



# New approaches to higher education in Africa: Example of University for Development Studies, Tamale

by

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presented at

**Open Seminar**

Graduate School of International Development

Nagoya University

**30<sup>th</sup> October, 2013**

# Presentation Outline



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# INTRODUCTION



- African tertiary education is under the **mounting pressure** to answer to challenges and demands of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, such as:
  - **training of large young population** in
  - **practically oriented** programmes and courses, and
  - **arresting the brain drain** which affects the continent.



- The UN Economic Commission for Africa and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) estimate that **67,000** educated Africans **left the continent** for industrialized countries between 1960 and 1984, and
- since 1984, this figure was about **20,000/annum** (Mutume, 2003).
- Black et al. (2003), suggests that **15 per cent** of Ghanaians with tertiary education have migrated to the United States and another 10 per cent to other OECD countries.



- At present, about **one-third of all African scientists** lives and works in developed countries.
- Africa currently produces just **1.4 percent** of the articles published in peer-reviewed international journals (NASAC, 2009).
- This corresponds with study by Mamdani (2002) which stated that of 900 African titles produced in 2001, only 1.5 per cent were published in Africa, and, of these, 65 per cent were published in South Africa, 25 per cent in North Africa, with **only 10per cent coming from** the rest of the **continent**.



- o This situation clearly reflects both a woeful lack of research publications, as well as **urgent need for transforming the learning process in Africa.**





# Challenges currently facing tertiary education in African countries

- A country's education system is the **critical link** that enables the **development of human capital** to
- **adapt existing** science and technology and to **develop new solutions** for local development challenges.





- Traditionally, in many African tertiary institutions, academics from various disciplines develop their programmes with **little or no input** from industries, communities and other stakeholders, that would later employ university graduates.
- Where these external stakeholders have been involved in curricula development, their roles have been limited to **giving feedback** on what academics have **already developed**.







- Concerns related to **appropriateness and usefulness** of these traditional concepts in education have called for the
- development of **relevant and comprehensive** programmes, that
- **integrate** stakeholders' inputs and
- **engage** them from the onset of the development process



- Programme development that involves **comprehensive stakeholder engagement** is now explored within tertiary institutions in Ghana, showing that lessons learnt from the emerging processes could be **shared wider**, with other universities on the continent.





# Situation in Ghana

- The public tertiary education sector in Ghana is composed of universities, polytechnics and several professional institutes.
- Between 1990 and 2004, enrolment in the public tertiary institutions **increased by 550 percent**, from 13,415 to 87,929. Much of this growth was due to increases in enrolment at the polytechnics.

- A **substantial** number of private universities and higher education institutions have been established since 2002.
- There were 27 private tertiary institutions accredited by the National Accreditation Board in 2004 (Manuh et al., 2007).



University of  
Ghana



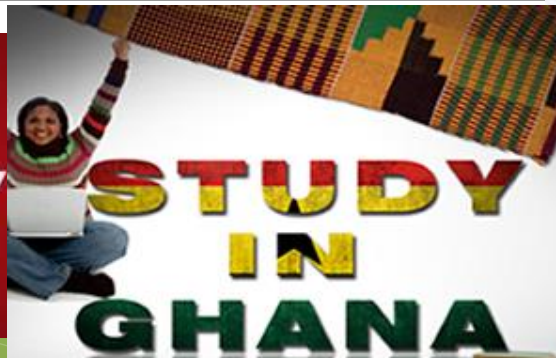
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# Mandate and Vision of the University for Development Studies (UDS)



- **Mandate** of the University for Development Studies (UDS) is to **bring University education** closer to the regions of Northern Ghana, **where** educational **opportunities** and facilities are generally **poor** (Kaburise, 2003).



# Vision



UDS seeks to attain its **vision** by:

- Promoting **equitable socio-economic transformation of communities** through **practically-oriented, community-based, problem-solving, gender-sensitive and interactive** research, teaching, learning and outreach programmes.



