

# Experiences and Advances in University Transformation workshop summary and outcomes

Workshop held at the American University of Beirut  
September 5-7th, 2019

AUB and the Faculty of Agricultural and Food Sciences (FAFS) hosted a two-day workshop (September 5-7, 2019) on Experiences and Advances in University Transformation as part of the Transforming Higher Education Project in partnership with the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, EARTH University and GCHERA. Forty-eight participants from 30 academic institutions and international organizations in the United States, Canada, Latin America, Europe, Africa, and Asia participated in the workshop, shared their commitment and advances to higher educational transformation. Project partners also addressed issues around strengthening and scaling up transformation efforts globally in response to the challenges arising in the 21st century.

AUB president, Dr. Fadlo Khuri welcomed the attendees and speakers, stating, “We are deeply committed to this project. We do this with great desire to learn from our partners.” FAFS dean, Dr. Rabi Mohtar, spoke at and moderated the event following President Khuri’s opening remarks. The dean addressed the importance of the changes under discussion as a tool for both instructors and students in becoming more eco-conscious in their decisions: an extremely important factor in mitigating current and future environmental challenges.

W.K. Kellogg Foundation president and CEO, La June Montgomery Tabron, spoke of the importance of creating and providing a stable environment for the students; an environment that allows students to achieve their full potential as leaders, noting that students must “take what they have learned ...back to their communities. These stable conditions come from families, communities, and building equality within our societies.”

Dr. Jose Zaglul, president emeritus of EARTH University and AUB Trustee, stressed the importance of learning process, rather than the teaching itself. He noted that education is about two things: people who care about what they are experiencing and what they are teaching, and the ability of students to apply what they learn to the real world to create a sense of experiential learning.

Dr. Ian Maw, former vice president of the Association of Public and Land-grant Universities (APLU), addressed the importance of understanding and growing with diversity. Dr. Maw pointed out “with diversity comes new challenges, requiring more personalized interventions and technological approaches to address the changing needs and goals of students”.

Following the opening session, Dr. Jim French, project director, presented an overview of the project and the advances made during its first year. Dr. French identified the pilot universities of the program, American University of Beirut, Université Quisqueya (Haiti), Technological Institutes of Calkiní, and Conkal (Mexico). He spoke of the partnership between AUB and the Global Confederation of Higher Education Associations for Agricultural and Life Sciences (GCHERA), and shared the experiences as they embarked on this journey: the major challenges faced and anticipated and the advances made thus far.

The Pilot Universities shared their Change Objectives and the great strides made in implementing their action plans including modifications to mission statements, and changes in curriculum focused on the integration of the five elements of success in their educational models. The advances and progress that has been made by the pilot universities is remarkable over the short time period since they initiated activities and in terms of their clear vision for strategic change that will allow them to advance in the transformation process and implement all five key elements of success of the project in their curriculum and educational models.

Dr. John Kennelly, president of GCHERA, provided an overview of GCHERA and introduced the Global GCHERA network participants who shared the innovative educational models and transformations that their respective universities are implementing or expecting to implement. They explained the reasons, objectives, successes, and challenges associated with these innovations in changing their educational models. They also described their visions of the future profiles of their graduates and the way in which the transformation addresses the changing world for which these graduates will become agents of change. RUFORUM presented their 2030 Vision that focuses on transforming African agricultural university to meaningfully contribute to

Africa's growth and development with focus on student learning, community engagement, research excellence, innovation and technology and innovation. They also focused on the student centered outreach model to engage with the community, and the agribusiness innovation model to give opportunities to the youth to contribute and grow.

The Asian Association of Agricultural Colleges and Universities (AAACU) focused on their role for networking, creating linkages and interactions where member institutions are able to contribute in enhancing programs in agriculture education, research development, and agricultural extension. AAACU integrates pedagogical strategies and experiential learning into the application of concepts and principles learned by students in class by providing them the opportunity to show how traditional teaching and content delivery methods can be closely linked to multi-cultural exposures and experiences. With the study tour, AAACU has started to introduce social and cultural differentiation into education.

