

Quality Matters

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A Quarterly Newsletter of the Center for Educational Improvement and
Quality Assurance (CEIQA)

St. Mary's University College

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Quote of this issue

*"Business opportunities are like buses,
there's always another one coming."*

Richard Branson

This newsletter is published every three months by the Center for Educational Improvement and Quality Assurance (CEIQA) of St Mary's University College (SMUC). The Objective of the newsletter is to inform the SMUC community as well as interested public, private, non-governmental stakeholders about the activities and endeavors of the institution in fostering quality education and research in the Ethiopian Higher Education setting.

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Training on Entrepreneurship Coaching

Training on Entrepreneurship coaching was offered to selected staff members of SMUC at Bole campus of St.Mary's University College from January 24 – 29, 2011. The training was sponsored by 'Meleya Foundation' and 'Oxfam Novib'. Mr Raoul Chong, from Next Level Partners of the Netherlands was the resource person for the training. The training was organized as part of the University College's initiative to enhance the capacity of the Entrepreneurship and Innovation Center which offers services to its students and outside customers who aspire to become entrepreneurs. The training focused on key entrepreneurship coaching skills. Three draft business plans prepared by marketing department graduates of SMUC were also re-evaluated during the training. It was noted that the training is beneficial to develop the capacity of the entrepreneurship center.■

From the Editorial Desk

In many countries the demand for higher education is increasing from time to time. To respond to this demand many countries are taking measures through expansion of the higher education sector. This expansion is creating an opportunity to many of their citizens to have an access to higher education. However, the increase in enrollment has an impact on the quality of the teaching learning process of the sector. Moreover, many actors of the sector are concerned about the performance of the sector to produce knowledgeable and qualified skilled manpower. At the same time the belief that higher education is crucial for development is held by many countries worldwide. The case in Sub-Saharan countries is not an exception to this trend. All in all, HEIs are forced to develop innovative strategies in response to today's highly competitive and complex environment.

For instance, in order to enhance the relevance of the services offered by HEIs they are expected to develop the innovative capacity of their students. In addition, HEIs are forced to look for additional sources of funding opportunities and form collaborations with companies. According to Clark (1998), entrepreneurial HEIs have the following characteristics: finding other sources of funds, involving in innovative programs and forming collaborations with the companies. This affects the way how a given higher education system activities are to be organized. In relation to this, students are encouraged to be critical thinkers, solution makers and active participants in the learning process. This is done so that graduates could later become pro-active

citizens of a nation. Nowadays, the need to focus on self-employment is emphasized as employability chances are limited for the increasing number of graduates.

Thus, every higher education institution must aspire to develop entrepreneurial abilities of its graduates. In line with this, the Ethiopian government is also encouraging individuals to develop mechanisms for self-employment. Small and medium sized enterprises are opened by young entrepreneurs who aspire to become active participants in the business. The media, government offices and the general public is also offering support to such kind of effort. In line with this, enhancing the relevance of the services offered by the HEIs in Ethiopia is a concern held by many stakeholders. In this edition of Quality Matters, we have collected entries which focus on the possible relationship between entrepreneurship and higher education in Ethiopia. ■

Forthcoming Event

The 2011 Biennial Conference of INQAAHE is to be held in Spain. It is hosted by ANECA, National Agency for Quality Assessment and Accreditation in Spain, and it will take place in Madrid, Spain. The conference theme is **"Quality Assurance: Foundation for the Future"** and the conference takes place from the **4th till the 7th of April 2011**. The conference focuses on four sub-themes:

- ➔ Globalizing forces and national/regional goals in higher education: emerging issues
- ➔ Professionalization of quality assurance
- ➔ Effective QA processes for diversity, development and sustainability
- ➔ Independence of QA vis a vis different stakeholders

The conference also marks INQAAHE's 20th anniversary!

