

**TURBULENCE IN TERTIARY
EDUCATION IN WEST AFRICA:
QUALITY, MENTORSHIP AND ACCESS**

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PLAN OF PRESENTATION

- Introduction: Historical note
- Tertiary education landscape in West Africa – the demand and access issue
- Interventions to address access
- Quality issues
- Interventions to address quality
- Thoughts on the way forward

INTRODUCTION: IN THE BEGINNING....

- The first generation of universities started off very well
- Higher education was a priority
 - To train nationals to take over from colonial officials
 - A university was a national monument and symbol of prestige and pride
- Student numbers were very small
- Funding was assumed and assured
- Quality was high and HE in Africa was one of the best you could think of.

INTRODUCTION

- HE modeled on those of colonising countries was elitist and available to few (GER in 1970 – **0.8**)
- Turbulence: “a state of violent disturbance and disorder (as in politics or social conditions generally)”
- Turbulence initially created by
 - Downturn in economic fortunes of African countries in 1970s and 1980s (the ‘lost decade’)
 - Reduced funding for HE (HE became the ‘stepchild’ of education in Africa)

TERTIARY EDUCATION IN 1980S & 1990S

- Educational reforms at pre-tertiary level leading to high demand for HE/TE, which was seen as a ‘private good’, and led to **massification** and high student/staff ratios
- Deterioration of infrastructure and academic facilities
- Quality relegated to the background
- Poor conditions of service of faculty fuelling the **brain drain**
- ICT revolution was taking place
- Globalisation

BARRIERS TO ACCESS

- Main barriers to access:
 - Inadequate capacity of existing institutions
 - demand and supply dilemma;
 - increase demand not matched by available institutions – exceeding of carrying capacity especially in respect of lecturers, eg. Nigeria]
- Socio-economic status:
 - Cost-benefit?
 - Cash constraints – liquidity
 - Debt?
 - Academic ability
 - Information access
 - Motivation
 - Family environment
 - rural/urban location of secondary school of origin;

BARRIERS TO ACCESS AND EQUITY IN HIGHER EDUCATION – VULNERABLE GROUPS

- Gender:
 - females - lower participation (around 40% in Ghana);
 - over-represented in humanities;
 - under-represented in sciences
- Persons differently-abled;
- Race/ethnicity/minorities??

ADDRESSING ACCESS CONCERNS: RECENT INTERVENTIONS

- High demand and reduced public funding triggered renewed thinking about the management and administration of higher education institutions, especially Universities
- Variety of measures and initiatives taken at:
 - National level
 - Institutional level

INTERVENTIONS: ADDRESSING ACCESS AND EQUITY CONCERNS

National Level Policies

- New regulatory frameworks to encourage
 - participation by private providers
 - Other modes of delivery (Distance learning)
- Establishment of New Public Universities:
 - Between 2011 – 2015, Nigeria opened 18 new public universities (and approved 20 new private ones)
 - Others in Ghana, Senegal (3 pub, 7 private)
- Open university (Nigeria)

ADDRESSING ACCESS AND EQUITY CONCERNS: RECENT INTERVENTIONS

National Level Policies (cont'd)

- New Funding Initiatives
 - Tuition remains generally low or ‘free’ (for students on state bursary)
 - Cost-sharing – students to contribute to their education
 - eg. abolishing free boarding and lodging for University students
 - Full fee-paying category (‘dual-track’) in public TEIs

ADDRESSING ACCESS AND EQUITY CONCERNS: RECENT INTERVENTIONS

National Level Policies (cont'd)

- Student Loan Schemes - are accessed by all students who wish to, to pay for their education (In Ghana since early 1970s).
- ‘Education Trust Funds’, eg. in Ghana and Nigeria:
 - Require political will on the part of governments
 - populated with specified tax revenues (VAT or petroleum)
 - cater for capital items – major rehabilitation of buildings, new physical infrastructure, new universities, student loans, research, faculty development

ADDRESSING ACCESS AND EQUITY CONCERNS: RECENT INTERVENTIONS

Institutional Level Initiatives

- Adoption of strategic planning to guide operations
- Public institutions contracting loans for infrastructural development
- Expansion of Infrastructure
 - expanding ICT infrastructure and bandwidth with support from donors (Partnership for Higher Education in Africa)
 - Opening branch campuses and study centres

