

**AUDITING INSTRUMENT FOR FOOD SECURITY IN HIGHER  
EDUCATION (AIFSHE)**

**AIFSHE Workshop Report  
Kenyatta University Conference Center  
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***Submitted to:***

*The Technical Center for Research on Agriculture and Rural Co-operation (CTA)  
and the Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture  
(RUFORUM)*

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## Introduction

Kenyatta University in collaboration with the Technical Center for Research on Agriculture and Rural Cooperation (CTA) and the Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture (RUFORUM) organized the first audit in Kenya. The audit that was held in Kenyatta University was the first among a series of similar ones to be held in Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific regions under the supervision of Wageningen University of Research (WUR) and CTA. The next audits are scheduled in Sokoine University of Agriculture (Tanzania), Polytechnic University of Bobo Dioulasso (Burkina Faso) and the University of Ouagadougou (Burkina Faso). The rest of the other four audits will be carried out in the West Indies and in the Pacific. The main objective of these audits is to determine how tertiary agricultural institutions can contribute decisively to the challenge of food security, particularly in the African continent. In these audits, the AISHE tool is used as an instrument of assessing where tertiary agricultural education institutions (TAEs) are with respect to critical thresholds deemed important for optimal contribution to the socio-economic development. With respect to this project, the tool is used with respect to assessing the contribution of tertiary agricultural institutions to the Comprehensive African Agricultural Development Program (CAADP) elements, particularly the pillar which deals with reducing hunger and increasing food supply.

The AISHE audit was one of the activities of the project; ***“Mainstreaming Tertiary Agricultural Education Institutes in the Comprehensive African Agricultural Development Program (CAADP)”***. The project is funded by CTA with the objective of assessing the contribution of TAEs to CAADP objectives. The project focuses on 2 Pillars: pillar 3-food security and eradication of hunger and Pillar 4-capacity building. The AISHE is an audit instrument that can be used for quality management and if effectively used it can identify key areas requiring scaling up. Its effective use can identify areas in which institutions can improve the role that they play in development. This is in an effort to mainstream their contribution to socio-economic development, particularly in dealing with the challenge of food insecurity. The audit in Kenyatta University is an important step toward assessing the role of the university in national and regional development.

The one-day audit was conducted by Professor Arjen Wals of the Education of Educational and Competence Studies group (ECS), of WUR and Dr. Olivier Bello of WUR. The audit was well attended by Kenyatta University students, lecturers and staff. The team representing CTA and RUFORUM was represented led by Professor Arjen Wals and Dr. Olivier Bello. They guided the participants on the essence of audit and this culminated in a performance score match for Kenyatta University. On the various criteria for assessment the observations made are described below.

### **Mission/vision statement**

It was confirmed from the audit that mission/vision statement of the institution was not clear and readily accessible by the students. Further, it was agreed that students were not fully involved in the development of the mission/vision. The lecturers in attendance agreed to revisit the mission/vision, involve students and make it more conspicuous for all.

### **Policy making**

It was determined from the audit that there are policies in place, but there are not fully consolidated to enhance the realization of the institution's goals. It was determined important to involve students in the policy making and it was agreed that in charting the way forward the inclusion of students in the making of policies will be emphasized.

### **Communication**

Communication between the university and the rest of the community was considered important for the growth of the university. Availing relevant documents and materials regularly to students was encouraged and students were also encouraged to be actively involved in issues related to food security by being active during career weeks, or in similar events held in the university or outside. Meaningful contact with the community and the business world was strongly encouraged as a means of reaching such target. However, improving delivery of information from the university to the other stakeholders is an important way that the university should embark on.

### **Internal management of food security**

Under this criterion individual staff members or students look after the internal environmental management. From the audit it was clear that people, especially students, get food but they do not know where it comes from and they do not seem to care or question the environmental effects of producing that food. Certain internal environmental management policies are not effectively managed in spite of the existence of some environmental management policy at the institutional level.

