

## DONOR HARMONISATION GROUP FORUM 2022

**“Creating reciprocal, mutually beneficial partnerships to respond to local and global challenges”**

*23-25 November 2022 – Barcelona, Spain – Hosted by OBREAL Global*

## WORKSHOPS AND WORLD CAFÉ DESCRIPTIONS

### WORKSHOPS

**Workshop 1: Fostering mutual benefits in programme design: Challenges and good practices** Offered by the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD), focusing on project funding and administration structures

**Workshop 2: An evidence-based move from transactional aid to mutually beneficial partnerships** Offered by UNESCO IESALC

**Workshop 3: Building capacity for project management in Southern partner countries and institutions** Offered by OBREAL Global and the Association of Colombian Universities (ASCUN), current Presidency of ENLACES.

**Workshop 4: Implementing Agenda 2030 in Higher Education & Science: Towards equal, global Partnerships? Going from SDG principles to tangible action at VLIR-UOS** Offered by VLIR-OUS

**In the second round:**

**Workshop 1** is replaced by the topic **“Measuring and Monitoring Global Academic partnerships for greater impact – Examples from the Programme ‘University-Business Partnerships’** – Offered by DAAD

**Workshop 3** is replaced by: **“Higher Education Partnerships for Development: Modes and Methods”** – Offered by the Association of Commonwealth Universities (ACU)

## WORKSHOP 1

### First edition

**Fostering mutual benefits in programme design: Challenges and good practices** Offered by the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD), focusing on project funding and administration structures

- **Caroline Felske**, German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD)
- **Sherif Azab-Els**, German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD)

Strengthening and revitalizing global partnerships for sustainable development is one of the core goals of the 2030 Agenda. Higher Education Institutions contribute to this, as they increasingly establish international networks and foster academic exchange between different actors and countries. HEI partnerships are intended to provide a setting for equitable cooperation between the Global North and the South. However, experience has shown that this intention does not automatically entail an inclusive programme design or mutual benefits.

How can HEI collaboration be designed to ensure equitable partnerships and mutual benefit? What are prerequisites and what are possible levers? How can funding schemes and administrating agencies such as DAAD account for the different contexts and systems in which HEI from different countries operate, in a way that enables equal opportunities and mutual benefit from project funding, implementation and long-term impacts?

Building on an analysis conducted by an internal working group, the DAAD has identified a series of aspects that contribute to partner equality in regulation processes, implementation as well as the follow-up of funding programmes. Among others, the developed strategies touch on application procedures, selection processes, networking, monitoring, and evaluation, such as:

- Preparation of project reports by all project partners and discussion of evaluations with all partners Organization of extended discussions on higher education and development research, also with DAAD alumni
- Annual meetings with German and foreign project leaders
- Creation of a diversified selection committee.
- Developing measures to stabilize higher education in conflict regions
- Review calls for applications, information sheets and websites and consider wording/terminology to position partners as contributors rather than recipients

These strategies are already being implemented in many funding programmes. Yet, this ongoing process aims at institutionalizing such strategies and making them an integral part within the implementation of all programmes. The process is accompanied by a scientific, empirical study which is conducted by social scientists from the Global North and South and which will feed into the workshop.

As part of the workshop, the DAAD will provide a brief introduction to the topic and share the different measures and developments with the workshop participants. Together with these, findings and experiences will be discussed. Ideas will be brought together to form a mapping of potential guidelines for funding administrators, agencies and partnering HEI.

## Second edition

**Measuring and Monitoring Global Academic partnerships for greater impact – Examples from the Programme ‘University-Business Partnerships’** Offered by the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD)

- **Christoph Hansert**, Head of Division Knowledge Exchange and Network, DAAD
- **Heike Heinen-Kritz**, Senior Desk Officer in the Section Partnership Programmes, Alumni Projects and Higher Education Management in Development Cooperation, DAAD

In the context of the international discourse on the effectiveness of development cooperation and a global agenda for sustainable development, many organisations face the challenge of continuously reflecting on and improving the results of their work and providing evidence on the impact of their programmes. In this workshop, DAAD will share its experiences with its results-oriented monitoring (RoM) system. Besides the results of RoM, programme-accompanying studies of individual programmes are also an innovative tool for further developing programme design. They also help to make the effects of a programme and its impact for international cooperation more visible. DAAD’s RoM system and accompanying study, which is currently being conducted within the framework of the University-Business-Partnerships programme, will be presented as a concrete example. In the discussion, we will jointly explore how partners from the Global South could play an even more active role in RoM and the design and execution of studies.

