio of university students to the total population. Thus the total number of graduates is not large. The number of higher education students and of graduates appears large only in comparison to the limited intake capacity of the higher education institutions and in the contexts of economic crises and increasing unemployment rates of graduates. Therefore, the actual raw number of highly educated Africans who migrate to industrial countries is small in comparison to migrants from other regions of the world - Asia for instance. However, in relation to the actual needs in the higher education institutions, especially the universities, attrition of a few members of the teaching staff has immediate consequences. There is also an internal brain drain whereby professor and researchers leave their faculty positions for more lucrative posts in the private sector, in international organisations or domestic political posts.

The brain drain phenomenon creates immediate problems for African institutions and countries, as the migration leaves instantaneous vacuums. In some universities, the departure of only a handful of the members of the teaching staff can translate into increased student/teaching staff ratios with an immeasurable impact on the quality and control of the learning environment as the teaching and grading load increases.

The ancient history of 'voluntary' movement of populations within and between regions of the world, of which Africa was part of, has been accelerated by increasing globalisation and colonial and historical factors. To present in a concise way the main explanatory factors for this phenomenon, the classical demographic argument of push-pull factors can be used, albeit with some reservation. Indeed, the combination of economic downward trends and political instability in many African countries has contributed to trigger the propensity of certain African population segments to emigrate toward countries that offer employment and physical security. The fact that a few African countries - Côte d'Ivoire before the recent political crisis, Kenya, Nigeria during the oil boom, and more recently South Africa — have had the experience of serving as destinations of migrants from other African countries is an indication that if African institutions offer stable environments, it is likely that Africans would not migrate outside the continent and, at least not in large numbers, to the point where their departure creates debilitating vacuums at African universities. Economic recession and political instability tend to exacerbate tensions that can take the tone of xenophobia, targeting 'foreigners' in general or those whose numbers make them appear as the 'invaders' in the receiving African countries (a phenomenon also observed in other regions of the world, including industrial countries). Thus, many African countries have expelled African 'foreigners'. If the institutional bases and political conditions are expanded and improved, there are indications that many Africans would prefer not to leave their initial homes — and the continent — to look for a source of living and professional development elsewhere.

Thus the movement toward industrial countries often follows colonial ties, whereby professionals from former British colonies tend to migrate to Great Britain, the United States, and Canada, while those from former French colonies migrate to France or Canada (primarily the Province of Quebec). This is the result of the search for better working and living conditions, maximizing the assets in the form of common educational preparation and professional experience. This is one of the unforeseen effects of reproducing Western educational traditions in Africa. While the colonial links are still in place, the language and educational borders have become porous. Indeed, in the context of increased

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globalisation and massive emigration, there have been physical and intellectual journeys of Africans from countries of French and Portuguese influence to the traditionally English-speaking metropoles, and in fact movement across the globe in many other areas.

Countries like Ghana, Nigeria, DRC, Ethiopia, Algeria, Egypt, Sudan, South Africa and Senegal have experienced massive emigration, with some preferred destinations and clusters but more and more being scattered around the world, depending on special contingencies. Even a country like Côte d'Ivoire that, until recently, was marked by exceptionally high immigration rates - with more than one quarter of non-nationals in its population - and an insignificant number of emigrants among all population segments including a relatively large highly educated group, has experienced increased emigration following nearly two decades of economic stagnation topped by political instability and a full-fledged war at the dawn of the twenty-first century.

The notion of 'brain gain' has been articulated recently when "brain drain" has been conceived in terms of the private gains to migrants and the social returns of migration to the homeland. There is a growing debate on possible institutionalisation of the intellectual, material, and social capital of the African Diaspora.

Thus, what types of institutions can be imagined to transform structurally the existing institutional settings within a new philosophy of education that must immediately meet so many challenges while fostering and sustaining long-run social progress in society as a whole?

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Chapter Six

Structural Change, Transformation, and Localisation of Higher Education as a Public Good

This sixth and final chapter points to areas of reflection and action for the transformation of higher education in African societies. It is argued that African higher education must be re-conceptualised as a public good. Such an articulation can be effective and meaningful only if it is accomplished on the ground of domestication of the institutions and their ownership by the people and the state while forging constructive and empowering partnerships around the world. As alluded to above, special relations with the historic and new Diasporas can bring particular boosts. By securing a safe position and agency on these grounds, new tools such as the information and communication technologies can be fruitfully used and contribute to achieve new goals toward social progress.

Re-conceptualising Higher Education as a Public Good

The notion of the localisation of African education includes various objective dimensions and social outcomes of Africa's historical contingencies and assets. Its major presumption is that there are some realities that, even in the context of revolution, will not lead to a *tabula rasa*. Indeed, in their attempt to control African societies, people, and minds, the Europeans intended to perform a social surgery whose outcome would be to produce totally new African societies, people, and minds. They succeeded only partially.

Despite the global impact of European colonial policies as already discussed, the sheer number of Africans who did not attend or are not in European-type schools has limited the targeted outcome of this social surgery. Furthermore, even among those who are exposed the longest time to the European type of formal education through the higher education level (in Africa or abroad) and

the Westernised elites in general, education in Africa did not miss its intrinsic property as an institution with two contradictory sides. Expected by guardians of the formal systems and the dominant class at each historical moment to be an instrument of reproduction of the existing social structure by virtue of its role in forming the minds for the future, formal education also contained the ability of producing critical minds among the dominated or colonised people.

What type of higher education institution is best suited for Africans and to promote structural change? How can education be re-conceptualised to meet the needs of national development? In 'Rethinking Educational Paradigms in Africa: Imperatives for Social Progress in the New Millennium', Lumumba-Kasongo (2000) argues that education in its various disciplinary forms, including its philosophy, science, technology, and knowledge base, must be reconnected to Africa's culture. In 'African Philosophy and Educational Discourse', Letseka (2000) argues that it is imperative that African philosophy provide the foundation of African education. This philosophy of *botho* or *ubuntu* that is defined by its humanistic nature can help re-centre African education around the collective well-being of the African people. As Mudimbe (1988), in contrasting the Western and African modes of thinking and self-definition in society, states:

> Western philosophy accepts as its starting point the notion of an uncon-strained and uncontextualized 'I' — that is, an 'I' defined in relation to the self and its inner being, rather than in relation to others. The African mode, however, seems more communal and emphasizes an 'I' that is always con-nected to and in relationship with others (Mudimbe 1988:1)

In the general African ethos, 'to be is necessarily to be in relation' to others and the 'centre is a human being who is free and at the same time highly dependent upon others, on the memory of the past, and on emphasising the balance be-tween nature and culture'. In the African ethos and practical life, this connec-tion with others is essential. The connection transits through the common cul-ture. The connection to others is not a mere juxtaposition of individuals living side by side who only draw resources from the same cultural source and have the same reference. Rather, they experience together their cultural expression and the use of culture.

Lumumba-Kasongo (2000) made the point that Africa must rethink and demo-cratically design an indigenous educational paradigm from pan-African or con-tinental perspectives. The issues of democratisation of education and collective well-being are related to the notion of public good.

