



PUBLIC LECTURE

SUSTANABLE MODELS OF
INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL
QUALITY ASSURANCE
FRAMEWORKS IN HIGHER
EDUCATION



MARCH 2018

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

CESA	Continental Education Strategy for Africa
EQA	External Quality Assurance
ICAN	Institute of Chartered Accountants of Namibia
INQAAHE	International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education
IQA	Internal Quality Assurance
ISO	International Organisation for Standards
ISQA	Introduction on Sustainable Internal Quality Assurance
IUM	International University of Management
NCHE	National Council for Higher Education
NQA	Namibia Qualification Authority
NTA	Namibia Training Authority
NUST	Namibia University of Science and Technology
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
QA	Quality Assurance
SADC	Southern African Development Community
UN	United Nations
UNAM	University of Namibia

INTRODUCTION AND WELCOMING REMARKS



Ms Sylvia Demas - Deputy Executive Director of NCHE

The National Council for Higher Education (NCHE) organises annual public lecture series. The 2018 annual public lecture took place on 15 March 2018 at the NAMPOWER Convention Centre, in Windhoek Namibia. The public lecture was under the theme: “Sustainable Models of Internal and External Quality Assurance Frameworks in Higher Education”.

The Deputy Executive Director of NCHE, Ms Sylvia Demas welcomed everyone to the 8th public lecture. She explained that the public lecture is an annual event having begun in 2009. It typically seeks to provide a platform for interaction, exchange of knowledge and experiences, as well as sharing of good practices among stakeholders in higher education.

Ms Demas defined a quality product as one that conforms to customer expectations, and thus meeting customer requirements. She said costs, available technology, time, marketing and other variables can impact on quality. She explained that in higher education, graduates formed the main products, while the government, stakeholders and other employers are customers.

She pointed out that it is important for NCHE to regularly explain its quality standards given that there are various factors that impact on the quality of higher education products. These factors according to her might include changing policies, increased levels of enrolment, widening access and pressure on human, financial and physical resources.

Ms Demas explained that the NCHE held the view that internal and external quality assurance could only produce sustainable results when they were sustainable. The 8th Public Lecture,

therefore, had been organised to explore sustainable models of internal and external quality assurance frameworks in higher education.

The Deputy Executive Director then introduced the Keynote Speaker, Dr Cosam Joseph. Dr Joseph is the Chief Principal for Quality Assurance and Qualifications Framework at the Inter-University Council for East Africa (IUCEA) where he is in charge of coordinating the development and operationalisation of the East African Quality Assurance System policies, threshold standards, guidelines and procedures. He is also responsible for coordinating and carrying out capacity building initiatives on various quality assurance regimes to staff of universities and the commissions/ councils for higher education. Dr Joseph holds a Ph.D. in Organic Chemistry.

This report publishes the keynote presentation at the event, and summarises the key issues that were discussed during this lecture, especially by the keynote speaker, as well as the responses raised to those issues by panel of discussion that attended and participated in the lecture. The report also captures questions and comments from the audience.

At the end of the report, concluding remarks have been captured to enlighten the reader on key matters that need attention.

KEYNOTE PRESENTATION



Dr Cosam Joseph

Dr Joseph began by expressing gratitude to the NCHE for inviting him to share his personal experiences in line with the chosen theme of the public lecture. He presented the outline of his lecture as follow:

- Overview on Global and Regional Dynamics on Quality Assurance
- Paradigm shift influencing reconstruction of higher education
- Quality Assurance and Stakeholders' satisfaction
- Introduction to Sustainable Internal Quality Assurance (IQA) & External Quality Assurance (EQA) Models vs University Models
- IQA & EQA Models
- Quality Assurance of Quality Assurance Agencies for Sustainable EQA Models.

He explained that he would regard Internal and External Quality Assurance Models as systems which always have to work together regardless of the differences they may encounter in their functions or operations. He further noted that he would also look at global dynamics and try to zero-in on what higher education institutions should respond to.

His view was that UN Sustainable Development Goal 4 (Ensure inclusive and quality education for all and promote lifelong learning) would be a good starting point. He would also focus on the African Union Agenda 2063, especially its Continental Education Strategy for Africa (CESA).

Dr Joseph alluded to a move in SADC to focus on skills development as a sub-regional agenda and suggested that Namibia, being in SADC, should in its intervention focus on how to respond to the SADC Agenda. He noted that Namibia's socio-economic blueprint Vision 2030 had two important pillars related to human resources development, institutional capacity building and knowledge information technology.

Dr Joseph said he had taken a close look at the NCHE website to get a sense of what the institution was doing. The statement by the Executive Director of the NCHE was rather telling and as such had caught his attention. The Executive Director of the NCHE borrows from the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), and the International Assessment of Higher Education Learning Outcomes. He said this shows that the NCHE was open to good practices elsewhere.

Dr Joseph cited three critical areas which managers in higher education ought to respond to. The first is related to outcomes of higher education. The second is improvement of access, quality and value for money in higher education. The third is, what higher education institutions can do to improve governance, financing and partnership in higher education. Dr Joseph observed that it was comforting to note that the Executive Director's statement indicates, that as an institution, NCHE was doing its best to respond to these critical issues which managers in higher education ought to pre-occupy themselves with. In responding to the three key issues, higher education institutions need to change the way they do business, and move away from business as usual, so that they respond to the ever-evolving needs of the higher education sector.

It is important, that higher education institutions demonstrate how they are changing their policies, regulations and procedures to be able to respond to the dynamic needs of higher education. Equally important are transparency and accountability. Higher education institutions need to demonstrate the level to which they are operating transparently and in response to the needs of their stakeholders who may include the Government, tax payers and students who are both customers and stakeholders.

Another challenge for higher education institutions according to Dr Joseph is how to demonstrate the extent to which their systems were flexible, and how they are transforming the specialisation aspect of higher education. He explained that entrepreneurship was driving the paradigm shift in higher education in many countries and higher education institutions needed to demonstrate clearly the steps they were taking to transform themselves from traditional to entrepreneurial universities.

Dr Joseph observed that higher education institutions should go beyond making statements of intent with respect to ensuring the active involvement of their stakeholders in higher education, to actually outline steps that they were taking to achieve this. Evidence of such a move, he said, should be apparent in higher education institutions' planning, curriculum and governance. It should also be apparent how universities are collaborating with the wider society. Given that many countries were not only talking about quality assurance but also working toward knowledge based or industrialised economies, universities and other institutions of higher learning must demonstrate how they are moving their societies and their countries towards being knowledge-based economies. Higher education institutions are expected to demonstrate how they are strategically positioning themselves to cooperate or collaborate with other international institutions. The quality assurance models should therefore create an environment which allows for sustainable organisational change.

His view was that the NCHE should not be a static institution, but must change in keeping with the dynamic needs of higher education and the stakeholders. In this regard, the issue of total quality management which has been borrowed from the manufacturing sector becomes crucial. In industrial or manufacturing sectors, focus is on defect-free products. The challenge, he said, was adopting such a philosophy into higher education. Higher education institutions must carefully consider what they can borrow from industrial processes which can be translated into education processes.

Dr Joseph further explained that the jury was still out in many countries with respect to how much higher education institutions could borrow from the ISO 9000 (International Organisation for Standards), with some people arguing it was not possible to use ISO 9000 in the classroom setting. However, other scholars had argued that it was possible to incorporate certain aspects of ISO 9000 into the management processes of education as this would reflect how well an organisation was organised, how it was performing, how it marketed its products, or how it shared information with stakeholders in order to have a system that is sustainable within the context of education.