ADDRESSING ACCESS AND EQUITY CONCERNS: RECENT INTERVENTIONS

Institutional Level Initiatives (cont'd)

- Institutional capacity-building for teaching and research
 - expansion of postgraduate/PhD programmes
 - Developing Next Generation of Academics Projects (Carnegie Corporation in some universities)
 - use of African Diaspora – for teaching, research and PhD training;
- Affirmative action
 - Girls - including top-up/bridging programmes in S & T, especially;

ADDRESSING ACCESS AND EQUITY CONCERNS: RECENT INTERVENTIONS

Institutional Level Initiatives (cont'd)

- Disabled-centres in individual universities
- students from less-endowed schools (eg. in Ghana)
- Academic policies
 - Delivery of courses by distance learning
 - diversification and introduction of market-driven/market-oriented programmes and courses
 - use of open educational resources and sharing programmes
 - Evening classes

ADDRESSING ACCESS AND EQUITY CONCERNS: RECENT INTERVENTIONS

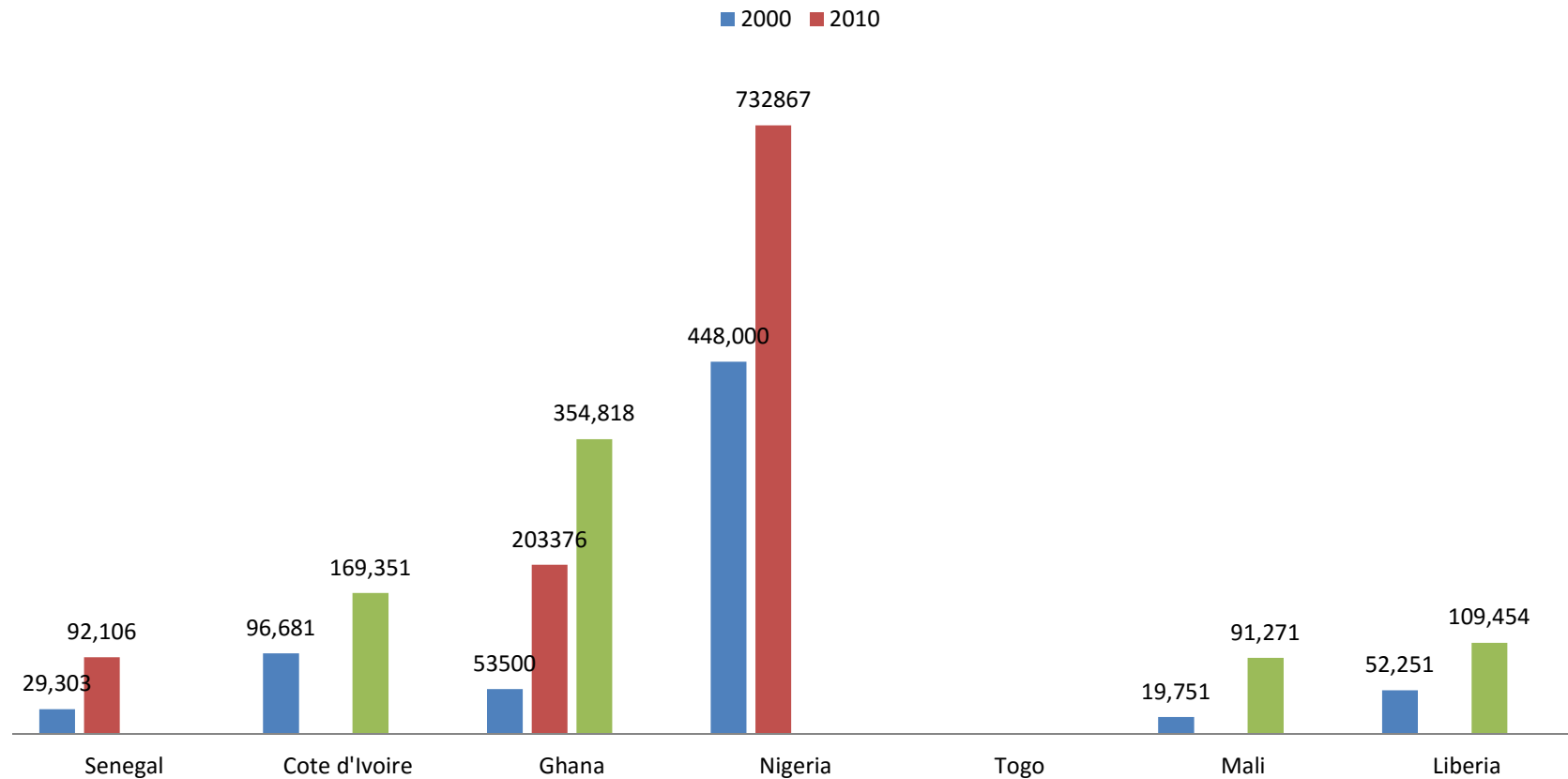
Institutional Level Initiatives (cont'd)

