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An Overview of the ‘National Multiplication Trainings’ Programme

ABSTRACT: The article introduces the efforts exerted to initiate multiplication of the DIES training courses to a wider audience of higher education managers and academics in the target regions. The DIES ‘National Multiplication Trainings’ Programme has supported three cohorts of alumni teams so far to implement national training courses in the area of higher

education leadership and management. The article sets the context of this publication and reflects on the main evaluation results of the programme implementation itself.

KEYWORDS: training multiplication, higher education management, higher education leadership, capacity building; alumni work

1. What Is DIES and What Is Being Multiplied?

The 'Dialogue on Innovative Higher Education Strategies' (DIES) was created jointly by the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) and the German Rectors' Conference (HRK) in 2001 to promote cooperation with universities in the South in the field of higher education management. Since its establishment, DIES has been supporting a group of initiatives in the field of higher education management to promote positive changes among German universities and those in developing and emerging countries through dialogue activities, partnerships cooperation projects, and participative training.

Since 2005, DIES has supported more than 7,000 individuals who took part in training courses offered within the frame of the DIES programme. The training courses have been generally coordinated and implemented by German universities in cooperation with DAAD/HRK and partners in the respective target regions. The following is an overview of current training course offers:

- **International Deans' Course (IDC)**

This course is offered to newly elected deans, vice-deans, and heads of departments in Africa, Latin America, and Southeast Asia. It offers modules related to faculty management such as strategic management, financial management, quality assurance and leadership, and managerial skills.

- **University Leadership and Management (UNILEAD)**

UNILEAD targets young management level professionals from higher education institutions in Africa, the Middle East, Southeast Asia, and Latin America who work in central administrative offices in their universities. It offers modules on project management, strategic management, and human resource management.

- **Proposal Writing for Research Grants (ProGRANT)**

This course is designed for young researchers and young PhD holders from Africa, Latin America, the Middle East, and Southeast Asia. It is meant to enhance skills in formulating sound research proposals based on prevailing international standards which are essential for a successful application for research funding.

- **Management of Internationalisation (Mol)**

Mol targets heads of international academic offices and university managers from Africa, the Middle East, Southeast Asia, and Latin America responsible for coordinating their universities’ international activities. To improve the management of the central tasks at an international office, the course contains modules on internationalisation, competences and key tasks of an international office, soft skills, and domestic management skills.

- **Training in the Frame of ‘ASEAN-QA’**

To support the harmonisation of higher education and develop capacity in the field of quality assurance (QA) in Southeast Asia, a multitude of training activities had been offered under the ASEAN-QA Project between 2011 and 2019. The project targeted both representatives from the external quality assurance side such as accreditation agencies and assessors, and representatives from the internal quality assurance side at higher education institutions, such as directors and vice presidents in charge of QA. With the Training on Internal Quality Assurance (TrainIQA), a comprehensive and holistic training approach for the management of quality in higher education institutions has been designed and implemented.

- **Training in the Frame of ‘Enhancing West African Quality Assurance Structures’ (EWAQAS)**

EWAQAS aims to strengthen and harmonise national higher education systems. Similar to the ASEAN-QA project, training on external and internal quality assurance were offered between 2013 and 2019 to practitioners in West and Central Africa, both to university representatives and those involved with external quality assurance.

All DIES training courses have in common that participants and/or institutions implement a personal project or an institutional change project within the frame of the training. Furthermore, the training courses are mostly offered in cooperation between German and European institutions and regional organisations and institutions of the respective fields. This cooperative approach is also reflected in the delivery of the training with a good mixture of European and regional experts, which often work in trainer tandems. The DIES training courses, in most cases, bring together participants from different countries or even regions.

Alumni who took part in the training courses are valuable resources for multiplying knowledge and skills in higher education management,

establishing cooperation between German universities and universities in their home countries, as well as promoting development and generating changes in the respective higher education systems. Hence the DIES programme 'National Multiplication Trainings' (NMT) was initiated in 2013 to support the DIES alumni in amplifying their knowledge and skills and in initiating needed capacity building activities in their national settings. The DIES NMT Programme is funded by the Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development of Germany (BMZ).

