

**Title: North-South-South cooperation in curricula development:  
The Case of Dortmund, Kumasi and Dar es Salaam**

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**Abstract**

Although most institutions of higher learning, especially in Sub-Saharan Africa, have visioned to become centres of academic excellence, many have not been able to excel at the anticipated pace. The author employs the case of what could be referred as the North-South-South joint curriculum design and implementation to illustrate that this type of arrangement is a potential which if harnessed could hasten the process of realising envisaged changes. The partner academic institutions of higher learning in question include The University of Dortmund (UniDO) in Germany, University College of Lands and Architectural Studies (UCLAS) of the University of Dar es Salaam (UDSM) in Tanzania, Kwame Nkurumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST) at Kumasi in Ghana and the School of Urban and Regional Planning (SURP) at Manila in the Philippines. With the exception of Dar es Salaam, the other three institutions have jointly implemented a Planning Programme coined as SPRING (Spatial Planning for Growing Economies) at a masters level for about 20 years. Plans are now underway to integrate UCLAS from Dar es Salaam in the network with a view to strengthening what the author would name the North-South-South cooperation. The emerging lessons of experience, among others, is optimised use of resources especially academic staff, knowledge complementarity and cheaper programme marketing.

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<sup>1</sup> An early consideration is needed for visa as well as budgetary reasons. I hope the conference organisers will assist me in securing the necessary funding. In case my article is selected, I will attend the conference in person.

## Background

In March 2002, the Faculty of Spatial Planning at the University of Dortmund, Germany, and the Faculty of Architecture and Planning (FAP) at the University College of Lands and Architectural Studies (UCLAS), University of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, agreed to co-operate in designing and implementing a common curriculum for a postgraduate degree programme in Regional Development Planning and Management within the SPRING International Network.

The Memorandum of understanding clearly defines the objectives of co-operation as follows:

- to jointly develop a mechanism for linking the existing MSc. Programme in Urban Planning and Management and a new MSc. Programme in Regional Development Planning and Management at FAP/UCLAS with the SPRING International Network thus allowing students of each member programme to transfer credit units and thus continue their studies at another member programme;
- to expand the pool of qualified professionals in both government and the private sector in order to increase the impact of planning and to improve the effectiveness of development projects and programmes;
- to support efforts on the local, district and national levels towards developing the institutional, organisational and conceptual framework of planning by providing models, expertise and qualified personnel;
- to extend the scope of urban and regional planning by introducing a focus on organisation and management of spatial development;
- to link academic training with professional research in order to contribute to increasing the national research capacity and to solving imminent development issues;
- to support staff development by facilitating the access to doctoral programmes at the two co-operating faculties;
- to foster exchange and co-operation between planning schools in the South;
- to provide an attractive and stronger base for the joint acquisition of research funding;
- to increase the pool of academic excellence and professional expertise within the SPRING International Network by incorporating an East Africa partner;
- to strengthen the profile of the Faculty of Spatial Planning in development related planning and management;
- to support the development related activities of German government institutions in Tanzania and East Africa.

Some of the outputs of SPRING Dortmund to the students have been; among others

- Improved knowledge of development Planning and Management concepts;
- Identified Urban and Regional development problems;
- Improved capability in designing development plans and programmes;
- Increased ability to analyse development trends and constraints ;
- Improved capability in analyses Urban and Regional development problems resources and group specific needs;
- Efficient management of development projects; and

- Improved application of instruments for implementation and control of plans and programmes.

### **The SPRING concept**

The SPRING International Network is a knowledge pool which can be tapped for all activities in the SPRING Programme, and allows for economies of scale in teaching through for instance, in the exchange of modules, joint research applications, joint marketing through retraining of practitioners, and technological development such as joint internet platform. It also provides additional competence and influence in national and international policy advice and above all, it assists in finding comparative cases in research and consultancy with a view to establishing best practices. The countries constituting SPRING International philosophy and network include Germany, The Philippines, Ghana and since March 2002 the network was expanded to include Tanzania. (See Appendix I and II for a summary of the SPRING Concept-to be faxed).