Participants at the Public Lecture

Dr Joseph noted that the European Foundation for Quality Management had aspects that could be adopted and introduced into the classroom situation to support learning and research. He observed that the issue of ISO 9000 had become very topical in many countries, including Kenya, where universities are supposed to be ISO 9000 certified to ensure that they meet minimum thresholds, to justify taxpayers' money. A requirement of that nature helps evaluators to determine the extent to which higher education institutions are meeting the expectations

of their stakeholders. He further explained that in the European Foundation for Quality Management Model, leadership is a key consideration as it is in line with the ISO 9000 principles of good corporate governance. He said it had been proven beyond reasonable doubt that good leadership in any organisation or institution contributes between 30 per cent to 40 per cent of the achievement of that organisation or institution.

Other factors such as human and financial resources contribute about 10 per cent, but scholars were generally in agreement that once an institution or organisation has good leadership, it was almost guaranteed of success. This was because there was a widely held view that good leaders could provide proper fiduciary leadership and ensure optimum use of often scarce resources. It has also been proven beyond doubt that good leaders can put together effective or winning teams. Planning, checking, improving over and over again, could also lead to success, according to research that has been conducted in Japan. Such practices enable institutions or organisations to continuously improve, in line with dynamic needs of their stakeholders in society. He stressed that good leadership was a pre-requisite for success of both internal and external quality assurance systems. Other quality dimensions included visionary planning, where awareness and natural resources were prime considerations and learning and innovation in which institutions ensure that they build cohesion between and among experts and employees from diverse backgrounds and knowledge levels, education and skills sets.

Dr. Joseph explained that many countries were blending different models to ensure sustainability. However, while it was fairly easy to build a team, it was more challenging to ensure that every team member is recognised and given an opportunity to do his or her best for the good of the organisation or institution.

Dr Joseph further suggested that higher education institutions ought to put in place a robust information management system to ensure that they collect and manage data better and to communicate intelligently with various stakeholders on the basis of collected and analysed data. Equally important was the need to manage processes and learn from them in order to achieve customer satisfaction.

Higher education institutions should always strive to ensure that their products or graduates are acceptable by the job market. Satisfaction assessed can be such as from surveys conducted to ascertain how the job market was judging people who had graduated from the various higher education institutions across the East Africa region in 2013 and 2014. In that survey the maximum rating was 54 per cent from one country. In one extreme case, the rating of university graduates by the job market was as low as about 24 per cent, which signified that very few graduates in that country met the expectations of the job market. He encouraged various higher education institutions to use various surveys that include tracer studies and to engage stakeholders in different fora to determine how higher education institutions were being responsive to the needs of society in general and the needs of the job market in particular.

Be that as it may, countries must ensure that their internal quality management systems and external quality management systems are robust and fit for purpose. Watchdog or regulatory institutions like NCHE should also provide stewardship and ensure that higher education institutions are meeting their expected obligations. Given that the needs of higher education systems were complex, the demands placed upon them ought to be equally complex. Thus, there is a need to ensure that there is quality and sustainability as well as social responsibility.

It is important to demonstrate how higher education institutions were meeting the demands of their own students, the needs of society, as well as the demands of the labour market. Various

educational institutions need to acknowledge that there are different models of internal quality assurance in higher education. These include:

(i) Institutional Academic Quality Assurance System Model

This is a purely academic philosophy which seeks to ensure that universities conduct their business on academic lines without political interference or the interference of the government. Such institutions, are presumed to enjoy a degree of autonomy, once they had received financial resources.

(ii) State-controlled Model

Under this Model, the country through its government and relevant ministries, has a say on the running of higher education institutions to promote the national agenda. The national agenda therefore is prioritised. Under this model, government has an influence as it plays a critical role in the accreditation of higher education institutions.

(iii) Popularist Model

This can be defined as a democratic system. The focus is on satisfying the needs of stakeholders. Stakeholders, including students, have a say in the type of education they want and their concerns and needs are taken on board.

(iv) Supermarket Model

The focus of this model is on meeting the expectation of the labour market or the stakeholders. There is a need to clearly understand these models in order to be able to choose the ideal internal quality assurance systems, as well as external quality assurance systems. This will minimise conflict between the external quality assurance agency, regulatory bodies and the institutions of higher education. To the extent possible, regulatory bodies should strive to strike a balance between the vision, and mission statements of institutions against the national agenda. The Supermarket Model tends to gloss over academic excellence. In higher education institutions, internal quality assurance focuses on enhancement of quality, while external quality assurance focuses on compliance and accountability. However, experience had shown that there is always potential for conflict between the two quality assurance systems (internal and external.) The key consideration in developing internal quality and external quality assurance systems, is the reduction of potential conflict.

Dr Joseph observed that the Namibian Higher Education Act was clear with respect to what the nation expects to achieve through higher education. However, the country had two systems of quality assurance, which are expected to work harmoniously.

Also important is the need to clearly define the roles of internal quality assurance and external quality assurance to ensure that various needs are met. Ideally, the external quality assurance agency, in this case the NCHE, should provide a National Framework within which all internal quality assurance systems of the various higher education systems in the country operate. That National Framework should be such that it takes into consideration the diverse education providers operating in the country to ensure that internal and external quality assurance systems work together.

At national level, a national quality assurance system should be one through which the government pronounces itself with respect to what it wants to achieve in terms of higher education with clear policy-guidelines and policy-statements. The agency that is implementing the agenda of the government as the quality assurance agency like the NCHE, whose fundamental responsibility

is accreditation, could also conduct academic audits, as well as external institutional audit review for continuous improvement.

Dr Joseph further observed that external quality assurance experts were being invited, as academic peers, to Namibian higher education institutions to conduct programme accreditation. He said this was important for continuous improvement of all academic programmes offered by higher education institutions. Typically, higher education institutions employ academic and administrative staff to guide students. It is important that they put in place self-assessment mechanisms which normally form the basis for external quality assurance. He also noted that the mandate of external quality assurance agencies should be clarified because in some settings they were negatively perceived as they are viewed as institutions that do more of policing, yet their mandate is to ensure that higher education institutions provide education which meets given thresholds and standards which can lead to licensing.

For accountability purposes, self-assessment or internal quality assessment systems must provide valid and reliable information about the degree to which stated objectives are met. These systems can also lead to improvements in delivering quality education. He stressed that it is important for institutions to have their own guidelines, quality assurance policies that guide faculties, departments and others in line with the National Quality Assurance guidelines.

Dr Joseph cautioned that it is important for higher education institutions to always align themselves with the national agenda, even though they might always have their own agendas and mission statements. Additionally, higher education institutions should have leaders who are willing and able to propel the institution in line with the national agenda. He warned that good policies, internal quality assurance systems, good professors, good support staff, and good students would amount to nought if sufficient resources are not made available to higher education institutions to execute their mandates.

Accordingly, higher education institutions must put in place robust Monitoring and Evaluation systems to point out gaps and areas of improvement. For an institution to have a sustainable internal quality assurance framework or mechanism, it should have monitoring instruments, evaluation instruments, and special quality assurance processes in order to track student progress, receive and process feedback from the labour market. Additionally, higher education institutions need a clear student and staff assessment mechanism so that in addition to tracking the academic progress of their students, higher education institutions should also regularly monitor the performance of their staff members through teaching, research and community involvement. He stressed that all staff members of higher education institutions should be subjected to continuous assessment, monitoring and evaluation, regardless of seniority. In some institutions, long-serving academic staff, especially old professors, tend to resist monitoring and evaluation, especially when those running or administering quality assurance are younger than them, or are their former students. Ideally, higher education institutions should also put in place SWOT analysis system for their institutions, faculties, and departments so that they can follow-up based on the policy and procedures of the internal quality assurance.