More information could be found at:

<http://www.inqaahc.org/madrid-2011>

News

Training on HIV/AIDS and Sexual Harassment

The Gender Office of SMUC organized and conducted a day-long awareness training on HIV/AIDS and Sexual Harassment for 40 academic and administrative staff of SMUC on February 18, 2011. The resource person Ato Bekele Delelegn, from FHAPCO, talked on the basic facts about HIV/AIDS and Mainstreaming HIV/AIDS in the Higher Education Institutions. In similar manner, W/ro Gimbwegish Kebede, from World Learning, dealt with Sexual harassment and its impact on the achievement of female students and staff in the education sector. The participants reflected that the training helped them to have better understanding on the issues raised and it was valuable for the institution's development. They also discussed on 'what is next?' and set a way forward to move on actions in collaboration with the Gender Office.■

Accreditation Secured for SMUC's Local MBA Program

SMUC has recently secured accreditation for its general MBA and MBA in Human Resource Management from the Ethiopian Higher Education Relevance and Quality Assurance Agency (HERQA). This is the first accreditation secured by SMUC for local programs to be delivered at post-graduate level. There are also other programs awaiting similar decision from the Agency. It is to be recalled that SMUC has been running nine graduate programs in partnership with Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) in India since 2007.■

Self-assessment at Program Level is Undergoing

St. Mary's University College is undertaking a self-

assessment process at a program level. Such kind of assessment is the first of its kind to be done at the program level in Ethiopia. Programs offered in the regular and distance modes are the main focus areas. Both the academic and administrative units of the University College are undertaking the self-assessment process. The Center for Educational Improvement and Quality Assurance (CEIQA) is responsible for facilitating the self-assessment process. It is known that institutional level quality audit has been undertaken twice at St. Mary's University College. Many of the units have finalized the preparation of the self-assessment process. The purpose of undergoing the self-assessment process is to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the programs offered by the University College.■

Public lecture on Knowledge Management

A public lecture on Knowledge Management (KM) was given on February 11, 2011 at the Business Faculty's Syndicate Room, organized by the ICT Development and Support Unit (a.k.a. ICT Unit) of SMUC. The lecture was given by Ato Marye Yigzaw, a volunteer from the Ethio Telecom, and who is training program director of CTIT (College of Telecommunications and Information Technology).

The lecture mainly elaborated the role KM plays as being a systematic management of vital knowledge and its processes, why KM is specific to organizational perspective, the key elements of KM and implementing KM in a company.

After the presentation, questions were raised from the audience and have been addressed by the presenter and participants of the lecture.■

Research Corner

Research Title: The Nature and Challenges of Youth Unemployment in Lideta Sub City of Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

Research Type: Exploratory

Date of Publication: A research paper presented in the 8th Annual National Research Conference on Private Higher Education Institutions organized and sponsored by St. Mary's University College in September 2010.

Researchers: Shimelis Dejene Yegletu, College of Social Sciences and Law, Department of Psychology, Jimma University.

The study was conducted to investigate the nature and challenges of youth unemployment in Lideta Sub-city, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia and provide recommendations.

Extensive document analysis, participant observation, and interview were the major instruments employed to obtain the necessary data. Extreme poverty as obstacle to start education and business, psychological dependency on government employment coupled with lack of entrepreneurial skills, negative peer influence, often loose and negative society and youth relationship, lack of robust political communication with the government, and rural to urban migration were found to be the key factors behind youth unemployment. Moreover, poor to modest macroeconomic performance; low level of employment creation and a rapid increase in the workforce were reported to be further exacerbating youth unemployment. On the other hand, some efforts such as provisions of

various trainings on entrepreneurship, vocational life skills, accessibility of credit associations; enabling the youth to be active participants in and beneficiaries of whatever they are involved in; and attempts for strong communication with high government officials were outlined to be appreciable measures taken to curb the problem of urban youth unemployment. Furthermore, enhanced education, information and health services, inadequacy of educated personnel and culture of interdependence were stressed as among the key opportunities available for the youth. However, the study also uncovered that absence of adequate place to implement what they have been trained for; due to lack of market connectedness; mismatch between skills requirements and education/training the youth; absence of follow-up (monitoring); absence of place to demonstrate what they have produced; and limited training field are identified as some of the central supplementary factors that could possibly incapacitate youth employment opportunities.