### **Rationale of co-operation**

The joint MSc. Programme will contribute to reducing the strongly felt shortage in quality planning professionals for executive positions in the public and private sector in Tanzania and other countries in the region. Besides, the shift of national development politics from socialist to market orientation and subsequent liberalisation of the land market has increased the need for experts in urban planning and land management ever further. The highly qualified professionals will become part of the forces in stirring up smooth implementation of the decentralisation policies in Tanzania. Also, this is an opportunity for programme to benefit from the SPRING philosophy which has been successfully applied in Ghana and in the Philippines will also benefit Tanzania in the updating and implementing a curriculum which is internationally linked and at the same time corresponds well to the local needs. In other words, joining SPRING PROGRAMME will assist in marketing our Postgraduate and Masters courses beyond the national boundaries. The review of SPRING Africa Project Progress was very positively impressed by the achievements of the SPRING Africa Programme.

### **Expanding the triangular network of SPRING Programme**

The quest for Tanzania to join the SPRING Programme is implicitly expanding the existing triangular network among the three Universities namely Kumasi, Manila and Dortmund.

The expansion of the two SPRING partnerships with DoP-KNUST in Kumasi and SURP in Manila to a wide and multi-lateral network has been driven by external necessities like new funding requirements, an increasing number of applications from third countries and new offers for co-operation, but also from changing demands. The original focus on rural development was gradually complemented by a growing interest in the urban effects of decentralised development management, while the concern with organisation and institutional issues called for a more pronounced consideration of management aspects.

The SPRING partners also realised that the expansion of the network would generate potentials for more comprehensive approaches to felt needs as well as new dimensions for development oriented teaching, research and consulting. The synergy effects of a larger network, if it is developed along strategic lines, can provide opportunities which are inaccessible to the individual partners.

The scope and the liabilities of co-operation between the partners will have to be extended. It will provide for partners who are closely linked by the joint Master's programme, and others who mutually accept the transfer of credit units for guest students from the partner institutions. In future, the expansion of the SPRING network will bring together the universities from South Africa, Latin America possibly Chile and the Middle East.

### **The concept for collaboration**

After an extensive review of the programme currently offered by the partner institutions and in view of the increasing demand for graduates with skills and knowledge in regional and urban development management it is imminent that Dortmund will continue to offer the first year course of SPRING, while DoP-KNUST in Kumasi, SURP in Manila and URP at UCLAS will offer both the first and second years of the programme focusing on their present demands and mission, namely Regional Development Planning and Management and Urban Planning and Management respectively. Under this arrangement the current first year programme at Dortmund will be adjusted so as to facilitate the transfer of credit points from this course to the second year MSc. Programme at either one of the three partner institutions.

According to this proposal the collaboration between FAP/URP (Dar es Salaam) and GEO/SPRING (Dortmund) should be based either on a joint Master's programme with a common curriculum and examination regulations, or on a model in which the two institutions agree and set modalities for transferring credit units. In the event that logistical and procedural obstacles for installing a joint MSc. Degree cannot be overcome in the short term, the provision of adequate modalities for the transfer of credit units is considered to be the best option to start with.

Critical issues which have to be solved while synchronising the 1<sup>st</sup> year of the SPRING programme at Dortmund and the new MSc. Programmes at the partner institutions will be worked out on the basis of the framework outlined below.

### ***Synchronisation of the first year course***

In order to facilitate the joint award of the MSc. Degree or the transfer of credit units the course programme being offered by the partner institutions will have to be harmonised. Common base or core courses as well as electives have to be identified. In order to facilitate a common base it might be necessary to consider introducing some new courses, e.g. Housing and Urban Development at GEO/SPRING and Organisation and Management at FAP/URP. Modules imparting planning methods and tools will be instructed in the first year so as to ensure that both groups of 1<sup>st</sup> year students at SPRING/DORTMUND and SPRING/UCLAS have a uniform knowledge base and are able to apply the acquired skills in real life situations during the field work practicals in the second year. At the end of the first year in Dortmund, students wishing to join Urban

Planning and Management courses at UCLAS will be required to write their final paper on urban-based issues.