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The illustration of the front cover of the book *Providing Global Public Goods: Managing Globalization* (Kaul et al. 2003) is a triangle that is referred to as 'the triangle of publicness' which

> looks at public goods from three perspectives. The first is *publicness in consumption*: is a good consumed by all? The second is *publicness in net benefits*: are the good's net benefits equitably distributed? The third is *publicness in decision making*: who decided to place this good in the public domain? (Inside page of the front cover).

In an article 'Debating the Public Good, with Afterthoughts' as a concluding chapter in his edited book *In Pursuit of the Public Good: Essays in Honour of Allan J. MacEachen*, Kent (1997:181) states: 'The public good requires that the individual has a place in society, a basis for belonging, for self-esteem and self-support'.

Some have argued that in thinking critically of the future of African higher education, it is important to move away from the technicist and linear conception that views higher education, especially the university, as an instrument or a mechanism to achieve economic growth. Although there is an assumption that growth can lead to development, historical and contemporary facts show that there are no systematic linear causal relations between growth and development. In the linear and causal conception, the prospect for jobs dictates enrolment policy. That is to say, when there are prospects for jobs, then the tap can be open but it must remain closed when there is a stagnant or downward trend in the job market. However, in industrial countries, regardless of the situation of the job market, there have been increased and diversified options of tertiary institutions with an increased number of short-cycle institutions such as the community college in the United States and the *institut universitaire de technologie (IUT)* in the French system. To these, distance and open universities have been added, reaching a wide audience in countries like the United Kingdom.

Saad Nagi, at the Expert Group Meeting on 'National and International Co-operation for Social Development: Sharing of Experiences and Practices in Social Development' on June 12-14, 2002, in Havana, Cuba, argued that the supply of education should not be dictated by the availability of jobs, even if individuals and families aim for employment at the end of the formal educational process. Thus, he argued that education should be provided to a large number even when there are no jobs. Basic and secondary education should not be considered the normal terminal levels. He argues that highly educated people who do not have jobs will ask the right questions and contribute to finding solutions. That is not to ignore the creativity of the people who have been referred to by Ela (1998) as le *'monde d'en-bas'* who, without evoking any essentialist assumption

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have, however, considerable lessons to teach in the process of rethinking and reformulating African education policies.

According to Nagi's arguments, highly educated people, especially in the perspective of transforming thinking, are more likely to be active participants in the decision-making process in the context of a knowledge-based society, with an increased search for ownership. It is not realistic to ignore the real problems as Bako (2002) explains in the case of Nigeria, stating that with about 212 higher education institutions and 'over 50 percent of Africa's total number of universities and student enrolment', it is a worrisome realisation that 'the rather phenomenal but unplanned expansion of higher education in Nigeria in the past two decades has now landed the country into some intractable quagmire' (Bako:1).

However, even in the early 1990s, at one of the worst periods of crises, there were signs of resilience among African higher education institutions throughout the continent, even in countries where the state collapsed altogether (DRC), where there was a prolonged war (Angola, Mozambique), or where the institutions were still under the grip of apartheid as in South Africa. Coombe (1991) observed that despite the damaging impact of the economy on higher education and more specifically,

> The universities' crisis does not invariably mean collapse. The universities have shown resilience. Despite the brains that have drained out of them over the years, and the compromises they have been compelled to make with their own standards, the universities remain great national storehouses of trained, informed, inquiring and critical intellects, and the indispensable means of replenishing national talent. They have considerable reserves of leadership and commitment on which to draw. Impoverished, frustrated, dilapidated and overcrowded as they may be, they have no substitutes (Coombe 1991:1).

The special role of the university as a place for forming critical minds is central. In *Higher Education for a New Africa: A Student's' Vision* (UNESCO, 1998) African students who met at the 'Forum of Students Associations in Africa on Higher Education in the Twenty-first Century' in Accra, Ghana on March 23-24, 1998, summarised the problems of African higher education as centring around 'the issues of relevance, quality, funding, access and management' (UNESCO 1998:4). Their visions were on 'improving the relevance... enhancing the quality... improving management and funding... improving regional cooperation... strengthening the Role of Students in the Development of Higher Education' (UNESCO 1998:6-10) even if they did not address the issue of the right to learn within the context of academic freedom.

The Quest for Ownership and the New Meaning of Relevance

The control of the African mind during the periods of transatlantic enslavement and colonialisation, was carried out through informal and formal socialisation, on plantations, in schools, in churches, in the work place, and in other social settings. The continued effort to control the African mind is still so strong that even at the beginning of the twenty-first century, it is not uncommon to find that some Africans continue to systematically dismiss any recognition of positive experiences in African history — including the genius of African women in producing sophisticated knowledge and providing the space for acquisition, consolidation, and preservation of power — as a mere 'romanticisation' of the past. It is one thing to be critical of the shortcomings, the internal contradictions, and some obvious violations of human rights in various forms that have existed in the different regions and societies in Africa (as in other societies of the world), especially when contemporary standards and awareness of human rights are used to judge them. It is a totally different matter when Africans — and Europeans — argue that nothing positive or significant could possibly have existed in Africa.

The role of the African people themselves in taking the lead in building their societies is central to the African history. It must be emphasised and repeated that African problems will not find solutions from the outside, even if those of the contemporary periods are intrinsically related to, or compounded by, external factors nurtured by those who gain the most from the conflicts and persistent poverty, ignorance, deficit, and constant blows to committed and enlightened leadership. Given the African objective conditions and centuries-old, ongoing exploitation of its resources that have contributed to the creation of wealth around the world, Africa needs and is entitled to have global support to move forward. However, as the African proverb states, 'If you have a heavy load and are trying to lift it to carry it, then a helping hand can assist you in lifting it from the ground to your head so that you can carry it away'.

As Nyerere argued, Africans must decide what they want to do, which development path they want to embark on, and then, if external support arrives, it can help. Direction, however, cannot be decided by others and then agreed upon and followed by the Africans because there is monetary assistance that accompanies the decision. Such assistance may not help, as the powers behind the different financial assistance sources may have their own interests that determine the type, quality, and quantity of assistance they decide to offer, regardless

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of Africans' development agendas. There is no free ride. Thus, Africans must decide which direction and destination they want to go in order to make best use of any external assistance. Accepting unconditionally a ride may temporarily give the illusion of a pleasant experience while heading, without any reason or plan, toward the direction of the owner of the means of transportation. It can be a costly mistake to accept an apparently free ride and then run the risk of being disoriented during the ride and at the destination. Even worse is when, after the 'free ride' proves not to be helpful because of its direction and destination, one has to walk back to the starting point to re-locate oneself on the map, figure out where to go, and then walk the distance to one's initially intended destination.

How much time, how many resources would be wasted not only for the individual but, in the case of policymakers, for a whole country and a people when "assistance" packages are uncritically accepted? Thus, even if external support in bilateral or multilateral forms is important, and necessary, the solutions that the assistance may help achieve must be formulated and generated from within. How should one ensure the inclusion of complementary contributions of different population segments, united around a national, regional, and continental, collective project of building the foundation for structural uplift toward social progress? What lessons can be learned from past prescriptions, even the ones that sounded genuinely well intentioned but yielded no substantive results—or created more problems? What is the role of higher education in creating the human resources capable of making the right decisions for Africa's interests?