The study concluded that though the government has made encouraging progress towards curbing the problems of youth unemployment, significant improvement remains to be made. The fact that the unemployment situation is particularly rampant among the youth, which constitutes the largest age group calls for an urgent intervention aimed at improving the fate of the unemployed. And this requires concerted effort among concerned stakeholders.■

Interview

This column features interviews of people including government officials, policy makers, educators, researchers, and presidents of universities or colleges as well as students on issues of importance in the higher education sector. This edition presents interview with W/ro Debitu - the leader of the 'Meleya' project.



Background

W/ro Debitu is currently the leader of the 'Meleya' project which has the objective of assisting active entrepreneurs in the external-trade process of Ethiopia. The project also aims to develop entrepreneurship culture in Ethiopia. W/ro Debitu lived in the Netherlands for more than 24 years. She used to run an import company called 'Meskel' in the Netherlands for 12 years. 'Meskel' was involved in selling and promoting Ethiopian art crafts and cultural products to the market in the Netherlands. In doing so, Meskel Company worked with women associations of art-craft makers and weavers in Ethiopia. Before she left Ethiopia, she worked in Rwanda Embassy, French Embassy and International Labor Organization. She also worked in UNESCO Ethiopia office in France for two years.

Currently, she lives in The Hague, Netherlands. This interview was undertaken during her one month stay in Addis -Ababa supported by IOM (TRQN program) to work with SMUC in developing the capacity of the Entrepreneurship and Innovation Center in the University College. The center would like to extend its gratitude to W/ro Debitu for sharing with us her thoughts. ■

Quality Matters: *What is the importance of entrepreneurship in relation to a higher education system?*

W/ro Debitu: From where I came, the Netherlands, entrepreneurship played a crucial role in the country's development. I believe that entrepreneurship is a cross-cutting issue. Every graduate from a given college/university should be able to sell himself/herself in a job market and if possible open their own business. It is also important to develop entrepreneurship culture in HEIs. If the students have knowledge about entrepreneurship, then they will be familiar with the hurdles of setting up a business. This could enhance the sense of dedication and commitment to the organization they would be working for after graduation. For those who are planning to open their own business, inculcating entrepreneurship culture helps them to be acquainted with the practical knowledge of business formation. It also boosts their interest in job creation.

Quality Matters: *Could you tell us the inception and the progress of the activities at 'Meleya' Foundation?*

W/ro Debitu: In 2006, Ethiopians and other Dutch and French friends of ours formed an association that can help Ethiopia by developing a project related to the millennium celebrations. The name of the association was Stichting Ethiopia Millennium (Branding ►►

Ethiopia Project). When we formed the association among others we had the following aims:-

- ➔ promote the culture of Ethiopia;
- ➔ raise awareness about the uniqueness of Ethiopia's culture;
- ➔ facilitate the export trade activity of Ethiopia;
- ➔ involve in activities to solve gender related problems in Ethiopia and
- ➔ involve in environment protection activities in Ethiopia.

As part of this endeavour we have organized film festivals, exhibitions and trade fairs etc. at different times. The association was able to grow and make connections with other developed associations and funding organizations. 'Meleya' project is one of the outcomes of this association's activity. The objective of 'Meleya' foundation is to brand the products of Ethiopia which are exported to the western market. Many of the association's activities aim to build bridges between the Netherlands and Ethiopia and later on Europe and Africa, that is how we came in contact with St Mary's University College.

It has been four years since the collaboration with St.Mary's started, and it is progressing well. For the past four years, we were able to bring students from the Netherlands to work with Ethiopian marketing department students at SMUC. We have found the participation of students helpful in the process as it was possible to incorporate fresh ideas from the students' side. This helps the students to get to know the real problems of the financial/business market. As part of the project, we have talked with Ethiopian students who aspire to become entrepreneurs. Three business plans of marketing department students have been selected and Meleya Foundation is in the process of raising funds for the selected business plans.

Quality Matters: Why did you choose St. Mary's University College to be one of your partners from Ethiopia?