2. The National Multiplication Trainings Programme

The NMT Programme trains, supports, and funds DIES alumni through independently implementing higher education leadership and management training activities in their home countries. The objectives of this programme are the following: (a) to strengthen DIES alumni in their role as multipliers in the field of higher education leadership and management, (b) to promote the sustainability of DIES training courses, (c) to initiate organisational changes at the participating universities, and (d) to encourage exchange and networking of DIES alumni from different training courses and countries.

The NMT Programme has thus two target groups at different levels. First, the DIES alumni from Africa, Latin America, the Middle East, and Southeast Asia who are supported to be organisers, as well as trainers and facilitators, in implementing their training courses. To receive the financial support, groups of three to four DIES alumni need to jointly conceptualise a multi-part training course in the field of higher education leadership and management and go through a highly competitive selection process to receive funding and to take part in a Training of Trainers which includes mentoring by experienced experts in the field.

Second, through the national training courses implemented by the DIES alumni, the programme targets higher education managers and their institutions who have not yet participated in any of the DIES training courses. These participants will implement change projects within the frame of the multiplication training courses.

The multiplication training courses address current issues and perspectives on higher education management that are tailored to the needs in the respective country. The alumni teams are not required to make use of the same concepts of any of the existing DIES training courses but should instead address the specific needs within a framework set by the

programme. They need to address topics of higher education leadership and management such as faculty management, project management, finance management, human resource management, and research management with focus on 'proposal writing', quality assurance including curriculum development, internationalisation, or a mixture of these.

The training should also bring theory and practice together. For the practical part, the participants are required to work on individual or institutional change projects throughout the training. The DIES alumni, in their role as trainers and mentors, support the participants in this journey through individual consulting and peer-counselling.

Another requirement and pillar of the programme are that the DIES alumni take full responsibility for the whole training process and implementation. They are in charge of conceptualising, implementing, selecting the participants and mentors, facilitating the workshops, and evaluating the training. Furthermore, they are also required to manage the finances connected to the grant of up to 25,000 EUR, including reporting and accounting.

Each national multiplication training course trains at least 20 participants, with two workshops of three to four days, and with a period of at least four months between the two workshops to allow participants to conceptualise and initiate their projects.

The principle that the alumni are held fully responsible for their training does not mean that they are left alone in conceptualising and implementing their activities. Indeed, the actual implementation of their own courses is part of the training concept to train them as trainers. This allows for a thorough and practical grounding experience in which the alumni receive formative feedback and take part in reflection sessions with experts and peers during a closing workshop. Since the second cohort of the DIES NMT Programme has been implemented, the alumni teams can choose up to two external experts from the region and/or from Europe who will accompany their multiplication training. The main role of these experts is to support and advise the alumni team in the conceptualisation, planning, and implementation of the training with a focus on content and didactics.

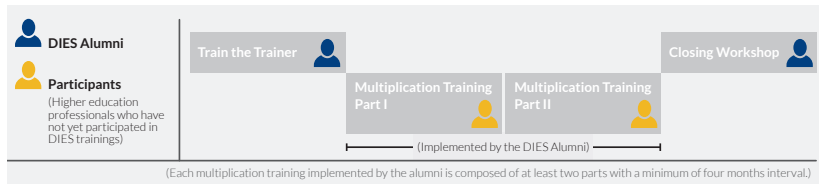
Once the alumni teams are selected and they receive the confirmation of the grant, representatives of the teams are invited to join a Training of Trainers at the University of Potsdam in Germany. Here they are introduced to topics and agendas related to the conduct of workshops: (a) planning and organising, (b) facilitating and moderating, and (c) discussing and revising concepts like formulating training goals, identifying

target groups, etc., with experts and peers. The chosen experts will, from then on, further support the alumni team and mentor the implementation of each step in the training, as well as join the workshops to be able to give feedback during and after the implementation. The mentoring and assistance by the experts are therefore extended before the training, during the training, and after the training.

