

# Intra ACP Academic Mobility Scheme 'Work in Progress'

**Renata Russell**

Programme Manager

Centralised Operations for the ACP Countries, European  
Commission, EuropeAid Cooperation Office



# Policy

- The policy of the European Commission (EC) is to provide support to Higher Education in ACP partner countries in the context of a balanced approach to investment across the education sector as a whole.
- The primary and overarching objective of EU development policy is the eradication of poverty in the context of sustainable development, including the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

## Policy

ACP Higher Education sub-sector needs to respond to a number of key development issues:

- need to **stimulate potential for economic growth** by increasing the supply of high level qualified human resources available to ACP economies
- need to improve the quality of locally provided Higher Education in the ACP states
- importance of **building local capacity** by promoting both: cooperation between ACP tertiary education institutions and between ACP and European universities
- importance of **promoting inter-cultural dialogue and understanding** among European and ACP countries.

# Policy

- A commitment to collaborate with the African Union to increase student mobility in the area of Higher Education between Africa and European Union countries as well as within Africa itself is contained in the **EU Strategy for Africa [COM(2005) 489]** namely through the opportunities offered by the Erasmus Mundus Programme and Nyerere Scholarship Scheme as the vehicles for this increased mobility.
- The **First Action Plan 2008/10 for the implementation of the Africa-EU Strategic Partnership**, namely in the field of migration, mobility and employment foresees support to the African Union Commission Mobility Programme (Nyerere) which is in line with the objectives of the “Second Decade of Education for Africa (2005-2015)” under the aegis of the African Union.
- The **10th EDF Intra ACP Strategy Paper and Multi-annual Indicative Programme** (for the period 2008-2013) also earmarks an amount of € 40 000 000 in favour of a student and academic mobility scheme(s) within the ACP region itself: € 30 000 000 for Africa and € 10 000 000 for the Caribbean and Pacific regions.

# Preparatory Work

- Initial meetings and discussions – end of 2007
- AUC Study visit to Brussels – looking at EC mobility programmes (Erasmus, Erasmus Mundus, Tempus etc.)- mid 2008
- Agreement with the ACP Secretariat and AUC on the Identification and Formulation Study – 2008 - end of 2009

# Identification and Formulation Study

- In the first stage – **Identification** – the objective is to provide decision makers in the African Union Commission, the relevant authorities in the Pacific and Caribbean, the ACP Secretariat and the European Commission with sufficient information to justify the acceptance, rejection or modification of a **project concept**, and to determine the scope of the planning work needed to specify and design the new operation.
- In the second stage – **Formulation** – the objective is to provide decision makers in the African Union Commission, the relevant authorities in the Pacific and Caribbean, the ACP Secretariat and the European Commission with sufficient information to **justify the acceptance, modification or rejection of a project proposal, and, if the proposal is deemed to be feasible**, adequate information on which to proceed to drawing up and concluding a financing agreement.

# Identification and Formulation Study - Phase I – Identification

- A) **Stock taking and analytical phase**

Collection and analysis of information regarding the various existing EU (**EC and 2 best cases from EU Member States**) mobility schemes with a focus on:

- Best practice and Lessons learnt
- Management structures including transparency and accountability procedures
- Cost effectiveness
- Synergies that can be found between the EU mobility programmes and the AU Nyerere programme for Africa as well as similar programmes in the Caribbean and Pacific regions if such exist.

# Identification and Formulation Study - Phase I – Identification

EuropeAid

Collection of information with the focus on the AU Nyerere programme as well as similar programmes or experience of mobility schemes/arrangements in the Caribbean and Pacific regions that might exist. This would cover among others:

- The programmes as they are defined,
- Organisational/implementation arrangements and procedures,
- Legal framework
- Place of the programmes in the broader sub regional or regional policies
- The policy as such and any other policies directly linked
- Funding arrangements and future prospects (sustainability)
- Vision for the future of the programme
- Institutional capacity related to the present and future implementation of the programmes

# Identification and Formulation Study - Phase I – Identification

EuropeAid

- B) The analysis of the information collected and the assessment of the key issues involved will lead to the presentation of different scenarios/options for the new programme that the partners could consider, elaborating explicitly on the advantages and disadvantages of the different options.
- Stakeholders meeting in Addis Ababa – June 2009 – discussion of findings and validation.
- Conclusion of the Identification Phase – September 2009 – formal approval of the Basic Project Concept – October 2009.

## Initial Project Concept

- The **overall objective** of the project is to promote sustainable development and poverty alleviation by increasing the availability of trained and qualified high-level professional manpower in the ACP countries.
- The purpose is to facilitate linkages between the Higher Education Institutions in the ACP region thereby creating education opportunities to encourage and enable ACP students to undertake postgraduate studies, and also to promote intra-ACP mobility of academics and staff.

## Initial Project Concept

More specifically the project will **aim**:

- To enhance the international cooperation capacity of universities in ACP countries;
- To promote cooperation between sending and hosting institutions;
- To enable students, academics and staff to benefit linguistically, culturally and educationally from the experience gained in the context of mobility to another country;
- To improve the transparency and recognition of studies and qualifications;
- To increase access for students from vulnerable groups to higher education;
- To enhance, in the medium-term, the political, cultural, educational and economical links between the participating countries;
- To contribute to the improvement of the quality of higher education through the promotion of internationalisation, joint degrees and harmonisation of programmes and curricula by participating institutional networks.

# Initial Project Concept

The **expected results** are as follows:

- ACP postgraduates completing Masters Courses outside of their home countries;
- ACP postgraduates completing PhDs;
- ACP Academic staff is exposed and contributes to the higher education inter-institutional exchanges ;
- Enhanced international cooperation capacity of higher education institutions in the ACP countries through cooperation within the region;
- The spreading of the various experiences and best practices of participating universities;
- Increased both visibility for the participating institutions and ability to host and manage flow of foreign students;
- Improved cultural understanding and respect for diversity;
- In the longer term, improved political, cultural, educational and economical links between the countries in the ACP region with a better understanding of mutual values.

# Initial Project Concept

- As a result of the assessment of strengths and weaknesses of the ACP regional organisations a **two-phase approach** is proposed for this project.
- During the first phase the management of the project will be entrusted to the EACEA, following which in relevant regional organisations are expected to take over.
- During Phase I, the African Union Commission will be invited to second personnel to get acquainted with the working methods of the EACEA in regard to the management of mobility schemes. The personnel concerned will receive training and then will be responsible for the management of the **scheme for Africa**.
- In relation to the operation of the **scheme for the Pacific and the Caribbean**, it will also be implemented from the EACEA. The relevant organisations will be given an option and invited by the ACP Secretariat to deploy officials to the Agency in order to be exposed to a learning process of designing and implementing mobility schemes.

## Basic Features

- Calls for Proposals for groupings of Universities –similar to EMECW
- In the first phase the Africa, Pacific and Caribbean regions operate independently with mobility within the regions, later possibilities for mobility between the regions may be considered.
- In the first call 3 African Projects, 1 Pacific, 1 Caribbean
- MAs, PhDs, Academics, Staff
- Applicants will also have to submit for scrutiny details of the courses that will be offered.
- For Africa minimum 5 and maximum 10 Universities in a consortium
- For C & P the composition still needs to be defined

## Further Work

- Continuation of analytical work
- Further Stakeholders consultation –survey
- Indicative timetable – final project concept January/February 2010
- Legislative procedures initiated
- Publication of the first call – Autumn 2010