# Vision-continued

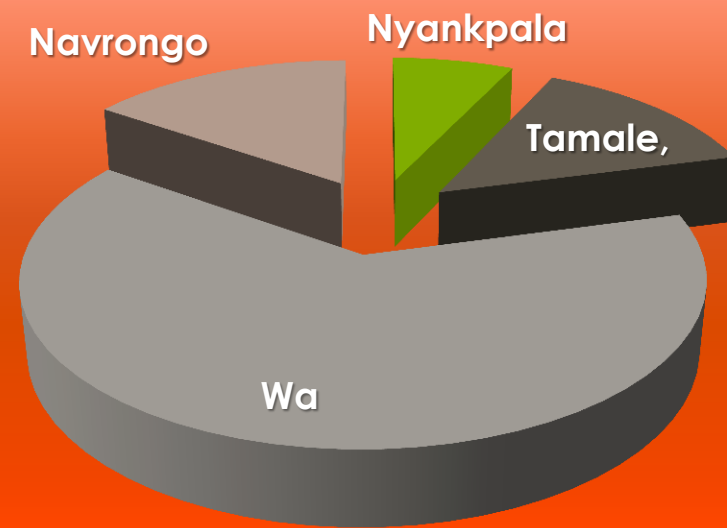
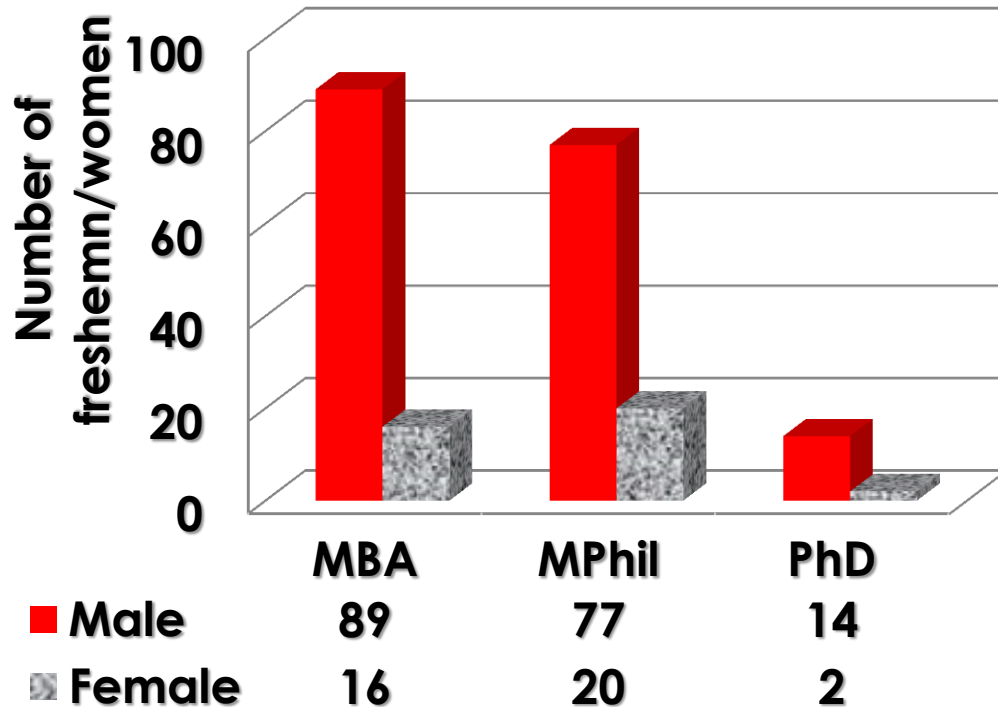
- Positioning itself as a national asset in the **facilitation of life-long learning**.
- Developing its Information and Communication Technology infrastructure as the **driving force** for the education of more people more rapidly, and the improvement of **efficiency** and **academic quality** in order to advance community and national development.





UDS recruited its **first batch of thirty nine students** into the Faculty of Agriculture in September **1993**.

It **currently** has about **20 000** students distributed over 4 campuses.



