African Higher Education and Quality Assurance

Peter Okebukola

President, Global University Network for Innovation (GUNI-Africa), former Executive Secretary, National Universities Commission, Nigeria

CHEA-2009

Prologue

CHEA friends ask:

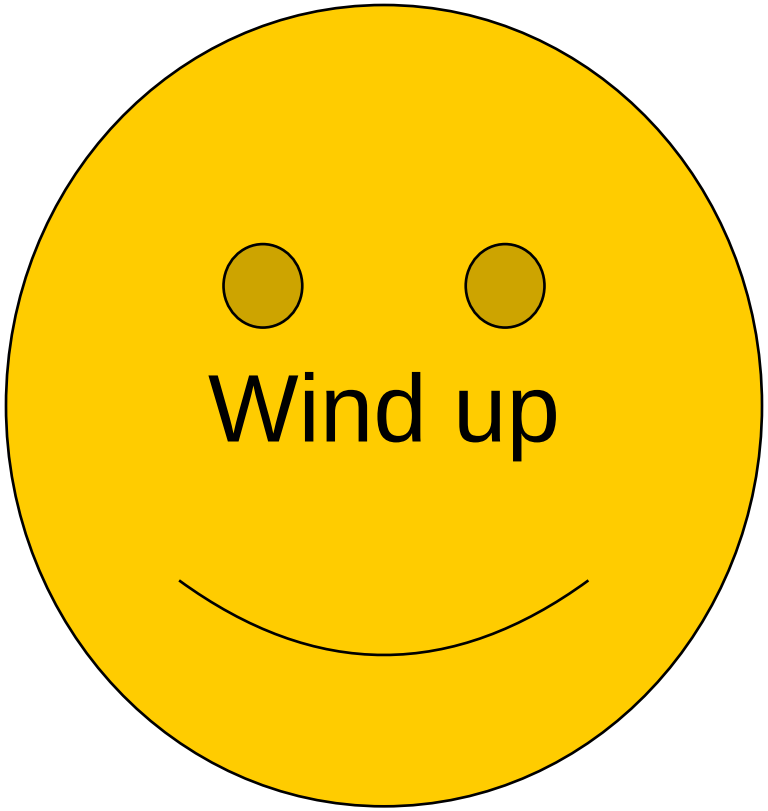
Have you benefitted from the CHEA 2009 Annual Conference?

8 Years of CHEAing
What dividends?

- **Learned lessons** for improving quality assurance practices in Nigeria
- Shared African experiences with colleagues from other countries; who are now **better enlightened** about the African QA context
- Opportunities for **networking** in QA

Thanks to Judith and her very able team …

In 25 minutes



In 30 minutes

Why perspectives from Africa?

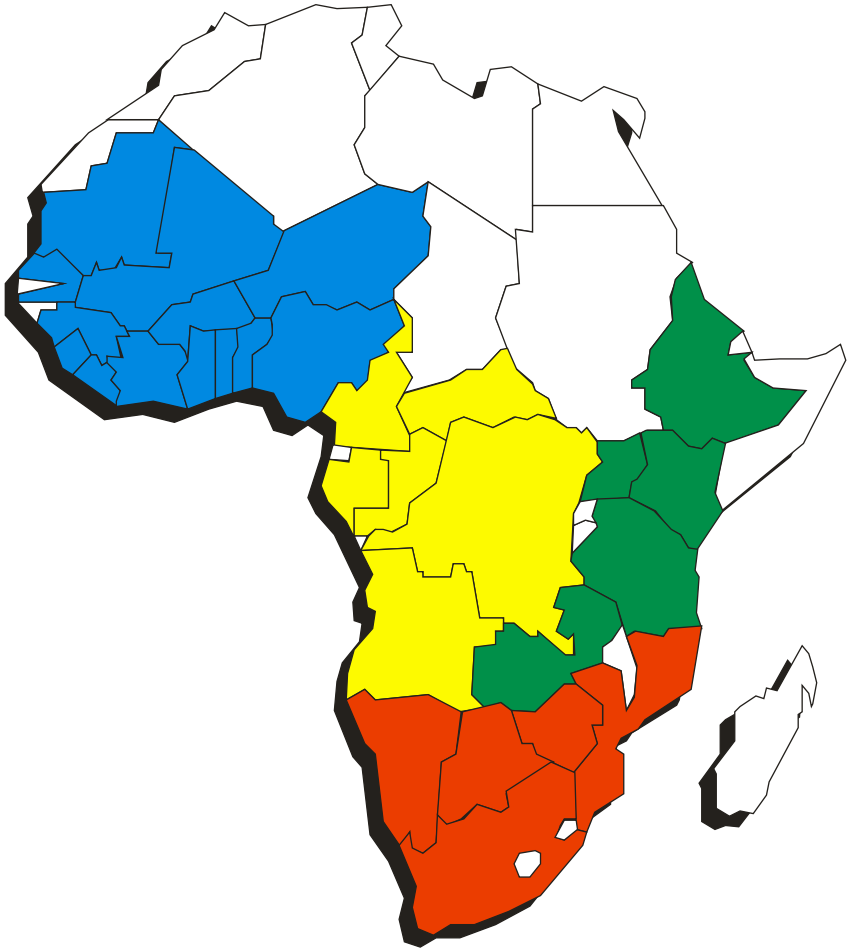
- In a globalised world of quality assurance, **we need to know what our neighbours do**
- **Learn from each other's good practices**
- Network to improve practice
- Students and staff from Africa are now in most countries of the world. **QA in African higher education becomes an issue**

In a few sentences…

African countries have moved quickly to establish effective quality assurance systems.