- HEIs required to generate proportion of budget (10% in Nigeria, 30% in Ghana)
 - Charging of application, registration, technology services and academic facilities 'user' fees
 - Advancement offices for fund-raising
- Student financial assistance policies
 - financial aid and scholarships– funded by internally-generated funds, philanthropy (donations from corporate bodies associations, alumni)
 - fees waivers, on-campus jobs

EFFECTS OF DEREGULATION AND EXPANSION

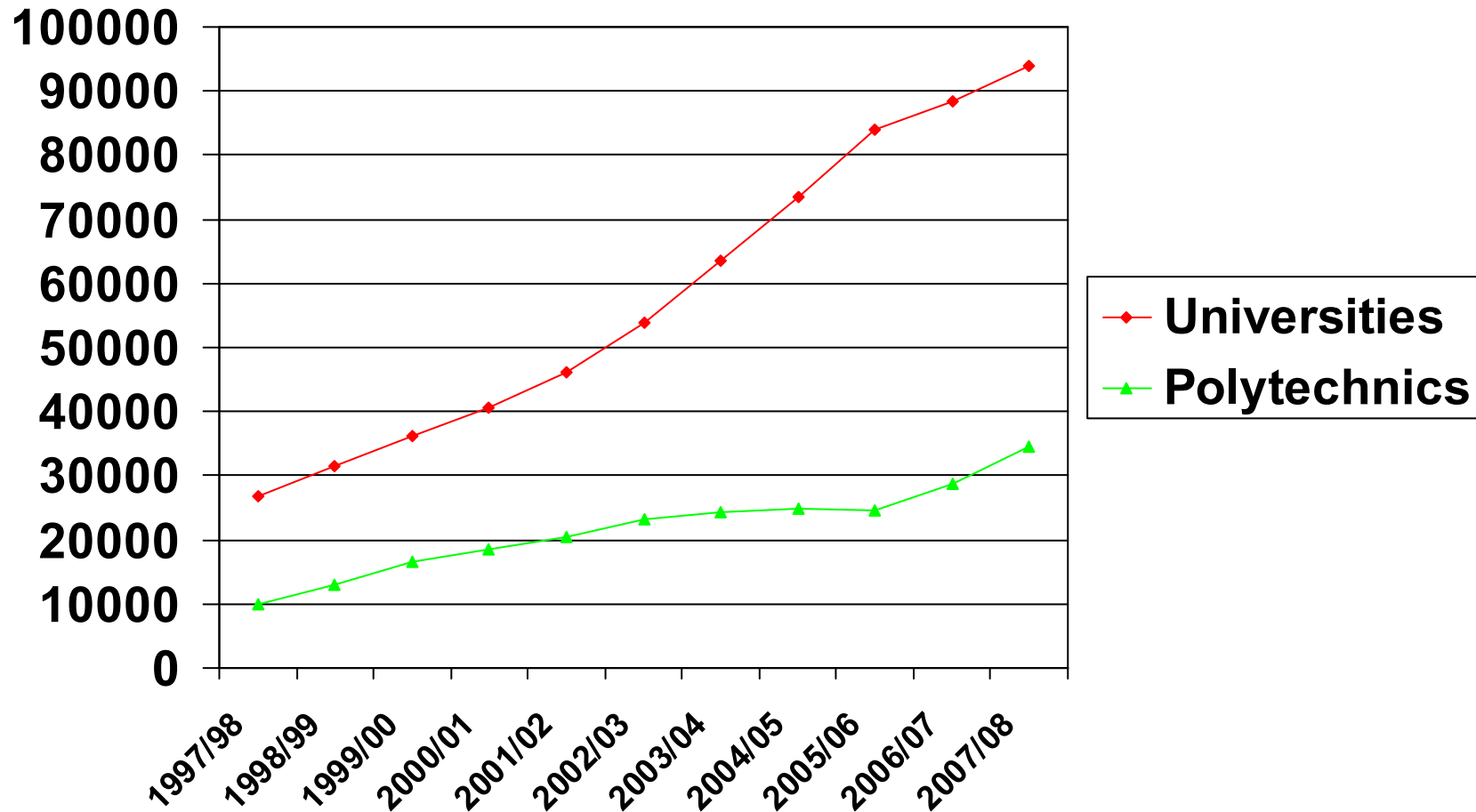
- Increase in enrolments leading to rise in GERs, which between 1991-2004 (15.6 % per annum) was the fastest in the world (Materu, 2006);
- Rapid growth in private sector provision
 - majority of institutions tend to be small in size and student numbers
 - offer narrow range of programmes, usually business
 - Not venturing into capital-intensive programmes like medicine, pharmacy, engineering, etc
 - Little or no research activities taking place
 - Many depend on existing faculty in public universities
 - Cost may be prohibitive