Undergraduate admissions

# CAMPUSES



UDS currently has **four main** campuses at Wa, Navrongo, Tamale and Nyankpala

- ◉ **Wa-** Integrated Development Studies, Planning, Law, Business and Education Faculties
- ◉ **Nyankpala-** Faculties of Agricultural Technology, Renewable Natural Resources

# CAMPUSES-2



- **Tamale-** Medicine and Health Sciences, a Centre for Continuing Education and Inter-Disciplinary Research as well as a Graduate School.
- **Navrongo-** Mathematical, Computer and Applied Sciences

## Third Trimester Field Practical Training Programme (TTFPT), developed by the University for Development Studies



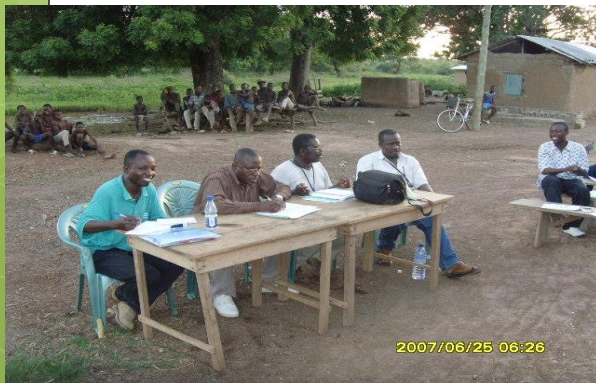
- The main innovative feature of all the UDS programmes is Third Trimester Field Practical Training Programme (TTFPT), in which **all students from year one to three** participate.
- Under this arrangement, students spend **two trimesters** in the classrooms and follow lectures and **one, the third trimester**, is spent in the field, within **rural communities** of Ghana.



- During this period, students obtain **opportunities for interaction with rural people** and gain insight into their problems and aspirations.
- In **2010/2011** academic year, for example, over **12500** students spent 8 weeks in **1131 rural communities** across Northern Ghana in this manner, with the similar numbers expected to take part in the programme in the coming years.

○ The TTFPT is an **iteration process** using **integrated approach**, which offers students from each faculty/school of the University, the **opportunity to live and work together in selected communities**.

The programme covers **three phases**, engaging students from the first year through to the third year in a rural community. The **work of each year builds on to the previous** in a dynamic manner.







- Students are introduced to aspects of community studies during the **first year**, when they **practice the community entry** and aspects of **community diagnosis using participatory approaches**.
- In the **second year**, emphasis is placed on techniques of **needs assessment**, culminating in the assessment of the **problems and potentials of the community**, using a variety of complementary techniques as well as suggested tentative/possible interventions.





- The problems and potentials analysed during the second year serve as starting point of the activities for the **third year**, whereby students are tasked to propose **pragmatic interventions** to the resolutions of the problems.
- Students are expected to demonstrate the use of the identified **possibilities for development** on the field in their research proposals/community plans.



- Third Trimester Field Practical Training (TTFPT) Programme provides **useful services to both UDS students and rural communities** through the **exchange of knowledge and information** on their felt **needs and aspirations**.
- It also provides **data for further research** into problem-solving developmental issues relevant to entire country.

# Cross cultural, local and international linkages developed through development of the new programmes



- New approaches currently built by Ghanaian Universities **attract many** foreign **partners**. UDS Third Trimester Field Practical Training Programme has collaborating partners from JAPAN (UNU ESDA programme), Canada, The Netherlands, Germany and several US universities, among others, as well as from some African institutions (ex. Ahmadu Bello University, Nigeria).



- Local **benefits** of the TTFTP are **enormous**. The programme **involves almost all stakeholders** in Northern Ghana, from traditional Chiefs to District Assemblies and other local-level structures.
- The University liaises with governmental and non-governmental agencies and organizations in the various communities and **works together with them** and **with the people in the communities** so that there is **synergy** and shared learning by all involved in the development efforts in the localities.

# Conclusions



- UDS, alongside other Public Universities in Ghana is developing **new educational models driven by the needs of society**, to serve institutions for higher learning and reduce drain of young professionals from the country.
- The fact that, for example, the majority of the **graduates** from University for Development Studies, are currently **working in rural communities** is a testimony of the **impact** of these innovative training approaches.



- Through field practical training programme at UDS, critical questions of **equity and access are also addressed**, separating them from the traditional approaches.
- If the concept is institutionalized from the very onset in the training of young scientists and professionals, it serves to ensure **changes in their perceptions and attitudes** with regards to development among the future generation.



- These innovative approaches are leading towards **increased ability** of Ghanaian tertiary institutions to **perform effectively and manage their resources efficiently**, and most importantly, to develop **models of tertiary education** that offer to beneficiaries **increased capacity to solve local problems**.





**THANK YOU FOR  
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