

# ROLE OF NCHE IN MAINTAINING QUALITY OF HIGHER EDUCATION: LESSONS & EXPERIENCES

BY AGNES MARY CHIMBIRI, PhD  
VICE CHAIR, NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

# INCEPTION PERIOD

- ▶ A gap of 2 years between the time the Credentials & Evaluation Committee in the Ministry of Education Science & Technology stopped registering higher education institutions and the birth of NCHE
  - ▶ Experienced teething problems (change of Government, funding, office space, staffing)
- ▶ While NCHE was being set up, more higher education institutions were sprouting - growing demand.
- ▶ NCHE Act - 2011

# INCEPTION PERIOD

- ▶ Appointment of Board:2011 (operational- 2014)
  - ▶ Setting up of Committees
  - ▶ Development of Work Plan
  - ▶ Development of Standards, Registration & Accreditation Criteria
  - ▶ Setting up of a Start-up Organogram
  - ▶ Recruitment of Staff (Secretariat)

# QUALITY ASSURANCE COMMITTEE

- ▶ Development of tools for Institutional Review
- ▶ Pre-testing of tools
- ▶ Identification of Reviewers
  - ▶ Creation of reviewers roster
  - ▶ Specialized programs require specialists - some available in country others not

# QAC: LESSONS LEARNT

- ▶ Limited understanding and appreciation of Standards by stakeholders
- ▶ Limited appreciation of requirements for Registration and Accreditation
- ▶ Unclear & inadequate Communication
  - ▶ NCHE to public & HEI (Documents, TOR & review program)
  - ▶ Public & HEI to NCHE on Queries - rushing to Court or Attorney General

# NCHE QUALITY ASSURANCE LESSONS

## ▶ Communication

- ▶ Outcome of review mission at exit meeting to be indicative of key findings
- ▶ Exit meetings to allow institutions to clarify some issues
- ▶ Council decision to be communicated in detail before publication (Registered or not/ accredited or not with details on areas that need improvement)
- ▶ Meeting between NCHE & HEI to clarify decision (optional)

# NCHE QUALITY ASSURANCE LESSONS

- ▶ Communication
  - ▶ Continued publication of Accredited Institutions and programs important for public awareness (end users)
  - ▶ Continuous availability of NCHE documents on website and on One Stop Centre critical for stakeholders.

# NCHE QUALITY ASSURANCE LESSONS

- ▶ Tools for institutional review need to be revised
  - ▶ Separate tool for newly established institutions (under 5 years old)
  - ▶ Separate tool for institutions older than 5 years
  - ▶ Separate tool for post-graduate programs



# NCHE QUALITY ASSURANCE LESSONS

- ▶ Reviewers roster
  - ▶ Local and international need proper orientation on context and process
  - ▶ Continuous review of roster
- ▶ Need for functional review to determine additional staffing requirement
  - ▶ Review of organogram to respond to growing demand

# OTHER ISSUES

- ▶ Gaps in NCHE Act - Registration of Public Institutions
- ▶ Absence of Regulations
- ▶ Need for overarching HE Legal Framework

# NCHE QUALITY ASSURANCE LESSONS & EXPERIENCES

- ▶ Issues with Higher Education Institutions
  - ▶ Poor planning & preparation for registration & accreditation - evidenced by failure to present policies, teaching tools, evidence of staff availability (ghost workers on list of staff).
  - ▶ Quality of programs not in tandem with Higher Education Vision and Mission as well as market demand
  - ▶ Poor infrastructure - not conducive for higher learning (laboratories, sanitation, library facilities, learning space, desks/chairs etc)

WHERE IS OUR EFFORT? - QUALITY ASSURANCE?  
REVENUE COLLECTION? INCOME GENERATION?



- ▶ THANK YOU.....
  - ▶ ZIKOMO....
- ▶ ASANTE SANA....
  - ▶ ZAITHWA....
- ▶ MUITO OBLIGADO....