Capacity Building in Higher Education
Focussing on ICDE's involvement in quality assurance and capacity development in distance and online education

By Reidar Roll
Secretary General of ICDE

Contents

Introduction

In our turbulent world, knowledge and education are essential to the economy of nations. Many countries are struggling to provide the best education possible for their citizens. Indeed, in most developing countries today, the capacity for delivering higher (tertiary) education is not sufficient to meet the rate of demand. Furthermore, though qualified students could attain tertiary education outside of their own country, many such students are not able to travel due to financial, familial, professional, or governmental restrictions. The challenge is to expand the capacity for delivering higher (tertiary) education on a mass basis to meet an increasing global demand that has exceeded the ability of existing national educational systems of developing nations to meet this need.

In order to make available world leading resources for capacity building in higher distance and online education, as well as to provide the mechanism at the international level to quality audit distance and online education institutions and systems, the ICDE has developed its own capacity though the establishment last year of the ICDE Quality Agency and this year with the establishment of the ICDE Global Capacity Projects.

The Market for Higher Education

World population will grow from 6.1 billion in 2000 to 7.2 billion in 2015 but the rate of growth is declining. 95% of the increase in population will be in developing countries, nearly all in rapidly expanding urban areas. Increasing life spans will have significantly different impacts (US Bureau of the Census).

Global demand for higher education is forecast to increase from 97 million places in 2000 to 263 million places in 2005. Most of the growth in global demand will be driven by Asia, where demand for higher education is forecast to increase from 37 million in 2000 to almost 159 million in 2025. Most of the growth will be in South Asia and East Asia. This is due to a combination of high income responsiveness and projections of relatively high income growth in this region.

In India the demand for higher education is forecast to grow by an annual compound rate of 7.7% from 9.6 million to 61 million between 2000 and 2025. In China, the demand is forecast to grow by 7.1% from 8 million to 45 million over the same period.

The increased importance of demand from Asia in 2025 is mirrored by a relative decline in importance of demand from the Americas (from 27% to 16% of global demand) and Europe (from 26% to 16%). This is despite growth in the actual volume of the demand from those regions.

Global demand for international higher education is forecast to increase from 1.7 million places in 2000 to 7.2 million places in 2025. This four fold increase represents a compound annual growth rate of 5.8%. While all regions are

forecast to experience strong growth to 2025, Asia will dominate global demand, accounting for 70% of the global demand for international higher education by 2025. Over the period, the demand for international higher education from Asia is forecast to increase six fold. This is due, as indicated previously, to a combination of high income responsiveness and projections of relatively high income growth in this region.

With over 215 million citizens, Indonesia is the biggest and the most populous country in South East Asia. Out of this number 65 % (141 million) are adult citizens (15-64 years of ages). It is a vast country of some 17,000 islands stretching across some 3,200 miles of oceans. The Philippines is the second biggest country in terms of population (79,345 million) and 59 % of them are adult citizens (46, 9 million). Thailand has more percentage of adult citizens (70 % / 43, 3 million) out of its population (60, 6 million), while Malaysia has 61 % (12, 9 million) of its population (21, 38 million) as adult citizens. Brunei Darussalam, the least populous country only has 323,000 populations with 202,000 adult citizens. All together, those five countries have more than 377 million people with more than 244 million adult citizens.

For all of these countries, education is considered to be a key and strategic tool for their national development. Geographic, economic and time constraints have made distance and virtual education a promising and necessary approach to deal with these needs.

In the Asian region, China and India will account for more than half of the total global demand for international higher education by 2025. However, comparing the top ten source countries in 2000 against 2025, some new markets are expected to emerge. These include Turkey, Morocco and Iran.

The USA and UK have long been the largest destination countries for international students. However, a number of new countries such as Australia and New Zealand have recently emerged as key destinations for international students. According to the 2001 review on international education by IDP, a number of countries are now proactively seeking to enter the international education markets. These include Asian countries such as Malaysia, Singapore and India as well as European countries such as the Netherlands, France and Germany. (Global Mobility Study 2025: Forecasts of the Global Demand for International Higher Education).

Public policy influences - Global trends

As demand for Higher Education has increased inexorably during the 1990s, governments throughout the world have sought methods of funding higher education that do not involve increases in public funding.