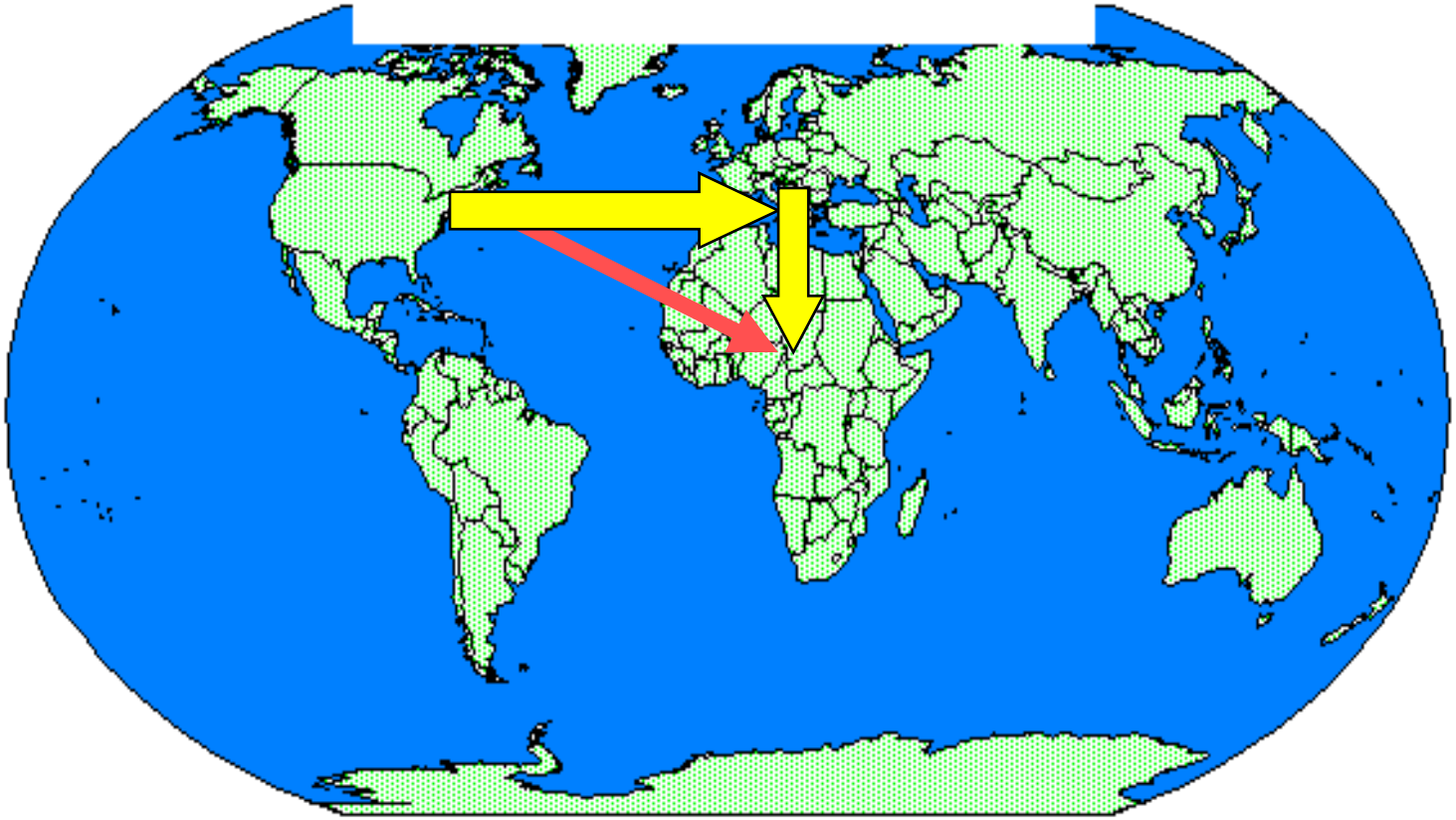
What actions have been taken and what remains to be done?

Focus on Sub-Saharan Africa

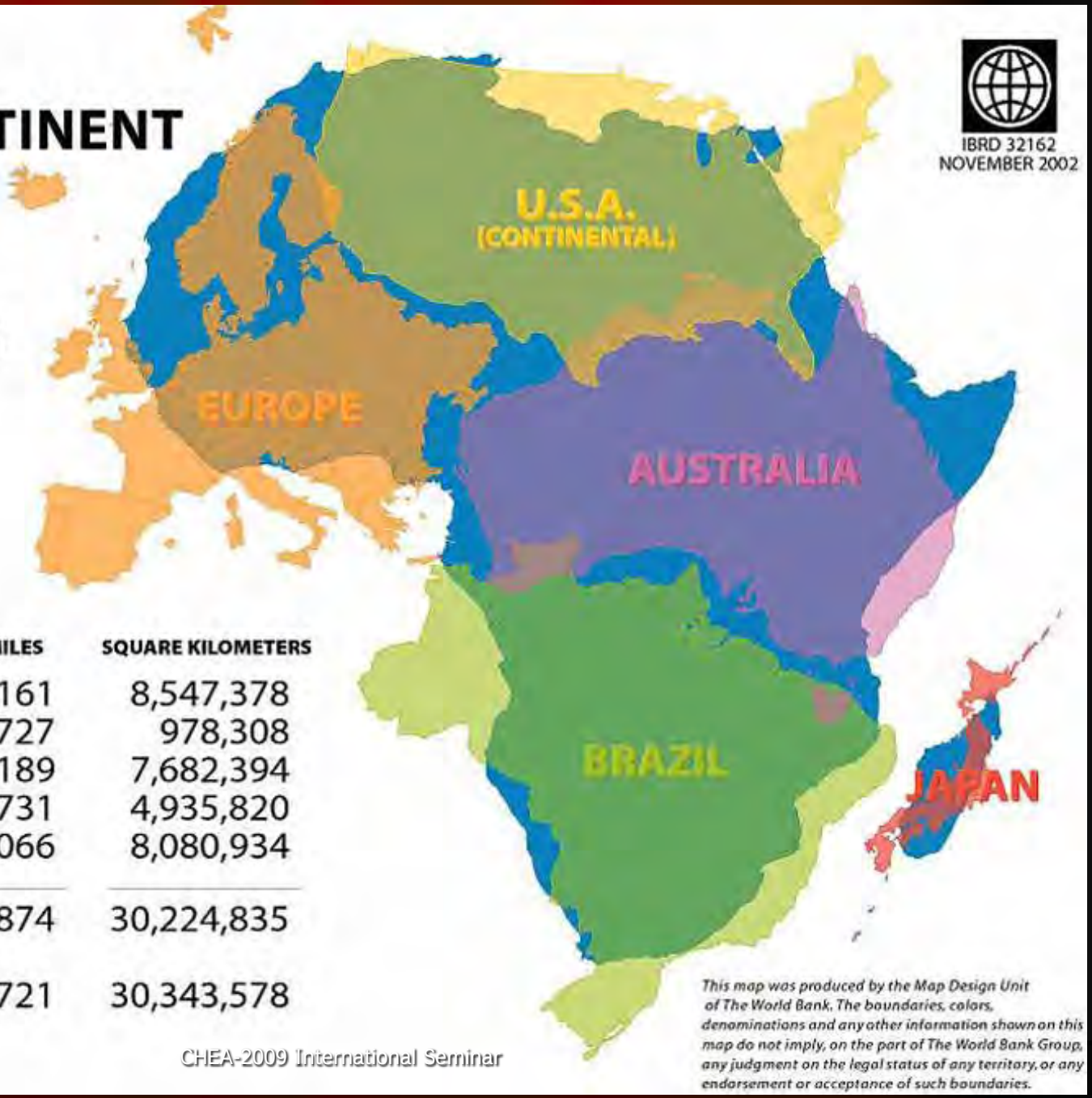


The context: A Trip to Africa

from Washington Dulles Airport



SIZE OF THE AFRICAN CONTINENT COMPARED TO OTHER LAND MASSES



	SQUARE MILES	SQUARE KILOMETERS
BRAZIL	3,300,161	8,547,378
JAPAN	377,727	978,308
AUSTRALIA	2,966,189	7,682,394
EUROPE	1,905,731	4,935,820
U.S.A. (Continental)	3,120,066	8,080,934
TOTAL	11,669,874	30,224,835
AFRICA (including MADAGASCAR)	11,715,721	30,343,578

Round the paper in **30 minutes…**

- Status of African higher education
- Where we are with regard to quality assurance practices
- Lessons learned
- The Road Ahead

Four questions….