W/ro Debritu: St. Mary's University College was flexible and cooperative to work with us and getting the acceptance of the top management of our project was easy. We are thankful for the University College's support. Besides SMUC has many offices in the regional states of Ethiopia which could help us to get access to the local people in the rural areas.

Quality Matters: What do you suggest to be done in the Ethiopian higher education system to develop the entrepreneurship culture?

W/ro Debritu: As in the case in the Ethiopian higher education system most of the European Universities curriculum did not contain adequate courses related to entrepreneurship. As a result, the universities in Europe are encouraged and sometimes pushed to reform their curriculum to include courses which could enhance the entrepreneurial culture of their students. Like wise, our colleges and universities in Ethiopia need to develop the entrepreneurial culture of their students. In general, the Ethiopian higher education system must aspire to include information about practical problems of the market, be it in the job or business market. In addition, information about model entrepreneurs should be made available to the students. Inviting business people from urban and rural areas to share their experiences with the students could be taken as one option. This not only assists the students to be acquainted with the real problems of the business market of the real world but also helps to form a network for the students. During our first Meleya Business Idea Competition at SMUC, we got a network of businessmen to help us in the selection of business plans of students, and I remember one of the jury members pledged to give internship positions for 14 SMUC students at his organization in Addis Ababa.

Perspective

Entrepreneurship Development

By Hailemeleket Taye
(Outreach/Community Services)

It is widely recognized that entrepreneurs play a very important role in societal development by initiating and implementing innovative ideas and solutions that could address economic, social, business and other problems in societies. In fact, entrepreneurship, self-employment and enterprise creation provide a solution to the crises of both unemployment and under-employment.

Given the above, in the contemporary world, the need for entrepreneurship development cannot be questioned, be it in Africa, Asia, Latin America, etc. In the case of Africa,

It is estimated that less than 30% of products from the higher education systems across Africa are able to secure employment within two years of graduation as a consequence of inadequate preparation for the labour market and the low absorptive capacity of the market. While entrepreneurship education is fast gaining ground, the job creation potential of graduates did not blossom in the last decade. (<http://www.icqahea.org>)

Thus it is possible to argue that entrepreneurship education and training not only develops winning personal qualities but also provides an opportunity to create employment for self and for others. In this context, re-orientation of our education system towards entrepreneurship would set in an encouraging trend with youngsters displaying a natural bent towards entrepreneurship as a career option. Interventions such as offering entrepreneurship course and tailor-made training on a regular basis to the

needy, inculcating the spirit of entrepreneurship among communities through workshops, developing resource persons (faculty members) involving in teaching entrepreneurship at schools, colleges and universities, and creating awareness through orientation programs and aggressive marketing will undoubtedly remove inhibitions among youth and mature adults and motivate them to take the plunge.

Ethiopia has been observing important developments in the area since the second half of the 2000s. The major ones include: the establishment of consulting firms offering short-term entrepreneurship training and the incorporation of entrepreneurship course in TVET curricula, and the creation of a center and in the content of St. Mary's, the establishment of CEI (Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation), which is dedicated to entrepreneurial education, training and research.

The center (CEI) at SMUC was established in 2008 with the vision to become nationally recognized center of excellence for educating and training entrepreneurial leaders using innovative interdisciplinary approaches. The center seeks to create unique learning opportunities through partnerships among students, faculty and community entrepreneurial leaders and members. These partnerships leverage the strengths of all participants to create a nationally recognized program enabling them to develop the critical skills necessary to:

1. identify new opportunities;
2. effectively manage existing businesses;
3. help create and grow successful new business ventures; and



4. advance ethical business practices and social responsibility.

As its mission, the center is mandated to render training, research and community services so as to unlock the entrepreneurial ideas in its target groups and enable them develop sustainable enterprises by utilizing mutually rewarding partnerships with the private sector, policy makers and nongovernmental organizations committed to economic growth, poverty alleviation and sustainable development. As its goal CEI seeks to institutionalize the development of entrepreneurship and innovation through teaching, research, networking and advocacy, as well as collaboration with the private sector, government and other development actors in and outside the country.