Given the severe economic crises that started to manifest themselves in the 1980s and the political destabilisation that led to the disintegration of some states, the need arose to explain these major failures. The identification of 'good governance' by the foreign donors as a criterion for access to loans and as a measurement of economic performance and political stability fits in this search for an explanation of the African predicaments.

Activists, policy analysts, policymakers, and scholars such as Amin (1976) predicted the current crises and located the roots of Africa's contemporary problems within the historical contingencies related to its projection into the world capitalist system. In contrast, the analysis related to governance tended to locate these problems within what has been perceived and presented as Africa's internal deficiencies.

Despite the ongoing debate and controversy that surround the concept of governance in terms of its origin and usage in the 1990s, there is a common understanding about its meaning. It can be defined as a set of rules, institutions, and values that are used to manage society, state, and social institutions in

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general and among which are political institutions such as political parties (those in power and opposition), parliaments or national assemblies, governments, and their interactions with society. The discourse on governance has been sustained by an assumption that those involved in the debate, including African leaders, acknowledge the importance of setting up rules for the conduct of politics. Hyden and Bratton (1992) rightly point out that:

> The concept of governance is not new. [However] ... recently, it has gained particular significance in the literature on African development as a result, among other things, of the World Bank's (1989) identifying the crisis on the continent as one of governance (Hyden and Bratton 1992:5).

They indicate that governance entails a 'scope for empowerment. In this respect, there is a resemblance to 1960 when the primacy of politics was regarded as a prerequisite for development' (Hyden and Bratton 1992:ix). The explicit or assumed constitutive elements of the realm of governance include the legitimacy of power and authority, trust, responsibility, institutional power, and accountability. Nyerere (1999), embodying the critical voice against the type of governance that has been prescribed to African governments, stated:

> As the world's powerful nations have not (as yet) accepted the principle of international welfare, they apply the... 'deserving poor' notion to the reality of poverty outside their own countries. 'Aid' and non-commercial credit are regarded not as springing from the principles of Human Rights or International Solidarity, regardless of national borders, but as charity extended as a matter of altruism by richer Governments to the less developed and very poor nations. However, the quantity of this 'Official' charity being increasingly inadequate to meet the most obvious needs, one of the criteria for a nation being classified as among the world's 'deserving poor' came to be having 'Good Governance' as defined by the Donor Community... It was this aid-related discussion of good governance, a matter between aid givers and aid seekers, and the arrogant and patronizing manner in which it was raised by the aid givers that discredited the whole subject in the eyes of many of us in Africa and other parts of the South. For used in this manner, Good Governance sounded like a tool for Neo-colonialism. We have therefore tended to despise the concept even as, out of necessity, we try to qualify under it (Nyerere 1999:2).

He added that good governance is obviously needed in Africa to fulfil the basic duties of African states toward the African people. It is not the presence or absence of the state that can guarantee good governance. A weakened or confused state, for instance, cannot in itself be an indicator of good governance. The

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organisations that assaulted the African state, however, were eager to imagine alternatives that would take over or at least share the space hitherto controlled by the state. Strong and enlightened states can provide the enabling context for institutions of higher learning to be developed as institutions of public good. Empowered by their autonomy and sufficient resources, they will be able to do what they are designed to do in the areas of forming critical minds and producing knowledge, and specific research results geared to solving problems in the African society.

In the contemporary world of increasing global stature, the African population that has the responsibility should have an interest in creating the developmental momentum to cross a desirable threshold of social progress. In this process, Africa must also include those who are part of what Mazrui has referred to as 'Global Africa'. Thus the contribution of the African Diaspora merits some attention, especially when the contemporary component of this group is predominantly the product of higher education.

Agents and Tools for Structural Change: The State, People, and Information and Communication Technologies

To embark confidently on the path of Africa's structural transformation toward genuine and sustainable social progress, African control of the definition of the nature, appropriation of the process, and the expression of sovereign voices in the determination of the utilisation of knowledge, are unavoidable. There can be neither delegation of responsibility nor surrogate actors in deciding what is relevant for Africa.

African populations across the board have a major role to play in the future of African higher education, but particularly those who have a high level of formal education. Without unnecessary and uncritical glorification of African culture, it is nonetheless indispensable to appropriate indigenous knowledge as key in rooting the knowledge produced for the future. The obstacles that impede development agendas of higher education can be overcome and make way to fulfil the social mission of helping secure the human resource capacity with African socio-historical roots. Awareness of the general and specific needs of African societies and people in the global context would help to make decisions only if there are central and collective *African Voices in African Education* based on knowledge of Africa as the basis for informed policy-making (Higgs, Vakalisa, Mda, and Assie-Lumumba 2000).

As Lumumba-Kasongo (2000) argued, there is an urgent need to systematically develop an indigenous educational paradigm, with a pan-African or regional

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content in all the disciplines. The obstacles can be overcome if people work together through the major institutions of higher learning with the aim of purposefully and constructively 'retrieving the past, engaging the present and shaping the future' (Odora-Hoppers 2000). This requires a recognition and critical re-appropriation of African knowledge systems as well articulated, for instance, by contributors to the book *Indigenous Knowledge and the Integration of Knowledge Systems: Towards a Philosophy of Articulation* edited by Odora-Hoppers (2002) or *African(a) Philosophy of Education: Reconstructions and Deconstructions*, edited by Waghid, van Wyk, Adams, and November (2005).

In the innovation studies of the Southern African sub-region, Subotzky (2003:18) reports:

> The University of Venda for Science and Technology has undertaken *widespread reform of the curriculum*... [that] has also involved the infusion of indigenous knowledge and technologies into the curriculum from such diverse fields as traditional arts and crafts, traditional cosmetics, traditional food systems and medicine, knowledge of the environment, and African Civilisation. Amongst the new programmes that have been introduced are Youth and Gender Studies, and an Institute of Indigenous Knowledge Systems. Curriculum restructuring has also involved the introduction of core modules on African Civilisation, computer literacy and communication skills, and the curriculum is designed to be learner-centred, problem-based and project-driven.

The assessment of the actual achievements of these changes is beyond the scope and purpose of this Green Book project. However, the point for citing this case is that it provides an indication of the type of approach and perspective for structural change based on a clear philosophy that could guide future societal projects in re-centring African higher education.

In this effort, many experiences that have been acquired the hard way and by force outside the regular channels of dependency and the systematic reproduction of external and inherited institutional heritage can also offer a source of reflection and learning. For instance, it would be useful to analyse what coping strategies were imagined by the higher education institutions and their constituencies, especially the teaching staff and students, to sustain these institutions in contexts where, as in the DRC for instance, the state collapsed. In effect it disengaged itself even from state-owned institutions and which, from the standpoint of the state, continued to stir interests mainly as political powerhouses with teachers and students who must be constantly monitored and contained.

To break the cycle of the crisis in many African countries, educational systems and higher education institutions and their leaders, view the new information and communication technologies (ICTs) almost as a panacea. Yet while the ICTs present opportunities, they have some inherent challenges as well (Colle and Roman 2004; Kuroda and Shanawez 2004; Moyo 2004; Heydenrych, Higgs, and van Niekerk 2004; Sehoole and Moja; Sy 2004; Yao 2004). In addition, the question of technology must be dealt with in broader local and global contexts.