Both EARTH University and EAP Zamorano presented their educational model that has the five key elements of success as their pillars and have extensively contributed to graduating leaders and change agents. The expected graduate profiles under these models will include: leadership, values and principles, commitment to solve social and environmental problems, effective communication skills, effective interpersonal relationships and teamwork, commitment to lifelong learning, structured problem solving, solid technical foundation, managerial and entrepreneurial capacity, working for the sustainable development and management of agriculture and natural resources, and application of sciences and technology.

The A5 initiative was presented by Wageningen University and research who is one of the five partner universities in this initiative that include in addition to WUR, UC Davis, Cornell, China Agricultural University, and the University of Sao Paulo. The A5 initiative to transform higher education focuses on knowledge, training and education for sustainable agricultural and food systems. Among other activities, A5 will develop joint education and curriculum activities, including e-learning, collaborative online platforms, joint course work, summer schools and students and teachers exchange. In addition, it will enhance the human and institutional capacity of higher education, especially in developing countries.

Iowa State University talked about their newly launched program titled Global Resource Systems that provide students the opportunity to their own learning experience by choosing the region of the world they want to get involved in, their preferred language, and their area of expertise they want to focus on. They must identify their internship goals and work with faculty members to find the opportunities they wish to explore. They also get to choose their senior research topic and their senior capstone project allowing them to collaborate with a real-world client, use their technical and global competencies and practice their professional skills.

Purdue University presented the College of Agriculture Transformational Experiences (or "CATE") that promotes college student intentional learning experiences that enhance the undergraduate academic educational life primarily outside the typical classroom setting. The CATE initiative encompasses the following knowledge and skills areas: Communication; Intrapersonal Awareness & Development; Interpersonal Skills & Intercultural Knowledge; and Ways of Thinking. Within higher education, these Transformational Experiences are designed to: foster intrapersonal and interpersonal development; assist students determine their place in a global environment; provide students opportunities for humanitarianism and civic engagement; enhance students' communication, problem-solving, decision-making, analytical and creative thinking and organizational skills; assist students to realize their potential; promote and enhance student engagement and satisfaction, along with to improve student retention, success, and graduation rates; and equip students for life after college.

The Tamil Nadu Agricultural University (TNAU) presented their role as a champion of higher education in India and their mission to provide quality education in agriculture and advance technology towards better agriculture. TNAU program consists of 5 components including: Experiential Learning – Business mode; Experiential Learning – Hands on Training (Skill Development) without business mode; Rural Awareness Work Experience (RAWE); In Plant Training / Industrial attachment / Internship; and Student Projects. All these components prepare graduates to be job creators rather than job seekers.

UniLaSalle highlighted their integrated education model that focuses on values including ethics, engagement spirit, respect, and loyalty, among others. It also considers leadership and teamwork as a core of their pedagogic model as well as community engagement, and innovative entrepreneurship.

The University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign presented their strategic plan to transform agricultural education for developing a technically competent global workforce. Through their transformative learning experience, graduates will have: Enhanced core competencies; Self-confidence; Enhanced problem solving

skills in the global context; Communication skills, values, ethical and behavioral changes, citizenship; Enhanced leadership skills; and Enhanced entrepreneurial skills.

Texas A&M's College of Education highlighted their five goals to transform lives which are to: Advance teaching and learning by placing high value on a collaborative, diverse, democratic, and global leadership training environment for graduate students; Provide all undergraduate students with the transformational learning experiences needed for responsible citizenship, lifelong learning, and productive contributions to a globalized society; Produce excellent initial teachers for the state of Texas while continuing to enhance, support, and engage educator and leaders in schools and communities as we tackle the education challenges of tomorrow; Develop new understandings through research, foster innovation and development, and influence policy and practice; and Enhance the quality of life of individuals and communities by promoting physical, psychological, intellectual, mental and spiritual health. They also presented the key elements for educational human resource development including: Adult Learning Principles; Experiential/Participatory Action Learning; Faculty-Student Engagement (Research/Learning/and Community Service); Triad of Training & Development: Career Development, and Organizational Development; Ethical Leadership and Talent Development; and Conflict Management & Dialogical Communication.

