Higher Education in Portuguese Speaking African Countries

Langa, Vitorino

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Executive summary and structure

This report is the result of a baseline study on the state of art of the higher education (HE) systems in the five Portuguese speaking (Lusophone) countries in Africa (PALOP): Angola, Cape Verde, Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique, and São Tomé and Príncipe. The project was undertaken by an African international expert in the field of higher education studies and was fully sponsored and supported by the Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA).

The report offers a historical overview of the development of higher education in PALOP from colonial times to the present. The information and data contained in this report are based on the available higher education literature and official documents as well as interviews with key individuals in PALOP.

The main objective of the baseline study is to map the landscape and dynamics of change in the higher education systems of PALOP countries. It focuses on describing the latest developments in expansion trends, financing, governance and policy reforms closely linked to the development of higher education systems of these countries. Furthermore, the study brings knowledge that can facilitate and inform debate and the dissemination of knowledge on the role of higher education for development in Africa.

This baseline study is based on existing research and knowledge on dynamics of change in African higher education, and attempts to fill the existing knowledge gap with regard to Lusophone African countries. A process of stakeholder consultation and discussion constituted the hallmark of this project.

The report is organised into seven chapters, starting with an introduction, followed by five chapters focusing on each of the five PALOP countries, presented in alphabetical order, and finally a conclusion. Most importantly, Appendix 1 presents a short report advocating for the constitution of a platform for effective collaboration and network building among PALOP.

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1 The Portuguese speaking countries in Africa are also known as Lusophone African countries.