Once the core course contents and electives are agreed upon between the partners, the standard course weighting system (credit unit system) will be applied in order to define the credit units which a candidate has to accomplish during the first and second year. Weighting and measurement of credit units will be based on contact hours.

It is assumed that between five and ten students of SPRING Dortmund will be able to continue their programme in the 2<sup>nd</sup> year at SPRING UCLAS. Both partners will strive to obtain scholarships for the programme.

The length of the MSc. Course will be around 20 months. It is proposed that the academic year for the programme starts at the beginning of October and ends in July/August. Common starting dates are important to facilitate and co-ordinate the link between the first and second year.

### ***Examination regulations***

The current examination regulation will be re-examined so as ensure a common base for the transfer of credit units. To achieve a successful modification of the courses and adapt them to the new partnership arrangements, at least two workshops are proposed for the staff from the partner institutions in the SPRING network to exchange views and iron out differences. The overall quality and consolidation of the proposed joint postgraduate training arrangement is proposed to be maintained not only through the joint improvement of the curriculum but also by continuous exchange of lecturers and external examiners.

### **Internal Curriculum Review**

The approved curriculum for MSc. in UPM at UCLAS spans in three Semesters lasting 18 months including lecture, examination and holiday periods. On the other hand, the MSc. SPRING programme is not semesterised and runs for between 22 - 24 months, that is 12 months in Dortmund and the second 12 months in either Ghana or the Philippines. These are fundamental differences that ought to be harmonised in order to facilitate the transfer of students from Dortmund to DoP – KNUST in Kumasi<sup>1</sup>, SURP in Manila<sup>2</sup> and URP – UCLAS in Dar es Salaam<sup>3</sup>

Under the proposed collaboration, SPRING Africa recognises special tasks that each University has to focus on (see appendix). Special tasks for URP Department at UCLAS, Dar es Salaam include:

- Development of Urban Planning Modules
- Development of Modular re-training programme
- Research on Urban Informal Development

This implies curricula synchronisation requires UCLAS to carry out the following amendments to the Masters programme in Urban Planning and Management (UPM):

<sup>1</sup> Department of Planning – Kwame Nkuruma University of Science and Technology in Kumasi.

<sup>2</sup> School of Urban and Regional Planning in Manila.

<sup>3</sup> Urban and Regional Planning in Dar es Salaam.

- Consider to increase the course duration from 18 to 20 months. Increasing course duration will not conflict with the UDSM training conditions. Already, there are Masters courses at the UDSM which run up to 24 months. For instance, the MA (Applied Social Psychology) by course runs for 24 months for full time students (UDSM Prospectus, 2000/2001: 93) and the Master of Science (Eng.) by course work and dissertation runs for 24 months for full time students (Ibid: Pg. 106). UCLAS, therefore considers to add one unity and increased the course duration to at least around 20 months. This duration takes into account of the envisaged costs and the duration of course currently conducted in the SPRING network. This implies transferring some of the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> semester courses with a view to consolidate up to 10 units in the third semester of the UPM Programme instead of only 6 units which are meant for dissertation. On the other hand, the SPRING course be reviewed for three basic purposes:
  - Reducing the course period from between 22 and 24 months to 20 months.
  - Adapting semester system at SPRING Dortmund during year one of the training. Already, the rest of the Departments and faculties at UNiDO follow the semester system.
  - Introducing some basic knowledge on urban context at SPRING Dortmund.

Increasing course duration at URP-UCLAS would also imply synchronising course units. Specifically, this may entail pooling/consolidating some of the Urban-based and research – oriented subjects in the MSc. UPM curriculum from the 1<sup>st</sup> year to the second year. Therefore, a master time table within the SPRING Networks has to be prepared.

Modalities for admitting foreign students into second part of the MSc. ought to be worked out. This is important not only because of conveniences, but also because the transfer of credits/units from Dortmund to UDSM (UCLAS) sets a limit of transferable units for the UDSM to offer degree upon graduation of the students.