Ohio State University talked about their initiative to transform education such as the knowledge exchange, workforce development, and their strategic partnership with different organizations to develop nation-wide partnership to enrich infrastructure and implement programs especially for community engagement and outreach.

As presented above, all the transformative educational models and initiatives being implemented by the GCHERA member institutions demonstrates that what they are doing at their institutions is in synchronization either partially or fully with the project's five key element of success that are: experiential and participatory learning, university engagement with the community, social entrepreneurship and business development, ethics and value-based leadership, and problem solving and conflict resolution through dialogue.

**The second day** of the workshop took place at the AUB agricultural education and research center (AREC – Advancing Research, Enabling Communities) which will become the focal point of change implementation at AUB. AREC Director, Dr. Mustapha Haidar gave an overview of the role of AREC in providing opportunities for agriculture students to obtain practical experience (Hands-on experience) in all activities and practices pertaining to the agricultural operation at AREC as well as its role in advancing research and engaging with the community. This was followed by a panel discussion about ways in which on-going problem solving research can, and should, be an integral part of the undergraduate learning experience, and how this research should contribute to solving 21st century challenges. Speakers from ICARDA and Université Saint Joseph presented what they are doing at their institutions and discussed how does research contribute to the education of tomorrow's leaders?

As a token of appreciation of the accomplishments to date and the hope for continued promising project outcomes in the coming year, each participating institution planted a tree at AREC.

Before doing the field visits in the region, Dr. Shady Hamadeh, director of the Environment and Sustainable Development Unit (ESDU) presented ESDU's on-going rural development projects and the Unit's work with the community. Participants then visited one of ESDU's community engagement activities at Khiara cooperative's community kitchen and dairy unit where they assisted women of the cooperative and refugee women in improving their kitchen's safety and their food processing activities. Students support the women in the cooperative to produce new types of cheeses and other dairy products as well as pickles, jam and other local products. They also help them with the packaging and marketing of their products in farmers markets throughout the year. The participants got the chance to interact with the beneficiaries as well as the students who are working with the women of the cooperative. The women of the cooperative explained how the project has affected their lives, not only from an economical perspective but also from a social perspective and interaction with the refugees. They also felt more empowered and able to support their families. Feedback from refugee women was also shared especially in terms of empowerment and inclusiveness with the host community.

This was followed by a visit to Saghbine's demo-plots which is a part of the climate smart agriculture project (CLIMAT project). These agricultural demo-plots were established to offer farmers, women, and youth hands-on group learning opportunities through the Farmers Field School approach. The agricultural demonstration unit in Saghbine includes a vegetables greenhouse, plots for blackberries, blueberries and strawberries, and units for aromatic production and barley sprouts. The unit demonstrates feasible agricultural practices that are of minimal harm to natural resources. Agroecology and organic production are adopted to promote eco-friendly, healthy

practices. The demo-plot serves as a knowledge hub and is visited by farmers interested in knowing more about best agricultural practices.

After that, everyone enjoyed delicious local food and fun activities at one of the community kitchen restaurants that is part of the Darb el Karam trail for food heritage developed by the ESDU unit at AUB.

**The final day** of the workshop provided the participants with opportunities to discuss global networking and partnerships on university transformation and concluded with a discussion of the future of transformation of higher education.