Besides the mentoring by experts, the exchange with peers coming from the target regions is another important pillar of support. The teams have ample time to exchange and counsel each other during the Training of Trainers and a further opportunity has been initiated by introducing a closing workshop, where the training teams can reflect on experiences, consider exchanges of good practices, and identify common challenges. These are made available to new cohorts who are simultaneously participating in their Training of Trainers and can therefore profit highly from the exchanges with the already experienced cohort.

The general structure of the NMT Programme for both DIES alumni and the participants is depicted in Figure 1 below.

Figure 1: Structure of the National Multiplication Trainings Programme for One Cohort



Through the activities within the NMT Programme, DIES alumni act as multipliers at the national level and pass on their knowledge and skills to higher education professionals and institutions in their countries and regions. Thus they are contributing significantly to the enhancement of the respective higher education systems. By offering these multiplication workshops, the DIES Programme reaches a much wider audience in the target regions of Africa, Latin America, the Middle East, and Southeast Asia.

Because of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, the exchange of the alumni teams has been expanded to online meetings and workshops which are held between the Training of Trainers and the closing workshop. These virtual meetings have been very valuable in both addressing the urgency of the pandemic and in shifting the training to online activities

to retain the contact among the different alumni teams, experts, and the coordinating team at the University of Potsdam.

3. Facts and Figures about the National Multiplication Trainings Programme

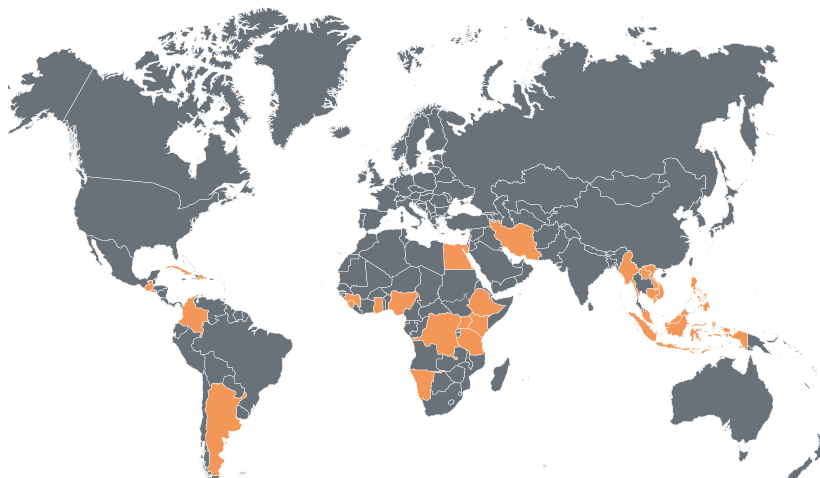
The NMT Programme is centrally organised by the Centre for Quality Development (ZfQ) at the University of Potsdam in Germany. The ZfQ is a central unit of the University which designs and implements quality assurance and quality development processes on a central university level and supports the faculties in their decentralised quality management. As an institution, which has rich experience and sound expertise in international cooperation, the Centre has been coordinating the NMT Programme since 2017, after it had been initiated and run by DAAD during the first cohort. The current concept is based on the experiences of alumni work and multiplication activities developed in the frame of the ASEAN-QA Project, a strategy on capacity building in the area of quality assurance with aim to support harmonisation in higher education in Southeast Asia, which had been implemented by the ZfQ between 2011 and 2019.

Starting with the first cohort in 2013, the NMT Programme is currently in its third, which will end in 2020. In total, it has supported 38 DAAD alumni teams implementing multiplication training courses in Africa, Latin America, the Middle East, and Southeast Asia. More than 700 participants have attended the training courses.

Figure 2 shows the countries where the NMT Programme has been carried out.

The first cohort of alumni teams participating in the NMT Programme which was coordinated by the DAAD between 2013 and 2014 supported 9 alumni teams to implement training courses in their home countries. Since then, the second and third cohort have been coordinated by the University of Potsdam and a total of 29 alumni teams have been active multipliers across Africa, Latin America, and Southeast Asia. The third cohort includes alumni teams which are being supported for a second time to promote the sustainability of the programme.