## WORKSHOP 2

**An evidence-based move from transactional aid to mutually beneficial partnerships** Offered by UNESCO IESALC

- **Dr. Victoria Galán-Muros**, Chief of Research and Analysis, UNESCO IESALC
- **Eglis Chacon**, Policy Analyst, UNESCO IESALC

The workshop session titled “An evidence-based move from transactional aid to mutually beneficial partnerships” aims to engage donors and recipients of tertiary education (TE) aid to jointly explore, reflect and build a common understanding of the features of mutually beneficial partnerships. During this session, participants will actively discuss some of the key evidence from UNESCO-IESALC’s flagship report on international aid for tertiary education ([Exploring international aid for tertiary education: recent development and current trends](#)). This includes the exploration and debate around the reasons behind the trends of international scholarships or the main delivery channels for tertiary education aid. Participants will also pitch in one minute on their more equitable partnership.

At the end of the workshop, participants will be able to better understand the complexity of TE international aid from a global perspective and identify the key success factors to foster more mutually beneficial partnerships.

This workshop is led by UNESCO’s International Institute for Higher Education in Latin America & the Caribbean (UNESCO-IESALC).

## WORKSHOP 3

### First edition

**Building capacity from project management in Southern partner countries and institutions** Offered by OBREAL Global and the Association of Colombian Universities (ASCUN)

- **Elizabeth Colucci**, Director for Global Projects, OBREAL Global
- **Agustina Calabrese**, Director for Finance, OBREAL Global
- **Oscar Dominguez**, Secretary General, ASCUN
- **Luisa Villamizar**, Head of International Cooperation, ASCUN (virtual)

One important element in ensuring ownership and impact of development cooperation initiatives and projects lies in the capacity of partners in the global South to not only benefit from international funding but also to be able to manage and to lead in administering that funding, towards their respective development objectives. OBREAL Global is an association of universities, university associations and research institutes that spans four continents. It's mission is premised upon South-South-North partnerships for development, in which the 'Southern' agenda not only is a driving force for common actions and projects, but whereby partners in the global South are empowered to manage projects as well.

OBREAL Global has been cooperating strategically with its member organisation, ASCUN, for a decade and a half. ASCUN is the umbrella body of public and private universities in Colombia, which in addition to defining the higher education policy agenda in the Colombian context, also has a strong international cooperation strategy, both related to the Latin American context but also towards the Global North.

This workshop will provide concrete examples of how OBREAL Global and ASCUN have developed and executed projects together, and how capacity has been built over time for ASCUN to lead in these projects from a management and administration perspective. This has been particularly relevant with respect to EU funding programmes like Erasmus+, which can be demanding administratively, and for which capacity building projects are most often led by partners in Europe.

### Second edition

**Higher Education Partnerships for Development: Modes and Methods** Offered by Association for Commonwealth Universities (ACU)

- **Susanna Carmody**, Education and Society, British Council

The Association for Commonwealth Universities (ACU) is a strong advocate for the role of sustainable partnerships in Higher Education and their role in reaching the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The ACU is also involved in a number of programmes that are underpinned by these types of partnerships, facilitate the creation of these types of partnerships, or both. This presentation will begin by highlighting the main principles that guide our programmes' partnerships, before discussing some of the different forms that these partnerships can take in higher education and the types of impact that they can have, drawing on examples of the ACU's work. This includes programmes such as:

- the Partnership for Enhanced and Blended Learning (PEBL), which brought together partners from the UK, Kenya, Canada, Uganda, Tanzania, and Rwanda to provide shared undergraduate and graduate courses to universities in East Africa (with a follow-on programme now also taking place in West Africa)
- the Blue Charter Fellowship programme, which enabled university researchers from across the Commonwealth to visit another university to collaborate on research into marine plastics
- the Commonwealth Scholarship Split-site programme, which funds doctoral researchers from across the Commonwealth to spend one year at a UK university conducting research, creating or strengthening partnerships between their home and host universities
- the Commonwealth Distance Learning programme, which funds online distance learners to study courses provided by UK-based universities who deliver in partnership with organisations across the Commonwealth, facilitating and strengthening those partnerships
- the Long-term EU-AU Research and Innovation Partnership for Food, Nutrition Security, and Sustainable Agriculture (LEAP4FNSSA), which provides a platform for European and African institutions to engage in research partnerships on agriculture and food security

By looking at a broad range of programmes and partnerships covered by the ACU's programmes, the presentation will help illuminate the variety of forms that higher education partnerships can take and the impact that they have.

## WORKSHOP 4

### **Implementing Agenda 2030 in Higher Education & Science: Towards equal, global Partnerships? Going from SDG principles to tangible action at VLIR-UOS** Offered by VLIR-UOS

- **Ise De Smet** VLIR-UOS
- **Koen De Koster**, VLIR-UOS

VLIR-UOS is committed to achieving sustainable and equitable development by promoting knowledge-driven global partnerships between higher education institutions, by empowering skilled individuals to act as global citizens, and by facilitating the uptake of knowledge into practice. In a rapidly changing world, VLIR-UOS has taken important steps towards integrating the underlying principles of the global Agenda 2030 in its vision, portfolio, partnerships, and scholarships. Focusing on the principles Leave No One Behind, Interconnectedness, and Multi-Stakeholder Partnerships, we strive towards a truly global approach with more equal partnerships, using decolonisation as our universal guideline as we move away from the traditional North-South paradigm. While much of the work remains to be done, this presentation showcases some of the advancements made in the VLIR-UOS portfolio.