This discussion started by stressing the importance of EARTH University as a model under the leadership of Jose Zaglul and the commitment of WKKF. **Ms. La June Montgomery Tabron (President and CEO of WKKF)**, shared the idea that foundations are created because they can be risk takers, find new models, that can then be scaled and replicated. A foundation can invest in a promising model or concept, help to make that idea a reality, support the proof of concept and then influence others to understand and invest in it. The real hope is that the risk is minimized for the foundation and they can then support the endeavor more broadly. She communicated that Investing in EARTH University is an example where philanthropy worked and the W.K Kellogg Foundation has learned a lot through the process. She stressed that all people have the inherent capacity to improve their lives and the Foundation is investing in people. Investing in EARTH was investing in people, for all people, not just the elite.

She continued to explain that WKKF believes that the EARTH educational model is ready for a larger positioning and place in this world, while recognizing that there are differences in starting a new institution from ground up versus transforming an existing institution. As an example in the case of EAP-Zamorano, WKKF invested in an existing institution and that investment was about transformation. Zamorano was able to realign its educational activities with the people of the community and engage them as part of their educational programs. For her, transformation can occur in existing institutions and it is related to the people, the leadership, the values and the commitment and that this is the way to go and work together in partnership. This is similar to the “leapfrog strategy” – starting with the focus on people, where you identify better models and leapfrog any barriers to adopting this better model. She feels that WKKF can take the path of the people. If it is considered that education is leaving too many people behind then we need to recognize these better, more inclusive models and scale them up to reach more people and have a greater impact. She states that ‘we are on a journey. It will be very interesting and rewarding when we can look at our students in the face and tell them that their journey will be different and that they will make an impact.’

The university ranking was also discussed, especially the need to include a standard that is more inclusive and she emphasized that this is what this work is doing; creating a new standard on how higher education is accountable. She stressed that higher education has a greater role to play in the development of the world, than what it has played, and that we are creating the new standard that should guide university rankings. That new ranking will have many more institutions at the top.

**The president of GCHERA, Dr. Kennelly** stated that there is a challenge in what we are doing and this is more exciting and interesting. It is important to know that we are not trying to emulate EARTH but rather look at key principals, and see how we can adopt these. There are already efforts on-going so we have to support and link those efforts to encourage the participants in similar efforts. The challenge however is to encourage and support “pockets of excellence”, so that they hear about these other initiatives and that there is a community that exists.

Dr. Kennelly goes on to challenge the participants with pointed question on the paths forward: ‘How do we support that effort now? What is our approach? It needs to be specific. From GCHERA’s perspective, we will have next steps. Engage other partners to support that effort. We will need to sustain that effort over time. How do we make sure that those on the journey are sustained along the way?’

Below are some of the comments and feedback of the participants.

**Dr. Lara Hanna Wakim (Dean of Agriculture at USEK, Lebanon):** ‘we believe that the transformation can occur. However, with my experience in higher education, there is a problem of resistance, within the university and outside the university. We must think about how to confront this? Train the trainers, train all faculty within the university? Resistance from outside such as the Ministry of Agriculture. They need to change their strategic planning and the objectives of higher education in the country. Bridge the gap between academic, community,



public sector, and private sector. The Public sector is on the other side from academic institutions. Why don't we create an accreditation body for agricultural schools? Those that exist are for engineering. Why do we lack design courses? We need to create new standards or have the college take the risk and create a body for agricultural sciences. Show a good model for the entire world.'

**Dr. Philippe Choquet (General Director of UniLaSalle, France):** 'In this initiative we are executives. How can we share these experiences with professors and students within the universities? Leadership programs for professors?! This can be very fruitful. And for presidents of student associations, speak with them about their role within the university. We know that GCHERA and University Associations are committed normally. We need to show the GCHERA experience at the professors' level and student experiences within the Transforming Higher Education Project.'