Figure 2: Overview of Countries (in orange) Where a National Multiplication Training Has Been Implemented



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The following table summarises the different cohorts and shows the training courses and countries/regions they have been carried out for.

Table 1: Overview of the NMT Cohorts and Multiplication Training Courses

Cohort	Training Name	Country/Region
Cohort 1 (2013–2014) 9 training courses	InterCHANGE for Higher Education Institutions	Central America
	Management tools for the Internationalisation of Research	Colombia
	Gestión de la Innovación en la Educación Superior (Innovation Management in Higher Education)	El Salvador
	Training on Research and Grand Proposal and Scientific Paper Writing	Ethiopia
	Indonesia Deans' Course: A Course in Faculty Management and Leadership	Indonesia
	Curriculum Development and Review for Newly Chartered Public Universities in Kenya: Implementation and Accreditation	Kenya

Cohort	Training Name	Country/Region
Cohort 1 (continuation)	Academic Administrators Training in Malaysia	Malaysia
	National Quality Assurance Trainings for QA Directors in Uganda	Uganda
	FacultyLEAD—Leading to an Autonomy and Entrepreneurial Faculty in the University of the 21st Century	Vietnam
Cohort 2 (2017–2018) 10 training courses	Internacionalización para la Construcción de Paz	Colombia
	Rédaction d’une proposition de recherche	D. R. Congo
	Training Course for Higher Education Managers and Academics to Develop Skills for Scientific Strategic Management	Cuba
	Senior University Management Training for Academics	Ghana
	Indonesia Deans’ Course for Private Higher Education Institution	Indonesia
	Training of Deans and Directors on Quality Leadership and Management: A Driver for Change in Higher Education	Kenya
	Transforming Higher Education Scenarios in Myanmar: Pathways to Success for Leadership Skills	Myanmar
	Multiplication de la formation en assurance qualité interne dans l’enseignement supérieur en Guinée	Guinea
	Strengthening the Development Capacity for Minimum Programme Standards	Lao PDR
	Project Management Training	Tanzania
Cohort 3 (2019–2020) 19 training courses	Gestión de la Internacionalización para la Calidad en Educación Superior	Colombia
	Task Force for Internationalisation in Higher Education	Egypt
	Internationalisation at Home in Vietnamese Universities	Vietnam
	Writing Renewable Energy Research Proposals	Argentina
	Renforcement des capacités des chercheurs à la rédaction et la budgétisation d’un projet de recherche scientifique	D. R. Congo
	Development of Practical Skills in Grant Proposal Writing for Young Researchers in Namibia	Namibia

Cohort	Training Name	Country/Region
Cohort 3 (continuation)	A Training on Multidisciplinary Research Proposal Writing for Heads of Academic Departments in Higher Education Institutions	Tanzania
	Academic Deans: Roles, Challenges, and Solutions	Cambodia
	Integral Leadership in Higher Education: Promoting Transformational Change	Dominican Republic
	Leading for Change in Higher Education	Guatemala
	International Deans' Course Malaysian Chapter (MyIDC)	Malaysia
	DIES-International Deans' Course Philippines (DIES-IDCP)	The Philippines
	Education for Sustainable (ESD): Initiative for Green Campus	Iran
	Enhancing Best Practices in Project Management, Financial Management, and Human Resource Development in Higher Education Institutions	Kenya
	Atelier national de multiplication en assurance qualité dans les établissements d'enseignement supérieur 2019–2020	Guinea
	Training on Indonesian Quality Assurance (TrainIdQA)	Indonesia
	Implementing Quality Management System in Higher Education Institutions	Myanmar
	Curriculum Development as a Veritable Tool for Internal Quality Assurance in Higher Education Institutions	Nigeria
	Training on Quality Assurance and Curriculum Development for HEIs in Sierra Leone	Sierra Leone

4. Lessons Learnt from the NMT Programme Evaluation

This section takes a deeper look at the formative evaluation design and its results which have been carried out since the second cohort of the programme. The aim is to gain and present more general fields of improvement and the lessons learnt from the implementation of the training courses and the programme as a whole. The evaluation results outlined herewith are mainly sourced from the second cohort (2017–2018), whilst the third cohort is still ongoing at the time of writing this article.