## WORLD CAFÉ SESSION DESCRIPTIONS

### TOPIC 1

#### **Guidelines for reciprocal, mutually beneficial partnerships: Chaired by The Swiss Commission for Research Partnerships with Developing Countries (KFPE)**

During the World Café, we would like to discuss the use of guidelines to improve partnerships and collaborations between partners from high-income and low- and middle-income countries. A number of guidelines exist that aim at improving partnerships that are reciprocal, mutually beneficial and respond to local and global challenges. At our session we briefly present some existing guidelines, mainly from research collaboration. With the “11 Principles & 7 Questions for fair and efficient research partnerships” the Swiss Commission for Research Partnerships with Developing Countries (KFPE) has also developed guidelines with this aim. We would like to discuss:

- Which guidelines do you know and recommend?
- How can guidelines support the creation of reciprocal, mutually beneficial partnerships?
- What are challenges to use such guidelines?
- How could the use and utility of such guidelines be improved?
- How can the quality of such partnerships be evaluated?

### TOPIC 2

#### **Encouraging partnerships with less-experienced partners and ethical guidelines for partnerships: Chaired by EDUFI, Finland**

This session focuses on mutually beneficial partnerships in higher education partnership programmes and how to include elements in funding instruments. In particular, it will discuss ethical guidelines for partnerships to support higher education actors. EDUFI will present the participatory process of formulating Ethical Guidelines for new Finnish programmes: To support the implementation of joint projects, there is a nationally coordinated process/working group formulating the Ethical Guidelines to help higher education actors in conducting sustainable and responsible collaboration with their partners.

### TOPIC 3

#### **Owning and evaluating impact: Data in African and Latin American higher education: Chaired by OBREAL Global, AAU and ENLACES**

Comprehensive and comparable higher education data is a complex topic for many parts of the global South and North. It requires institutional data management capacity, supported by higher education systems that have structured, reliable and transparent quality assurance and accreditation process. What is more, a strong link is needed between data indicators, capacity to collect data and decision making. While some systems have advanced at the national level in this respect, many other systems lag behind. This is particularly significant in regions that have defined regional or continental objectives in the higher education sector, such as Africa with its Continental Education Strategy for Africa (CESA 2025) or Latin

America, with the Latin American Higher Education Space (ENLACES). Yet both regions lack systematic reliable and comparable data on higher education.

This world café will start with two short input presentations from the Associations of African Universities and ENLACES, respectively, highlighting the challenges and advances and posing a number of questions to participants about how data is collected and how it could be enhanced.

## TOPIC 4

### **How can we use partnerships to maximise the impact of higher education in advancing gender equality? Chaired by the British Council**

One of the key challenges facing societies worldwide and addressed by Sustainable Development Goal 5 is the enduring impact of gender inequality on the lives of women and girls.

As a recent British Council [report](#) sets out, higher education institutions have the potential to act as powerful accelerators for advancing the empowerment of women and girls given their role as incubators for the thought leaders and social leaders of the future and as sites where norms for gender equality are practised and modelled. However, evidence shows that gender equality issues in wider society affect and are reflected in higher education systems worldwide – with unequal access in many countries, fewer resources, and opportunities available to women, the existence of violence against women affecting students and staff, and sustained underrepresentation of women in leadership positions.

There is a pressing need to address gender inequalities in and through higher education and partnerships can play a role in this. This participatory session will engage participants in dialogue around the different ways in which international collaboration within higher education can contribute to advancing gender equality, including exploration of possible areas of focus for collaboration, different types of actors who could be engaged, and how the benefits of collaboration in this area can be aggregated and amplified.

## PLENARY SESSION

*November 25th 3pm*

### **Team Europe: Coordinating approaches in Europe, towards enhanced synergy and impact**

This session offered by the European Commission, DG INTPA and DG EAC, will present an outline of the EU policy and initiatives in global higher education partnerships. Furthermore, the origins, rationale and process of the Team Europe approach will be presented and highlighted through concrete examples. Participants will be invited to discuss the Team Europe concept in practice and how they could contribute to increasing the visibility and impact of European actions in the Global South.

Speakers:

- **Claire Herrmann**, DG Education and Culture / EAC, European Commission
- **Annika Sundback-Lindroos**, DG International Partnerships / INTPA, European Commission