**Dr. Daniel Sherrard (Professor at EARTH University and Project Advisory Board Member):** 'We can benefit a lot from the project website, we can include some examples of public universities that have done some exceptional things such as what RUFORUM is doing or some universities in Uganda...no one knows about these things. Such concrete examples that are focused on the takeaway message are very useful. It would also be cool to get some private sector messages, and to hear what students have done within their businesses or communities and the impact on the world.'

**Dr. Liu Zhimin (Director of Institute of Higher Education at Nanjing University, WAP Coordinator GCHERA):** 'What Ms. Tabron is proposing is very interesting. We need to create new standards on what is a successful university. China university rankings, US News, Turkish, etc. everyone is putting research ability first. So for agricultural education according to University rankings, none reach the upper rankings, top 50 or 100. Texas A&M, China's ag University, Swedish, are at the bottom. So what? Agricultural universities seek to become more comprehensive to increase rankings. But lose the agricultural focus. What contribution can we do? Set up GCHERA World Agricultural Prize (WAP) to recognize contributions. Set standards to make contributions'.

**Anthony Egeru (Ag. Deputy Executive Secretary at RUFORUM, Uganda):** 'We want to focus on what had become barriers to transforming the university. Once we educate the faculty then transformation begins to work. There are 47 associations of higher education. We are trying to bring them together to have a conversation on Transforming Higher Education. How do we discuss the issues on higher education?'

**La June Tabron (President and CEO of WKKF):** 'Stories are good examples to give us hope. First question was on resistance, the 2<sup>nd</sup> on accreditation. Another was on creating momentum and how to make it as a movement. How to share stories and get others on board and supporting their transformation processes.

For example, here is a story on a dental health aide therapist: there were defined functions for full dentists and dental hygienist. There was no mid-level provider. We received a proposal from Alaska that wanted to create this mid-level person for dentistry because of a shortage in rural areas. Federal law says they cannot treat this practice in Medicaid. We have heard about this mid-level road from New Zealand. We received resistance. ADA attacked us, they did not want us to create this. WKKF took on the fight and created this. We had a strategy: if we could train people from the community they were more likely to stay in the communities. We involved dentists in the strategy and invited them to see and to visit the communities that were being treated by these mid-level providers. These dentists became transformed and became champions of the work. Alaska was the beginning. Native American regions had different laws. Once changed there then we began to look at the lower 48 states. WKKF worked on this for a decade. Now it is a profession that is recognized more widely. Several states have changed laws to support these professions as schools began to offer these degrees.

We're told in the beginning that they were told why they couldn't do this. Quality would decline, etc. Wrong, quality improved because the training was so strict and intensive and the overall health professionals say this.'

"It Always Seems Impossible Until It Is Done" (Nelson Mandela).

**Jose Zaglul:** 'We have a similar story from EARTH during the Approval of the law. It wasn't an easy beginning. There was a lot of resistance. First thing we did was to bring universities close to us. They told us we would not be successful. How can you bring students with low grades? How can you talk about values? That is taught at home. The communities did not trust us at the beginning. We had to build bridges. Communication was important but we decided we would be silent until we could show results.

We felt that we have to do it. Resistance exists. But we need to be the champions to begin to make change. When we began in the Salzburg Seminars, we felt very isolated in this effort. But with time, we felt more and more that there are people who feel like the status quo is not working.

Now that we have a group who believe in this, we must begin to bring others, to seek to make an impact. Find that there are other groups that are involved in transforming higher education. We are already advanced, but we can find other partners. Let's talk about what ranking we would like to have. Let's do it. Combine this process. Where do we go from here? What are our next steps? Let's think that this is possible, and that we can do it. When we began with so much resistance, Zamorano is a partner in this. Now we are beginning to create a very close relationship.'

**John Kennelly:** 'Building on both comments of La June and Jose, if we are struggling with next steps, we can begin to identify examples of excellence. We can begin to create networking amongst institutions so that they can support each other. Focus on Transforming Higher Education, focus on those that are already doing a good job. How do we support this effort? How do we get the support to begin the next steps?'