- What is the status of higher education in Africa?
- What are the prevailing quality assurance practices?
- What are the major challenges to quality assurance
- What is the future of quality assurance in higher education?

Data sources

- 1st, 2nd and 3rd ICQAHEA conference presentations
- *GUNI 2007 World Report on Quality Assurance*
- Statistics from MOEs
- Web sites of Quality Assurance Agencies
- *Accelerating Catch-up:* by the World Bank (2008)

Some notions of higher education in Africa

Myth

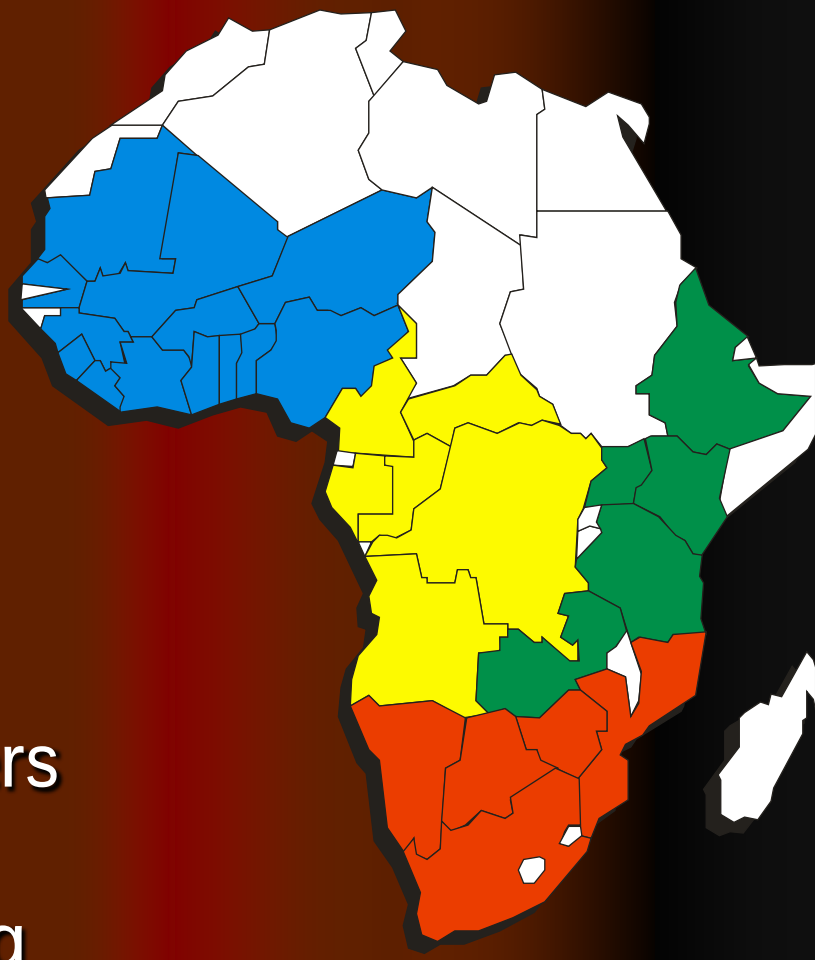
- Delivery system is all antiquated
- Graduates are mostly poorly prepared
- Too many bogus institutions

Reality

- Increasing use of new technologies
- System is producing a new breed of globally-competitive graduates
- Not the world's worst case scenario

Some statistics

- 2,302 higher education institutions
- Enrolling 6.2 million students
- 39% female enrolment
- Less than 20% in science, engineering and technology
- Contributes about 3% to the global scholarly literature
- A handful of Nobel Prize winners
- Students have potential to succeed given ambient learning environment



Access

- Africa has the lowest higher education participation rate (**mean GER= 6%)**
- **1%** in Angola, Eritrea, the Gambia, Mozambique, Niger and the United Republic of Tanzania to a high of **17%** in Mauritius; followed by South Africa with **15%** and Nigeria with **10%**.

- 2007

Stimulus for Quality Assurance

- **Demand for Efficiency and Competitiveness**
- Increased Mobility, Globalisation and Cross-Border Recognition of Qualifications;

QA Propelling Forces

- Need to be in top positions on global league tables
- Desire for better quality graduates
- Increased enrolment - massification
- Funding inadequacy- doing more with less

Benefits of QA

- **Protection of students against poor quality** programmes and maintaining the credibility of qualifications
- Encourage and support providers to institutionalise a culture of self-managed evaluation that builds on and surpasses minimum standards.
- **Increase the confidence of the public in higher education programmes and qualifications**.
- Facilitate articulation between programmes of different higher education sectors and institutions.

What quality is assured?

INPUT

- Students
- Teachers
- Non-teaching staff
- Managers
- Curriculum
- Facilities
- Finance
- Instructional materials
- Other resources

PROCESS

- Teaching and learning processes
- Research
- Use of Time & Space
- Student Services
- Administration
- Leadership
- Community Participation

OUTPUT

- Skilled and employable graduates
- Responsible citizens
- Economic and social development
- Production of new knowledge

Equity, Efficiency, Effectiveness, Relevance, Quality

How quality is assured

- External examiner system
- Institutional audit/visitations
- Routine monitoring
- Accreditation
- …