## **Proposed courses**

The following outline provides a framework for subject contents:

### **Development Theories and Strategies**

- Spatial theories
- Strategies of space
- Economic theories
- Strategies of economy
- Theories of hierarchy
- Strategies of hierarchy
- Theories of consensus
- Strategies of consensus
- Planning approaches
- Current debates in planning theory

### **District Development Planning and Management Studio**

- Defining planning objectives
- Identification of stakeholders and planning team
- Data management and analysis
- Elaboration of planning options

- Decision making
- Organising implementation
- Monitoring and evaluation

### **Organisation and Management**

- Decentralisation and administrative reforms
- Organisation and management theory
- Management of change
- Humana resource development
- Good governance and development
- Participatory Rural Appraisal and District Planning
- Local institutional building

### **Development Planning Process**

- Definition of analysis, planning and implementation
- Basic planning concepts
- The operational planning process
- Programme and Project management communication and negotiation management
- Presentation and moderation skills

### ***Participation, Employment and Gender***

- Definition and concepts
- Gender theories and frameworks
- Social constructs of gender
- Information management and gender
- Gender and urban change
- Gender, civil societies and governance
- Policy and Gender issues.

### ***Settlement Pattern***

- Introduction to spatial theories
- Description of the settlement pattern, size, function and spatial distribution of settlements'
- Analysis of trends and explanation of urbanization processes
- Analysis and evaluation of the settlement structure
- Regional urbanization strategies
- Selection procedures (evaluation of location) for the identification of centers to be upgraded
- Implementation design for small rural and urban centers

### **Agricultural Development Planning**

- Planning for agriculturally dominated regions P
- Peasant economic
- Agrarian change
- Agricultural policies
- Farming systems analysis
- Relationship between agriculture and development
- Urban agriculture
- Sustainable agriculture Marketing

### **Ecology and Environmental Planning**

- Landscape ecology
- Ecosystem approach
- Land use suitability
- Land carrying capacity
- Protected area management
- Environmental Impact Assessment
- Environment and health
- Energy and environment

### **Social Infrastructure and Demography**

- Population growth and development
- Methods of Population projections including scenario writing
- Poverty reduction
- Infrastructure demand
- Public sector capacity to provide infrastructure
- Social infrastructure analysis and Planning
- The implementation of social infrastructure

### **Project Planning, Budgeting and Finance**

- Project planning cycle
- Priority setting and selection of alternative projects
- Financial management procedures and structures
- Determination of the financial capacity of different actors
- Local government planning and budgeting procedures
- Coordinating revenue sources, plans and local investment programmes
- Estimation of financial requirement of a project
- Project operations and approaches to cover financial gaps

### **Enterprise Development**

- The role of micro, small and large scale enterprises in economic development
- Medium and large scale enterprises
- Institutional preconditions for economies development Extension of economic background
- Economic policy analysis
- Entrepreneurship analysis and development
- Enterprise development strategies

### **Transport Planning**

- Nexus between transport and development
- Transport demand and modes
- Transport Planning Steps
- Integrated transport and accessibility planning: methods for problem analysis
- Labour-based/community-based technologies and maintenance in planning transport
- Impact assessment and transport project appraisal
- Transportation policy and sector development
- Administrative and institutional aspects of transport provision including the role of Public-Private partnership



## **Core Courses in Year Two Semester One**

### **Urban Strategic Planning and Management Studio I**

To have an informed urban manager: Concepts and situation appraisal

- Introduction to strategic urban planning and management concepts
- Tools for data collection in urban organisation and management
- Sensitisation of urban development stakeholders to participate in urban strategic planning and management
- Participatory rapid appraisal of urban development
- Urban environmental profiles

To have urban managers as development analysts

- Tools for data analysis
- Application of computerised geographical information in data base management
- People analysing their own situation: city-wide plenary session on critical issues
- Analysis of national policies