Universities across the world remain largely publicly funded, although the use of privately sourced money is a substantial and increasingly prevalent source of tertiary education funding. In 10 out of 19 OECD countries, private expenditure grew by more than 30% between 1995 and 1999.

The increase in private funding to universities has generally not been accompanied by a decrease in public financing of universities - the increase in private spending on tertiary education tends to complement, rather than replace, public investment.

In 1999, the United Kingdom spent $9,554 (US) per tertiary student, slightly higher than the OECD country mean of $9,210 (US). In 1999, Canada, Korea and the United States spent the highest proportion of their GDP on tertiary education (2.5%, 2.4% and 2.3% respectively) accounting for more than one-third of their total expenditure on education.

The move away from narrowly national to harmonisation within the broader regional context can be seen, for example in Europe. The Bologna Declaration (signed by 29 European Ministers for Education in 1999) established the European HE area. Most countries, though at varying speeds, are working on the implementation of the objectives:
comparable degrees,
a two-cycle degree structure,
establishment of a system of credits,
promotion of mobility,
promotion of European cooperation in quality assurance,
promotion of the European dimension in HE.

Purpose of the Global Education Capacity Project

The potential market for Higher Education, outlined above cannot be met by traditional means and through existing or planned educational institutions. Much of the demand is in developing countries, which lack the infrastructure, staff and non-staff resource to deal with this challenge. The major sources and expertise in higher education tend to be in developed countries whereas the major needs tend to be in developing countries. The physical movement of staff on the scale which would be required for traditional higher education methodology is not achievable.

Distance education has been able to make inroads into this challenge but, although the scale of some institutions is quite large, the global spread is not great and often the local and/or regional infrastructure militates against the economies of scale which might be achieved.

To help meet the growing demand for tertiary education in developing countries the International Council for Open and Distance Education (ICDE) has decided to instigate a series of partnerships between its members and organisations in developing countries. It is intended that these partnerships will provide a sustainable base for the delivery of more and better open learning and distance education to meet economic, business and social needs. They are described as ICDE Global Capacity Projects (GCP).

The purpose of the ICDE Global Capacity Projects, are to design the structure and first steps of a relationship between ICDE and local universities and other partners. to deliver quality distance and online higher education on a large scale to students in developing countries.

If the challenge of the Global Education Capacity Project is to be met, there is a need for large scale delivery of quality higher education.The project includes ICDE quality audits of institutions and systems in distance education, in order to assure the quality of what is being offered to the students.
The partnership will be based on the known economies of open and distance learning achieved through:

- the division of labour in the teaching process itself which allows a rationalisation of the elements of the teaching process
- the use of technical equipment to ensure a product of constant quality and theoretically unlimited volumes
- the application of organisational principles to cut down on necessary effort on the part of those teaching and learning
- the use of technical media to supplement and replace teachers and cater for volumes
- the testing of the product, the teaching package, to eliminate mistakes and guarantee a standard
- the monitoring of the teaching system by scientific methods to maintain quality and standards.

Online provision is the only mechanism which can be expected to overcome the physical infrastructure problems associated with communication and the delivery of materials in the almost infinite variety of local circumstances and needs existing in developing countries.

Strategic analysis of GECP in the context of possible futures

This proposal is one which comes at a time of significant change in the world environment and which includes political, economic, sociological and technological change. We have therefore examined it in the context of "scenario planning".

Scenarios first emerged following World War II as a method for military planning as the US Air Force tried to imagine what its opponents might do and to prepare alternative strategies. In the 1960s Herman Kahn, who had been part of the Air Force experiment, refined scenarios as a tool for business prognostication. But scenarios reached a new dimension in the early 1970s with the work of Pierre Wack, a member of the team in a newly formed department called Group Planning in the London offices of Royal Dutch/Shell. This group created two scenarios, each a complete set of stories about the future with tables of projected oil price figures. One presented the conventional wisdom that the oil price would stay stable; the second envisaged an oil prices crisis sparked by OPEC. The value of this exercise for Royal Dutch/Shell was seen in October 1973, after the "Yom Kippur" war when there was an oil price shock.

Scenarios are not predictions since it is simply not possible to predict the future with certainty. Scenarios are vehicles for helping people to learn, tools for ordering one's perceptions about alternative future environments in which one's decisions might be played out.