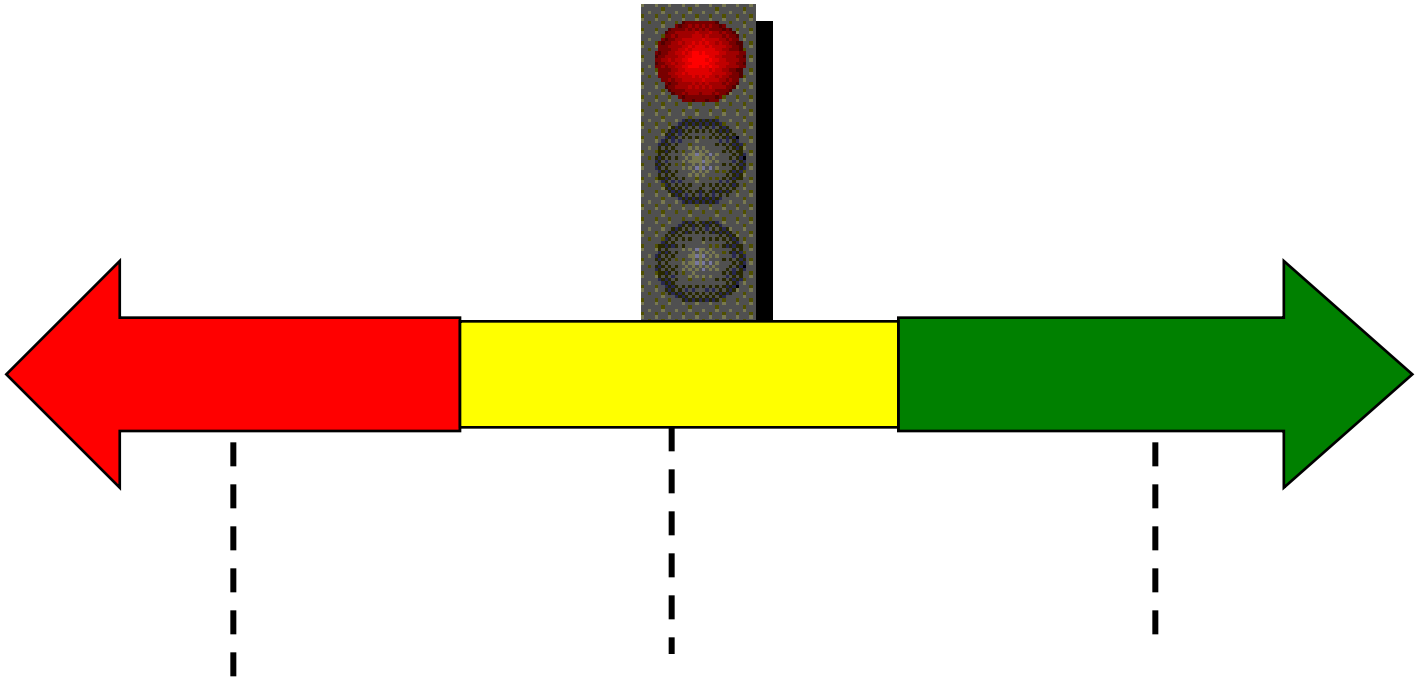
Issue of Accreditation- the Process

- Programme
- Institutional

Programme accreditation: *The Process*

- Setting minimum standards
- Self study
- Selection and training of accreditors
- Site visit
- Decision making
- Disclosure

Decision Spectrum
Programme Accreditation



- Not accredited
- Denied

- Interim accreditation
- Partial accreditation
- Provisional accreditation

- Accredited
- Full Accreditation

Cycles for programme and institutional accreditation

Programme

- Range 3 years to 8 years
- Relatively new university systems -3 years; well established systems= 5 years

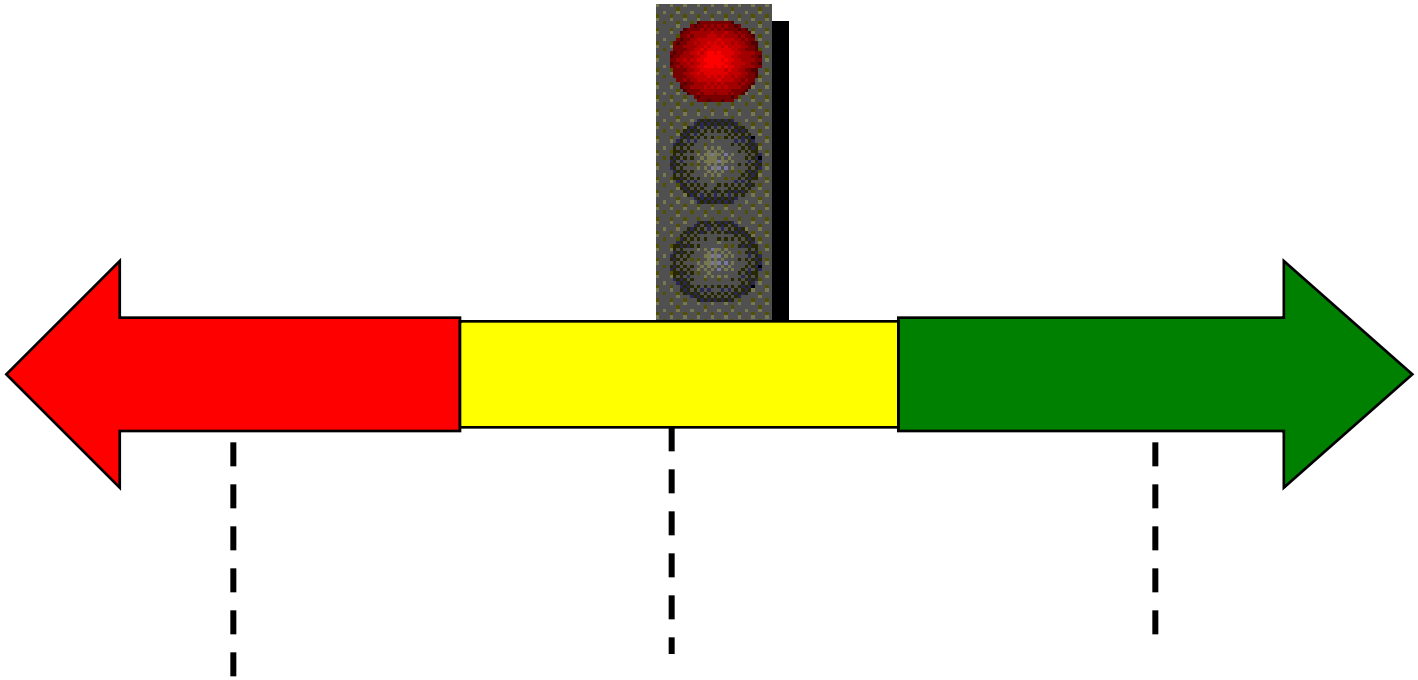
Institutional

- 5 to 10 years
- Relatively new system=8 years; well established=10 years

Institutional accreditation

- Setting minimum standards
- Self study
- Selection and training of accreditors
- Site visit
- Decision making
- Disclosure

Decision Spectrum
Institutional Accreditation



- Not accredited
- No confidence

- Partial accreditation
- Partial confidence

- Accredited
- Confidence

Impediments to quality in higher education

- Exploding demand
- Brain drain (educating Africans at the tertiary level simply leads to “brain drain.”)
- Ageing professoriate and poorly prepared younger lecturers
- Student migration
- Funding inadequacies

Impediments to quality in higher education -2

- Poor quality student input from the basic education level
- Curriculum not responding to contemporary developments
- Graduate production mismatched with national human resource requirement leading to severe graduate unemployment
- Poor teaching-learning environment