**La June Tabron:** 'We will have to strategize on this. Need to develop strategy, build the narrative and then from there begin to look at joint funders.'

**Lori Snyder (Associate Professor of International Agriculture at NC State University):** 'What has NC State done to increase more rural students in the College of Agriculture. We're rejecting rural students. So wanted to reflect on how they could increase the number of students from the rural agricultural areas. Starting accepting students on off semester. Then ask for experiential experiences (4 H), or if weak on exams, and courses they could take these at community college to overcome this.'

On the other hand, there are two issues to succeed with transformation: first is the cost, second is how to capture distance education transformational learning. Some opportunities are: grant collaboration that fit the potential model (business for peace?); internationalization of curriculum; etc. The way to build classrooms has to be different.'

**Yanine Chan (Dean of Agriculture and VP of Academic Affairs at EARTH University, Costa Rica):** 'I was checking the internet our ranking, we are number 4,000, but is that interesting? We have an accreditation in Costa Rica since 8 years ago. A couple of months ago they came to campus to review the system. They previously went through a Check-list. They said they no longer have the list anymore, due to EARTH. First time they had to learn the EARTH model and they interviewed the students, etc. So this is great.'

**Iman Nuwayhid (Dean of Health Sciences at AUB):** 'Even when doing health, we can learn from what EARTH is doing. We were told that we can do things together because of the diversity of the challenges, to create the health sustainability program. We got a joint program approved by NY State for a Master's of Science in global sustainable health. All course co-taught together. Experimental program, taking risks. Approached Foundations to see what they were doing and then come back. Thanks to EARTH for their flexibility especially given that all academic programs must be approved by NY State. Given that EARTH is not registered in NY we cannot issue the degree together. So we decided that AUB will reward the degree and the two Presidents will be signing it. We can learn a lot from the EARTH model and work together.'

**Jose Zaglul (President Emeritus of EARTH University):** 'It is our belief in the need to change university education completely which will connect us. We should build partnerships and swim against the current. Building bridges instead of walls. Learn from each other, sharing, etc. What should happen from here on? We need to leave here with an idea of what are we going to do? I think we have a plan that is becoming more concrete. In Nanjing we will have a new audience. This allows us to think a little bit more about what we can do and how to sustain the movement and the plan of action. We will have to leave Nanjing with an action plan. But we think we are in pretty good shape. We are a big group here; we need to create some kind of plan to provide continuity of how we will continue. At the end of the Nanjing meeting, we can build on these two events. There will be continuity. We need to see how to keep connected and how we will move together.'

**Gael Pressoir (Dean of Agriculture and Environmental Sciences at Quisqueya University, Haiti):** 'I started sharing experiences, but I have a colleague that is always fighting about the ranking. He is a great educator, because he does a lot of experiential learning. How do we create the space which allows and recognizes all of these? EARTH is great in creating the soft skills, but some traditional universities do well in creating problems

solving skills, engineering skills, etc. or in Science. You can be very experiential in learning skills. Let's bring the soft skills together with the other skills, and the entrepreneurship skills.

Teaching the students and the faculty to be transformational. How can you change things on the ground? Fund research projects according to who you are working with, who you are working for, are you addressing the need or demand? Are students involved in learning to solve the problems along the way?

Bridging the gap, it's an excuse. We need a textbook of what RUFORUM is doing or EARTH. Let's put together a text book of all of the accessible solutions.'

**Jude Samuel Acquah (Manager for Outreach and Experiential programs at Ashesi University, Ghana):**

'The promotion of ethical leadership, community outreach, and experiential learning that the *Transforming Higher Education Project* seeks to drive is extremely important. In an increasingly interconnected world, this is the best way to prepare the leaders of tomorrow to drive human progress in a way that benefits the many, preserves our planet, and promotes our common humanity.