Dr. Joseph explained that there is a global quality assurance network (INQAAHE) in place, which regularly documents good practices globally, and brings practitioners together to share good practices for the purposes of continuous improvement. Under this Network, the main concern of external quality assurance agencies is to promote quality education and student achievement given that student achievement forms the main part of an institution's output. In this regard, ensuring quality should be the primary responsibility of higher education institutions themselves. Dr Joseph explained that it is not the responsibility of NCHE, for instance, to ensure

that University of Namibia (UNAM), Namibia University of Science and Technology (NUST) or International University of Management (IUM) are delivering quality education. In a competitive world, institutions of higher education should be competitive enough to deliver quality in terms of graduates, teaching, research and community outreach without being compelled by a regulatory agency.

Dr Joseph candidly alluded that: "external quality assurance agencies must ensure that they have policies and mechanisms for their own internal quality assurance. Though NCHE is itself an external quality assurance agency, it should have its own internal quality assurance mechanism to ensure that their external quality assurance mechanisms are also meeting what is expected of their responsibilities." There are basic principles with respect to how external quality assurance agencies can ensure that they are quality-assured. These guidelines include transparency, integrity, professionalism and adherence to ethical and professional guidelines so that people do not question their decisions.

He indicated that he is aware that NCHE had committed to reviewing its systems in the year 2018, to ensure that it is operating within its mandate and in line with the law that established it. This will maintain the trust that has been bestowed upon it by the higher education stakeholders.

As an external quality assurance agency, NCHE, should subject itself to external quality assurance by external experts from sister QA agencies for the purpose of continuous improvement.

Conclusion

Dr Joseph said that there is no ideal Model which can be a panacea in terms of sustainable internal quality assurance or external quality assurance frameworks. This is because many different factors are at play. Customer needs are many and vary, and the manners in which higher education institutions utilised human, financial and other resources differ.

However, the commitment of the leadership of various higher education institutions is important for internal and external quality assurance purposes. It is imperative that the leadership of higher education systems build a culture of internal quality assurance so that striving for high quality becomes everybody's business in those institutions; not just the preoccupation of the quality assurance director.

“Everybody from the Vice Chancellor or Rector, Directors, Deans, Professors, Support and Administration Staff, Technicians and Students should all embrace a culture of quality. Only that way one can ensure that internal and external quality assurance systems are sustainable.” Higher education systems should be intrinsically motivated to maintain a high level of quality and not to do things because they wish to satisfy the needs of an accrediting body like NCHE.

Dr Joseph underscored the need to ensure that external quality assurance and internal quality assurance frameworks operate symbiotically. To achieve this, it may be necessary to bring stakeholders in higher education under the same roof, to iron out differences so that the two systems are in harmony.

Dr Joseph further observed that it is important also to ensure that the education offered in the country continues to respond to the dynamic needs of the nation, regardless of the many different Models of higher education. Regular review of systems, programs and frameworks must be the norm.

Dr Joseph concluded his presentation by the following remarks:

“Teamwork is very important if you want to have a sustainable IQA or EQA. Let's do our part in organisations. And when we do our parts, let's do our best. Let's appreciate the contribution of each and every one in our organisation.”

PANEL DISCUSSION

After the keynote address, a panel of experts was invited to respond. Panel members were drawn from academic institutions and a professional body. They included:

- Dr Ngepathimo Kadhila, Director for Quality Assurance & Management, University of Namibia (UNAM);
- Ms Himeesora Kaimu Director for Quality Assurance, Namibia University of Science and Technology (NUST);
- Dr Demus Makuwa, Director for Quality Assurance, International University of Management (IUM); and
- Mr. Koos du Toit, Chief Executive Officer CEO, Institute of Chartered Accountants of Namibia (ICAN).



Dr Ngepathimo Kadhila

In his response, Dr Kadhila expressed concern over the fact that many of the Models that Dr Joseph had expounded upon, had been borrowed from industry and from the Western world. His view was that the models were Eurocentric. He indicate that after carefully considering the practice in higher education in Namibia and other African countries, he reached the conclusion that it was not sustainable in terms of improving student learning experiences. Although it seemed to work in terms of the way institutions of higher education were run or managed, when it came to the actual quality of which the student should be the focus, their performance is less likely to be positively impacted. He claimed that there was no difference in terms of student performance under accredited or unaccredited programmes of study. His view was that too much time was being spent on processes rather than on improving student experiences. He called for the localisation of Euro-centric models to suit specific regional-country needs in Africa.

“My suggestion is that as we borrow these models from Europe, let us Africanise them. In curricula, we talk about curriculum-decolonisation. We must de-colonise these models. Borrowing models as are, will not work in our context. Africans should strive to develop their own Models, which even Europeans could borrow from”, Dr Kadhila said.

He said there were too many quality assurance agencies in Namibia, which according to him, are duplicating efforts. “We have NQA, we have NCHE and we have NTA. They are all doing the same thing! It’s a waste of resources. There is no support to build capacity within institutions so that institutions take ownership of quality assurance. Institutions spend much more time in meeting external requirements, than strengthening their internal requirements. I want to see a model whereby external agencies play a facilitative role to build capacity within institutions so that institutions can take charge of their own quality assurance,” Dr Kadhila stressed.

He suggested that the quality assurance agencies in Namibia should move away from accreditation and move toward the development of systems. Dr Kadhila said it was important that quality assurance is used as a strategic tool. “Quality assurance should inform our strategic direction,” he concluded.



Ms Himeesora Kaimu

Ms Kaimu thanked Dr Joseph for what she described as an “insightful” presentation. She said what made NUST different from other institutions of higher education in Namibia, is that it is focused on the study of science and technology.

Ms Kaimu stressed that “technology by definition, has something to do with improvement, that in itself makes NUST to be very improvement-driven.”

Ms Kaimu said Dr Joseph had done well to focus on different institutions at different levels of development, saying that it will enable various institutions in Namibia to reflect on where they are

on the development continuum. She said NUST had embarked on quality assurance nearly ten years ago and was therefore now managing a very mature system of quality assurance.

Her view was that following Dr Joseph's presentation the pre-occupation for those managing higher education institutions in Namibia should be how IQA and EQA frameworks could be reconciled to ensure better alignment and better management of higher education in the country. She concurred with Dr Kadhila on the impact of external quality assessment on internal quality assurance systems and student learning. She called on higher education institutions to ensure that students are not negatively impacted by external quality assurance processes. She said sustainability and equality are interlinked and revealed that NUST was preoccupied with the future of higher education in the face of dynamic demands from the labour market and how it could continue to produce graduates that are fit for purpose.

Ms Kaimu then concluded by calling upon the audience to reflect on the type of Model higher education institutions ought to undertake, take due consideration the specific institutional context.



Dr Demus Makuwa

Dr Makuwa thanked Dr Joseph for what he described as a “very broad” presentation. He said that he concurred with much of what he had said, as well as what Dr Kadhila and Ms Kaimu from UNAM and NUST said respectively. With respect to which Model was ideal, Dr Makuwa said he agreed with Dr Joseph that there is a need for adaptation of several elements from various Models. Dr Makuwa submitted that there is no Model that can be a one-size fits all. Various aspects of each Model need special consideration and thereafter applied creatively to suite our own context. On the issue of leadership and a culture of quality, Dr Makuwa said these were crucial considerations.