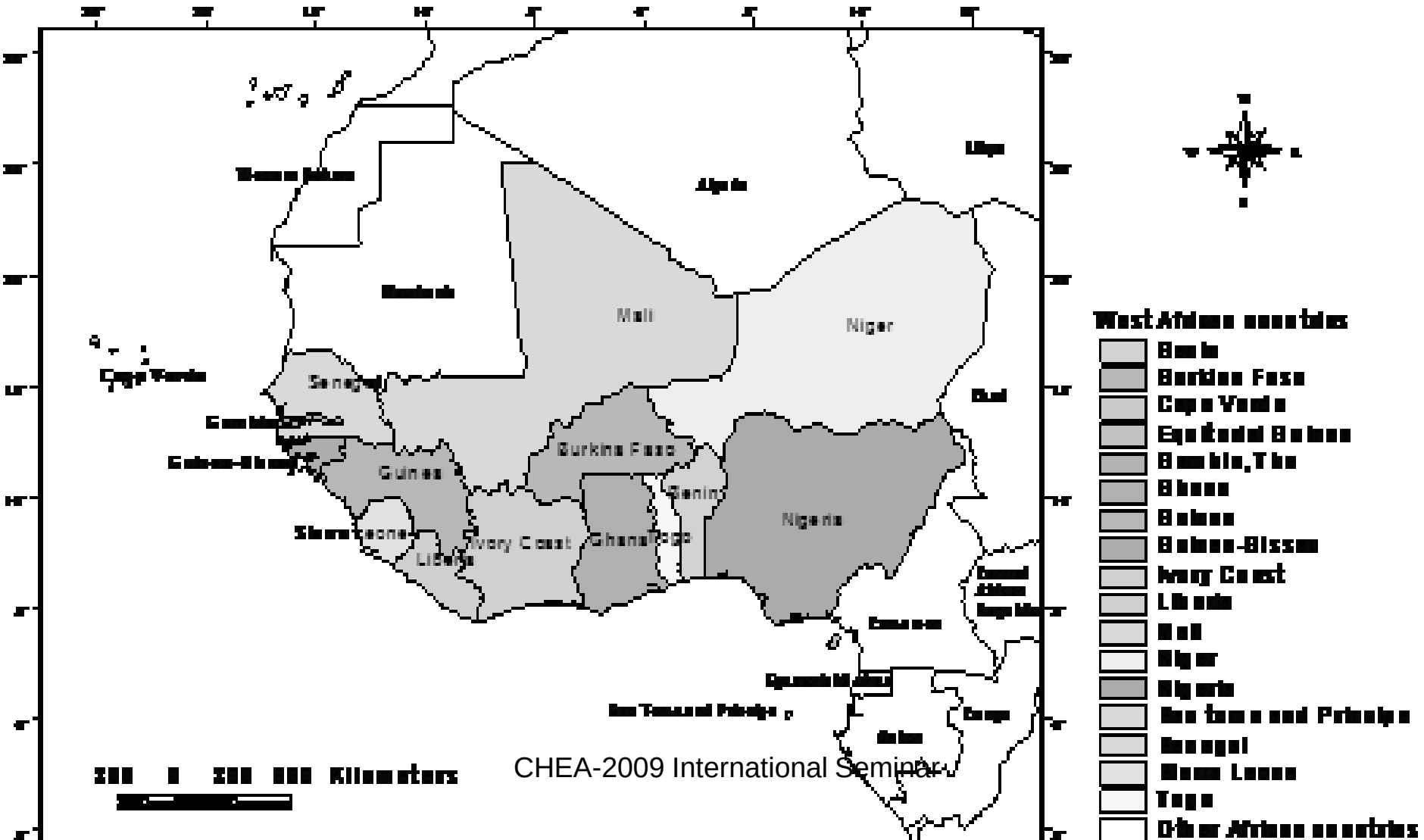
QA- Situation Analysis

- Absence of National QA mechanisms in some countries.
- Only 17 countries have existing national structures for QA
- Institutional quality assurance exists in all cases.

QA Status Report in the sub-regions

- Anglophone West Africa
- Francophone West Africa
- East and Central Africa
- Spanish-speaking (Luzophone) countries
- North Africa and Arab-speaking countries
- Southern African countries.

West Africa

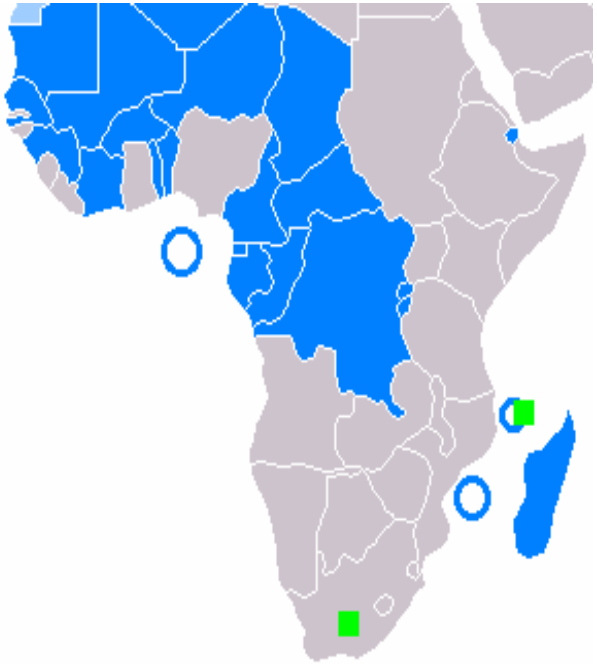

Mali
Niger
Senegal
Burkina Faso
Guinea
Benin
Nigeria
Ivory Coast
Liberia
Ghana
Togo
Kilometers

Anglophone West Africa

- Nigeria (strong national quality assurance tradition)- 45 years
- Ghana (young national quality assurance agency)
- Sierra Leone (very young national quality assurance agency)
- Liberia (forming national quality assurance agency)
- Gambia (forming national quality assurance agency)

French-Speaking Africa (Excluding North Africa)

- (a) Ten West African countries including ***Benin, Burkina Faso, Cote d'Ivoire, Mali, Guinea Conakry, Guinea Bissau, Niger, Senegal and Togo.***,
- (b) Five Central Africa countries including ***Cameroon, Central African Republic, Congo, Gabon, and Chad***;
- (c) Two countries of the Great lakes Region represented by ***Burundi and Rwanda*** and
- (d) one Indian Ocean country namely ***Madagascar***