As we look to broaden this work, the project should ensure to always include the views of students and recent graduates. Their perspectives will be most helpful. And we should draw on the perspectives of both students who benefited from the model at places like Earth University and those who attended universities which didn't necessarily use such a model.

We should also look at how some of the community projects implemented at various institutions can be replicated across the network if needed. Such successes at scale would make our efforts more visible and strengthen the argument for the model we champion.

Lastly, beyond the network, we may want to identify and encourage individuals or institutions who can begin to roll out some of these ideas, even if in informal ways. This will help to build the necessary momentum around student-centered, community-based, experiential learning model we in the network value. Inspired faculty or departments around the world would be willing to try out some of the ideas and practices that we saw AREC implementing.

As we do all this, I think we should be mindful of not compromising the objectives and principles of the *Transforming Higher Education Project*. What Dr. Jose Zaglul said on the last day about preferring to educate one Gandhi or one Martin Luther King instead of thousands who may not make a difference really stuck with me. His point emphasizes the need to hold true to the ethos of this endeavor.'

**Alex Fernandez (Executive Director at UPAL, Bolivia):** 'We come to this workshop to learn from the efforts and successes that several universities are achieving in the transformations in Higher Education, we are especially motivated after having learned about the experience of EARTH.

We are convinced of the relevance of adapting your model to the cultural, economic, social and natural context of our reality.

We believe that we have the same advantage that EARTH had 30 years ago, which is: the possibility of bringing together a passionate human group committed to the transformation of higher education, focused on the applied teaching of the student, whom must be able to implement the pedagogical model from the first day of school.

However, from your experience, it is clear that, to carry out this wonderful project, we need to establish alliances and hope that you join us in our common dream.

In this first stage we urgently require your support in two key aspects:

- 1- In the advice of the implementation of the Educational Model and in the design of the Pedagogical - Curricular Model.
- 2- In the training, of our teachers and academic administrators, in the application of the Pedagogical Model.

On the other hand, the project makes sense if it is aimed at students who come from the rural area, so we hope to be able to access external financing to cover student scholarships.

The men and women who have decided to carry out this dream, consider that this is the most important political action of our lives, and we assume the challenge with the urgency in our veins, we will not rest a single day until we achieve it, because we feel that there is no time for doubt, it is time to act in favor of a new civilization process.

We will take the advice that La June gave. The possibility of the change that Philippe mentioned to create a global effort to train the faculty. Also the creation of space and emphasis on values, but how? How to create a new way of thinking focusing on values and social areas?'

**Nada Abou Ali (Professor of Education and Pedagogy at the Lebanese University):** 'Serving society and following up the various serious problems should not remain a luxury or slogans which are raised by organizations and institutions that may not be trusted in addressing the problems of society.

Attention to university education's role in community service came real, actual & systematic through this workshop. This event acted as a precious jewel which was represented by university education's role in society service and goldsmith that was represented by those professors and those universities that have been emerged from the theoretical and practical framework to what could be practical to play a role in Community Service.

All hope that this mission will become the philosophy of university education in each country. Thus, these attempts require university education to serve with its ultimate goals and objectives the community as a fundamental dimension in mission and vision in both sectors (public & private). Cooperation is necessary between the two sectors and also among more than one faculty to promote a solution aimed at a problem or crisis at the national level.

We really realize no better than providing solutions by those specialist professors who are considered the most effective factor to implement "Transforming Higher Education". Thus, university education plays its main and actual role. This role is not limited to the production of working energies and the brains of society, but it is in itself a continuous and sustainable service to society.'

**Hiram Aranda Calderón (Principal of Instituto Tecnológico Superior de Hopelchén, Mexico):** 'It is true that higher education needs a transformation, redirecting its goals, process, commitments and interests. Our Institute, is located in the heart of the Maya zone at the center of the Yucatan Peninsula in México. It's a public school where all the students pay every semester, a recuperation fee of 34 US dollars. We have 3 degree programs: Innovative Sustainable Agriculture Engineering; Computational Systems Engineering; and Business Administration. 90% of our students come from communities with less than 2000 habitants, with Mayan roots; 40% of our students are Mayan speakers and 80% of our students have direct relations with agriculture, apiculture or some productive activities.

