A Case Study Describing the Creation and Implementation of a Capacity Building Program for Mixed Mode Delivery of Academic Programmes in Developing Countries.

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Abstract

In 2002 RMIT UNIVERSITY (RMIT) were awarded a World Bank (WB) four year contract (2003 --2006) by the AFRICAN VIRTUAL UNIVERSITY (AVU) for • Delivery of a COMPUTER SCIENCE (CS) diploma and degree to 8 AVU Learning Centres (LC) in Africa using an INFORMATION COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY (ICT) mixed-mode delivery model, and • Building capacity in the LEAD PARTNER UNIVERSITY (LPU), in this case the UNIVERSITY OF DAR ES SALAAM (UDSM) in Tanzania, so that they could take over the management & operations of the program from RMIT as from the end of the contract-Dec 2006. The inclusion of effective CAPACITY BUILDING (CB) into the program was viewed as an essential and urgent requirement that would lead to an ongoing and sustainable program. This need is particularly important in the areas of ICT, where the technology has the potential to support education and contribute meaningfully to the development of economic and sustainable industries. To be effective, CB would need to be seen as a holistic process involving the whole organisation. This paper describes: • the complexities and key issues involved in developing a CB program with the primary objective being “To ensure that UDSM is “operationally ready” to take over the management and the delivery of CS Program from RMIT.by Dec 2006" • the 'organisational mirroring' planning approach created to develop the CB program and • the specific strategies and activities that formed the CB program. Finally the paper reflects on the strategies and activities adopted and discusses key issues arising during implementation and lessons learned to date.

Keywords: capacity building; online education; sustainability; organizational mirroring; mixed mode delivery; developing countries.