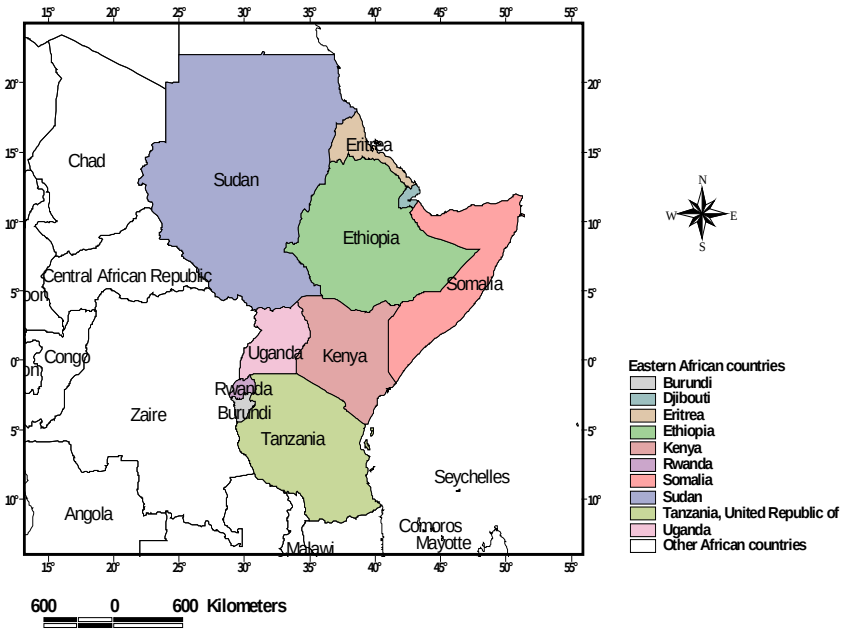


Anglophone West Africa (contd)

- Sub-regional QA agency (**CAMES**) exists
- 17 countries implement QA policies but do not have strong structures to support QA;
- 12 of 17 countries yet to set up national QAAs;
- Inadequate capacity for monitoring and for programme and institutional accreditation; and
- Limitation in QA of distance and e-learning provisions

East Africa

- Quality assurance agencies have been established in each of the four countries **Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, and Ethiopia.**



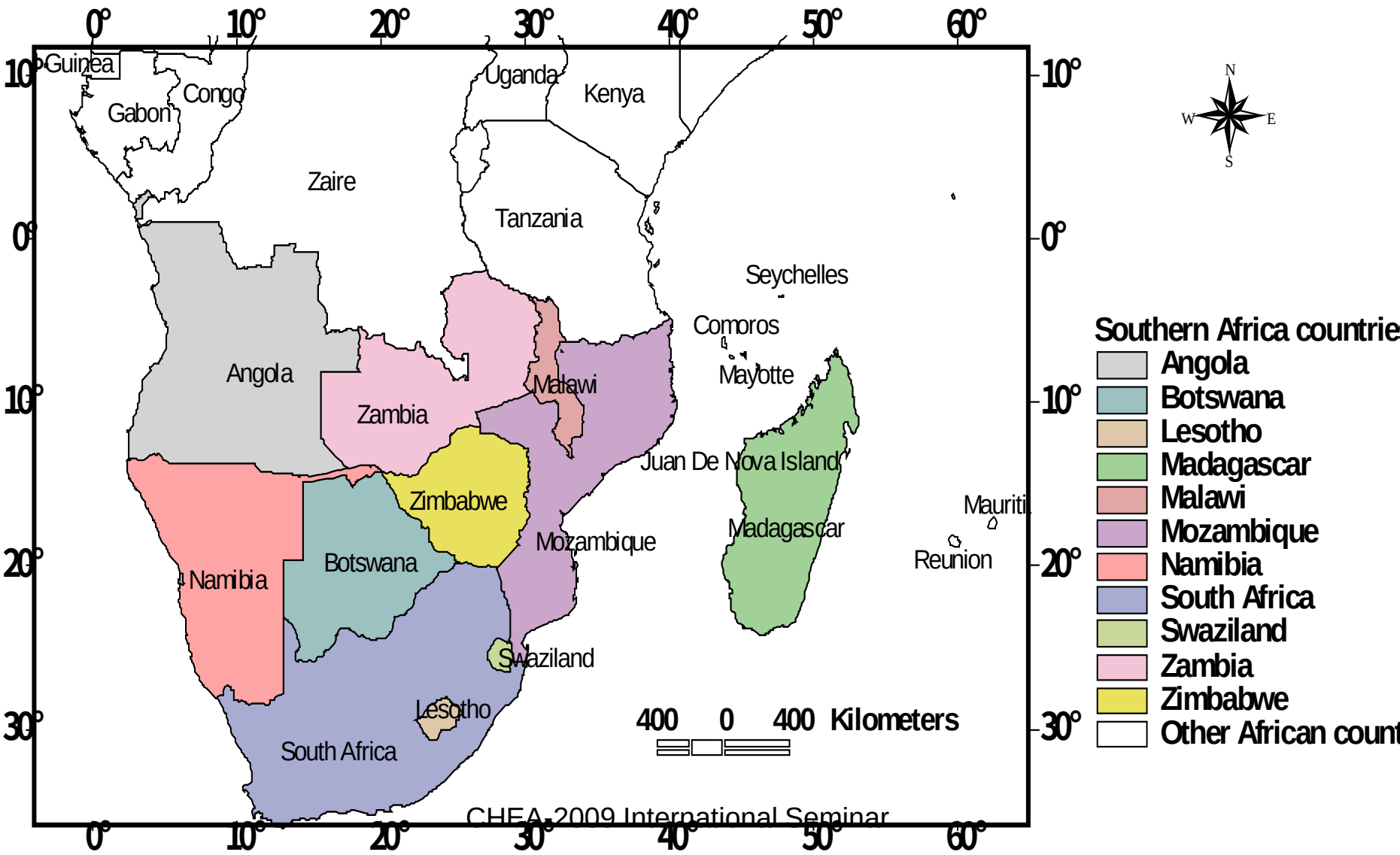
East Africa (contd)

Country	Agency	Year of Establishment	Level of Autonomy
Kenya	Commission for Higher Education (CHE	**1985**	Semi
Uganda	National Council for Higher Education (NCHE)	**2001**	Semi
Tanzania	Tanzania Commission for Universities (TCU)	**2005** (Although the Higher Education Accreditation Council was first established in **1995)**	Semi
Ethiopia	Higher Education Relevance an Quality Agency (HERQA)	**2003**	Semi

Portuguese-speaking African Countries

- **Angola** has no national quality assurance agency.
- **Mozambique** has established the National Commission for Quality Assurance (CNAQ) which will gradually become an autonomous body for quality assurance.
- Both Angola and Mozambique associated with Southern African Development Regional QA network, and are being helped to modernise their education and training systems