We have conducted an examination of major driving forces that were deemed likely to shape the external environment into which GECP is projected. These forces were considered in terms of their predictability and their impact on GECP. They may be grouped in terms of a PEST analysis (Political, Economic, Social and Technological factors) or a market focus analysis (Demand and Supply side factors; threat of competition and substitutes). They include changes to economic conditions and demographic patterns around the world, the growth of web-based communication and its impact on learning, changes in student expectations, changes in government policy etc. Early indicators (of those events happening now that might be signs of a future trend) have been identified on the basis of a ten year horizon.

For the purpose of creating the scenario matrix, the two most unpredictable - and probably therefore most important forces - have been used as axes. The horizontal axis ranges from greater customer power (and therefore lower producer power) to lower customer power (and therefore greater customer power). The vertical axis ranges from greater regionalisation (and therefore a lower impact from globalisation) to greater globalisation (and therefore a lower impact from regionalisation). The matrix created through the use of these axes contains four possible scenarios which have been constructed on the basis of a ten year horizon.

This ICDE strategy is based on scaneario planning and assumes that the following scenario will exist by 2010:

- that by the second decade of the century, enlightened self interest, philanthropy and socially responsible action are transforming the world;
- a world in which a tough stance on terrorism and unfriendly states is balanced with massive aid budgets;
- as a result - that economic migration has slowed, to a considerable extent due to increased and much more focused aid programmes that have raised education levels and supported modernisation in many poorer countries;
- these education programmes are creating a more highly educated workforce which, in turn, is making increased levels of internal investment possible;
- that from this arise increased levels of demand for higher education;
- that multinational companies identify this source of a low-cost, well-educated work force;
- that large numbers of manufacturing and production jobs will shift to developing countries and this in itself will drive further development plans;
- that while a loss of cultural identity is a topic of debate, the issue is not sufficient to derail the trend as long as most people involved see personal and financial material gain for themselves;

- that the Second World, led by China, will increasingly seek to raise its sights to the challenge of the First World for supremacy in the global knowledge economy;
- that there will develop an international qualifications framework which would provide an easy means for multinational companies and partnerships to ensure that workforces are skilled and dedicated to standardised levels across national boundaries;
- that much tertiary education throughout the world has shifted decisively to the provision of portable qualifications which satisfy employment market needs;
- that most post-secondary education is provided by a small number of dominant global education alliances with a "you may choose the colour but one size fits all" vocationally orientated qualification that is globally recognised and accepted;
- that these alliances might originate as partnerships between governments, academia, big business, professional bodies and non-governmental organisations but would migrate to become corporate businesses;
- that these would gradually include information technology, telecommunications and media companies in search of new expandable markets;
- that, from a large number of experiments, only a small number of global education alliances would survive, a situation illustrative of the pace and change of competition;
- that "Higher education" would no longer be synonymous with "university" although what we now call "universities" would have evolved as these partnerships progressed;
- that world wide dominance on the part of the successful global educational alliances would follow, particularly after the introduction of an advanced qualification with its emphasis on continuing professional development.

The proposed partnerships between ICDE and partner universities and organisation are seen as a strategic move on the part of involved organisations to position themselves and offer them the potential for first mover advantage in such a scenario. The scenario planning outlined above goes beyond the initial concepts discussed in its exploration of possible futures.

The ICDE Quality Audits

For many years ICDE has received requests to validate the credentials of institutions, particularly in those areas where there exist no legislation or standards concerning quality. These requests have been received from institutions themselves, from prospective students and also from agencies and departments of government. Recent developments in communications technology, which allow institutions engaged in education and training to operate globally, have considerably increased the need for an international assessment of quality standards and ICDE has now responded to this need.

The purpose of the ICDE Quality Agency is to promote public confidence that the quality of standards and provision of services to students in Open and

Distance Learning are being safeguarded. It is important to make clear that **this does not involve an audit of academic standards of courses or qualifications**, since there exist no agreed international standards for qualifications, curriculum and academic content, although various elements of these can be, and often are, regulated by country or region. It assumes that institutions will be operating within the overall national and/or state legislation and guidelines which are applicable to them at any given time.

ICDE's audit is concerned with:

- the quality and standards of services to students at the point of delivery;
- an institution's responsibility for what is done in its name.