Dr Makuwa however, lamented the dearth of training opportunities for quality assurance practitioners in Namibia. His view was that quality assurance is a professional discipline which requires focused training and certification. He observed that there was a widespread perception that anyone could become a quality assurance practitioner, regardless of their initial training. That perception is wrong because quality assurance had become a specialised field of study. Due to lack of local institutions offering quality assurance as a discipline, people who elected to venture into the QA field as a specialisation had to study outside Namibia.

Dr Makuwa said he found the silence around cross-border providers of higher education in Namibia disquieting. He said some people in Namibia had access to online courses, and he wondered how those online and cross-border institutions offering higher education fit into the discussion of IQA and EQA. Also, equally unsettling for Dr Makuwa, was the silence on the role of professional bodies on quality assurance in Namibia. He said in some countries, there is no national quality assurance agency, but several for various states or regions. Other quality assurance agencies are based in professional bodies. Dr Makuwa further wanted to know which agency assured the quality of external quality assurance agency. He went on to stress that students are an important stakeholder in higher education.

Mr Du Toit described himself as a representative of consumers of products of higher education especially in the fields of Accounting and Auditing. He explained that ICAN represented all Chartered Accountant). He then reeled off a list of names of who is who in the accountancy and auditing fields of Namibia including Nangula Uaandja, Sven Thieme, Junias Mungunda and others.

He stressed that when one obtains a Chartered Accountancy qualification in Namibia, such a graduate would have been quality-assured or certified by a qualified body. This is because the program that trains and produces Chartered Accountants recruits people who already have a first degree, who then undergo professional examinations.



Mr. Koos du Toit

Mr Du Toit informed the audience that ICAN has a critical interest in the quality of graduates that are leaving the local higher education institutions. “Markets change if a product is not good enough,” he said, and gave the example of consumer attitudes toward polony and other processed meats associated with the outbreak of Listeriosis in the previous year.

To ensure that they got the best quality out of tertiary institutions, ICAN actively engages with the tertiary institutions. This helps maintaining quality of graduates. He revealed that about a year ago, his Institute initiated a conversation with the NCHE around accreditation because the NCHE represents the statutory accrediting body in the country. The result of the collaboration was a Joint-Accreditation Model that looks at accreditation from NCHE’s perspective, but just as much from a professional body’s perspective.

Mr Du Toit explained that internal and external auditors in various organisations and companies were obliged to report to shareholders and directors. External auditors rely on internal auditors who are onsite.

“There is a need for synergies, collaboration and ensuring that quality assurance is done effectively. Where does the conflict come in? Problems arise when the external auditor points out problems within an organisation. Then people begin to wonder where internal auditors were. To avoid conflict, external auditors and internal auditors have to work hand in hand,” Mr Du Toit candidly remarked.

He concurred with earlier observations that a “one size-fits” all approach would not be viable for all purposes and intent.

Dr Cosam Joseph



Dr Joseph concurred with the candid opinions of the panellists. While acknowledging the need for a vibrant discussion over the pros and cons of domestication of education models, Dr Joseph enjoined the panellists and the audience to accept the fact that the world had become a global village.

He noted that stakeholders should also try to benchmark the good practices out there. While localising education is a way forward, Dr Joseph cautioned that there are good things out there that every education system needed to borrow and adapt. Dr Joseph then alluded to the fact that all the models that he had presented are premised on stakeholder satisfaction.

Dr Joseph further stressed that the stakeholders in higher education included students who deserve and demand quality education which meets the demands of the labour market. He acknowledged that some of the models that he had described may appear ill-suited for learning

and teaching. A good strategy would be to innovatively use the model to ensure that emphasis is on teaching and learning in higher education.

With respect to the multiplicity of quality assurance agencies in the country, Dr Joseph said this was a domestic issue, and encouraged NCHE and other agencies in the country to find an amicable solution to the challenge in order to prevent confusion.

With respect to the training of quality assurance practitioners, Dr Joseph advised the NCHE and other partners to take up the issue and explore how the capacity of quality assurance practitioners could be developed at national level. It is understood that in East Africa, a program had been set up to train selected individuals from higher education institutions on basic quality assurance techniques and regulations.

On cross-border providers of higher education, Dr Joseph noted that this also was an issue that NCHE could investigate without reinventing the wheel. He indicated there are many international regulations on how cross-boarder providers could be regulated or managed.

On the role of professional bodies, it was observed that in some countries the regulator would demand evidence on the extent to which an institution intending to introduce a professional qualification has consulted and collaborated with local relevant professional bodies. Turning to who should quality-assure external quality assurance bodies, Dr Joseph advised that inviting experts from other jurisdictions would be a good starting point.

In response to the moderator's question related to how higher education institutions in Namibia ensured that graduates were of high quality, Dr Makuwa explained that the IUM was a private, not-for-profit institution which would not have survived had it not been providing demand-driven academic programs and qualifications. Dr Makuwa emphasised that as a private higher education institution, a thorough market analysis of the needs of the labour market, an analysis of the national human resources requirement and take into consideration the knowledge-gaps which need to be (plugged) under Vision 2030 in order to prepare for a knowledge-based economy is thoroughly undertaken. He explained that many of the qualifications that IUM was offering had been developed in consultation with the labour market and the industry, in general. Dr Makuwa shared the example of pharmacy assistants, nurses and teachers. On the quality of the students, Dr Makuwa confirmed that higher education institutions, including IUM, had standard entry requirements into their academic programs. For a student to be admitted into any degree program, he or she needs to have a minimum of 25 points at Grade 12. However, he added that the quality of higher education in Namibia was influenced by the quality of students who matriculated and enrolled into higher education institutions. Dr Makuwa observed that the quality of outcome of higher education institutions (graduates) is largely dependent on the quality of the input; the learners higher education institutions get from high schools. He further lamented that the problem was two-fold and a long chain reaction. If one goes to the schools, senior secondary school teachers would argue that they could not do much because the quality of students they had depended on the quality of primary schools. At primary schools, one would hear that the students that are in primary schools are the quality that were produced by Early Childhood Development Programmes. Dr Makuwa is of the view that this is an issue that needs to be addressed from a holistic point of view. Otherwise, there still remains a challenge in terms of students that come to university which begs for a solution. In particular, at IUM, compensatory and remedial stop-gap measures are employed to mitigate the shortcoming. Without these mitigating measures, IUM would not be able to graduate the students over the years.



Mr Patrick Sam

The moderator noted that in his intervention, Mr Du Toit had spread out a long list of people working in auditing and accountancy firms in Namibia. He wondered how many of those professionals had been produced by Namibian higher education institutions. Given that the process of becoming a Chartered Accountant or Auditor was a “tumultuous” one, the moderator wanted to know if licensing was a model that should be embraced in higher education in Namibia as well as to ensure quality. In response, Mr Du Toit reiterated that people who are enrolled into accounting and auditing studies have to undergo rigorous continuous assessment and competency based examinations, sometimes up to seven years to ensure quality of the highest level. He said anybody who holds a relevant first degree from a university is considered to have sufficient foundation to undertake and cope with the rigours of professional training. He underlined the importance of collaboration. In this regard, Mr Du Toit candidly put it this way, “If you want to walk fast, walk alone. If you want to walk far, walk together.” Mr Du Toit’s view was that Namibia should stop talking about quality assurance, but start talking about quality improvement. “Let us look at ourselves as quality improvement experts working together and with external improvement experts. Let us commit to engagement and collaboration. Let us pursue our common interests and not our separate identities,” Mr Du Toit said.

PLENARY DISCUSSIONS



Participants at the Public Lecture

After the panellists had their say, the moderator invited members of the audience to ask questions or make comments.

