REPORT OF THE AFRICAN COUNCIL FOR DISTANCE EDUCATION-QUALITY ASSURANCE AND ACCREDITATION AGENCY (ACDE-QAAA) TRAIN-THE-TRAINERS WORKSHOP ON THE USE OF AFRICAN COUNCIL FOR DISTANCE EDUCATION ACDE QUALITY ASSURANCE TOOLS AND INSTRUMENTS FOR EVALUATION OF QUALITY IN ODL AND E-LEARNING IN AFRICAN HIGHER EDUCATION, ORGANIZED BY ACDE-QAAA IN COLLABORATION WITH NOUN, HELD FROM 24TH - 25TH SEPTEMBER, 2018 AT ABUJA, NIGERIA.

Introduction
The African Council for Distance Education (ACDE) Quality Assurance and Accreditation Agency in collaboration with the National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN) guided by the concern for parity of standards and esteem in ODL provision and mindful of the organizational pedagogical and methodological features that characterise ODL, organised the ‘Train-the Trainers’ Workshop on the use of African Council for Distance Education (ACDE) Quality Assurance Tools and Instruments for Evaluation of Quality in ODL and E-learning in African Higher Education. The workshop was held in Abuja, Nigeria, from 24th - 25th September, 2018.

Workshop Opening Ceremony
The workshop was declared open by the Vice-Chancellor, National Open University Nigeria, Prof Abdalla Uba Adamu, after a welcome address by the Director, ACDE-QAAA Prof. Nebath Tanglang. Thereafter, the Executive Director, ACDE, Prof. Rotimi Ogidan gave his welcome address.

Objectives
The workshop familiarized participants with the ACDE-QA Toolkit and how it could be used to enhance quality. Some of the specific objectives of the workshop were as follows:

1. To help participants appreciate the quality challenges of Distance Education provision.
2. To familiarize participants with quality assurance of Distance Education provision in a digital age.
3. To enhance capacity of NOUN staff to deliver high quality Open, Distance and eLearning (ODEL) programmes.
4. To lay foundations for the development of a robust quality assurance system for Distance Education programmes at NOUN.

The workshop was coordinated by the Director, ACDE-QAAA Prof. Nebath Tanglang and facilitated by Dr. Ephraim Mhlanga, lead facilitator; and two other facilitators: Dr. Eleanor Johannes and Prof. Christine Ofulue. Prof. Rotimi Ogidan, ACDE Executive Director, was in attendance at the workshop.
Sub-Topics
Below are some sub-topics covered during the workshop:

- Quality and Quality Assurance in Higher Education: Conceptual matters.
- Assuring Quality in Distance Education.
- Catering for the Typical DE Students.
- Toolkit Development and Validation.
- Quality Assurance in the Toolkit.
- Quality Standards in the Toolkit.
- Internally Driven Quality Assurance.
- The Changing face of Distance Education Provision.
- How internal quality assurance can drive success.
- The Effects of Internal Quality Assurance on Quality and Employability.

Lessons Learnt
The experiences shared by different facilitators are very important to note. These include the following:

1. No time to be done with quality; unless you continue, you may find yourself obsolete.
2. Open and Distance Learning is the best option for providing access and enhancing quality in educational system.
3. Established human contact between learners, course materials and organization.

The important roles which the use of ACDE-QA Toolkit play in Open and Distance Learning were also learnt particularly to promote continuous self-improvement and build a culture of quality in higher ODL Institutions in Africa. We have realized that in a knowledge society, government stimulates and support universities in opening up to citizens and society at large.

Significance of the Toolkit
The toolkit has the following importance:

1. The criteria, standards, indicators and performance measure reflect current global practices for Quality Assurance in Open & Distance Learning.
2. The Toolkit aims at developing capacity for institutional self-improvement and building a culture of quality.
3. The framework is flexible to accommodate individual ODL higher education institutional provision in contextually specific environments and covers the full range of distance delivery methods from print to online learning.
4. The Toolkit is designed in a way that it can be contextualized.
5. The Toolkit is appropriate for the use by both new and old institutions.
6. The Criteria are based on the common core processes of higher education institutions and the scope covered by the criteria is well defined.
7. The Toolkit has undergone several revisions with input from international experts.