At the centre of the process is an emphasis on students - in terms of the quality of the information they receive about their programmes of study and the ways in which their learning is facilitated and supported so that they can achieve in practice what they might reasonably expect to achieve.

ICDE's audit process involves:

- all aspects of recruitment including marketing and general publicity - including advice offered through staff, printed materials and all electronic means;
- all aspects of admission - including fee payments and the contractual arrangements between the individual and the institution;
- learner support - including requirements on the student where provision is ICT based;
- the integration and maintenance of systems and services - including record keeping and links with other students;
- a commitment to educational values, good customer relationship and business practices.

In addition, the audit process examines internal processes of review of the provision of services to students.

The audit visit

30 For most institutions (with the exception of small specialist institutions) the audit visit extends over five working days, Monday to Friday. The detailed programme for each visit, based around meetings with staff and students, is decided by the audit team. Most visits include:
opportunities for the team to read the documentation provided to support the audit, including external examiners' reports and documentation relating to internal reviews;
exploration of the institution's approach to quality assurance;
exploration of the relationship between institutional procedures and their operation at the programme or discipline level, giving particular attention to the effectiveness of internal reviews of programmes and awards;

exploration of the chosen audit trails and thematic enquiries, including targeted discussions and (in respect of audit trails) scrutiny of illustrative examples of assessed students' work;
exploration of the accuracy, completeness and reliability of the information published for students and others, with particular attention to programme specifications;
exploration of the claims made for the quality of programmes and the actual achievements of students, focusing not only on academic outcomes, but also on the ways in which students are treated and their opportunities to learn optimised;
during the closing stages, meetings with senior staff and, where necessary, staff from the areas selected for trailing, to discuss any matters outstanding and to follow up any matters emerging from the audit trails.

31 On the final day of the audit visit, the audit team considers its findings in order to:
decide on the confidence that it believes can reasonably be placed in the soundness of the institution's management of the quality of its programmes and the academic standards of its awards;
decide on the reliance that it believes can reasonably be placed on the accuracy, integrity, completeness and frankness of the information that the institution publishes about the quality of its programmes and the standards of its awards;
identify features of good practice in the management of quality and standards, or in the delivery of teaching and the facilitation of learning;
agree recommendations, categorised in terms of importance.

32 The audit team also confirms on the final day any areas on which it wishes to seek specialist advice, having notified the institution, where possible at the start of the penultimate day, of any areas in which this is likely. When specialist advice is to be sought, the team's findings, judgements and recommendations on the final day are provisional.

Institutional audits will run on a 5-year cycle. The process will require a high degree of openness, transparency and trust in the partnership between the ICDE Audit Agency and the institution.

62 The administration of the process takes place in accordance with the principles outlined in this ICDE Handbook. Responsibility for the co-ordination of the audit rests with the Secretary General of ICDE but the judgements and recommendations resulting from the audit are made by the audit team. However, it is the responsibility of the Secretary General to test that the team's findings are supported by adequate and identifiable evidence, and that the audit report provides information in a succinct and readily accessible form. To this end the Audit Agency retains editorial responsibility for the final text of the report.

63 Every effort is made to ensure that a close and constructive working relationship is established with institutions and actively maintained beyond the

specific requirements of the audit and related activities. Each institution is invited to nominate a correspondent to liaise with designated staff of the Audit Agency.

64 The Audit Agency endeavours to protect the quality of the audit process through the adoption of explicit operational principles, service standards and quality assurance mechanisms. The latter include the opportunity for participants in the process, including students, to provide structured feedback on their experiences.

ICDE Seminars and WORKSHOPS ON e-LEARNING FOR BUSINESS

Background

ICDE has been asked to run a series of workshops with UT to introduce the benefits of e-learning and distance education to business and other employers in the public and private sectors. ICDE will bring case studies from around the world, with examples of what works, and what to avoid.

Objectives / Outcomes

Each workshop will have the following objectives:

I. To consider the strategic environment within which distance education (DE) and e-learning takes place in distance teaching universities in Europe and the USA.
II. To understand modern Western European approaches to the delivery of continuing professional development courses for business.
III. To access theory and practice behind materials development techniques in order to apply them in Indonesia.
IV. To observe the use of different technologies and appreciate issues of cost-effectiveness.
V. To understand assessment issues relating to e-learning environments in the context of continuing professional development.
VI. To learn the benefits and disadvantages of a distributed approach.