Prof Kingo Mchombu from IUM noted that it was not easy to prepare students for the future because no one knows the future for certain. He intimated that, “we claim to know the future, but actually don’t know the future. What we can do however, is to prepare the students to learn how to learn so that whenever ideas come in the future they can engage with them. If we train them like circus animals, they can only cope with the immediate environment, but the moment it changes, they lose direction.”



Prof Kingo Mchombu

He further warned that contrary to popular belief, stakeholders did not have one, but diverse agendas and expectations. Some stakeholders preferred modestly educated graduates for fear of paying them high salaries, while others preferred students that graduate with practical skills. Still, other stakeholders preferred students that think and reason and who come up with original solutions.

“So, when we talk about quality, we need to contextualise and that is what I often miss when we try to follow up on what stakeholders are saying. Sometimes we have to bring down the level of education in order to conform to the needs and expectations of those stakeholders. I think we miss the boat terribly by imagining that stakeholders have one uniform agenda,” he opined.

Mr Joseph Amunyela



Mr Joseph Amunyela posed a question to Mr Du Toit on whether ICAN was working alone or together with other stakeholders. “What is the strategic position for ICAN to ensure that your contribution in terms of accreditation and support of training institutions create a meaningful input or output at the end of the day?” How many of the people in influential position in auditing and accountancy firms are actually involved in supporting the strategic needs of the nation. He asked.

Mrs Francina Keendjele



Mrs Francina Keendjele from NAMCOL wanted to know how IQA and EQA could become sustainable.

Dr Rachel Shanyanana-Amaambo from UNAM wanted to know how higher education institutions could ensure quality in their final products, which are the graduates at all levels. She warned against producing human resources exclusively for Namibia, given that the world has become a global village. She gave the example of graduates from other African countries who were so well educated and so well-trained that they could operate in any environment in the world.

“Can we also look at quality in terms of ensuring that our graduates are competent and relevant anywhere? When we talk about quality, we need to be very clear with respect to whose benefit are we producing that quality?” She wondered.

***Dr Rachel Shanyanana-
Amaambo***



A student in the audience prompted Dr Makuwa from IUM to elaborate on the source of labour market demand: During your intervention you stated that IUM was producing graduates in line with demands of the labour market. “Who is creating that demand?”

Student from one of the HEIs



Mrs Ingrid Mettler from Lingua College International said Namibia was still far from a situation in which it could go alone. Her view was that the country still required the support of experts from other countries. However, the Ministry of Home Affairs and Immigration was denying the country an opportunity to tap into the vast skill set that neighbouring countries and abroad presented.

“At this stage Namibia is not yet ready to work on its own.” She said Namibia still required lecturers who were qualified to teach as some of the lecturers in Namibia were sharp on content, but wanting on pedagogy. “What we still miss in our system is the training of higher education lecturers,” she said, adding that it was not easy to get work permits for expatriates in Namibia where they could help improve the quality of higher education.

Mrs Ingrid Mettler



Panellists' responses to questions from the audience

Before responding to the audience's remarks, **Dr Joseph** asked those in the audience who were employed and were performing duties and tasks which they were trained for in higher education. A few hands went up. He said research had shown that 40 to 50 per cent of the current jobs would disappear within the next 20 or 30 years. Dr Joseph empathically noted that he concurred with the audience, that the country should train students to learn how to learn. But still, another argument is that the demands of the labour market are very dynamic; so dynamic that higher education institutions cannot cope. “You introduce a new program today, five years down the line, (it becomes obsolete). How current can our universities be to keep abreast?” Dr Joseph encouraged continuous engagement among stakeholders in order to develop informed curricula. On how IQA and EQA could work together, Dr Joseph reiterated the importance of building partnerships so as to minimise conflict between them.

Dr Kadhila re-echoed the notion that there was a lot of passing the baton with higher education institutions blaming secondary schools, secondary schools pointing the finger at primary schools, and primary schools laying the blame on Early Childhood Development. He noted that all higher institutions had an obligation to play their part to ensure that students that enrol in their institutions benefit meaningfully from higher education. He said that there would always be an articulation gap when graduates move from university to the job market. He called on employers to patiently bring the graduates up to speed with what they required. It is up to employers to put mechanisms in place to fill those gaps. So whether universities do a good job, there would always be gaps as the students articulate into the job market. He further stated that there

were too many overlaps in Namibia with respect to quality assurance processes and systems and called for strategies to streamline them. Given the financial difficulties that the nation was under going it was not prudent to sustain multiple quality assurance bodies, some of whom appeared to be working in silos or in total conflict, said Dr Kadhila. “We need a system that is simple and effective,” He emphasised. He called for a paradigm shift in the management of research projects in higher education with preference on applied research, which could result in innovation for the good of society.

Ms Kaimu noted that while it was difficult to train for the future, higher education institutions could train their students on critical thinking and how to manage knowledge.

Dr Makuwa confirmed the IUM had adopted a holistic approach to ensure the quality of its graduates. “There is no magic bullet to improve the quality of our graduates,” Dr Makuwa said. However, it was difficult to satisfy stakeholders or customers in Namibia because the level of customer care in the country still left a lot to be desired. He cited an example when he recently went to a restaurant and a young waitress walked up to him asking ‘yes what do you want?’ Instead of saying ‘Good evening sir, how can I help you?’ So the soft skills including answering telephonic calls, still desire a lot.” On the question as to who is demanding quality, Dr Makuwa responded that it is the nation.

Mr Du Toit reiterated that his organisation was not working alone but collaborating with various institutions including NCHE.



An audience expressed concern over the likely impact of populist campaigns like #feesmustfall which recently shook South Africa, on quality in education. Of concern, was the stance that many governments have taken to improve higher education in the face of dwindling financial and other resources. His fear was that quality could end up being sacrificed at the altar of populism. He also noted that some staff members of higher education institutions in Namibia were suffering from review-fatigue, which was being made worse by the multiplicity of quality assurance agencies that operated in the country, coupled with the professional bodies. “You feel sorry for the management and sorry for the staff. It is a problem. How do you deal with that?” He asked.

There was a concern that most higher education institutions in Namibia were putting a premium on research in partial fulfilment of various academic programs, but there was no mechanism in place to harness the large body of research that the higher education students were producing.



Ms Wilma Bruwer

Another question was related to the slow pace of accreditation of academic programs in private higher education institutions. Fear was that some of the programs would “expire” before they were accredited.

Professor Earl Taylor from IUM underscored one of the basic principles of quality assurance was definition. “You must define first before you can measure and be able to eventually manage. We have a problem in that a lot of the things we are trying to do are not defined properly. We have a confusion between higher education and tertiary education. If we cannot define a problem, we cannot quality assure,” he said.

He further said regulation was a misplaced concept in quality assurance because in his understanding, to regulate was to control. He advocated for greater emphasis on internal quality assurance systems and frameworks. He further said: “If we define the processes internally and we are clear with the expected outcomes, we can then work with stakeholders and others who



Professor Earl Taylor

can give you compliance, satisfaction and accountability. You then put in place internal quality assurance processes that address specific needs of the higher education institutions.”



Prof Lischen Hoases-Gorases - NCHE Chairperson

The chairperson of NCHE Prof Lischen Hoases-Gorases said her nearly 35 years of experience in the higher education sector in which she has been training nurses had enabled her to witness first-hand the evolution in the higher education sub-sector. She added that she had also seen many innovative approaches to higher education and how they struggled to keep up with constant changes and expectations within the sector, implying that ensuring quality was not easy. As it was not uncommon for a lecturer within the higher education system to have upwards of 150 students in one lecture, such a lecturer-student ratio made it difficult for the lecturer to deliver quality education.