To have urban managers as planners: roles and tasks

- Planning tools
- Stakeholders working sessions on strategic urban development frameworks to address critical issues
- City-wide planning process
- Participation and gender mainstreaming
- Strategic urban development and management plan
- Targeting, monitoring and review

### **Urban Management Practices and Poverty**

- Concepts of cluster and neighbourhood development, planning and management
- Urban land use models
- Urban land use planning processes
- Urbanisation and urban development
- Urban public policies analysis
- Urban planning law in Tanzania
- Government resources in urban planning and management
- Urban land markets
- Decision making and power relations
- Capacity building of social institutions in socially regulated urban land development
- Regularisation of unplanned land
- Formal and informal urban land dichotomies

### **Research Methods**

- The need for planning surveys and research methodology
  - Outsiders and urban development: common biases of outsiders studying local development in the urban setting
  - Social sciences and strategic urban planning and management
- Choosing a topic and formulating a problem
  - Theory and hypothesis/propositions
  - Exploratory and descriptive research
  - Qualitative and quantitative research
  - Methods of sampling
- Official statistics: sources, availability, reliability
  - Observations, maps, aerial photographs
  - Qualitative in-depth studies, eg. participant observation, key informant participation
  - Interview schedules and questionnaires
  - Establishing entry points for interactions
  - Focused group interviews
  - Urban surveys, e.g. traffic counts
  - Composite approaches e.g. "rapid appraisal"
  - Case study methodologies
- Coding, categorisation of data, principles of classification
  - Tabulation, percentages, statistical analysis
  - Grouping of data and typologies
  - Reflections and explanations
  - The meaning of interventions
- Organisation of the report
  - Form: conventions of the presentation of tables, footnotes, bibliography, index,
  - The use of tables and diagrams, functions of appendix
  - Style of writing
  - Levels of reporting: monograph, occasional paper, journal article, newspaper article,

## **Core Courses in Year Two Semester Two**

### **Urban Strategic Planning Studio II**

Continued from Year 2 Semester I

To have urban managers as facilitators of urban strategic plans implementation

- Plan implementation tools,
- Implementation process of urban strategic plans

- Establishment of sequences for implementation of strategic urban development plan.
- Preparation of plan of operation
- Preparation of work plan and management concept for monitoring plan of operation
- Impact evaluation on policy principles
- Re-planning strategy to cope up with inadequate resources

### **Dissertation**

Develop a research strategy; outline a research methodology; carry out research, and report the findings in an analytical and professional manner.

With support from advisor, each student shall apply scientific research methods in carrying out their dissertation work. Students are expected to demonstrate sufficient skills in analyzing the issues, as well as proposing realistic and practical solutions. Each student shall be supervised by one supervisor. Students may recommend to the head of department possible supervisor who will be formerly appointed by the head of department and confirmed by the Faculty Board.

Procedures for the assessment of the dissertation are as provided for in the examination regulations.

### **Emerging Lessons**

Although the proposed joint MSc. Programme is set to start in September 2003, there are some preliminary lessons the author would like to outline for further discourses. These include:

- Joint (Inter-University) curricula development optimises the exchange and imparting of knowledge and above all, experience generated by partner universities over the years.
- The Least Developed Countries (LDC) and Sub-Saharan Africa in particular, could benefit more if the North-South-South was advocated with a more emphasis on the South-South cooperation but supported by the North. This arrangement has several advantages namely:
  - More practical to exchange academic staff because of shared context.
  - Increased chances of complementing each other in knowledge gaps and complementarity.
  - Most international organisations would like to support demand-driven efforts in the network.
- In order to make the South-South cooperation (in curricula development) effective and sustainable, there has to be some internal mechanisms of mobilizing resources especially funds and properly trained manpower. The

North support should be called in only to build capacity among partners particularly the academic staff.

- It is relatively cost effective and easier to exchange the academic staff within the South-South region than the North-South setting. This is largely because some of the conditions (which are often genuine) attached to the offers to the Northerners are relatively exorbitant.
- The international flavour of the courses offered under joint approaches seem to be more attractive to potential candidates and may lead to easier marketing of the programme at all local, national and international levels.

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