

## **Global Business School Network Academic Advisory Council Meeting April 2007**

*M.E.R.C and IFC would like to thank Landis Gabel and INSEAD for their generous commitment in hosting the second annual meeting of the GBSN Academic Advisory Council.*

The second annual meeting of the Global Business School Network (GBSN) Academic Advisory Council (AAC) was held on April 27, 2007. This year's objective was to align commitments from top business schools with the needs of those in the developing world. Eighteen AAC member schools sent representatives while deans and faculty of nine African business schools attended. Guests from foundations, corporations, and the media also participated.

The meeting was convened by the Management Education and Research Consortium (M.E.R.C.) in partnership with the International Finance Corporation (IFC) and the Association of African Business Schools (AABS). INSEAD kindly hosted this event at their campus in Fountainebleau, France.

The objectives of the meeting were:

- Discuss how Business schools contribute to national development
- Identify Needs and priorities of African business schools
- Understand how global business schools can nurture management education in Africa
- Define tangible commitments of partner schools in both the developed and developing world
- Clarify the future of GBSN and the roles of AABS, M.E.R.C., and IFC.

The meeting began with brief introductory remarks given by Landis Gabel of INSEAD, Guy Pfeffermann of Management Education & Research Consortium (M.E.R.C.), and David Donaldson of International Finance Corporation (IFC), followed by four working sessions:

- How Business schools contribute to national development
- Needs and priorities of African business schools
- How leading business schools can nurture management education in Africa
- Moving forward: How to make it happen?

The meeting concluded with a discussion on the future of GBSN and the responsibilities of M.E.R.C., IFC, and AABS in ensuring continued success.

Throughout the day, participants heard comments from member schools, African faculty, international organizations, NGOs, representatives of foundations and corporations, and the media. The discussion demonstrated the breadth of knowledge and experience in the room while highlighting how much work remains to be done.

Some common themes emerged from the discussion including the need for business schools to define their own strategy amidst the multitude of possible paths, while maintaining flexibility in order to take advantage of opportunities as they arise. Additionally, schools must ensure their strategic direction is a good fit given their particular context.

One of the biggest issues raised throughout the discussions was the difficulty in building and retaining skilled faculty. The pros and cons of doctoral programs were discussed at length and the idea of developing a joint program or PhD consortium among top schools was raised.

The issue of how to build more interest in Africa within international schools was also discussed throughout the day. GBSN must be more proactive and innovative in tapping into various pockets of support including student groups, alumni associations, and retired faculty, while continuing to strengthen the support of school leadership and individual faculty. Along with support within schools, the support between schools was discussed during a session regarding various forms of partnerships and linkages. These are very much dependent on the context in which they are made and the partners involved.

The last session of the day was dedicated to defining concrete actions that schools could take to further the objective of nurturing business education in Africa. Many potential activities were identified and M.E.R.C. proposed to seek out partners to take up these programs. More promising were the concrete offers made by some of the participating schools.

Some commitments were made at the institutional level, such as INSEAD, which offered to support a 2-month fellowship for African faculty to study at INSEAD; and NYU Stern which proposed to explore the possibility of holding the next Social Entrepreneurship Conference in Africa. Individuals also made commitments, for example Bob Kennedy of the Ross School, University of Michigan, offered to be a case writing mentor as well as promote 4-5 outstanding African business cases internationally.

After the last session regarding tangible actions, the discussion turned to the future of GBSN, and the evolving role of M.E.R.C., IFC, and AABS.

After four years of successful incubation within IFC, GBSN will now move into an independent organization where it will have the freedom and flexibility necessary for its continued success. M.E.R.C. will be the secretariat of GBSN and ongoing program management will shift from IFC to a combination of AABS and M.E.R.C. IFC will work with AABS to strengthen its capacity so that it can successfully take on a larger role within Africa, while M.E.R.C. will ensure the institutional knowledge gained to date will

be carried forward and continuity will be maintained throughout the transition phase. M.E.R.C. will also continue to raise awareness of the importance of business and management education while seeking funds for new capacity building programs throughout the developing world. IFC offered continued assistance with GBSN's transition for 3 years and will contribute \$1 million to build the capacity of AABS and support the activities of M.E.R.C. This transition will no doubt require flexibility and innovation; IFC, AABS and M.E.R.C. will look to the network schools for their continued support and guidance.