Currently, the Center is implementing a project in partnership with Meleya Foundation of the Netherlands. The project will enable the center conduct short-term training for potential entrepreneurs, and organize business competitions on regular basis.

To make a huge impact at national level, other higher education institutions in Ethiopia might need to initiate their own projects taking note of what is being done at SMUC. Entrepreneurship education needs to gain firm ground to change the face of the economy. It is only under such a scenario that we would witness a longer queue of job providers than job seekers. The future vitality of our nation is largely dependent upon innovative entrepreneurs who will make our economy grow from time to time.■

Virtual Links

Ethiopian Ministry of Education

Web site: [http:// www.moe.gov.et](http://www.moe.gov.et)

Higher Education Relevance and Quality Agency (Ethiopia)

Website: www.higher.edu.et

PROPHE- Programme for Research on Private Higher Education

Website: www.albany.edu/dept/eaps/prophe/

International Network for Quality Assurance Agency in Higher Education (INQAAHE)

Website: [http:// www.inqaahe.org](http://www.inqaahe.org)

Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (UK)

Website: <http://www.qaa.ac.uk>

Center for International Research on Higher Education

Website: http://bc.edu/bc_org/avp/soe/cihe

Quality and Standards Authority of Ethiopia

Website: <http://www.qsae.org/>

International Institute for Capacity Building in Africa

Website: <http://www.eric.ed.gov>

International Network for Higher Education in Africa (NHEA)

Website: <http://www.bc.edu>

International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in higher Education

Website: <http://www.inqaahe.nl>

European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education

Website: <http://www.enqa.eu>

Asian Pacific Quality Network

Website: <http://www.apqn.org>

Ethiopian Knowledge and Technology Transfer Society (EKTTS)

Website: <http://www.ektts.org>

Association of African Universities (AAU)

Website: <http://www.aau.org>

HEDDA , Higher Education Development Association

Website: <http://uv-net.uio.no/wpmu/hedda/about/>

The African Quality Assurance Network

Website : <http://afriqan.aau.org/>

Basic Elements of an Entrepreneurial University

Strong Steering Core

- ➡ Effective individual leadership
- ➡ Effective collegial mechanisms for the implementation of institutional priorities and strategies to the faculty and departmental levels
- ➡ Leadership and collegial mechanisms linked with operating environment

Expanded Developmental Periphery

- ➡ Mediating interfaces between the institutional organisation and environment
- ➡ Multi-disciplinary and project oriented research units
- ➡ Orientation to solving problems of society

Diversified Funding Base

- ➡ Decreasing dependence on government funding
- ➡ Attention to each of the three funding streams (National HE budget, national and international funding, contract funding)
- ➡ Strategic development funding at the central level of the university (funding for the implementation of change)

Stimulated Academic Heartland

- ➡ Academic work deeply rooted in international disciplinary communities
- ➡ Respect of academic and disciplinary values
- ➡ Interaction between pure science and applications

Integrated Entrepreneurial Culture

- ➡ Organisation culture characterised by change orientation, fulfilment of mission, and "institutional idea"
- ➡ The identity of organisational units is built around the institutional mission and institutional idea
- ➡ Commitment of individuals (including students)

Fun Corner

Letters exchanged between a college boy and his father

Dear Dad,

School i\$ really great. I am making lot\$ of friend\$
and \$tudying very hard. With all my \$tuff, I \$imply
can't think of anything I need, \$o if you would like,
you can ju\$t \$end me a card, a\$ I would love to hear
from you.

Love,

Signature

Your \$on

The Reply:

Dear Son,

I kNOw that astroNOmy, ecoNOmics, and oceaN-
Ography are eNOugh to keep even an hoNOr student
busy. Do NOt forget that the pursuit of kNOwledge
is a NOble task, and you can never study eNOugh.

Love,

Signature

Dad

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If you have comments on this issue of *Quality Matters* or would like to contribute to future issues, please contact our office on 011 553 79 99 Or email: ceirqa@smuc.edu.et

Photo Gallery

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