ACCESS: GROWTH IN STUDENT ENROLMENTS



Source: UIS 2015

ACCESS: ENROLMENTS TRENDS IN PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS IN GHANA

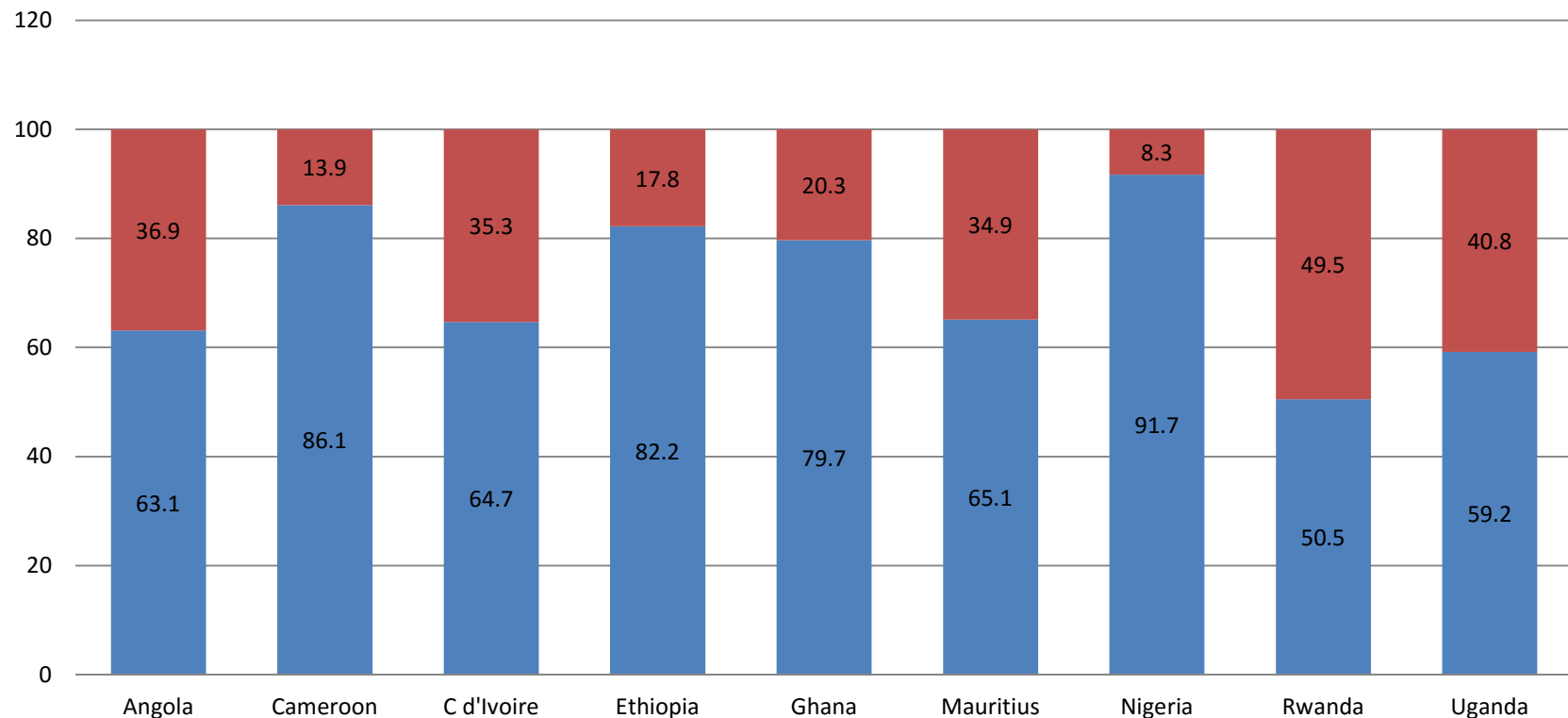


EFFECTS OF INTERVENTIONS ON ACCESS: GROWTH OF INSTITUTIONS

Country	Universities		Polytechnics		Cols. of Education		Other
	Public	Private	Public	Private	Public	Private	
Nigeria	80	61	65	30	69	14	368
Ghana	10	66	10	0	43	0	51
Liberia							
S. Leone	4	1					
Gambia	1						3
Benin							
B. Faso	3	1					
CIV	5	1					206
Guinea	3				1		2
Mali							
Niger							
Senegal	5	7					
Togo							

PROPORTION OF STUDENTS IN PRIVATE INSTITUTIONS REMAINS LOW