How to Use the Toolkit
The overall aim of the Toolkit is to prove and improve Open and Distance Learning (ODL) practice. It can also be used in the following ways:

1. The Toolkit can be used for accreditation by the African Council for Distance Education ACDE.
2. It can be used as multipurpose tool used in innovative ways.
3. It can be used for monitoring performance so it can be proactive in addressing issues (all or selected programme).
4. It can be used for collection of data that fit into planning at various levels.
5. It can be used for self-assessment.
6. It can be used for self-performance; reporting on own performance to relevant stakeholders.
7. It can be used for peer reviews.
8. It can be used for inter-institutional comparisons.
9. It can be used as guidelines in developing new programmes and resource materials.

**Way Forward**

After the workshop, the following were suggested:

1. That the Toolkit be made available to all members of staff of NOUN.
2. That NOUN should ensure that the Toolkit is being used from time to time.
3. That there should be award to individuals, Study Centres, Faculties, Departments and Units who excel in demonstrating compliance in the use of the toolkit.
4. That participants should further train members of staff in their respective Centres and Directorates on the use of the Toolkit.
5. That NOUN should institute a ‘Quality Day’ for the purpose of showcasing Quality activities by the various units in the university.

**Participants**

A total number of 54 senior management staff of NOUN participated in the workshop. The categories of staff include: Principal Officers, Deans of faculties and Directors of the various directorates of the university.

**Acknowledgment**

I wish to express our profound gratitude to the African Council for Distance Education (ACDE) and NOUN for organizing this important event. This has really exposed participants to so many things that are too numerous to be mentioned. These lessons will really assist in achieving the vision and mission of African Council for Distance Education.

**Recommendations**

I hereby recommend as follows:

1. That ACDE should make it a point of duty for all member institutions to conduct annual training on the use of ACDE Toolkit.
2. That there should be regular accreditation exercise by ACDE to each member institutions using the Toolkit.

**Prof. Nebath Tanglung**

*Director, ACDE-QAAA*
NOUN VC, Prof. Abdalla Uba Adamu, presenting his welcome address at the Train-the-Trainees Workshop on the use of African Council for Distance Education (ACDE) Quality Assurance Tools and Instruments, hosted by NOUN in Abuja.

The ACDE Executive Director, Prof. Rotimi Ogidan, presenting his remark at the commencement of the workshop.
A group picture of the participants at Train-the-Trainers Workshop on the use of African Council for Distance Education (ACDE) Quality Assurance Tools and Instruments hosted at the National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN). Standing in the middle with a deep blue caftan dress was NOUN Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Abdalla Uba Adamu; on his immediate right was Dr. Johannes and immediate left was Dr. Mhlanga, the two facilitators at the workshop. On the immediate left of Dr. Mhlanga was the Director, ACDE-QAAA, Prof. Tanglang.
A cross-section of the participants comprising Professors, Deans and Study Centre Directors during the workshop at the National Open University of Nigeria, Abuja.

Some participants at a break-away group exercise during the Train-the-Trainers Workshop on the use of African Council for Distance Education (ACDE) Quality Assurance Tools and Instruments.
Dean, Faculty of Science, Prof. Monioluwa Olaniyi, presenting a report on behalf of her group to all the participants during the workshop training.

Some participants at a break-away group during the Train-the-Trainers Workshop on the use of African Council for Distance Education (ACDE) Quality Assurance Tools and Instruments
Some participants at a break-away group during the Train-the-Trainers Workshop on the use of African Council for Distance Education (ACDE) Quality Assurance Tools and Instruments
Some participants at a break-away group exercise during the workshop. Standing with microphone was one of the facilitators, Dr. Eleanor Johannes, monitoring activities of the group.

Dr. Ephraim Mhlanga, Lead Facilitator, making additional illustration during his presentation at the workshop
The Director of the African Council for Distance Education (ACDE) Quality Assurance and Accreditation Agency, Prof. Nebath Tanglang, presenting workshop evaluation form to the lead Facilitator, Dr. Ephraim Mhlanga, and other participants for workshop evaluation.
At the end of the workshop training, the Vice-Chancellor, National Open University of Nigeria, Prof. Abdalla Uba Adamu (left) presenting NOUN souvenir to the ACDE Executive Director, Prof. Rotimi Ogidan (right). In the middle holding the microphone was the Director of the ACDE Quality Assurance and Accreditation Agency, Prof. Nebath Tanglang.

At the end of the workshop training, certificate of attendance was presented by the Vice Chancellor, National Open University of Nigeria, Prof. Abdalla Uba Adamu; on the right is the ACDE Executive Director, Prof. Rotimi Ogidan; and in the middle is the Director of the ACDE Quality Assurance and Accreditation Agency, Prof. Nebath Tanglang.