Prof Hoases-Gorases observed that HEIs talk about quality education, but sometimes there are not even enough resources to cater for various learning needs of students. She further stressed that some subjects require that the lecturer moves around while teaching. In this regard Prof Hoases-Gorases remarked that a lecturer needs to interact with the students. This poses a challenge due to lack of facilities. Various educational institutions have various challenges. For instance, an institution in Keetmanshoop does not face the same challenges as the one in the north of the country. Thus, one has to integrate many educational methods to teach over and across distances. She said quality assurance was even more difficult to achieve in the face of different modes of instruction including face-to-face and distance or online education. “Sometimes there is a power failure (and ICT fails). How do you ensure that students you interact with face-to-face receive the same quality as those that you seldom meet and you have to deliver lectures 500 kilometres away from them via video-conferencing?” Prof Hoases- Gorases asked.

CONCLUDING REMARKS FROM THE PANELLISTS

The panellists concluded as follow:

Mr Du Toit stated that quality could also be assessed via the competency of the product of the higher education institution. He thanked the NCHE for organising the lecture.

Dr Makuwa reiterated the need for a holistic approach to quality assurance in higher education institutions starting from pre-primary to university education. He said providers of higher education should constantly reflect on whether the various sub-sectors that support the sector were improving or deteriorating. He called for scientific methods of analyses to evaluate so that those running the sector could affect improvement. He underlined the fact that the various subsectors that support the higher education sector were interrelated and warned that fixing only one in isolation would be futile.

Ms Kaimu from NUST echoed an audience's views on the need to be clear on definitions of external quality assurance and internal quality assurance. She said listening to statements from the audience, it became clear that people were speaking about different things with respect to quality in higher education. She encouraged anybody with an interest in higher education to read the Act establishing and governing higher education in order to understand and apply it. She said sustainability meant different things to different stakeholders and there is a need for common understanding. She advocated for a situation in which people would reflect on the actions they make on the future of their communities and the country.

Dr Kadhila said there is an appreciation and an acknowledgment at UNAM that teaching was an art, and that not every person who holds expert knowledge in a particular subject was necessarily good at teaching the subject. Accordingly, the University had developed a staff development program whereby even professors were taken through the steps of how to teach in higher education, as well as on how to assess students. He said the focus should be more on improving student experiences. Accordingly, there was a need to strike a balance between IQA and EQA systems. His view was that there were two systems running parallel in Namibia and it appeared that there is more pressure coming from EQA agencies in such a way that the IQA systems were bound to suffer.

Dr Joseph said ensuring a healthy balance between quality and access-related issues is something that required political will and leadership at the highest level. He highlighted the need for national policies with respect to the cost of higher education for students. He noted a general pattern emerging throughout the African continent in which governments funding to higher education institutions was dwindling while at the same time governments are committing to increasing access and equity to higher education for students. To respond to such a situation, policy interventions at the highest level are required. In light of review-fatigue, higher education institutions could focus on the evaluation of systems to build trust from stakeholders. He, encouraged relatively young educational institutions to embrace quality assurance as part of growth. Finally, He commended NCHE for organising the public lecture from which he had learned a lot, specifically from the spirit and nature of a series of the NCHE public lectures and in general the higher education quality assurance landscape in Namibia.

PUBLIC LECTURE

Date: Thursday, 15 March 2018

Time: 18h00

Venue: Nampower Convention Centre

SUSTAINABLE MODELS OF INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE FRAMEWORKS IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Keynote Presenter



Dr. Cosam Joseph is the Chief Principal for Quality Assurance and Qualifications Framework at the Inter-University Council for East Africa (IUCEA) where he is in charge of coordinating the development and operationalisation of the East African Quality Assurance System policies, threshold standards, guidelines and procedures. He is also responsible for coordinating and carrying out capacity building initiatives on various quality assurance regimes to staff of universities and the commissions/ councils for higher education. Dr. Joseph holds a Ph.D. in Organic Chemistry.

Moderator



Mr. Patrick Sam
Journalist & TV Host

Panelists



Dr. Ngepathimo Kadhila
Director, Quality Assurance
& Management, UNAM



Ms. Himeesora Kaimu
Director, Quality Assurance
NUST



Dr. Demus Makuwa
Director, Quality
Assurance IUM



Mr Koos du Toit
CEO, Institute of Chartered
Accountants of Nmaibia

Kindly confirm your attendance with Ms Indileni Shavuka at ishavuka@nche.org.na, Tel: 061- 307012

Appendix B: Programme

PUBLIC LECTURE 2018

Date: 15 March 2018
Time: 18h00
Venue: NAMPOWER CONVENTION CENTRE

Time	Activity	Name
18h00		Registration
18h15	Welcoming Remarks	Ms Sylvia Demas, Deputy Executive Director, NCHE Secretariat
	Keynote Presentation	Dr Cosam Joseph, Chief Principal for Quality Assurance and Qualifications Framework Inter University Council of East Africa
Discussions		
	Moderator	Mr. Patrick Sem, Journalist and TV Presenter
	Panelist 1	Dr Ngepathimo Kadhila, Director, Quality Assurance & Management UNAM, UNAM
	Panelist 2	Ms Himeesora Kaimu, Director Quality Assurance NUST
	Panelist 3	Dr Demus Makuwa, Director Quality Assurance IUM
	Panelist 4	Mr. Koos du Toit, CEO, Institute of Chartered Accountants of Namibia
Open Discussion and Comments		
	Conclusion and Closing	Prof Lischen Haoses-Gorases, NCHE Chairperson
Refreshments and Networking		

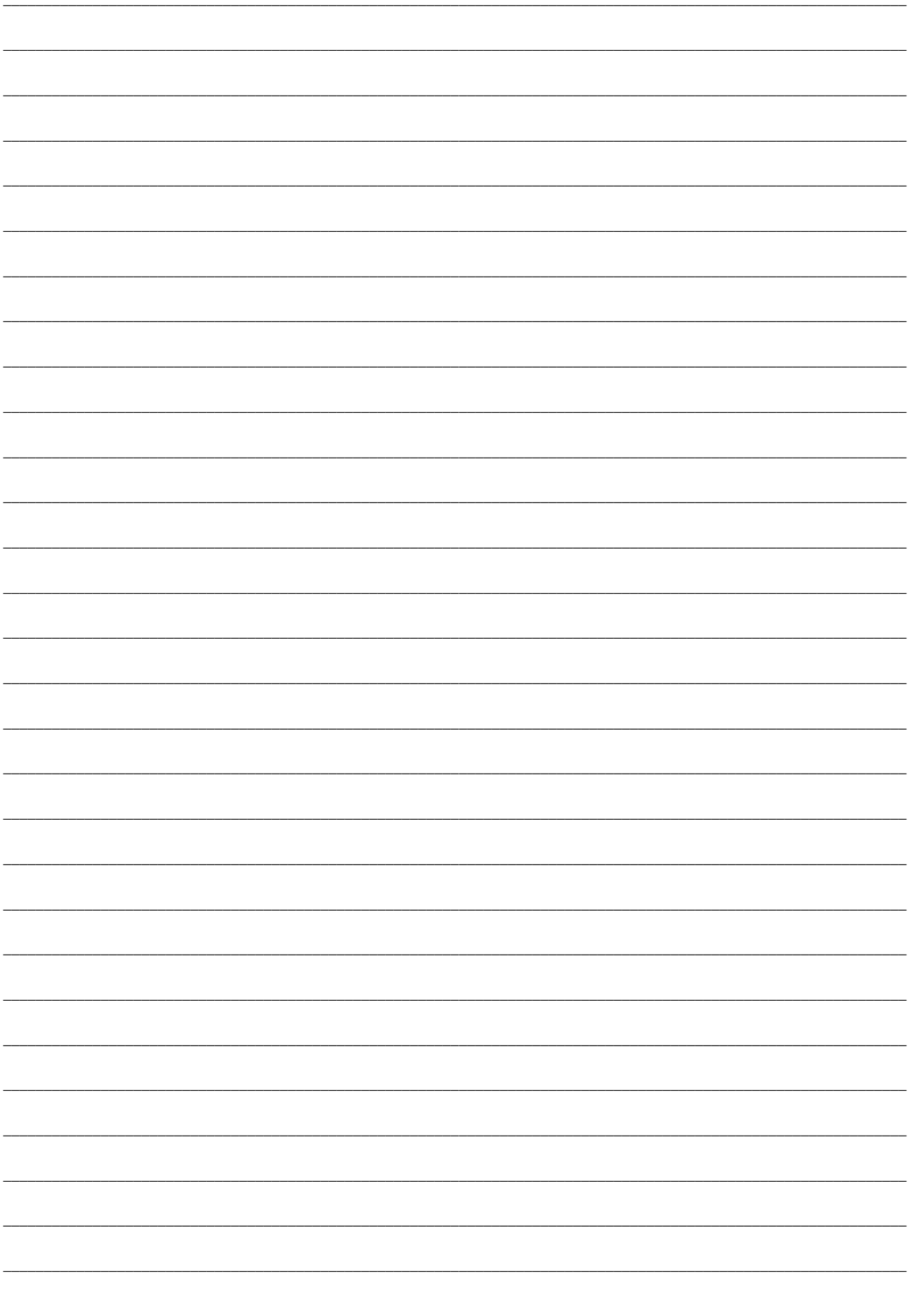
Because of your valuable support and contributions, we would like to involve you in the planning of Public Lectures on higher education. Please share your ideas on themes you would like us to consider.