4.1 Evaluation Design

The evaluation design of the NMT Programme puts a strong focus on a formative approach which means that data collection and analysis have been carried out alongside the programme implementation. The main aim of such a formative evaluation is to provide ongoing support for decision making and to enable the draft and execution of possible improvements during the implementation segment of the programme. The summative aspect of the programme evaluation, on the other hand, strongly focuses on collecting data with regards to the effects and results of the multiplication training.

The evaluation concept of the NMT Programme includes the perspectives of all involved target groups and experts in the programme activities using a mixed-methods approach. Hence, sources of data used in the evaluation process include the following:

- Quantitative and qualitative data from the participants of the multiplication training courses (questionnaires for workshop evaluation and interviews during site visits);
- Quantitative and qualitative data from the DIES alumni trainer teams (questionnaires for Training of Trainers’ evaluation, feedback forms, and interviews during site visits);
- Feedback from both regional and European experts (feedback forms)
- Observation data from the site visits at the multiplication training courses (observations and interviews during the site visits).

4.2 Results from the NMT Programme Evaluation

The following sections detail the main evaluation results of the second cohort (2017–2018) differentiated from the viewpoint of training participants, the trainer teams and the experts, as well as observations made during on-site visits. The evaluation results concerning the implementation of the participants change projects, which are an important part of the training, are also presented.

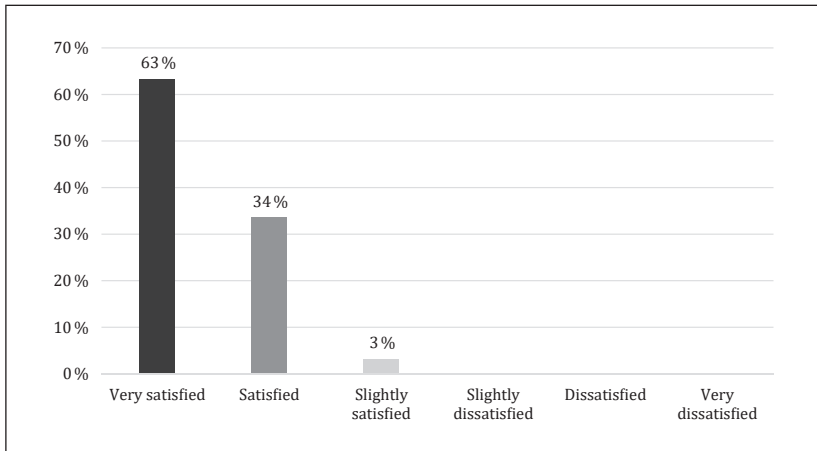
4.2.1 Results of the Feedback from the Participants

The participants’ feedback on the multiplication training courses is based on quantitative online surveys conducted after each workshop. The questionnaires used for this evaluation are part of the monitoring tools of the DIES Programme and are provided by DAAD. The DIES alum-

ni trainer teams had the opportunity to adapt the questionnaires according to their interests and needs.

Figure 3 shows the general satisfaction of the participants with the conceptual set-up of the multiplication training. 63% of the respondents were very satisfied with the conceptual set-up of the training and none of the 158 respondents had indicated to be dissatisfied with the training concept.