In his article entitled 'The Disappearing Drums', Colle (2000) quoted the World Bank that stated: 'If African countries cannot take advantage of the information revolution and surf this great wave of technological change, they may be crushed by it. In that case, they are likely to be even more marginalized and economically stagnant than they are today'. Using the metaphor of Africans' fingers being used to beat the drum as cultural symbol, Colle remarked that:

> Fingers on a keyboard is the sound that is going to have the greatest impact on Africa's participation in the 21st century Information Society. The challenge is to keep up with what is happening and to put these African advances in ICT and tele-centres into the larger context of African life, culture, and development.

Before discussing further the specific issue of ICTs, it is worth providing a brief historical introduction to the current question of science and technology in African higher education, with the special role of the information and communication technologies. While it may at first appear a digression, it is important to recall the notion of history as a compass (Clarke 1996). Indeed, historical evidence shows that people tend to develop first the kind of technology that is most relevant and useful for their interactions in their socio-geographic environment. Thus, people who live near oceans, rivers, or lakes tend to develop skills that enable them to make the best use of water as a source of food provision and as a means of transportation that connects them to, rather than separates them from, dwellers on the other side and other areas. This is why England and also Spain, at different historical periods, developed powerful navies. Thus, the African people near the Atlantic Ocean, for instance, developed such skills that permitted them to satisfy their curiosity and drive for connection to what was on the other side.

Bakari II was the most distinguished Africans, among others, who travelled to the Americas nearly two centuries before Columbus. As argued by Diagne (1992?) this transatlantic voyage by Bakari II is now a well-established historical fact that was recorded by various oral, visual and artistic means. Indeed, the

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region of the Guinean Gulf and Senegambia developed marine technology and knowledge of the movements of the oceans that made such trips possible.

At that time, whatever the personal feelings Europeans had about racial differences, they respected the Africans as people with will, a sense of direction, and achievement and deemed them worthy of partnership and exchange at all levels. As Basil Davidson (2004) argues, there was a mutually accepted belief of their being 'different' in their appearance and their cultural experience, 'but equal in their human worth' and genius. Thus, there is now, albeit still limited, readily available historical evidence of the African presence in other parts of the world, specifically in Asia and Central and South America, prior to the transatlantic enslavement period. As a matter of fact, research conducted from the perspectives of various disciplines has found converging historical evidence and conclusions that confirm the African voyages and settlements in Central and South America before Christ. The African people on the coastal areas have been particularly involved in exchange with people from outside the continent. While visitors came from other continents to Africa, Africans visited other places beyond their borders. Such voyages could be made only with the use of relevant scientific knowledge of the time (Sertma 1976).

Besides the conventional sources that have been mostly generated by, and used, in Western hard sciences, social sciences, the humanities, and specifically in historiography, Africa offers her own means of accounting for the veracity of these transoceanic voyages and settlements by Africans in ancient times. The caste-like system in Sahelian societies in West Africa have created a specialised social category, the *griots*, who are considered as the repository of the historical memory of these societies. Although this source alone would create scepticism among some and legitimate concerns among others, the griotic account remarkably coincides with other sources. Indeed the Olmec stone heads, the terra cotta, the skeletons, the ancient maps, the pyramids, and the measures and numbers, for example, converge to make a resounding statement about the evidence of the African presence on the eastern shore of the Atlantic Ocean prior to Columbus (Sertima 1976, 1987).

These African pre-Columbian voyages, contacts, and settlements provide manifold positive contributions to African historiography. First, they help to unravel further the fact that Africans coming to the Americas should not be limited to the devastating experience of the transatlantic enslavement. Second, it highlights the scientific genius among the Africans that enabled them to master the movements of the sea and to create the appropriate means of transportation to take advantage of favourable winds and streams to travel across the Atlantic Ocean. As it is recognised, Columbus did not make it secret that those were

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crucial learning trips he made to the West African coast at a time when Senegambia was also under the control of the Mali Empire.

As indicated above, what may appear as a historical digression from the current issue, is in fact of direct relevance. Indeed, African historiography provides intellectual and methodological tools to investigate what scientifically the people of Africa and its Diaspora can offer in the domain of science and technology in the twenty-first century and beyond. Recent efforts to rediscover and recover the wealth of writing systems around the Sankore University in Timbuktu is only a sign of the beginning of what should be an epic enterprise that is good in itself, for Africans and humanity, and also as an example of investment in building African intellectual and technological capacity.

The theme of the 10th General Conference of the Association of African Universities (AAU), held at Kenyatta University, Nairobi, Kenya on February 5-9, 2001, was 'African Universities and the Challenge of Knowledge Creation and Application in the New Century'. For this conference, the AAU commissioned a study that was conducted and presented at the conference by Ajayi (2001) on 'Information and Communications Technologies: Building Capacity in African Universities'. The following arguments are drawn from the critique that this author made of this study at the conference at the request of AAU.

It was argued that in his paper, Ajayi rightly recalled where Africa stood at the beginning of the twenty-first century in terms of its overall technological capacity, with a focus on ICTs and their application to education, particularly higher education. He provided indicators of Africa's appallingly weak technological base despite rapid growth in some areas, especially the Internet. He correctly suggested that technological readiness and expansion in society must be assessed based on the notion of cumulative process. Indeed, the expansion of new technologies in any social environment at a particular stage must be explained in connection with previous technological preparation and readiness. For instance, population segments that have used the television in the past when it was first introduced in a country were likely to be among those who were already using the telephone.

This linear pattern might not necessarily be verified in every context and with every new introduction of technology, as some technological inventions can make it possible for societies to skip some stages. However, given Africa's generally weak base, it is worth asking whether there is any objective reason to imagine that African societies can skip stages and move decisively forward. Indeed the relevant issue for Africa in this context is, given the importance of this cumulative process and the fast development of new technologies, how can Africa prepare itself for basic global coverage or readiness in order to move

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along with and be an active agent of new inventions? This is a particularly important question, given the large proportion of the population that lives in remote areas that is still formally illiterate. How can higher education connect to other levels of education and literacy programmes to help promote preparation for an expanded use of ICTs and maximise and sustain the condition of their productive use?

Besides formal literacy, the issue is: How can one demystify technology and connect it to the population in the community by producing graduates from African higher education institutions who are 'ICT literate' (Ajayi: 2001:10)? How does one train all faculty members to explore new and more effective means of carrying out old tasks such as conducting research and teaching? Ajayi (2001) stresses the reluctance and even open resistance of some members of the academic community to the introduction of technology. And when some of those who resist change are in a position of power and authority (Ajayi 2001:14), what would it require to present technology in a friendlier, less mystifying and threatening way to win their trust and make them realise that the new technology is for collective advancement? How should one design and implement a comprehensive, step-by-step training programme that can help create a community whose members (faculty, students, administrators, and professional and support staff) view ICTs as a new means of learning instead of creating an internal digital divide with a small group of initiates connected to the world through e-mail and the World Wide Web, while the majority feels alienated or self-excluded? If the mission of higher education must be fulfilled by or through the global society, how will this cumulative process be addressed in higher education institutions, especially universities, but leaving out the majority of the faculty, students, administrators, and support staff? How does one address the challenges of classic campus-based learning and the open and mega-universities without borders?

