

**EUROPEAN-AFRICAN NETWORK TO IMPROVE HEI's IN AGRICULTURE
AND FORESTRY BASED ON NEW LABOUR MARKET NEEDS (AFOLM)**

***Identifying new needs in Agriculture and Forestry Labour market in
Africa to improve Higher Education***

**Presentation on the 1st Working Group Meeting: Federal University of
Technology, Akure (FUTA), Nigeria**

By

Matthew B. Oyun (PhD)

**Associate Professor and Head
Department of Forestry and Wood Technology,
Federal University of Technology, PMB 704, Akure, Nigeria
Email:banjiyun@yahoo.com
Tel (mobile):+234 0807 092 8919**

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PREAMBLE

Education, whether general or vocational, involves teaching and learning.

Any education aimed at developing the creative ability of people requires curricula and contents which must be strategically organized and taught in a manner that deliberately encourage people to question the efficacy of received knowledge, to investigate the efficacy of equipment and operational procedure, and devise alternative processes and models which can perform at higher levels of efficacy.

This brings to fore, the issue of strategic organization of education programmes and technology of teaching

Specific to agriculture and forestry curricula and contents, organization and the teaching strategies should be capable of building capacity of recipients (students, local people) to such a level of excellence that will make them job creators, productive work force, and improve their quality of life to such a degree that they will cope with the demand of life whenever they may find themselves

The Federal University of Technology, Akure (FUTA), Nigeria, is an autonomous Public Institution established by the Federal Government of Nigeria in 1982.

It's main goal is summarised in the University's Motto, which is "technology for self reliance" .

It currently operates under six Schools namely: Agriculture and Agricultural Technology, Sciences, Engineering and Engineering Technology, Earth and mineral sciences, Environmental Technology and the Postgraduate Studies.

Each of the Schools has several related Departments.

The School of Agriculture and Agricultural Technology

The School of Agriculture and Agricultural Technology, SAAT, was one of the pioneering schools established when the University took off in 1982.

Mission

Within the broad mission of the University, the Academic Programmes of the School were specifically packaged to:

- a). Provide education in the science and technology of agriculture that will be functional and of academic excellence
- b). Provide continuing opportunities for agriculturists, foresters, farm management and agricultural extension experts, fisheries and wildlife, crop, livestock and animal health specialists, and related disciplines in their areas of expertise and to make such training relevant to national needs and development goals.
- c). Improve agricultural potentials of local farmers by providing:
 - (i). Extension services that will bring the results of research to their use and benefits
 - (ii). Opportunities for visits by local farmers to teaching, research and commercial farms of the University for mutual and beneficial interaction,
 - (iii). Relevant short-term training for those involved in production and management of farm products for the acquisition of techniques for improved production

e) Collaborate with the federal and state Governments, Parastals, Institutes and other organizations in the areas of research in Forestry, Crop and Animal Production, farm and soil management, fisheries, Wildlife Production and Management .

f. Get involved in actual production of food both for the needs of the University and for the immediate community

g. Work in close cooperation with the other Schools in the University and complement or supplement their efforts in other to achieve the set goals of the Federal University of Technology, Akure, Nigeria

Currently, the School has seven Departments namely:

(i). Agricultural Economics and Extension

(ii). Animal Production and Health

(iii). Crop, Soil & Pest Management

(iv). Fisheries and Aquaculture

(v). Food Science and Technology

(vi). Forestry and Wood Technology

(vii). Wildlife and Ecotourism

Report of 1st Working Group (FUTA)

Issues Confronting Agriculture and Forestry Education in Nigeria

1. The training/education programmes at the Faculties of Agriculture/Forestry in Nigerian Universities are not well related to the needs of the new labour markets
2. The Faculties of Agriculture/Forestry do not adequately valorize outreach activities
3. Inefficient management or allocation of resources to different activities in the Universities
4. Total dependence of the Universities on the national subsidy for funding which in most cases is not adequate (2% of the annual national budget as against 26 % bottom line by UNESCO standard).
5. Inadequate linkages between Universities and industries
6. Non involvement of the civil society (stakeholders) in the design of education programmes (curriculum development)

Criteria or Framework for the Proposed Changes in Agriculture/Forestry Education in Nigeria

1. Involvement of civil society groups (stakeholders) in curriculum development through:
 - Consultations through memoranda
 - Membership of education committees in Universities/national university commission
2. Improvement of existing symbiotic links between Universities and industry through:
 - Increased funding of entrepreneurial training of University students
 - Facilitation of students' industrial work experience scheme by the industry
 - Funding support for research by the industry
 - Change agents to focus more on information dissemination
3. Internal machinery to strengthen capacity of the universities to reduce dependence on national funding through:
 - Increased capacity for internally generated revenue
 - Increasing research efforts
 - Co-funding by private/industrial bodies
 - Encouraging industries to commercialise research findings
4. Defining new directions and foci of Nigeria's Agriculture/Forestry Education programmes for undergraduate, graduate and diploma students

Undergraduate

More focus on entrepreneurial skills
Capacity building

Graduate

Empowerment for self reliance
Micro credit schemes
Integration into the industry

Post graduate

Scholarships/Fellowships
Professional assistance for research

Diploma

Practical skills
Micro credit scheme

General

Market oriented programmes
Demand driven (private and public)



5. Making graduates of Nigerian institutions to be more productivity oriented (job makers rather than job seekers) by:

Starting training programmes that are job oriented/entrepreneurial skills

Developing model villages for small scale farming, emphasizing partnership

Linking graduates to financial institutions for funding

Building capacity to enable the graduates to add value to forest and farm produce

Establishing graduate monitoring programmes

Access to land

Micro credit financing of small scale enterprises

6. Putting in place strategies that can help to source adequate funds for agriculture and forestry training institutions in Nigeria through:

Developing linkages and partnerships with other institutions

Creating income generating projects

Lobbying government

Lobbying the private sector

Developing appropriate development programmes

Property rights

7. Making agriculture and forestry training institutions to facilitate improvement of small scale and peasant (resource poor) agriculture and forestry practices (through:
Developing centres of continuing education (short term courses, seminars)

Assist in facilitating access to markets

Strengthening linkages between research and extension

Productions of brochures/leaf lets/hand bills

Generation of appropriate technology that is:

- user friendly
- affordable, and
- accessible

Main objectives of curriculum development

Within the context of the present AFOLIM Project, the main objectives of curriculum development are:

1. to benefit from acknowledged expertise and skills in education and training
2. to increase the amount of networking amongst education professionals
3. to improve communication between training professionals (experts) in order to arrive at a better appreciation of the various situations in Africa
4. to support the teachers and trainers as they face up to the challenge of improving the fundamental living conditions of local population.
5. to make the most out of all the training experiences of other countries and “on the ground” in order to enhance the contribution of teachers

Main proposed areas of curriculum development

A. Entrepreneurial leadership skills

Business administration

Risk management

Personnel management

Strategic planning and management


B. Technical skills

Environmental science

Meteorological observations on climate change in relation to agriculture/forestry

Hi-tech applications



A photograph of a person wearing a traditional conical hat and a patterned shirt, standing in a field of tall, golden-brown grass. The person is positioned in the center-right of the frame, looking towards the camera. The background is a vast, open field under a bright sky.

Thank you for listening