There were numerous points made throughout the day on a number of topics. Some of the key issues are outlined below.

### **Defining Business Schools in Africa**

Some of the issues to look at in defining an “African Business School”:

- Locally focused v. global business school
- Big business, classic MBA model v. cross-sectoral management model
- Global MBA v. simplified African MBA

Business schools as tools for national development:

- Health is a sector in which management barriers have really hindered success. Need to introduce better management to increase efficiency and improve delivery.
- NGOs and Education sector face same impediment
- Using local Business Schools to run capacity building programs resulting from development projects is much more cost effective than setting up separate trainings or bringing in ex-pats
- Donors are interested in knowing what's happening on the ground in business
- Introduce management models that lead to more efficient use of resources; change mindset and illustrate that social and financial success are not mutually exclusive

### **Priorities in Capacity Building**

- Case Studies:
  - Need to write local cases, promote teaching them in participatory way;
  - identify areas which are better for adapting international cases, areas that need to be drawn from local context;
  - different audiences require different level of complexity in cases
- Faculty development and retention:
  - Strong need to build doctoral programs and research capabilities within Africa to sustain faculty supply;
  - Sends a negative message to private sector that local institutions are sub-standard when faculty needs to be trained abroad
  - PhD partnerships can work if one or two faculty members take responsibility for visiting professors;
  - Proposed a continent-wide research methods course;

- Highlighted the need for supervision assistance of PhDs for quality assurance (doesn't need to be resident);
- Suggested the need to identify those researching same areas for collaboration purposes through a database possibly maintained by AABS
- Executive Education:
  - Not everyone needs an MBA, but need management and business skills, case studies illustrating realities in their areas; need to create problem solvers, not academics
  - Need to build EMBA, certificate programs to for current professionals and entrepreneurs

### **Barriers**

- Social Sectors: How do business schools address business and management issues in areas where bottom line is not financial?
- Health: There is a tension between saving lives, and cost-benefit of activities
- PhD Program: funding difficulties, no long term supervision (hard to get faculty to do this over span of 2-3 years)

### **Mobilizing Support**

Points of intervention within a business school:

- Leadership
- Faculty
- Non-academic staff (heads of various centers)
- Programs
- Students

Potential pools of resources:

- Student groups, from both local and international b schools
- retired professors and deans
- alumni networks

Tactics for support:

- Rally around a particular project rather than an idea;
- Hook work into research (promotion is based on research)
- Can make both a business and a moral case depending on the audience

### **Media message / PR Spin**

- Need to change image that students need to leave the continent for good education;
- Need to get away from “doom & gloom” coverage and highlight positive aspects to get people interested, optimistic
- Some schools, for example those in India, have found success by referring to management, not to business
- Emphasize developmental role of management education vis-à-vis funders

## **Partnerships and Linkages**

Key elements:

- Avoid dependency, push self-sustaining models;
- make sustainability plan a requirement from the start;
- go in with the attitude of equal partners

*Highlighted experience: Individual faculty mentor (Prof Murray Low):*

Through mentoring and giving workshops, Prof Low was able to test his theories in new settings and environments. He learned about African businesses which he took back to the classroom in US and improved teaching through workshops by teaching in a new context.

*Highlighted experience: Institutional partnership (IESE):*

IESE has been engaged in various forms of partnerships, those from a school's inception, partnering with well-established schools, partnering with multiple organizations, and building new campuses of IESE. Benefits of partnering come through long term stability, while challenges of doing such include getting full support from the dean and administration, dealing with faculty movement over time, and maintaining obligations in the face of a changing context.