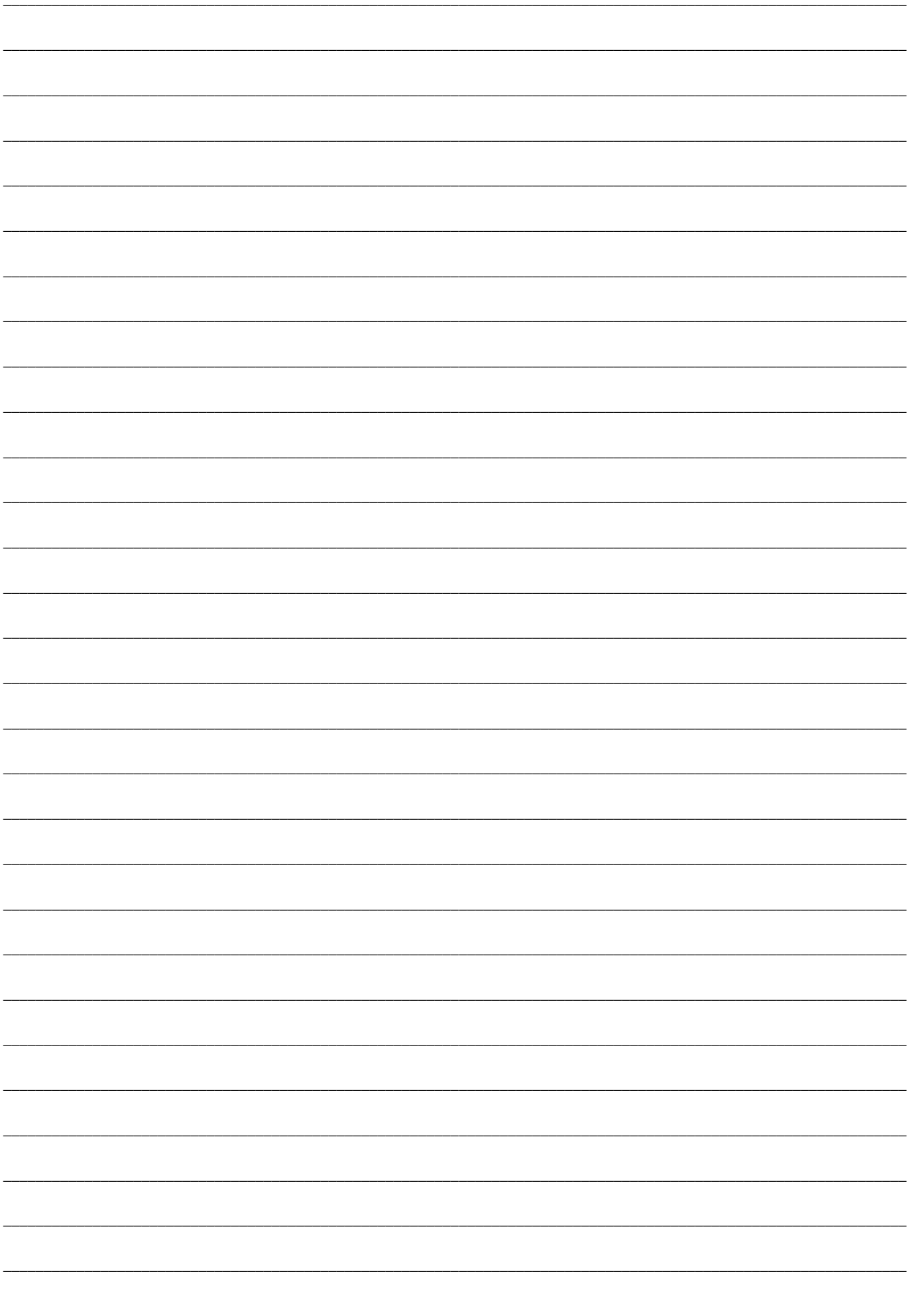
Appendix B: List of Participants

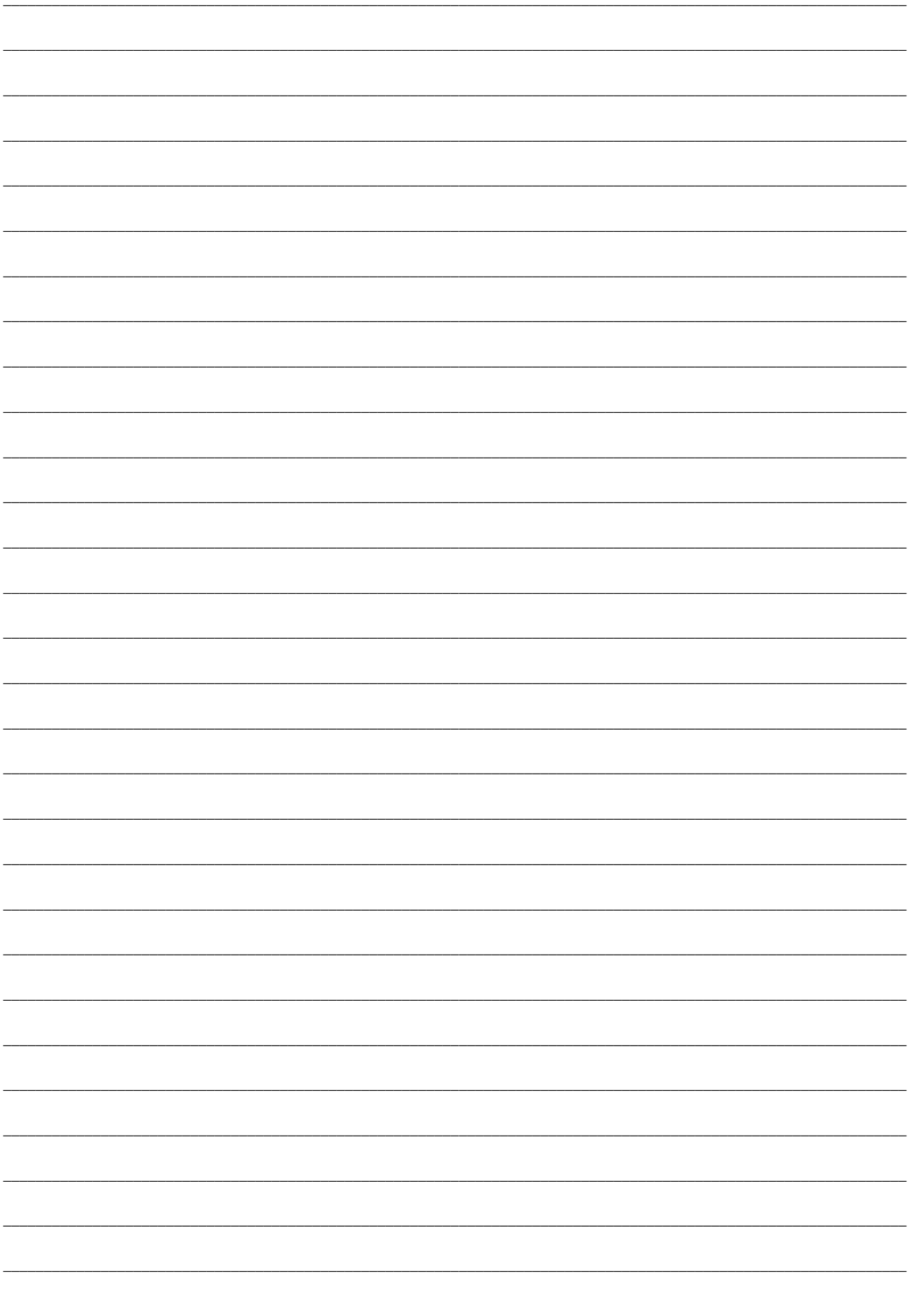
Name	Institution
1. Dr Cosam Joseph	Key note Presenter
2. Dr Ngepathimo Kadhila	UNAM
3. Dr Demus Makuwa	IUM
4. Mr Koos du Toit	ICAN
5. Ms Himeesora Kaimu	NUST
6. Mr. Patrick Sem	NBC
7. Dr. Raimo Naanda	MHETI
8. Dr. Ananias Iita	UNAM
9. Murangi Godwin	UNAM
10. Nico Kaiyamo	CAVEMA Fishing
11. Gebhard Mvula	
12. Justina Kavale	NAMCOL
13. Zauisomue Erlich	
14. Eureka Ndhlovu	Welwitschia Health Training Centre
15. Ndatalomwene Nghaamwa	IOL
16. Amadhila Helena	UNAM
17. Loide Shifula-Dama	UNAM
18. Elisabeth Basson	Health Profession Council
19. Dr Shanyanana Rachel	Council Member
20. Mr Mbangu K	UNAM
21. Friedrich Kauatjijtjie	
22. Mathew Rukoro	
23. Uanee R Kaapama	
24. Charity	Hoperise Private College
25. Eude Heita Kambuta	African Hospitality & Tourism cc
26. Franky Gonteb	
27. Nikodemus Nikodemus	
28. Venancius Rukoro	
29. Mr Ivan Bassoon	Namibian Consulting Services
30. Taveuli Gervasiu	Alpha Key College
31. Sam David	Alpha Key College
32. Hamutenya Markus	Private
33. Ngola Kisoma	Private
34. Tangeni Avula	Private
35. Absalom Absalom	Ministry of Education
36. Athanasius Mangundu	Private
37. Ms. Panduleni Amwaala	Namibian Press Agency (NAMPA),
38. Prof Kiangi G	Triumphant College
39. Mr Mukupi Elvis	Ministry of Education
40. Selma Kristof	
41. Marchall Gerjina	Varsity Institute
42. Jose Mukuturi	Varsity Institute
43. Mr. Kasoina	Higher Education
44. Mr Basilius Haingura	NANTU

45. Mr Elisa Kaurianga	
46. Stanley Mbatira	NSFAF
47. Frans Gauseb	Kalanami Investment cc
48. Khana Fidelius	Private
49. Mbumbo Berthold	Private
50. Mahongora Kavihuha	TUN
51. Moses Magadza	SADC
52. Joseph Amunyela	NQA
53. Aina Indongo	NQA
54. Gebhald Iwata	Private
55. Mr Nelson T Tjihozu:	Secretary to the Technical Committee
56. Lusia H Shikongo	NUST
57. Dr Colen Tuaundu	NUST
58. Dr. Asa Romeo Asa	(QMS Lecturer: NUST)