The technological weakness eloquently discussed in Ajayi's paper was only an expression of the overall location of Africa in the structure of power at the global level (Moyo 2004; Sy 2004). It is a reflection of the nature of Africa's weak and negatively dependent economy and educational systems. The analysis of the structure of the state, needs, and policies of ICTs in Africa must be placed in this global context.

An important dimension of technology's role in higher education as an instrument for social development that is worth highlighting is the gender factor (Sehoole and Moja 2004). While a few African countries, specifically in Southern Africa, have no clear national pattern of distribution of education by gender or perhaps even an imbalance in favour of the female population, the overwhelming majority of African countries as indicated earlier, have a lower proportion of

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females in the educational system, with wider gaps at the higher education level. As a result, women are under-represented in the formal sector. They represent a small fraction of higher education students and faculty and have a negligible presence in some disciplines, especially sciences. Women are also less likely to hold positions of power and authority that would allow them to influence policies for redressing general or specific imbalances. What are the gender issues related to the composition of decision-makers and their awareness and sensitivity to the needs of actual and potential users of ICTs?

If higher education institutions in general and the university in particular must use ICTs to better perform their analysis of societal needs and delivery of services to the community, what are the overall gender factors in terms of agents and beneficiaries of ICT policies on and off campus? For instance, e-commerce is mentioned by the author (Ajayi 2001:8). In many African countries, particularly in West Africa, women play a major role in local, regional, and international trade. How does higher education deal with the interface of gender imbalance in the higher education system, service to the community, and relevant ICT literacy programmes that take into account the various layers of the gender gap in better servicing society?

Because women are under-represented in the educational system, especially at the higher education level, they are under-represented in the most economically rewarding occupations. Instead, they are clustered in the so-called 'informal sector' in 'small' yet indispensable trade, from the rural market to the cities. Yet women as a social category have relatively little influence in the political processes that define the policies of the states whose location in the international power structure defines the situation of the citizens, including women. A fundamental question then is: How do the state, higher education institutions, industrial countries, international organisations, foundations, and 'donors' in general conceptualise, design, and implement gender-focused ICT policies?

In a book edited by Rathgeber and Adera titled *Gender and the Information Revolution in Africa* (Ottawa, Canada, International Development Research Centre, 2000), Rathgeber wrote a chapter on 'Women, Men, and ICTs in Africa: Why Gender Is an Issue'. She warns against some factors and policy matters that are likely to further widen the digital divide with negative consequences for development agendas, given the role that women play as a productive (and also reproductive) force in African societies. There is, of course, the question of the right of access to education and relevant technologies as an effective means for success. It is important to acknowledge consistently and include women's needs in all discussions and policy matters. It certainly should be explicitly articulated in such an important paper that is providing recommendations that are likely to

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guide the AAU, -a continental institution- and its member institutions in their future efforts to promote ICTs in African higher education institutions.

Issues of inequity in general within the African context must be systematically tackled. For instance, if as Ajayi pointed out the rapid growth of Internet access in 'capital cities' and some progress is being made toward more installations of points of presence (PoPs) or tele-centres in some secondary cities, what is the meaning of this growth in terms of the gap between these few urban centres and the majority of the population? What are the implications of such access in the long run for the questioning of the 'ivory tower', and will it consistently improve the linkages between African higher education institutions, especially the universities, and the society at large, especially rural communities? (Colle and Roman 2004).

One of the major shortcomings of Ajayi's study was his almost exclusive focus on Anglophone African countries. While this was an unfortunate neglect, it is nonetheless a fact that by and large Francophone countries lag behind Anglophone countries, though neither are well advanced. Here, South Africa stands out with its more familiar and rooted technology. For instance, UNISA (University of South Africa) is one of the oldest distance learning institutions in the world. Still, one cannot dismiss the legacy of apartheid and its lingering effects on internal inequality. In his paper 'Tertiary Distance Education and Technology in Sub-Saharan Africa', Saint (2000) recalled the 'capacity development sequence for distance education in Sub-Saharan Africa' and identified the typology of distance learning and the actual types and nature of the differential or similar experiences that African countries have had, including Anglophone, Francophone, and Lusophone countries. It is important to assess the factors that hinder or foster the adoption of technology as an instrument and subject in higher education institutions of groups of countries, or specific countries, in order to find solutions. Are there any relevant issues related to different university traditions within the colonial legacy? How can one explain the exclusive support from some foundations and countries that still follow colonial and European language divisions regardless of the actual needs in different countries? How would such policies affect the digital divide?

Ajayi's study provided detailed information on the benefits of using technology in higher education and the limited availability of ICTs in African institutions at large. It would have been useful to touch on some of the problematic sides of ICT policies by showing, for instance, that there are not only opportunities associated with the ICTs. The challenges that higher education in Africa still faces within the global context, and how they might impact ICT policies must be systematically addressed. For instance the 'silent crisis of technological trans-

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fer' (Assié-Lumumba and Lumumba-Kasongo 1994b) within the broader framework of North-South cooperation must be considered. Indeed, cooperation has a history that has been basically characterised by a structure of domination reflected in all systems of society, including the education system and particularly in higher education. The structural inequality that has characterised the framework of most of North-South cooperation, be it bilateral, multilateral, or within some of the major international organisations, must be taken into consideration as a source of experience that can help avoid repetition of past misunderstandings. Healthy and mutually beneficial cooperation requires a genuine appreciation of the objective conditions in both the current and the former foundations of policy design, taking into account the material and social costs and benefits of such cooperation.

Ajayi's study made some references, although seemingly in passing, that call for reflection the philosophical framework for the adoption of relevant and promising ICT policies. For instance, in his introduction it is stated: 'ICT now plays a major role in education, learning and research in general, agriculture, health, commerce and even in poverty alleviation by generating or creating new jobs and investment opportunities' (Ajayi 2001:3). He also referred to 'the national telephone companies [that] constitute obstacles' and 'have been the least cooperative, although the situation will start to change with the wind of deregulation blowing across the continent' (Ajayi 2001:12). Efforts must be made to create more favourable conditions for ICT development. However, concepts and policies that are heavily loaded in the context of global liberalisation require critical assessment of actual beneficiaries and those who would bear the cost.

In this context, it is worth asking: How would deregulation substantially and consistently benefit African institutions and people? Is there not good reason to view deregulation very critically when it simply means total laissez-faire and liberalism in the African context? It is worth noting that, as Ajayi indicates, 'there are hundreds of Internet and information technology initiatives in Africa, involving millions of dollars. However, there are not many targeted to providing information network facilities to higher education institutions (HEI) generally in Africa'. This may be a sign that African needs do not necessarily coincide with the interests of profit-driven private companies that are likely to take over, thanks to deregulation; which may be portrayed in a solely positive light. Even some 'donors' may have their respective agendas that dictate the visible or hidden strings that may be firmly or loosely attached to the technological assistance provided in-kind or in monetary form.

