

# **INTRODUCING AFRICAN NETWORK FOR THE INTERNATIONALISATION OF EDUCATION (ANIE)**

by Dr. Roshen Kishun, Interim Chair of the Steering Committee

On behalf of the Interim Steering Committee I am pleased to announce the formation of the African Network for the Internationalisation of Education (ANIE). ANIE had its genesis in 2006 when the *Higher Education in Africa: The International Dimension Project* undertook a comparative analysis of the current issues and emerging trends related to internationalization of higher education on the African continent.

In the first phase of the project a series of workshops were held in Cairo, Egypt (March 2007), Pietermaritzburg, South Africa (August, 2007) and Nairobi, Kenya (April, 2008). The Cairo workshop, the first formal meeting of the project, was an opportunity for the authors of 11 identified “case study countries” to present a comparative analysis of the issues, the emerging trends, and risks and opportunities related to the internationalisation of higher education in their respective countries. The main objectives of the Cairo meeting were to discuss their draft articles and preliminary findings for a proposed book to generate interest in the “new generation group” (NGG) of scholars to concepts and paradigms in the internationalization of higher education.

The visit to South Africa was an opportunity for the NGG scholars to attend the International Education Association of South Africa (IEASA) Conference held at the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University in Port Elizabeth. This was a learning and networking opportunity for the participants. The workshop held in Pietermaritzburg was designed to have discussions on the formation of ANIE and the first special interest group (SIG) now designated as the Network for Emerging Scholars for Internationalisation (NESI). The outcome of the discussions was tabled at the Nairobi meeting. The proposed ANIE and NESI structures were adopted and the ANIE Steering Committee (ASC) was formally accepted to provide the leadership for the project. The Nairobi workshop marked the end of the first phase of the project.

ANIE was constituted as an independent, non-profit, non-governmental, membership organization whose aim is to develop research capacity and constitute an expert network in advancing the understanding of internationalization of higher education to meet the professional needs of individuals, institutions and organizations. ANIE's vision is to be the leading organisation of its kind in Africa to meet the professional and practical needs of those active in international education.

ANIE's work will be based on the premise that the globalisation context is a multi-faceted process and rests on the rapid world-wide systems of communication, information, knowledge and culture that is changing societies radically. In this environment higher education in Africa is expected to be impacted in historically unprecedented ways. The challenges which confront the sector are those that are likely to change the very foundations on which higher education in Africa rests and those which are likely to transform higher education itself.

ANIE will focus attention on appropriate policies, structures, principles, rationales, and programmes that will enable the higher education sector to add the international dimension to its teaching, research, and service functions in a considered and constructive manner. Examples of priority activities will include student/scholar mobility, regional and international networks, curricular reform,

and cross-border education. By engaging in these and other activities and developments that bring new opportunities, challenges and risks to higher education systems and institutions ANIE will strive to support institutions to understand the importance and complexity of internationalisation.

The organization will aim to build on the extensive work and information gleaned from the existing experiences from the continent and from sister organisations around the world, to support and nurture new research to examine trends, new developments and challenges related to the international dimension of higher education at the institutional/organisational, and national and regional levels. ANIE will strive to make transparency, comparability, and quality important criteria in promoting and responding to the growing need for further information and analysis on what is happening in African countries regarding the new developments in internationalization and how to reap benefits from further regional integration and international alliances.

In meeting its goals the primary aim will be to build the capacity of individuals, institutions, and organizations involved in the implementation and study of international education. To this effect the Network of Emerging Scholars for the Internationalisation of Higher Education (NESI) was launched. Other Special Interest Groups (SIGs) will be formed to act as functional units of ANIE on specialised subjects that need research and further information. For example, a SIG could be formed to provide the expertise and research around identified issues like brain drain, student mobility, or credentials evaluation or respond to some of the basic and fundamental questions such as *What does internationalization mean?* Alternatively a SIG could bring together members with similar professional responsibilities, for example, directors of international offices or credential evaluators.

NESI currently has ten members from nine African countries. Recruitment of additional members is ongoing. The outreach to the rest of the continent will be dependent on the success of the second phase objectives and the support needed to grow the organization. ANIE will give serious attention to funding initiatives and the development of funding proposals to sustain its future growth. ANIE is set-up as a fully functional independent organization with its own identity and membership and with management structures such as the Board of Directors. It will be governed by a constitution that will allow it to function as a properly constituted organisation. ANIE will be managed by a Secretariat based at Moi University, Kenya.

Perhaps the most eagerly anticipated event is the forthcoming launch of ANIE and its structures. The event will take place at Moi University in November 2008. The programme is intended to formally launch ANIE and NESI; to discuss key issues and challenges facing internationalization in Africa; to launch the new book "Higher Education in Africa: The International Dimension;" and conduct an intensive two-day workshop for the new generation group of scholars. The launch will also provide the platform to discuss and develop a strategic plan for the next five years.

In November, 2009 an Africa-wide international conference is being planned where major events and programmes around internationalization of African higher education will be introduced. The conference will be designed to continue the dialogue around internationalisation and to share knowledge generated by scholars on a variety of relevant issues. ANIE will be working with partner universities from Africa and around the world and will extend an invitation to colleagues who are engaged in internationalization issues.

We share this information in the spirit of internationalisation that will allow the African continent to be an equal partner of the international community. On behalf of the Steering Committee, I am most grateful to individuals identified below who were instrumental in the development of ANIE. We look forward to working with you.

**Founding Members:** Jane Knight and Damtew Teferra (Project Leaders); Elizabeth Ayalew (Ethiopia); Roshen Kishun (South Africa); James Jowi Otieno (Kenya); Mohsen Said (Egypt).

**NESI Special Interest Group Committee:** Jowi James Otieno (Kenya, Chair); Elizabeth Ayalew (Ethiopia, Vice-Chair); Mulumba B. Mathias (Uganda); Maha Mourad (Egypt).

**ANIE Steering Committee:** Chacha Nyaigotti Chacha (representing IUCEA, East Africa); Paul Effah (Ghana); Jowi James Otieno (Kenya); Crispus Kiamba (Kenya/David Siele, alternate member); Roshen Kishun (IEASA, South Africa, Chair); Mohsen Said (Egypt).

**Roshen Kishun**

**Chair: ANIE Steering Committee (Interim)**

[Anie-network@iafrica.com](mailto:Anie-network@iafrica.com)