59. Mr. Jose Luis Pretorius:	The NSI Technical Committee 2 (QMS) Chairperson
60. Ms Maria Ndafyaalako	(Section Scientist: City of Windhoek Scientific Services
61. Ms Orpa Patuomasa:	NSI Standards Development and Training Officer.
62. Ester Johannes	NUST
63. Olivia Itenge	NUST
64. Seno Namwandi	NUST
65. Ndakalako Shikongo	
66. Laetitia Coetzee	Business School
67. Fiina Jeramia	NQA
68. Josephine Kadhila	NTA
69. Bonadei Thekwane	NIPAM
70. Elias Kaurianga	Private
71. David Shikulo	NUST
72. Frans Koolike	Koolike Production
73. Ndeshi Afunde	NAMCOL
74. Nahum Namakwambi	NAMCOL
75. Annaline Keet	NMU
76. Edmrie Pretorius	Wits
77. Leo Mettler	Lingua College
78. Theo Bhengu	
79. Joseph Shonghela	NQA
80. Leonard Eiseb	NUST
81. Dr D.F Nyaungwa	
82. Evelina Joseph	NUST
83. P.R Kisinin	NUST
84. Ingrid Mettler	Lingua College
85. Sylvia Chidunka	NFPDN
86. Daniel Trum	Council Member
87. Victory Mufile	Ngoma C. Services
88. Elize Strauss-Symoms	Lingua College
89. Mukwa Kawesha	Lingua College
90. Teopoliwa Shingeengee	UNAM
91. Menette Namupembe	UNAM
92. John Shihepo	NQA
93. Selma Krisof	IUM

94. Fillemon Iyambo	IUM
95. Kandjimi Goma	MSYNS
96. Irene Shapi	NSI
97. Jakavaza Kavari	Ella Du Pless
98. Jaqueline Tjitendero	MOF
99. Elrico Nakusera	UNAM
100. Wilma Bruwer	Lingua College
101. Nangula lipumbu	UNAM
102. Ndakalako Shilongo	IUM
103. Victory Ndaumbwa	IUM
104. Lise	NAMCOL
105. Arnold Ngeama	Min of Labour
106. Dr Romanus Kawana	Council Member
107. Seno Namwadi	IUM
108. F Keendjele	NAMCOL
109. Sylvia Demas	NCHE DED
110. Sem Shikongo	NCHE Secretariat
111. Bertha Njembo	NCHE Secretariat
112. Henry Kapalu	NCHE Secretariat
113. Eveline Shinana	NCHE Secretariat
114. Abia Mbulu	NCHE Secretariat
115. Wilfred Sam	NCHE Secretariat
116. Lucia Oarum	NCHE Secretariat
117. Raimi Shikulo	NCHE Secretariat
118. Victoria Verner	NCHE Secretariat
119. Astrid Mughongora	NCHE Secretariat









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