Thus, the apparent regret that 'deregulation in the ICT sector is still in its infancy in many countries' (Ajayi 2001:14) would have benefited from a more

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careful and critical articulation. Within the deregulation, the small technological initiatives are not likely to have any chance to be productive and survive. Indeed, while there are advantages in expanding opportunities, the power structure in the global context in the quest for profit-making ventures, regardless of their actual relevance in the context, must be watched. The role of the African Diaspora is an important component of the agents of changes.

The Special Role of Africans in the Diaspora in Higher Education Development in Africa

What stereotypically comes to mind when the phrase 'African Diaspora' is mentioned, is the many Africans who were forced to migrate to the Americas and the Caribbean during the three centuries of transatlantic enslavement. Indeed, the African world in its complexity today cannot be seriously analysed without the inclusion of the forced transatlantic migration of African populations. However, as indicated earlier, reducing the African presence outside the continent to the displacement of Africans who were enslaved in the Americas, with a short addendum on contemporary self-exiled Africans of various socio-economic categories, poses a crucial epistemological question in the pursuit of knowledge about the historical process of Africa and its people as agents of their history - past and in the making- in which formal education at the highest level is crucial.

In 'The Dialectic between Diasporas and Homelands', Skinner (1982) rightly points out that the relations between exiles and their homeland are inevitably full of contradictory forces. Thus, there are forces that keep the lines alive while other forces of latent rejection exist, particularly in the context of the forced migration. He states:

> Relations between peoples in Diasporas and their ancestral homelands are complex and full of dialectical contradictions. First, there is anger, bitterness and remorse among the exiles - and often among the people at home - over the weaknesses that permitted the dispersion to occur. Second, there is conflict when the dominant hosts attempt to justify the subordinate status of the exiles, and the latter, in turn, refuse to accept the status thrust upon them (Skinner 1982:17).

A number of socio-historical factors in both societies contribute to the emergence of particular positions or attitudes of the exiles, their offspring, and subsequent generations toward their original home. The economic and political conditions in both the recipient country and in the homeland encourage or repress the expression of the desire to return, physically and spiritually, and contribute to

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the development of the mother country. The expression of the need to return is stronger and more explicit when the actual or perceived conditions in the initial home are positive and attractive while those in the receiving country are negative and reject the migrants, whether voluntary or forced.

Several programmes encouraging recent African migrants for their return and resettlement of have their merits and have without any doubt been of great use to individuals and even institutions where they may have integrated upon their return. Given the large number of emigrants, such programmes tend to have an intense but focussed impact because of the small number of beneficiaries.

Generally speaking, regardless of the geographic distance between the homeland and the country of emigration, Africans outside the continent maintain, on their own, strong ties with their families. Indeed, the African family system and values, as a social institution, is still very strong, attesting to a vibrant cultural continuity contrary to the profound Europeanisation of other social institutions, including education. Their systematic effort to maintain family ties, to meet their social obligations back home, and to return home periodically to replenish their own energies are, however, of circumscribed and limited impact. Even if these practices are common and consistent, they are also at the same time dispersed, individualised, or existing only within small or informal groups.

Besides keeping these family ties alive, many Africans in the Diaspora also try to establish or maintain various forms of institutional linkages. Many among the newly emigrated Africans in various parts of the world work in academic institutions, in major industrial companies, and in non-academic research institutions. Many of them do so as individuals or as members of specific professional associations and institutions such as CODESRIA, the Association of African Women for Research and Development (AAWORD), and the African Association of Political Science (AAPS). AAPS for instance has constitutionally or practically created sub-sections in North America with different functional capacities. As a Pan-African institution, CEPARRED functions in different intellectual and geographic sites outside its African headquarters, especially from the United States.

While such initiatives are timely and realistic, they still have limited organisational membership, space, support and impact. Nonetheless, using their personal and professional bases outside Africa, they can play a major role as a group. To date, however, the Africans in the Diaspora still constitute a major resource that has not been systematically tapped, specifically in the areas of research, teaching, and management to contribute to revitalising African insti-

tutions. It is imperative to ensure a more systematic and organised institutional framework so as to make a real impact on the continent and its people.

In 'Pan-Africanism and the intellectuals: Rise, decline and revival', Mazrui (2005) argues that as the origins of modern black intellectual traditions and those of Pan-Africanism are intertwined, African 'intellectuals and educated minds' have the capacity 'to conceive and construct an alternative social paradigm' (Mazrui 2005:56).

Zeleza (2005) discusses the role that the academic Diaspora plays and can play in African knowledge production. He argues that in general, the contemporary Diaspora, in particular its intelligentsia (just like the historical Diaspora through the Pan-African movement), has the potential for productive and progressive engagement with Africa.

Partnership and Higher Education for Development

International cooperation derived from the colonial linkage does not solve African problems but instead deepens them. Cooperation in this historical framework has been marked by an unequal donor-receiver syndrome in which the donor decides what to 'give' and dictates conditions for use while the receiver is expected to unconditionally accept these terms and conditions with gratitude. This has led African countries to the situation of literally being treated as beggars when they apply for loans. They are treated as if they have nothing to offer but are always receiving. Paradoxically, Africa's development obstacles cannot be simply explained by the continent's lack of economic resources. Africa has been producing human and material resources that helped build Europe and its extensions in the Americas, yet it bears the responsibility for its vulnerable economic position in the world system. Africa's marginalisation and lack of political leverage at the international level are not natural phenomena. Rather, they can be traced to specific historical moments. Thus, they can be changed by collective action in which internal and external actors, Africans and non-Africans play complementary roles.

First, Africans must clearly define their development path and appropriate the process. International cooperation should also be redefined and located in a new framework of genuine partnership, as the old partnership model has yielded little benefit. In their study entitled 'External Support to Higher Education in Africa: The Promise of Partnership and Continuities of Dependence' that was presented at the African Studies Association Annual Meeting in Washington, DC on December 5-8, 2002, Samoff and Bidemi (2002) demonstrated, based on their research findings, the following: the type of partnership that has been the

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basis for assistance to African higher education by US foundations and agencies, among others, has been unproductive from the African side. Assistance has been basically unequal. It is often guided by a tradition of selective treatment and assistance to preferred sub-regions and pet countries without looking at Africa's needs holistically. Most of them follow the lines of colonial boundaries and the heritage of colonial powers with assistance guided to, for instance, Commonwealth countries. In this context, it is a partnership in name only and has basically no substance, since major decisions are made unilaterally under the assumptions either that the 'donors' best know the African needs, or that African institutions face such dire need, that they would accept any assistance that comes their way regardless of what strings are attached. Thus in the end, Samoff and Bidemi (2002) conclude that hitherto partnerships and assistance have little benefits to show and have made no real contribution to the capacity building of African institutions.