Southern African



CHEA-2009 International Seminar

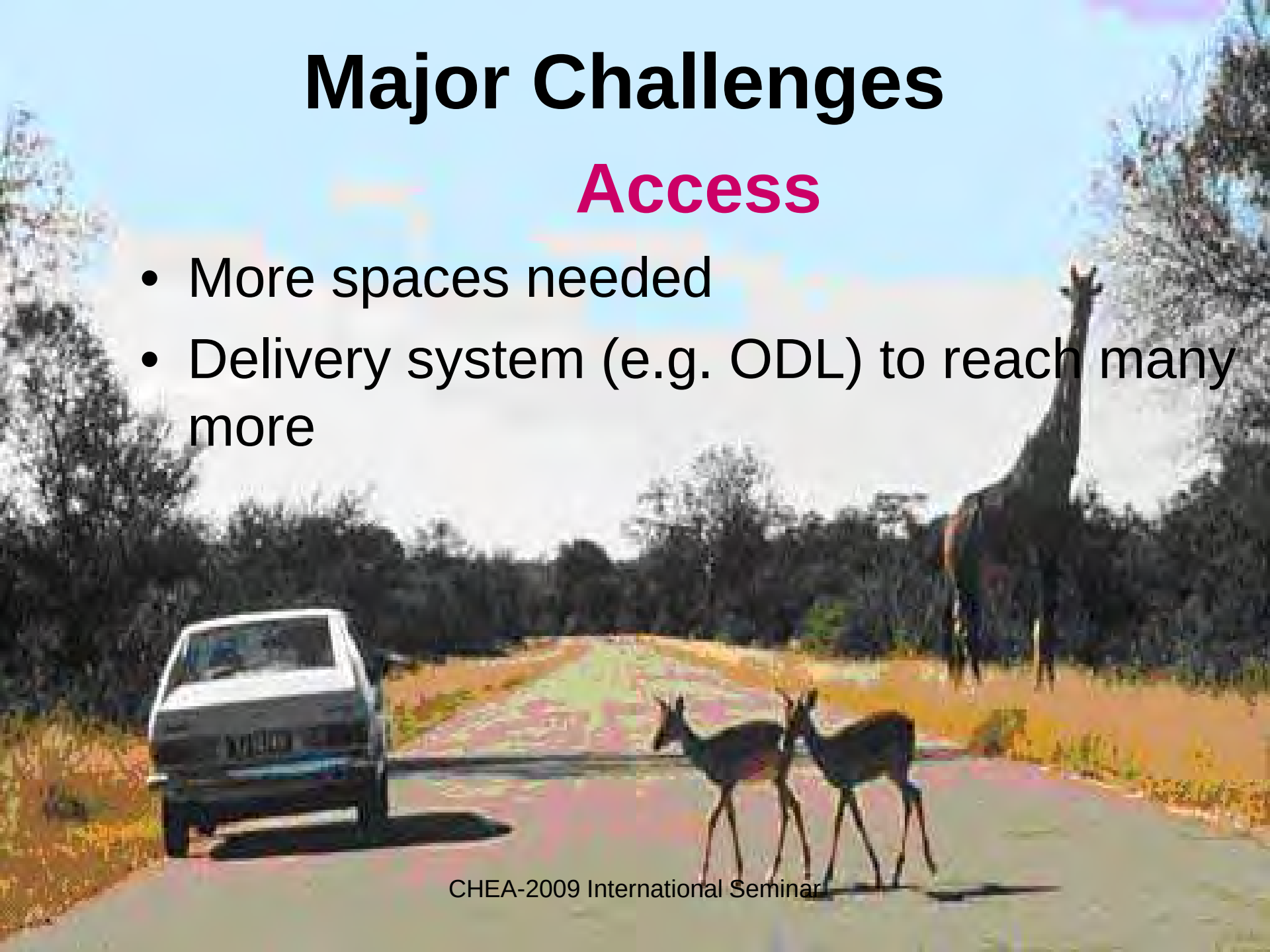
Southern Africa (contd)

- Three countries (**South Africa, Namibia and Mauritius)** have quality assurance systems in place, with national bodies responsible for coordination and ensuring coherence
- Six other countries - **Zambia, Malawi, Botswana, Swaziland, Lesotho and Zimbabwe** have well established quality assurance systems and are also in the process of modernising their systems.
- A regional effort is going on to promote the harmonisation of quality assurance.

Major Challenges

Access

- More spaces needed
- Delivery system (e.g. ODL) to reach many more



Europe – Origin of Foreign Students- 2006

Country	Foreign Student (Total)	Africa	North America	South America	Asia
Austria	31,682	965	554	320	3,885
Belarus	1,794	136	2	20	1,497
Belgium	38,150	10.973	485	646	2,609
Bulgaria	8,130	146	20	10	1,555

Country	Foreign Student (Total)	Africa	North America	South America	Asia
Croatia	2,720	5	7	1	8
Czech Republic	7,750	239	102	82	727
Denmark	12,547	382	307	123	1,027
Finland	6,288	716	294	69	1,666
France	147,402	75,465	5,242	4,253	19,828
Germany	199,132	19,394	5,387	4,265	67,658
Hungary	11,242	175	435	15	1,602

Country	Foreign Student (Total)	Africa	North America	South America	Asia
Ireland	8,207	**415**	2,044	21	1,399
Italy	29,228	**2,186**	612	1,233	3,463
Latvia	7,917	**12**	24	4	7,124
Netherlands	16,589	**2,559**	348	1,079	3,308
Norway	8,834	**733**	393	149	1,017
Poland	6,659	**296**	451	57	1,081
Portugal	11,177	**6,093**	601	1,846	142

Country	Foreign Student (Total)	Africa	North America	South America	Asia
Republic of Moldova	2,578	**81**	1		1,046
Romania	11,669	**691**	155	33	1,681
Russian Federation	64,103	**23,112**			28,013
Slovakia	1,690	**133**	18	11	390
Spain	39,944	**4,013**	2,645	6,604	1,131
Sweden	26,304	**641**	1,387	572	2,303

Country	Foreign Student (Total)	Africa	North America	South America	Asia
Switzerland	27,765	**1,802**	697	866	2,175
United Kingdom	225,722	**18,134**	18,564	2,926	74,400

Challenges: Equity and Funding

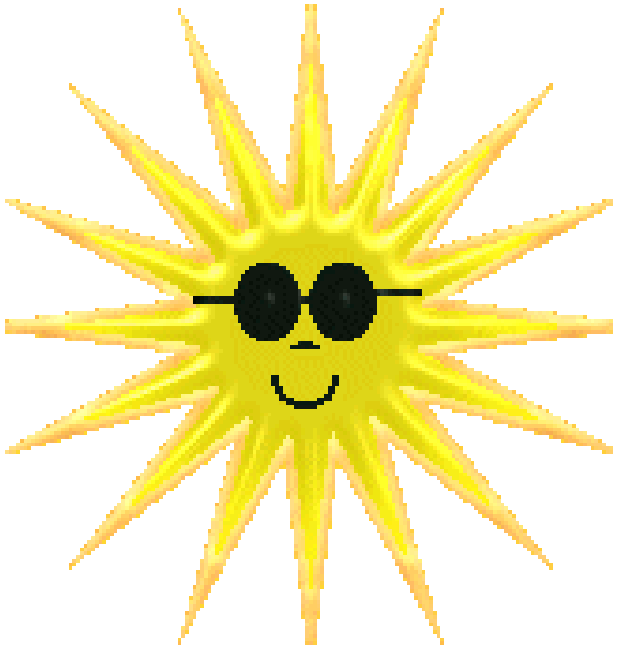
- Less females in science and technology
- For the poor and for the rich
- For under-served populations
- Funding inadequacies