## **Suggested Programs**

- An idea was put forward to bring in student teams from B schools to do follow up, M&E, implementation, etc. in order to give them experience, get them interested, and cut costs of such activities.
- INSEAD offered to support 2-month Fellowships for faculty to go to INSEAD
- Umea post-doc programs ongoing in Tanzania
- Possible collaboration on PhD consortium with CIBERS
- AABS coordinated fellowships for faculty to go North to South
- Workshops of interest:
  - Case writing
  - School administration
  - Research grant writing
- INSEAD MBAs and faculty to pair w/ African school to write a case usable by both schools
- London Business School Africa club present a source of interested students
- Case Writing Mentors: Bob Kennedy, Landis Gabel, others?
- Identify 4-5 outstanding cases from Africa to be highlighted and marketed heavily
- NYU Stern to look into possibility of holding Social Entrepreneurship Conference in Africa

## **Roles**

Role of AABS:

- Educating parent universities on role of business schools

- Capacity building w/in African schools (activities such as Dean's visits, TPM)
- B School models, accreditation education
- Lobbying for important role B Schools can / should play
- Public policy debate
- Diaspora project, looking into incentives to attract Africans back to Africa

Role of GBSN / M.E.R.C.:

- PhD Partnerships, cap building, supervision assistance
- Joint courses / visiting faculty
- Shared research / case studies
- Student visits / projects
- Hosting African faculty & students
- Disseminate project information
- PR / visibility

South-South partnering:

- Explore different models of B Schools
- Case studies exchange
- Faculty exchange

## AGENDA

### **Second Meeting of the Global Business School Network's Academic Advisory Group (AAG)**

#### **"Nurturing Business Education in Africa"**

#### **Thursday evening April 26**

20.00 Welcome and buffet dinner on INSEAD campus (Le Cercle)

#### **Friday April 27**

08.45 Welcome and introduction by *Landis Gabel* and *Guy Pfeffermann*

- General welcome
- Thanks to sponsors
- Institutional update since 2006 Tuck Meeting
- Brief personal introductions

09.15-10.30 Working session #1  
**How business schools contribute to national development?**  
Moderator: *Guy Pfefferman*

- What markets do business schools serve best?
- Where does strategic advantage lie?
- What role should business school play in developing business and management skills outside the business sector?

10.30-11.00 Networking coffee break

11.00-12.30 Working session #2  
**Needs and priorities of African business schools**  
Moderator: *Professor Franklyn Manu*

- Presentation of AABS Dean's visits; AABS projects in the pipeline
- What types of partnership work best? What are the resource constraints?
- How to spread good practice internally?
- AABS as a diffusion instrument (within AABS, beyond AABS)
- What role can schools play in lobbying for or mobilizing funding?

12.30-13.30 Buffet Lunch at INSEAD "Le Cercle"

13.30-15.00 Working session #3

## **How leading business schools can nurture management education in Africa?**

Moderator: *Professor Javier Santoma*

Successful projects:

- Individual faculty mentor (*Professor Murray Low*)
- Institutional partnership (IESE)
- Scaling up from pilot projects (CBS/LBS)

Mentoring schools:

- Internal mobilization: is there a potential for institutional support?
- Should schools specialize functionally or geographically?
- What role can schools play in financing programs and mobilizing funding? (Umea/SIDA case in point to launch the discussion)

All schools:

- How do schools deliver a consistent message to media?

15.00-15.30      Networking coffee break and group photo

15.30-16.30      Working session #4  
**Moving forward: How to make it happen?**  
Moderator: *Professor Robert Kennedy*

Potential avenues of involvement:

- Experimental fellowships
- Visits by mentors to teach in African schools
- Joint case-writing projects
- Creation of alumni advisory groups
- Pro bono consulting support to African schools
- Joint student projects
- Formal pairings/partnerships
- Other opportunities

Concrete steps: AAG commitments

16.30-17.30      GBSN coordination and funding: evolving roles

- M.E.R.C    Guy Pfefferman
- IFC        David Donaldson
- AABS      Nick Binedell
- Schools    Conference participants

19.30-20.15      Cocktails at INSEAD "Le Cercle"

20.30              Dinner at the Hotel Mercure with invited INSEAD guests: Lola Dare  
nb: All catering services are offered by INSEAD



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