Figure 3: *General Satisfaction with the Training Concept (n = 158), Percentages*

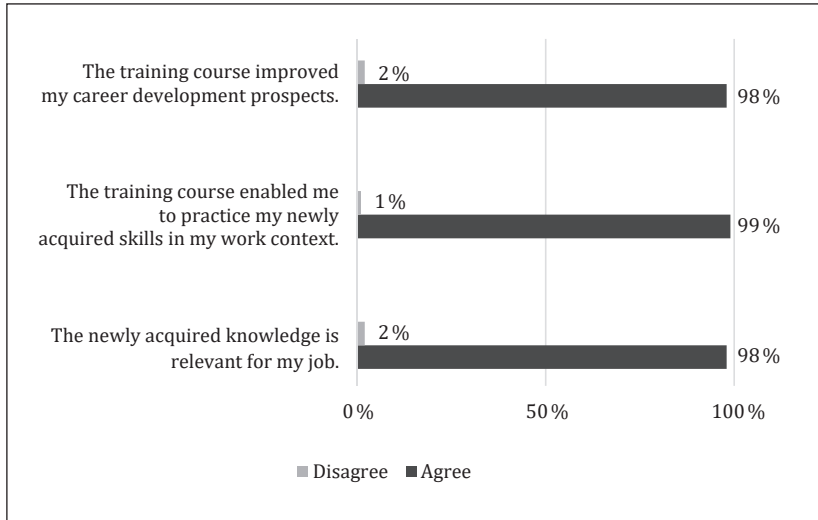


Question: How satisfied/dissatisfied are you in general with the conceptual set-up of the course in separate contact phases?

Figure 4 gives an overview of the self-perceived personal gain of the participants after finishing the second part of the multiplication training¹. More than 90% of the participants agreed that participating in the training improved their future career perspectives. The survey results also indicated that the contents of the training had high relevance in the work context of the participants. More than 90% of the participants reported that they could practise the newly acquired skills in their work context. These results show that the multiplication training courses had generally been implemented with high satisfaction and relevance of the training for the participants.

¹ Each multiplication training was composed of two workshops.

Figure 4: Personal Benefits of the Multiplication Training Participants (n = 171), Percentages



4.2.2 Results of the Feedback from the Trainer Teams and Experts

Based on structured feedback sheets after each workshop by the alumni teams and by regional and European experts, and the interviews with the alumni teams during the site visits, the following lessons learnt for the NMT have been derived:

- Availabilities and roles during the workshops should be defined and accepted prior to training since well-founded and sustained commitment within the trainer teams is key;
- Regional/European experts should be given adequate time for groundwork and preparation before the training begins;
- A crucial briefing and coordination meeting should be held before the workshop starts to give trainers and experts time to do final directives;
- The motivation of the participants should be considered in the selection process (e.g. handing in a letter of motivation or a video);
- If possible and suitable, a great variety of higher education institutions should be selected to have a stronger national impact and an interesting mix of cases;

- An easy and effective communication channel among the trainers, experts, and participants (e.g. creating group chats using mobile phones) should be put in place;
- The participants of the multiplication training should be updated and informed about future DIES activities and a form for factoring in alumni status should be considered by DAAD/HRK for them;
- The workshops need to be well-structured combined with a realistic and attainable timeline;
- Expected learning outcomes should be defined for each workshop and session to align and clarify the goals for the trainers and make them evident and straightforward to the participants;
- The time between the two workshops allotted for the development of the projects and mentoring should be made sufficient and commensurate to the tasks at hand;
- Some alumni teams and experts had recommended a blended learning approach with online training and/or mentoring part between the two workshops;
- Mentoring between the workshops should be defined and coordinated well in advance and should include the experts in its conceptualisation;
- Resources for marketing should be included to enhance the visibility and impact of the training.

4.2.3 Results of the Site Visit Observations

During the second cohort, the University of Potsdam conducted four site visits to get a deeper understanding of the training courses taking place in the target regions. In addition to the observation conducted during the visits, interviews were carried out with the trainer teams and with the workshop participants.

The site visit observation and interviews provided data related to the exchange and communication between the trainer teams and the regional/European experts before and between the workshops that are crucial in running a successful training. Ideally, there should be multiple programme conferences (online or in-person) with all facilitators and experts during the preparation of the workshops to address the distribution of tasks, to clarify roles and expectations, as well as to discuss content-related issues. It is also important that roles and responsibilities among the team members and experts were communicated and made clear before the beginning of the training.