Scaling the hurdles

Capacity Building Training Programs		
At Institutional Level	***At National Level***	***At sub-regional and Conti. level***
Training workshop on building internal quality assurance system in higher education institutions	Training workshop for peer reviewers as external quality auditors	Training workshop on assuring quality in distance education, e-learning, and cross-border higher education
Training workshop on institutional self-evaluation	Training workshop for experts in quality assurance agencies	Regional framework towards harmonization and Rating mechanisms

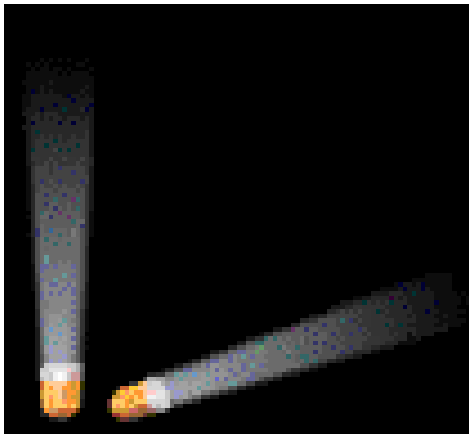
A Peep into the Future…

- Global collaboration in quality assurance
- Borderless higher education – processes and products- **Arusha Convention**



In the next 10 years

- African higher education space
- Improved quality assurance framework for open and distance learning
- Postgraduate quality assurance



Initiatives to promote quality assurance

- Establishment of national quality assurance agencies (40% growth in the last 5 years)
- Regional quality assurance agencies
- AU Decade of Education
- Intensive capacity building
- ICQAHEA

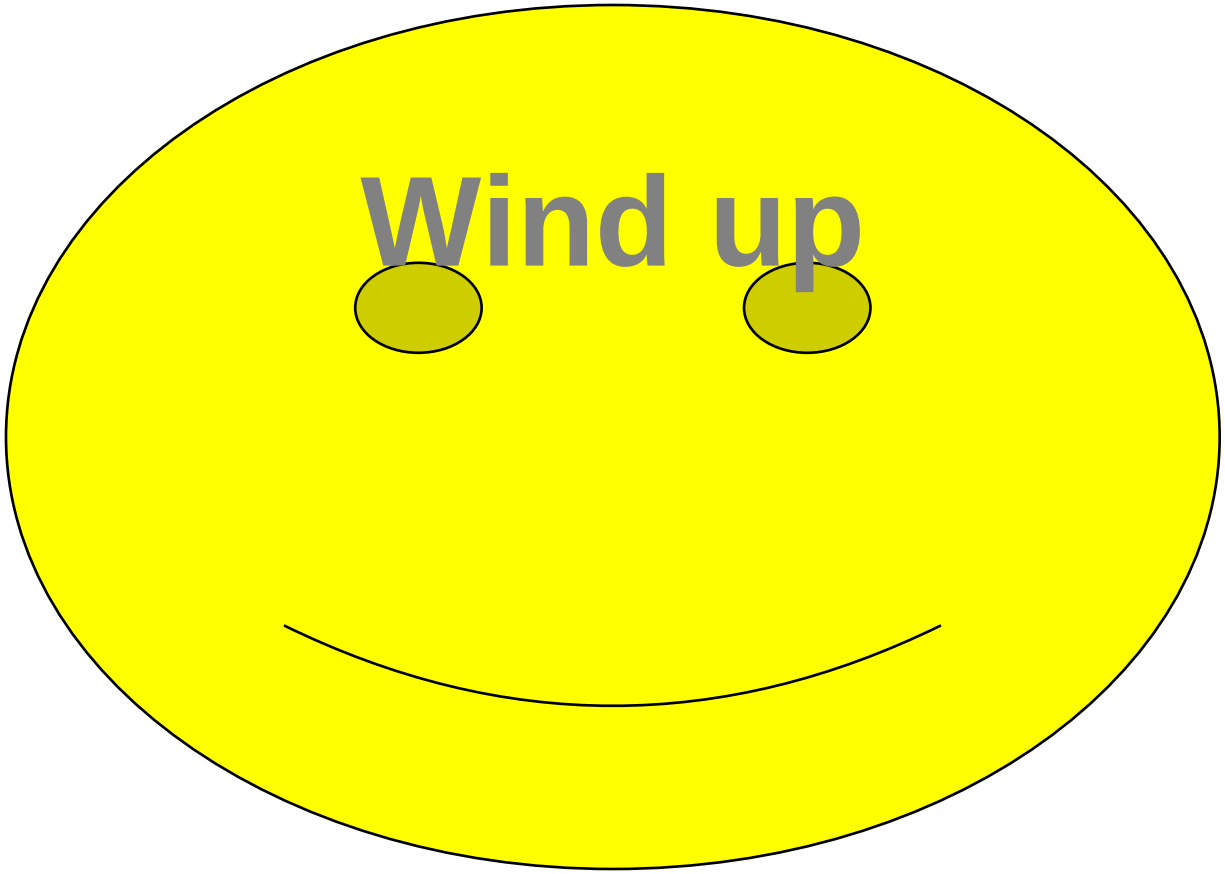
So, what’s new?

- Accreditation involving Global Experts (AGE)
- Licence-Master-Doctorate (LMD) reform
- Active use of the Diaspora
- Expansion of the ODL systems

Hot Spots….

- No. PhD no appointment/promotion to and beyond Lecturer Grade 1
- Institutional autonomy Vs central regulation

Yellow Card



What needs to be done…

- Establish national QAAs in countries without any
- Build capacity of QA experts and practitioners for programme and institutional QA activities in all countries;
- Develop national and regional guidelines for QA in cross-border provisions incl. e-learning. Consider modifying and adopting the OECD/UNESCO guidelines;

Initial reactions to a depressed economy

- Lower minimum standards? **NO**
- Reduce regularity of accreditation site visits? **NO**
- Lengthen life of accreditation status? **NO**
- Stay within carrying capacity? **YES-** Cut your quality coat according to your cloth

STOP NOW

Just before I go…

Suggestions for improving QA in Africa and for partnerships are welcome

Thank you