Building prosperity in these challenging times requires that nations reach out beyond their borders, more than ever before, to establish strategic international connections. Increasingly, the right doors are being opened and the path to prosperity is being constructed through partnerships being forged by universities in research, innovation and higher education.¹

1 Introduction

The idea of undertaking a study that maps the state of higher education in the five Portuguese Speaking Countries in Africa (PALOP) was to bring higher education in these countries into the spotlight, since historically they have been neglected from the mainstream of higher education research, policy and advocacy in Africa. There is a significant amount of research on Anglophone and Francophone higher education in Africa compared to the insufficient research on PALOP. ADEA’s initiative to support this study is therefore an unprecedented effort which should be commended and encouraged.

The aim of the appendix to this report is to present preliminary results of the advocacy work undertaken in PALOP to support a more integrated higher education research network in PALOP. I discuss ideas and proposals gathered from different stakeholders.

The ideas gathered from these sources could serve as the basis to build a sustainable higher education research and advocacy network amongst PALOP and between PALOP and other networks, such as the Higher Education Research and Advocacy Network in Africa (HERANA).²

² http://chet.org.za/programmes/herana/
2 Bringing PALOP into HERANA

2.1 About HERANA

HERANA is an expertise network aimed at developing higher education studies and research in Africa, coordinated by the Centre for Higher Education Transformation (CHET) in Cape Town, South Africa. The *University World News*[^1] is a partner in this project helping to disseminate its activities. The research component of HERANA is investigating the complex relationships between higher education and development in the African context, with a specific focus on economic and democratic development. A new research area is exploring the use of research in policy-making. HERANA has established two research information distribution portals. The HERANA Gateway is being developed to distribute research-based information to relevant experts and decision-makers. The Gateway is already operational at www.herana-gateway.org. It uses a dedicated Google box to search the websites of a number of organisations that store publications and reports on higher education in Africa.

Mozambique is the sole country involved regularly in the HERANA projects. The country has been benefiting from useful data produced under the studies conducted by different experts linked to the HERANA network. On the one hand, during this study, I contacted various key players in PALOP about the idea of developing a similar HERANA–PALOP NETWORK project for the five Portuguese countries.

This idea was overwhelmingly welcomed, and most of the people I approached are in top managerial positions in their respective countries (see the List of Interviews on page xii). With the necessary support from ADEA or any other agency it would be possible to develop a network of higher education researchers for PALOP. On the other hand, since Mozambique and Eduardo Mondlane University are well connected to HERANA, it would be possible to link the two projects.

Regarding further initiatives for the advancement of higher education in the, it is strongly recommended to:

- Map the existing research expertise in the field.
- Track and promote forms of aid to higher education in PALOP.
- Systematically collect a variety of data on higher education, and develop a database on the basis of performance indicators that can be utilised by, amongst others, institutional leaders, funders and governments in making evidence-based knowledge policy decisions about higher education.
- Establish an observatory for higher education to monitor the development of higher education in PALOP and link it to the African Union’s Education Observatory which receives significant technical support from ADEA’s Working Group on Education Management and Policy Support (WGEMPS) based in Harare, Zimbabwe.
- In doing the above, to solicit the support of ADEA’s WGEMPS and WGHE.

[^1]: http://www.universityworldnews.com/
3  Masters programme in higher education

The Masters programme in higher education studies and development (MHESD) is a collaborative programme involving the Eduardo Mondlane University (UEM, Mozambique), the University of Oslo (Norway), the University of the Western Cape (UWC, South Africa), the Centre for Higher Education studies and Development (CESD, Mozambique) and the Centre for Higher Education Transformation (CHET, South Africa). The author of this report, Dr Patrício Langa, was instrumental in the establishment of the MHESD programme at the Faculty of Education of Eduardo Mondlane and bringing in the collaborative partners from South Africa and Norway.

MHESD at UEM is a coursework-based programme focusing on the changing functions, policies and operations of higher education in Africa. Before engaging in the thesis research, students take a number of coursework modules, viz. Introduction to Higher Education (taught to some students at the University of Oslo as part of the Erasmus Mundus European Masters in Higher Education Programme and quota scholarship scheme); Research Methods and Proposal Development; and Higher Education and Development (to be taught at UWC); and the remaining modules taken in Maputo. Through various disciplinary perspectives, the programme provides students with a solid basis for analysing and critically assessing change processes at all relevant levels in higher education and development. This Masters programme is the first of its kind to be established in Mozambique. The programme focuses on the complex relationship between higher education and development, particularly in sub-Saharan African countries. The programme is linked to a research network on expertise in higher education in Africa (HERANA), giving successful applicants access to the latest knowledge in the field.

3.1  Developing an academic exchange programme

During the visit to PALOP, I contacted various academics and higher education officials from the ministries. All those contacted were extremely interested in the idea of developing an academic exchange programme involving students and academic staff from the PALOP (see List of Interviews on page 103). The universities of PALOP would have an opportunity to use the new Masters programme in Maputo, the first of its kind in PALOP, as the starting point to train the much needed breed of experts in higher education studies and development for their respective countries.

All director generals of higher education and institutional leaders support this idea. The next step to take advantage of this opportunity would be to identify potential funders for the project, provided that a higher education working group made up of at least five members (one from each country) could be established and present a project. Once again, ADEA could play a critical role in the implementation of this initiative.

Reputable personalities such as Prof. Victor Kajibanga and Paulo de Carvalho from Agostinho Neto University, Angola; Claudio Furtado, Tolentino Cursino, the current minister of higher education, science and innovation, António Correia, Cape Verde, Rui
Ladim, current president of the installation committee of Amílcar Cabral’s University, João Ribeiro Butiam Có, the current director general of higher education, Guinea-Bissau; Fernanda Pontifice, former minister of education, São Tomé and Príncipe, to mention some, are available and eager to contribute to the implementation of such an initiative.

4 Association of Portuguese speaking universities (AULP)

AULP⁴, the Association of Portuguese Speaking Universities, has as its objective to promote cooperation between higher education and research institutions by means of exchange of students, professors and researchers, and of participation in research projects by sharing information. For more than 20 years, AULP has been striving to gain international recognition for the achievements of this Portuguese speaking community. Even though this association brings together other members who are not from the PALOP, it can be utilised as a platform to extend the PALOP network.

5 Revista Inter-universitária – PALOP (RIU–PALOP)

One of my responsibilities during the visit to the PALOP, apart from the baseline study, was to initiate contacts to set the stage for the establishment of a forum to facilitate networking among key actors in higher education in the PALOP in order to improve information flow, joint policy dialogue for sharing experiences of good practice and promising approaches: research, teaching, data and advocacy. This idea was discussed with the key participants in the study during the fieldwork visits. Most participants recommended the establishment of an academic journal that would enable regular exchange of information and an opportunity to publish the work of PALOP academics. Consensus was reached that the journal should cover three broad areas: education (higher), culture and society. The journal would be registered in Cape Verde (the registration process is in progress), and have an editorial board with members from the various PALOP universities. A proposal for the editorial board has already been established involving some of the people in the list of the academic personalities I interacted with during the visit to PALOP.

⁴ http://www.aulp.org/