The social environment of our students does not stimulate higher education; and for many of them, they have regular contact with alcohol, tobacco, and drug abuse. Many have come from dysfunctional families, with family abuse and violence; and they often face racial, religious, and political discrimination.

With this background, our curricula includes a course on Ethics, and Social Communication. Professors see that their function is not "teaching" ethics and values, but that it is their mission to demonstrate ethics and values, and of course, teachers are conscious that everybody is a singular being, unique and unrepeatable, and that every person deserves respect and an opportunity. The students learn how to build on their strengths and feed their own resilience as they grow.

This educational mechanism is applied during the student's career, and the results are demonstrated, at the end of their studies, when the student has to be incorporated into a real job or function. Most our students have shown good attitude, open mind, good communication skills and a strong commitment to their families and communities.

We believe that the three education programs (IIAS, ISC, LAD) have to be linked, and we are proposing integrative, common projects, so as not to have isolated "islands" any more. Every knowledge area has a responsibility to support the others. The Higher Technologic Institute of Hopelchen's mission is to form good professional persons, not only professionals; it is forming persons that become part of the solutions and avoid becoming part of the problem; it is forming people that never forget who they are, and where they come from; it is forming persons that, instead of taking a job, they generate jobs.'



## Main Outcomes:

The main outcomes of the workshop can be summarized in the following points:

1. Consensus by Pilot Universities and GCHERA member Universities that graduates, employers and others recognize that professionals in agriculture and natural sciences need to develop soft and higher order learning skills and that experiential learning and practical based learning which allow faculty and students to engage with and contribute to real life situations in their professional fields. They recognize that student learning should be at the core of an experiential, value based educational system to provide the future leaders that society demands.
2. Various GCHERA member universities are incorporating systematic innovative methods aimed at the development of these skills. These actions demonstrate true commitment by these universities to University Change in line with the goals of the Transforming Higher Education Project. Examples include greater emphasis on extra-curricular activities, internships with industry, creating courses designed by students, greater field practices, developing entrepreneurial endeavors, working within community development programs, among others.
3. The Pilot Universities from Mexico and Haiti have developed a Change Agenda Strategy and have committed resources to creating change as they have mapped out in the Agenda and their Action Plans. They have already incorporated systematic changes in their curriculums and in one case, they have created a new Mission Statement in line with their Change Agenda. These actions demonstrate clear sustainable commitment to the goals of the project.
4. American University of Beirut has initiated a University-wide commitment to student immersion in the Lebanese communities to demonstrate commitment and leadership to University Change as its role as lead institution of the Transforming Higher Education Project.
5. Ashesi University and RUFORUM in Africa are demonstrating the need for and importance of Ethical Leadership and Entrepreneurship as cornerstones of the Change Agenda.
6. UniLaSalle University in France offers an innovative educational experience which incorporates experiential and practical learning at the core of its educational model.
7. Critical to the Change Process is the commitment and leadership provided by the university's leadership: Presidents, Deans, and Directors. Creating a team to lead the Change Process at the University is critical to guide the process, however, it is essential that the University leadership not only supports but is a champion of the Change Process. The innovative universities that have demonstrated the greatest actions to the Change Process have the University President or Director (AUB, UniLaSalle, Quisqueya, Instituto Tecnológico de Conkal, Instituto Tecnológico Superior de Calkini, Ashesi University) or the Deans leading the process (Purdue, Iowa State University, Quisqueya, AUB, TNAU) among others.

*Note: All presentations, videos, workshop program, summary and outcomes may be found on the project website under the following link: <https://sites.aub.edu.lb/transforminghighereducation/publications/>*

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