### **Network**

The university has not made a lot of meaningful progress and it was suggested that inviting more guest speakers to the university was encouraged. Some of these activities are normally not covered in the university budget and this is the argument behind the low number of guest speakers coming to the university. When these events are held in the institution, students are strongly encouraged to attend such seminars. Lecturers were also encouraged to create awareness among the university community as a way of raising attendance.

### **Expert group**

Within this criterion, it is presumed that there exist a permanent group of staff members that possesses large and deeply integrated knowledge and expertise on sustainable development. Of the five stages, Kenyatta University was ranked to be on stage 2 implying that much more needs to be done to strengthen such groups in order to ensure that it fulfills its role on food security. Lecturers were commended for keeping up with knowledge and bringing it to the classroom in their fields of focus. Creating new knowledge or creating a food security center was considered important in creating greater awareness in the area of food security. Support from the institution is an important way of nurturing the expert groups.

### **Research and External Services**

This criterion implies that research done by university personnel and students of the institution is deemed to contribute to the integration of sustainable development in education. According to the audit, KU is on stage 3, meaning that there exists an intensive co-operation with expert

external institutions on food security. Although, researchers (lecturers) are involved in these efforts, students are not fully involved. In order to foster gainful co-operation, the inclusion of all students is important. The focus should not only be on doctoral and master's students. It is crucial to involve undergraduates on research related issues, such as identifying internships for them in the private sector.

### **Profile of the graduate**

This criterion entails the education program goals, professional profile, as well as professional competencies. It was concluded that food security is incorporated in the profile of the graduate though not explicitly. The goal of Kenyatta University is to produce graduates capable of broadly adapting to the labor market; as opposed to narrowing down on to just food security as a program. The institution's assessment of the job market is that it requires a broadly knowledgeable graduate. However, it was suggested that the food security should be clearly integrated in the graduate's profile. Overall, the audit rated the institution to be on stage 3, meaning that the graduate profile contains most of the aspects of food security.

### **Educational methodology and curriculum**

On this criterion the institution was ranked to be on stage 3. This implies that educational trips, classes, attachments and research have been availed to students. It was however recommended that intensifying the situation will be necessary. In terms of the curriculum, there is a clear linkage between the different units studied to food security, for example topics on environmental management, food industry, disease control and farming systems. This implies that the institution is at a fairly advance stage, but still improvements are necessary.

### **Integrated problem handling**

Integration of students taking different courses is available in different clubs in the university. The integration is intensified among postgraduates from different schools/faculties especially when doing research. The trend is slowly moving from multi-disciplinary to inter-disciplinary. It was determined that the ambition to grow to stage 4 is highly felt, but currently the institution is on stage 3.

### **Traineeships, graduation**

It was clear that there is no specialization to food security in the school. For instance the degree content does not have majors or minors in food security. The institution has chosen this approach on purpose in order to avoid limiting the students once they graduate to the job market. However, the consensus was that in terms of traineeships in the area of food security, the institution has a lot of room to improve in order to include food security explicitly in its training.

### **Recommendations**

This audit/workshop identifies several recommendations for the university to take up in order to improve its position with regard to its contribution to food security.

- The institution needs to involve students more in curriculum building which is currently lacking since students are an important stakeholder in curriculum development.
- The mission/vision needs to be made clearer among the students. This will enhance internalization of the mission and vision of the school/faculty and the institution at large.
- The institution also needs to mention and incorporate the subject of food security more explicitly in graduate's profile. Such approach will augur well in terms of the graduate's appeal and eventual contribution to development.
- The need to further evaluate and improve the examination of food security graduates is important.
- It was recommended that the school/institution needs to realize the importance of nurturing its expert group. Consequently, supporting its personnel with specialized knowledge would help foster their contribution to food security.

Overall, the audit was deemed a success in terms of its organization and the manner in which it was conducted.

## **AIFSHE INCEPTION REPORT ATTENDANCE LIST**

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## *Scenes from the workshop*



Audit registration.





Students during the audit.



Participants during the audit.



Some of the lecturers during the audit .



Professor Wals and Dr Bello speaking with some of the lecturers during the audit. The secretary is on the far right.





Lecturers listening during the audit.



Audit participants dining.