PROPORTIONS OF STUDENTS IN PUBLIC AND PRIVATE INSTITUTIONS IN SELECTED COUNTRIES



PARTICIPATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION GROSS ENROLMENT RATIOS (GER)

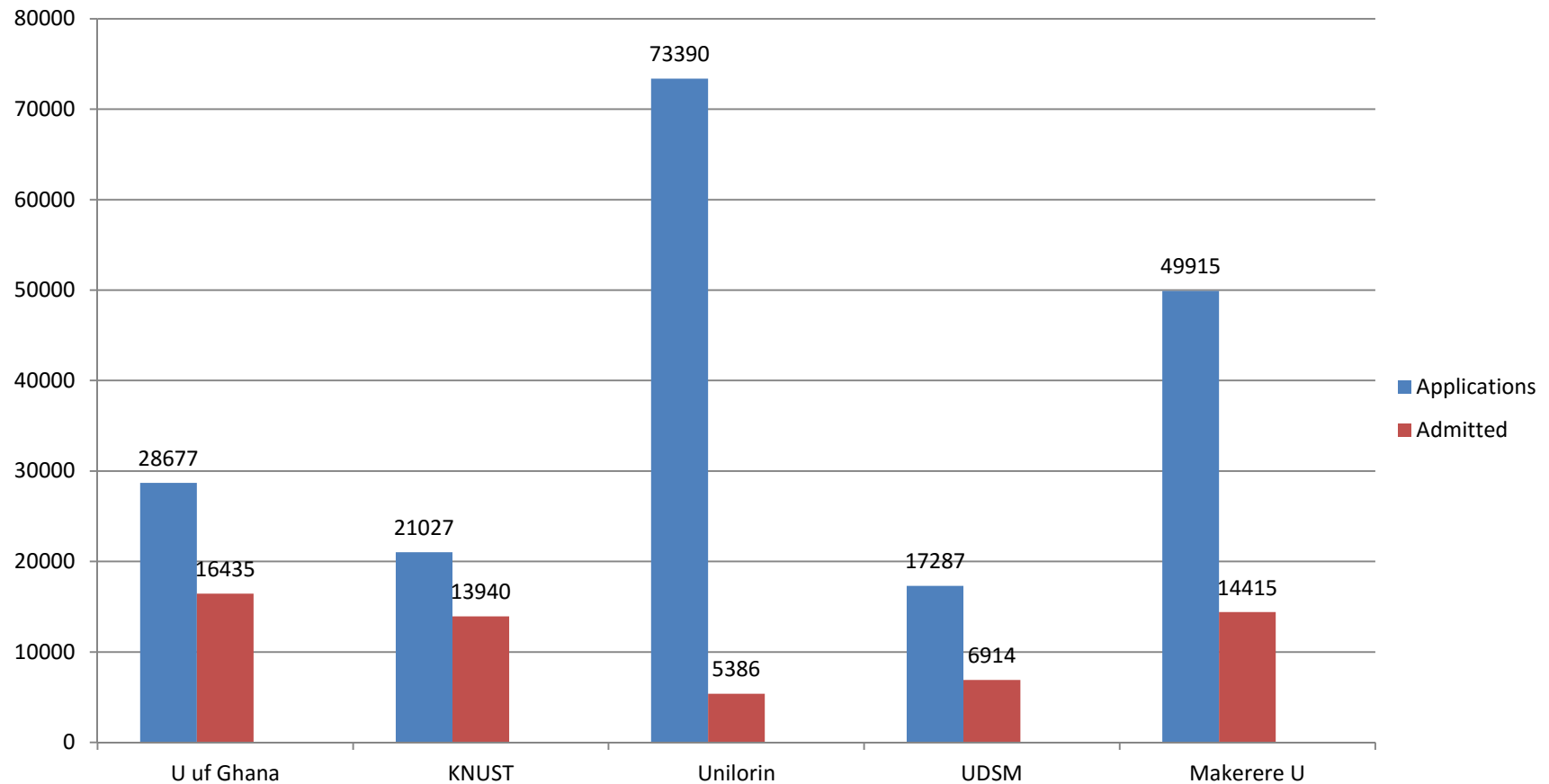
Country	GER		Country	GER	
Benin	4.0 ('00)	12.37 ('11)	Gambia	ND	ND
Burkina Faso	1.0 ('99)	4.78 ('13)	Ghana	3.0 ('00)	14.33 ('13)
Cote d'Ivoire	6.64 ('99)	9.10 ('13)	Liberia	19.4 ('00)	11.64 ('12)
Guinea	2.14 ('04)	10.44 ('13)	Sierra Leone	1.62 ('00)	ND
Mali	2.0 ('00)	7.47 ('12)	Nigeria	6.08('00)	10.41 ('05)
Niger	1.0 ('00)	1.75 ('12)	Sub-Saharan Africa	4.41 (00)	8.18 ('13)
Senegal	4.0 ('00)	7.63 ('10)	Developing countries	12.17 ('00)	26.69 ('13)
Togo	5.05 ('06)	10.04 ('13)	World	19.98 ('00)	26.69 ('13)