Regarding the didactical aspects of the multiplication workshops, questions related to moderating and facilitating the workshop (i.e., time-keeping), facilitating discussion, and implementing a variety of teaching/learning methods, showed to have room for improvement. These elements were addressed during the Training of Trainers, but it is also a question of experience and confidence to use new methods. Whilst the implementation of the workshops is considered to be part of the Training of Trainers, as was the actual implementation of the training as a whole, the didactical training could be extended, bringing in more possibilities to practise before the first workshop is implemented. Another option would be to offer didactical training after the first workshop experience, not only to receive feedback from the mentors but, more importantly, to specifically address the needs which have become evident during the first implementation.

4.2.4 Results of the Change Projects of the Participants

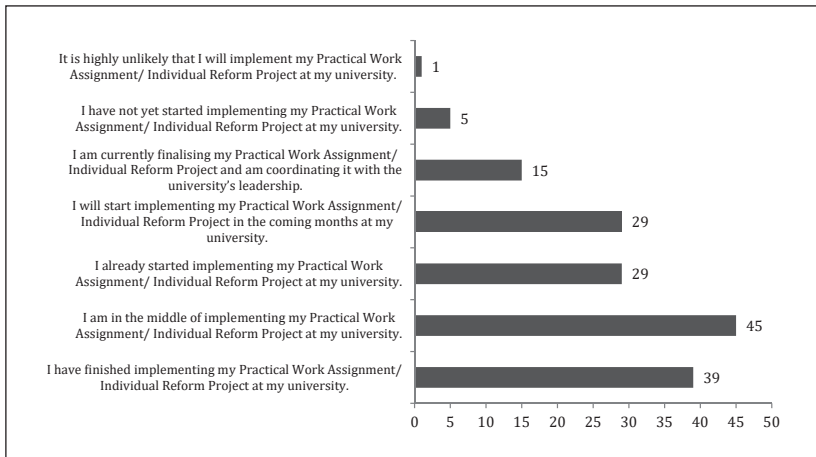
All participants of the multiplication training courses should implement individual or institutional change projects, which are linked to the training contents. The change projects are mentored by the alumni team with the support of the regional and European experts. In this section, the evaluation results from different stakeholder groups regarding the change projects are summarised.

Figure 5 outlines the status of implementation of the individual change projects by the end of the multiplication training courses. The results indicate that 24% of the participants finished implementing their individual change projects, whereas 46% of the participants were in the middle of implementing or were just starting their individual change projects. Furthermore, 30% of the participants reported that they had not started their individual change projects by the end of their training. The qualitative feedback from the experts and alumni trainer teams reported that it would be difficult for most of the participants to finish their change projects after the training without the support from the trainers and experts.

Based on the qualitative feedback gleaned from the trainer teams and the experts, the causes for not finishing the change projects are as follows:

- The change projects were too complex to be implemented within the short training period of less than a year;

Figure 5: Status of Implementation of Participants' Change Projects after the Second Workshop (n = 163), Total Number



- Participants struggled with insufficient leadership support and changes in academic position within the leadership occurred during the implementation of the projects. These delayed or even totally aborted the completion of the change projects.
- Multiple responsibilities shouldered by participants made the implementation of some projects difficult;
- Participants lacked the time to focus on the implementation of the change projects because they needed to be done in parallel to the everyday tasks at the HEIs;
- Participants lacked experience in project management.

According to the feedback from the trainer teams and experts, some possible solutions in overcoming the challenges met during the implementation of the change projects would be to (a) focus on making the projects realistic and feasible so that each could be carried out during the time-frame of the multiplication training, and (b) to possibly offer some funding to support the implementation.

Given the fact that more than 60% of the projects did not see implementation at the end of the NMT activity, support and counselling from the project mentors beyond the second workshop of the multiplication training should be taken into consideration.

Apart from the challenges met whilst implementing the change projects in a short time, all of the trainer teams, experts, and participants agreed on the importance of the change projects for institutional development. The participants and alumni trainers reported that using Project Action Plans (PAPs) as a tool to plan and monitor their change projects was very beneficial.