Assistance to African countries often comes in the form of spare parts from the 'donors' without a clear philosophical basis and a comprehensive and holistic policy as to what type of education is appropriate and what type of citizen is to be trained for the present and future, to create and sustain what model of society. Partnership must reflect internal and international relations, as suggested in the following typology:

- Partnership between internal institutions, internal social groups taking into account the gender representation at all levels;

- Partnership between African countries on a bilateral, sub-regional, or continental level, working toward a more integrated continent;

- Partnership between African countries and other developing countries;

- Partnership between African countries and industrial countries; and

- Partnership between African countries and international organisations, some of which constitute proxies of some industrial countries. The idea of partnership also applies to the institutions of higher learning and concerns specifically:

- Partnership and complementarity between African higher education institutions of different types;

- Partnership between African public and private institutions without adopting any dogmatic position leading to a systematic rejection of private initiatives. Private initiatives that aim at supporting national development can be a major asset. The privatisation of national agencies and control of the private sector by multinational corporations whose major objective is to pump maxi-

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mum profit out of Africa with no real responsibility toward the development effort should not be confused with the private initiatives that support national development agendas. In this sense Scandinavian countries offer some inspiration, given the commitment of private business in state-led development policy;

- Partnership between African institutions of higher education and the community (lay, religious, and business).

Within the institution, partnerships between the different stakeholder constituencies can significantly reduce and eliminate tension.

To manage and make the best use of old and new external relations, some have proposed the idea of fusion as one way to take stock of Africa's reservoirs of knowledge and frames of reference. The notion of fusion proposes a deliberate choice by Africa to appropriate some elements of their received institutions, values, and ways of doing things. These chosen elements can be added to, mixed, and fused with African institutional, cultural, and other realities to create an enriched original system. Part of the argument is that even though Africa did not initiate the coming of the Europeans and the transfer of their institutions to Africa, to make it work, Africans must appropriate this inheritance and make use of what it considers the most relevant for itself while it is firmly grounded in its culture in order to have a sense of direction. Japan is often cited as an inspiring example of selective borrowing and 'fusion by choice' (Assié-Lumumba 2005). Recently, South Korea has also been cited as another example of successful fusion.

As a respondent of the study presented by Samoff and Bidemi (2002) the Namibian Minister of Education, Culture and Sport, Angula (2002) discussed the fusion notion when he stated:

> Both the experiences of Japan and Korea inform us of clear objectives, national commitment and leadership, and the measured fusion between traditional values and Western educational models. All these appear to be lacking in the African intercourse with external encounters and influences. Leadership in particular is found wanting in Africa in general and in African institutions of higher learning in particular (Angula 2002:5).

Japan is often cited for its ability to borrow from other societies and institutions, including education, and to make the borrowed inputs work by blending them into their own system. Japan borrowed heavily from China to firm up the foundation and construction of its modern education. Japan also borrowed, at different historical moments, components of educational practices, policies, and philosophies from the West.

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The Japanese experience should be, however, analysed from the perspective of a regional power and sovereign state that exercised its prerogative to make selective choices according to its perceived and defined interests. Japan has not practised fusion whereby it would blend elements - assumed to be the best - of its own system and from other systems to create a new one. In fact, Japan selects elements from outside that it blends into its own system. Neither the foundation nor the essence of the Japanese system is affected by the careful, deliberate, and selective injection of external elements. Thus, fully in command and confident of the solid roots and evolution of its own system, it has been selectively importing elements that could be blended into or provide new impetus to its own old system.

This is not the case for African countries in the process of colonisation and neo-colonial experience. Being in charge of their destiny would permit them to harness resilient and innovative impulses and to embrace preservation and renewal, continuity and change.

The notion of fusion is a complex process that involves a sense of responsibility and a holistic, long-term vision. The cases cited above comprise cultural and historical contingencies and assets that clearly differ from the African. However, Africa also has its own assets in spite of the negative weight the history of colonial domination and the continued efforts by external forces to maintain it in neo-colonial gear.

Brock-Utne (1999) argues that in order for African universities to play their role fully as institutions for development, they must work toward rooting African education in African traditions amidst the perpetuation of a colonial situation. University education is necessary in any genuine effort to restore the dignity and heritage of the African people.

It is worth recalling that Tanzania made great strides in a short time and emerged as an education leader, offering a space for ideas and the analysis and proposal of solutions to the African 'predicament'. This means they are attracting African scholars from throughout the continent as well as from the old and recent diasporic experiences, and people and institutions internationally beyond the Africa world.

Tanzania offered visionary leadership where African minds could be trained and challenged. Greatness of leadership can be measured by what is left for posterity when a specific leader is gone. Nyerere offered the type of leadership that must be emulated at a time when Tanzania did have natural resources to attract attention as wealthy or potentially wealthy country. The best resource that was being given a chance to help create and strengthen the foundation for Africa's development was the brain.

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This is the same resource that took Japan to its present level. Even when natural and physical resources are abundant, they can be put to use for social progress in Africa only if the thinking is clear and the leadership is consistently committed to Africa and its people throughout the continent. Although contradictory in appearance, some of the significant directions are not mutually exclusive. This is the case, for instance, with the notion of an African-centred education and fusion to produce the relevant knowledge to guide policy for social development.

Knowledge production should not be considered as an end in itself. Rather knowledge is meaningful for society only as it benefits the entire society through its use to make decisions, undertake actions, and design, implement, critically evaluate, and adjust development agendas for society. Angula (2002:5) indicates that underdevelopment in Africa is at least partly due to the failure to leverage knowledge as a resource for wealth creation for both the short and long term. He stated:

> Knowledge management means therefore integrating content to context. For African institutions to be able to benefit from knowledge networks they must answer the following questions: (i) What knowledge and capacity exists within the institutions? What it knows. (ii) How is the existing knowledge or capacity being used? How it uses what it knows. (iii) How fast the institution can know something new? Knowledge acquisition capacity. This brings us back to leadership. For the institutions of higher learning in Africa to provide honest answers to these questions leadership is critical. Such leadership should develop the knowledge sharing infrastructure through incentives and reward systems. Partnerships should therefore be based on such leadership seeking help from knowledge centres outside Africa. Such knowledge transfer should be aligned to long-term knowledge strategy of an institution and should be aligned to its broader mission and vision (Angula 2002:6-7).

In this way, partnerships will be empowering, systematic, and sustainable. African institutions will then be able to create knowledge networks on their own terms and interests. These are some of the promising areas for thought and research.

Engendering African Higher Education

One of the most counter-productive and self-destructive traditions in African higher education has been the persistence of structural gender inequality. The quantitative and qualitative distribution by gender in African educational systems, from the lowest level and up, reveals the societal norms and constraints,

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the policy priorities and the contradictions between the officially stated pursuit of development agendas while denying the female population the rights and preventing women from participating fully in these agendas with their full capacities. Out of a variety of social and individual variables, gender remains the most universally entrenched, compounding the effects of other factors on life chances of individuals and groups for educational achievement and socio-economic attainment.

Because of their low numbers, one of the most vigorous ways to quantitatively and qualitatively boost their representation is to expand the institutional capacities. This expansion cannot be addressed in purely quantitative terms. Indeed, it is not enough to increase the number of female students and professionals. It is important to create gender-sensitive environments. Although the specific arrangements may vary from context to context and depend on the discipline, the philosophy, education and social goals are the same.

In recent years, in addition to the initial issue of simple access, the analyses of women's representation and gender questions in higher education have been more comprehensive, as they have included various dimensions of structural gender inequality that affect the nature of, and the space for, women's participation in learning and knowledge production. Several scholars, many of whom are women, have contributed to this reflection through a series of studies sponsored by CODESRIA, published subsequently a series of publications: *Women in Academia: Gender and Academic Freedom in Africa*, edited by Sall (2000); and *African Gender Scholarship: Concepts, Methodologies and Paradigms* (CODESRIA, 2004) and in CEPARRED's forthcoming (2006) book entitled *Women and Higher Education in Africa: Reconceptualizing Gender-Based Human Capabilities and Upgrading Human Rights to Knowledge*.