And the following outcomes:

I. Increased awareness of e-courses for business.
II. Staff awareness of the media and methods most likely to be used by business and able to incorporate these
III. More relevant courses for business.
IV. Increases in collaboration between business and ersities.
V. Courses costed and priced to ensure long-run viability.

Workshop Topics

I. What is DE and e-Learning and why use it. Demand-led delivery approaches through continuing professional development and re-training for employers and employees.

II. Training needs analysis. Curriculum planning for the workplace. Meeting today's operational needs, and tomorrow's needs. Partnership between universities and business.
III. Various technologies – pros and cons. Where and when to use.
IV. Individual vs group learning. Learner support. Remote learners. Cultural issues.
V. Work-based learning.
VI. Accreditation, assessment and quality.
VII. Costs, pricing policies, marketing, return on investment.
VIII. Management and administration.

In the years ahead, we look forward to close cooperation with SEAMOLEC and Universitas Terbuka, as well as other partners in South East Asia in the work to build further high quality capacity in distance and online education.

Conclusions

Global Education Capacity Project (GECP) – a partnership between the International Council for Open and Distance Education (ICDE) and local universities and organisations, to deliver quality Higher Education, through the medium of new technologies, to students in developing countries.

ICDE is the global membership organisation of educational institutions, national and regional associations, corporations, educational authorities and agencies in the field of open learning, distance education, and flexible lifelong learning. ICDE has membership in 142 countries around the world and represents, through this membership, the leading network of expertise and experience of the world in distance education. ICDE is:

- approved and authorised by the United Nations to serve as the global membership organisation in open, distance and e-learning;
- a non-profit organisation established in 1938 with a mission to deliver quality service to its members;
- a membership organisation which enables partnership approaches and networking, peer to peer;
- global in membership and outreach;
- experienced in working in different cultures and circumstances;
- independent.

ICDE is affiliated with the United Nations through UNESCO and is also an affiliate member of the South East Asian Ministers of Education Organisation (SEAMEO) and it is a World Bank Partner organisation. The main mission of ICDE today is to provide leadership and development and communication at the global level in distance and virtual education systems.

Recently the Executive Committee of ICDE has agreed to the setting up of a wholly owned company to engage in educational partnership projects and accreditation. ICDE's first partnership has been a joint project with the University of Maryland University College (UMUC).

The purpose of the ICDE Project is to employ the best of new technologies to deliver quality higher education on a large scale to students in developing countries through a partnership between ICDE and partners, working with philanthropic entities and region/country specific educational partners.

Global demand for higher education is forecast to increase from 97 million places in 2000 to 263 million places in 2005. Most of the growth in global demand will be driven by Asia, where demand for higher education is forecast to increase from 37 million in 2000 to almost 159 million in 2025. Most of the growth will be in South Asia and East Asia. This is due to a combination of high income responsiveness and projections of relatively high income growth in this region.

In India the demand for higher education is forecast to grown by an annual compound rate of 7.7% from 9.6 million to 61 million between 2000 and 2025. In China, the demand is forecast to grow by 7.1% from 8 million to 45 million over the same period.

The increased importance of demand from Asia in 2025 is mirrored by a relative decline in importance of demand from the Americas (from 27% to 16% of global demand) and Europe (from 26% to 16%). This is despite growth in the actual volume of the demand from those regions.

Global demand for international higher education is forecast to increase from 1.7 million places in 2000 to 7.2 million places in 2025. This four fold increase represents a compound annual growth rate of 5.8%. While all regions are forecast to experience strong growth to 2025, Asia will dominate global demand, accounting for 70% of the global demand for international higher education by 2025. Over the period, the demand for international higher education from Asia is forecast to increase six fold. This is due, as indicated previously, to a combination of high income responsiveness and projections of relatively high income growth in this region.

In the Asian region, China and India will account for more than half of the total global demand for international higher education by 2025. However, comparing the top ten source countries in 2000 against 2025, some new markets are expected to emerge. These include Turkey, Morocco and Iran.

If the challenge of the Global Education Capacity Project is to be met, there is a need for a very large scale delivery of quality higher education to those in the developing world. The Project will have an Advisory Board. The Advisory Board will be made up of leaders in the field of higher education from appropriate strategic geographical areas of the world.