5. Conclusions and Outlook

This article shows that the NMT Programme is very complex and involves numerous and diverse stakeholders and target groups across the continents of Africa, Latin America, the Middle East, Southeast Asia, and Europe. It is an encompassing and comprehensive way in broadening the sustainability and reach of DIES training courses, and in supporting the networking among the different alumni groups.

The evaluation design and its results gave an ample picture of the actual multiplication training activities in the target regions. The success factors, the challenges, as well as the newly emerged needs were taken into consideration for further programme development.

With the possibility of extending the project that arose in 2018, some major takeaways from the evaluation could be implemented for the second cohort (at that time running) and the planned third cohort. To wrap-up the experiences and learnings made during the implementation and to promote exchange and knowledge transfer among the different alumni teams, a closing workshop was organised to be attended by the alumni of the second cohort (2017–2018).

In September 2019, the alumni teams were invited to Potsdam, Germany, to reflect on their training courses and share their experiences. In conjunction with this, the Training of Trainers workshop for the third cohort (2019–2020) took place in Potsdam as well. This setting promoted knowledge transfer and networking between cohorts. Altogether, more than 50 alumni from different parts of the world attended this activity. Some of the alumni of the second cohort were invited as experts for the new third cohort. The didactical sessions in the Training of Trainers workshop were given more sufficient time.

The evaluation showed that some main challenges regarding the implementation of the multiplication training courses regarded workload and availability of time. The alumni teams who were organising and implementing the training courses on top of their usual work duties

had a challenging workload. It is therefore imperative that the respective institutions, especially the hosting institution, are supportive of the training and its goals, and responsibilities that emerge from the training course are fully acknowledged and adequately handled by institutional leadership.

The participants, on the other hand, who would be joining the training whilst on the job, should also be backed by their leaders' institutional commitment and implement a realistic and relevant project they could work on during the training. A focus should be given on downsizing and making the projects realistic in the initial mentoring phases. The time between the workshops of the multiplication training courses had often been too short to work on the projects and their implementation. It is recommended, therefore, to extend the time needed to finalise the project plans and initiate the projects before the second workshop. This short project time could be addressed by either identifying and defining projects that could be finished by the second workshop, or by setting milestones to be reached within the training time.

As an initial step to address the time issue, a longer interval of at least four months was set as a framework for the multiplication training courses in the call for applications for the third cohort.

The outbreak of COVID-19 has brought tremendous challenges to the implementation of the national multiplication training courses. The workshops planned between the middle of March and June of 2020 had to be suspended. More than 20 workshops in the target regions had been rescheduled and/or reconceptualised. Due to the various lockdown measures, some of the alumni teams had to change the traditional face-to-face workshops to online workshops, which are especially challenging in some countries due to the lack of support infrastructure (i.e., unstable internet connections and outdated equipment). However, the trainer teams, as well as the experts, have been very flexible and timely to adapt to these new circumstances. Numerous online meetings have been conducted to find solutions in accomplishing the training courses in a justified and most beneficial way to the participants. From the programme side, an online series of Training of Trainers workshops using virtual settings was offered to the teams to support them in these challenging times.

The current worldwide pandemic, though posing as a grave challenge, brought with it a catalyst as well, a boost to include more online and blended learning activities into the multiplication training courses and the NMT Programme in general. The numerous online experiences

initiated by the disruption paved the way to a more fruitful implementation of the online parts found in the NMT Programme. Furthermore, the readiness of participants to take part in online training settings has been evident, allowing for new possibilities to implement online activities as an enrichment component of the workshops and programme.

Last but not least, networking between cohorts and the different training is a steady, invariable pillar of the programme with room for development not only but also because of the current digitalisation boost.

The experience, the knowledge, and the expertise of the DIES alumni have been proven to be extremely valuable, making them multipliers of change with far-reaching effects towards the establishment of quality higher education leadership and management systems in emerging countries of the world.

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