In addressing gender biases in the curriculum and the learning space, scholars have articulated the need for institutional transformation with different alternatives that are not mutually exclusive: promoting gender parity in classical institutions; creating specific units (for example, gender/women's studies programmes and departments), and all-women institutions of higher learning. Regarding the question of institutional space, Mama (2005) points out in 'Gender studies for Africa's transformation' that gender and women's studies in African institutions respond to particular challenges facing African women intellectuals and activists. The author analyses the increased engagement with gender studies in Africa in the context of: political, institutional, and social challenges of the contemporary era; and the growth in the number of African women entering higher education, in spite of the relatively low proportions.

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Several empirical studies have led the similar findings and conclusions about the assault on women's academic freedom and raw exercise of violence against women (Fashina 2000; Mbow 2000; Onyango 2000; Othman 2000; Ouendji 2000; Phiri, 2000; Sharawy 2000; Tamale and Onyango 2000; Gaidzawa forthcoming 2006; Meena forthcoming 2006).

Some call for epistemological alertness in the discourse on gender in academia, taking into account historical process rooted in European imperial domination (Oyewumi 2004; Kisiang'ani; 2004) while others focus on the contemporary framework for continued efforts to control Africa, especially through the globalisation process (Steady 2004). In 'An investigative framework for gender research in Africa in the new millennium', Steady (2004) specifically examines the impact of external concepts, methodologies and paradigms in African gender studies by presenting evidence that their supporting academic structures validate the exploitation of the continent. The author proposes African-centred approaches for gender research in Africa based on an understanding of African socio-cultural realities, feminist traditions and philosophies.

In order for African countries to develop institutions of higher learning that are capable of promoting social progress amidst the global context, they must secure permanent solutions to the structural gender inequality in these institutions. Women's roles as researchers and research topics on gender and women can make a contribution in the search for such solutions.

In his assessment of the existing institutions and the developmental challenges, in 'We Need to Reinvent the African University' Juma (2005) has argued that:

> Many of these universities will need to be changed from being conventional sources of graduates to becoming engines of community development [by] … working directly in the communities they are located in. … The continent needs a new generation of universities that can serve as engines of both community development and social renewal. The task ahead is not simply one of raising more funds. It will require deliberate efforts by governments, academia, business and civil society to reinvent higher education and put it to the service of the African people. To achieve this, a qualitative change in the goals, functions and structure of the university is needed. As part of this process, fundamental reforms will be needed in curriculum design, teaching, location, choice of students and the management of the continent's universities. Such an effort will push African leaders to the frontiers of institutional innovation; nothing less will meet the challenges.

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Indeed, there is need to forge new institutions of higher learning to solve structural problems of which the gender inadequacies constitute a part.

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Conclusion

It is worth recalling that by the time African countries started to acquire their political independence, human capital theory was popular and guided education policies under the eye of experts from industrial countries. Given the euphoria about the assumed economic value of education, questions concerning which type of education and what development did not guide policy decisions. Several facts challenged the human capital assumption of a positive and linear relationship between education and development. Without even dealing with the substantive question of whether growth can lead to development, these facts challenged the notion that education, measured often in terms of number of years of formal education, leads to economic growth or development.

The phenomenon known as the 'brain drain' also shows that countries that had earlier achieved relatively higher proportions of enrolment and output of the higher education institutions may not be better developed. Rather, their stock of human resources is depleted by the massive departure among the most highly educated segment of the population as a result of a junction of multiple factors, with a final trigger provided by political strife or severe downward economic trends. Thus it appears that education, especially higher education, alone is not a sufficient condition for development.

While African leaders and their populations have continued to put their faith in education, conflicting messages have been communicated by means of differential allocation of education finance to the different levels of the system. Higher education, hailed by international organisations and industrial countries in the immediate post-colonial period of the 1960s and 1970s, became anathema to them, especially the World Bank.

Since the end of the 1990s, higher education has become again an object of interest. With the merger of the assistance to African education into a single institutional framework, the 'Donors to African Education - DAE' renamed 'Association for the Development of Education - ADEA', even organisations and governments that had in the past been critical of neo-liberal policies enshrined in the IMF and World Bank appeared to have been co-opted, or at best agreed

upon an inevitable convergence of views and policies, until the World Bank rediscovered the relevance of higher education for African development.

In its joint commissioned work *Higher Education in Developing Countries: Peril or Promise?* (The Task Force on Higher Education and Society, 2000), it is eloquently articulated that higher education is necessary for the fruitful pursuit of development agendas in the twenty-first century to participate in the 'knowledge economy' (Task Force 2000:17). There is still a lack of vigorous and unequivocal support for higher education. The "Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers" (PRSPs) emphasise more the process of further integration of African economies and population into the global market. Even if higher education matters and projects may be scattered in other units, the fact that The World Bank's staff that concentrates on higher education in Africa has been kept to a bare minimum of two (having been kept at one more than a decade) is a testimony to this neglect.

Why has there been, in the first place, any reasonable expectation that the World Bank and other international organisations would permit or enthusiastically support the development of African higher education? The nature of the agents that define the philosophical framework and the practical policies of the World Bank constitute an indicator of the infringement on the actual sovereignty and self-determination of societies. Indeed higher education, as a subsector of the social institution that provides a key component of the influential knowledge produced and is central in social reproduction, cannot reasonably be expected to be managed, and appropriately so, by external agencies in general. More specifically, a single international institution like the World Bank, no matter how powerful and having much support from world powers, and precisely because of its own agenda and mission, cannot be expected to provide support to higher education in African countries from a nationalistic perspective.

As argued in this book, there is a need to reclaim history and locate African higher education in its relevant socio-historical context, and critically to examine the cumulative process that produced the current systems in order to make sense of the crises and the counter-productive solutions that were prescribed through the allocation of financial resources. The various forms of change in the different waves of reforms and innovation require critical analysis. Fostering systems that can help address the impact of the challenges and prevent new ones from emerging should guide action. In sum the research to be conducted under CODESRIA's intellectual guidance must help shed light on past and current processes and conditions and provide at least elements that will lead to

ideas for undertaking policies of renewal for the commitment and engagement toward social progress.

Despite the similarities, there are differences that call for a broad representation of the research topics and national and sub-regional case studies. CODESRIA offers a space to facilitate research from African perspectives on higher education that can provoke constructive debate and reflection. Rather than merely presenting an opportunity for intellectual exercise, it can provide guidance for policy formulation to re-conceptualise higher education as a tool for Africa's project of rooted social progress. Why is it that the structure of the current systems of higher education has not been socially relevant as expected by the majority of the African people? What are the general and specific constraints in specific countries that have been impeding the systems of higher education to provoke the dynamics of social progress? What ought to be done to transform the essence, mission, structure and process of that education for the benefits of the whole continent? These are some of the possible areas for reflection and urgent action.

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