Source: UIS 2015

NEW CHALLENGES

- Expansion in Tertiary Enrollment in W. Africa without a matching Increase in Funding
- Rising costs yet inadequate public funding;
- Enrolments below the world average, despite rapid growth
- Demand remains huge with large numbers of qualified applicants; only 30-40% gain admission;
- Rapid growth in private provision;
- Search for autonomy.

ACCESS IN TERTIARY EDUCATION IN WEST AFRICA: APPLICATIONS VS ADMISSIONS



NEW CHALLENGES: NEED FOR QUALITY ASSURANCE AND ACCREDITATION

- The Challenge of the new modes of delivery to traditional approaches to HE development
- Demand for efficiency, competitiveness, increased transparency and accountability in Higher Education
- Increasing mobility, globalization, the cross–border recognition and harmonization of qualifications and awards
- Increased market demand for Quality and Relevance of education
- The challenge of brain–drain: Quality HE in W. Africa could improve retention of skilled human capital

WHAT IS QUALITY HIGHER EDUCATION?

Gola (2003), defines quality in higher education as “specifying worthwhile learning goals and enabling students to achieve them”, it involves “articulating academic standards” to meet:

- society’s expectations,
- students aspirations,
- the demands of the government, business and industry;
and
- the requirements of professional institutions.”

Gola, M.M. 2003 Premises to Accreditation: A Minimum set of Accreditation Requirements in *ENQA Workshop Reports 3, European Network for Quality Assurance in Higher Education*, Helsinki, pp 25-31.

QUALITY ASSURANCE (Cont'd): RECENT INTERVENTIONS – (1)

Recent interventions in quality assurance have taken place at regional, national and institutional levels:

- At the regional level – current initiatives by Association of African Universities (AAU) and AU (determining indicators);
- At the national level –
 - Accreditation agencies, eg. National Accreditation Board (NAB) in Ghana and National Universities Commission (NUC) in Nigeria
 - Mentoring of new and private universities by established, older ones (Ghana).



QUALITY ASSURANCE (Cont'd): RECENT INTERVENTIONS – (2)

Regulatory bodies strengthened – for professional courses.

