



Academics without Borders

USF-AWB

Universitaires sans Frontières

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Editorial

Within a holistic approach of a territory whatsoever, higher education must match local needs, and moreover must be in cross-fertilization for sustainable development: nothing is worse than seeing the university of a medium-size city educating students that all will work in the capital-city or in of other countries.

The politicians in charge must not only consider universities as employing bodies that can generate some economical activity, but as major actors for the future development. The offered curricula and the research directions must be chosen in accordance with a deep analysis and after a precise diagnosis of local needs including human consequences of the projects under development or in course: for example, if a region wants to launch textile industry, not only it will have to create a professional high school in this sector, but also to create curricula for senior executives and middle management officers. And this reasoning is also valid for the new technologies, nanotechnologies, etc.



Creating a new curriculum or a new research center must not be done only from the new craze of some professors, but in accordance with the social local economical actors, as development agencies or Chambers of Commerce. And it is in this context that USF-AWB wants to position, that is to say to be an actor that helps the local protagonists design with an integrated approach the development of a territory and particularly the training of the executives; in three directions:

- educational engineering in order to set up adapted curricula,
- the choice of the directions of research for the training for trainers,
- the organization or the administrative and financial re-organization of higher education entities.

So, in this context, different actions were made or are under development. We can presently quote:

- the creation of a faculty of mechanics in Lebanon,
- the creation of laboratories of information technologies in Mexico and in Algeria,
- the formation of middle managers in Haiti,
- and the creation of a school of new technologies in Cameroon.

So, we ask the following question: for which reasons, are the international specialized organisms ready to finance courses or actions of research in the short run, and not structuring actions in the long run? ■

R. Laurini

Insurances

We have the pleasure to inform that a contract of insurance was signed with the mutual insurance company MAIF in order to cover the members during their displacements for USF-AWB. Indeed, if the members who are still in activity are ensured by their institution, it is differently for those who are in pension. Consequently, they will be able to make their missions without worrying. ■

Practical training in international project management

A recent study has showed that 90% of engineers are implied in international projects or international activities with customers, suppliers or other partners. As training in project management is common in the graduated engineer curricula, some specific training in international projects was designed under the name of NEREID (Network of Engineering universities Educating in Intercultural Design) in order to practically initiate the students in information technology to international project management. Typically a group of students of different universities must do something together with conventional deliverables and while using only electronic media of communication like the e-mail, IP-phone, videoconference. The present partners are the INSA of Lyon, France, the TEC of Monterrey, Campus of Puebla, Mexico, the Technische Universität München, Germany, and the Universidad Tecnica Federico S. Maria de Valparaiso, Chile.

We are actively seeking partners in Northern Europe which would be motivated by this kind of experience. Concerning only-English-speaking universities, there are welcome with the condition that English language is NOT taken as working language by the students. ■