- At the institutional level –
 - Improvement in governance, eg. Strategic Plans
 - Periodic Review of curricula to ensure currency and relevance of programmes;
 - Improvement in student:staff ratios by recruitment and training of new faculty; use of African Diaspora;
 - Improvement in academic and physical infrastructure;
 - Provision of ICT infrastructure and Internet connectivity; cost of bandwidth still high.



QUALITY ASSURANCE (Cont'd): RECENT INTERVENTIONS - 3

- Establishment of Academic Quality Assurance Units – for self assessment
- External Audits – eg. visitation of universities



MENTORSHIP AS PART OF QUALITY ASSURANCE IN GHANA

- As part of regulatory arrangements for establishment of private TEIs in Ghana, prospective tertiary institutions are required to seek affiliation with chartered institutions
- Relationship requires the mentor institution to:
 - provide academic support and supervision to a newly-established tertiary institution tertiary institution (the mentored institution)
 - ensure the attainment and maintenance of high standards for the assurance of academic quality in the newly-created institution.
 - Ensure the proper conduct and regulation of examinations in the mentored institution.

MENTORSHIP AS PART OF QUALITY ASSURANCE IN GHANA

- Ensure that the admission requirements of the mentored institution are in conformity with the approved national minimum and any other nationally approved equivalent;
- Approve the appointment of External Examiners for the programmes it is mentoring;
- Ensure that the content of the programme of the mentored institution satisfies the minimum requirement for graduation in the specified discipline;
- Carry out an assessment of the programme for which affiliation is being sought by the mentored institution;
- Include a representation on the team of the mentored institution for discussing the programme with visiting National Accreditation Board experts for programme assessment;

MENTORSHIP AS PART OF QUALITY ASSURANCE IN GHANA

- Vet qualifications of academic staff of mentored institutions from time to time;
- the mentoring institution should have at least one member of staff, not below the rank of Senior Lecturer, in the Faculty/Department who possesses the relevant qualification and experience in the area of the programme to be supervised; and have good research output particularly, in the programme area for which supervision is being sought.
- Mentor institution provides graduates of the mentee institution with its certificates until the mentored institution is granted a Presidential Charter.
- Absorb students of the Mentored Institution in the event that the accreditation of the Mentored Institution is revoked or the Mentored Institution is closed down by National Accreditation Board.

CHALLENGES WITH MENTORSHIP

- Not enough mentoring institutions available
- Inadequate capacity of mentoring institutions
- mentoring leads to the stifling of innovation and replication of the challenges faced by public universities in newly established ones
- Private universities often have more than one mentor and programmes are linked to different public universities with distinct intellectual and administrative processes and this often results in confusion ;
- The concept of affiliation has been hung around the necks of private institutions only, thus the practice is discriminatory against private institutions;

CHALLENGES WITH MENTORSHIP

- Private institutions are made to pay exorbitant fees to secure affiliation to older public institutions; thus phasing out of the affiliation and mentorship mechanism would enable private institutions to apply funds that would have been used to secure affiliation in supporting needy students.
- Private universities are not being allowed to develop their unique identities. They are often subjected to long processes of approval by mentoring institutions to compel the “mentee” institutions to emulate the ethos of public institutions.

A FEW THOUGHTS ON THE WAY FORWARD

- No single solution to demand and access dilemma
- Consolidate gains made so far
- Differentiation and diversification of institutions
- Improve access through ICT, DE and OU
- Incentivise private sector to grow (tax breaks, etc)
- Regulatory bodies must be given 'teeth'
- Institutional autonomy critical for innovation
- Adequate public funding to improve facilities
- Institutions should find innovative ways of raising funds (diversify sources of funding)
 - Endowment funds
 - Strategic use of land,; involve private sector
 - Foster spirit of giving in alumni

A FEW THOUGHTS ON THE WAY FORWARD

- Institutions should build capacity for quality assurance
- Ranking to engender competitiveness
- Improve inter-university communications in the sub-region (AWAU, AUF, CAMES, ECOWAS)
- Establish sub-regional standards to foster student and staff mobility
- Improve conditions of service
- Sustainable students' loan schemes
- Institutions should find innovative ways of raising funds (diversify sources of funding)
 - Endowment funds
 - Strategic use of land
 - Foster spirit of giving in alumni, largely untapped potential
- Governments should leave the Education Funds alone

THANK YOU!!!!!!