

EVALUATION AND ACCREDITATION DOCUMENTS

Ph.D. Health economics (Reproductive Health)

Centre of Excellence in Reproductive Health
Innovation (CERHI)
University of Benin
Edo state,

Nigeria

September 2019

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International evaluation and accreditation

EVALUATION REPORT

Ph.D. Health economics (Reproductive Health)

Centre of Excellence in Reproductive Health
Innovation (CERHI)
University of Benin
Edo state, Nigeria

JUNE - 2019

The University of Benin has mandated Hcéres to perform its Reproductive Health economics doctoral program evaluation. The evaluation is based on the “External Evaluation Standards for doctorates out of France”, adopted by the Hcéres Board on March 26, 2018. These standards are available on the Hcéres website (hceres.fr).

For the Hcéres¹ :

Michel Cosnard, President

On behalf of the experts committee² :

Dominique Laurain-Mattar, President of the committee

In accordance with the decree n°2014-1365, November 14th, 2014,

¹ Le président du Hcéres "contresigne les rapports d'évaluation établis par les comités d'experts et signés par leur président." (Article 8, alinéa 5) – The president of Hcéres « countersigns the assessment reports made by the experts' committees and signed by their president » (article8, alinéa 5)

² The evaluation reports "sont signés par le président du comité". (Article 11, alinéa 2) – « are signed by the president of the committee » (article11, alinea 2)

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I. NATIONAL CONTEXT AND INSTITUTION IDENTITY SHEET

GENERAL CONTEXT AND HIGHER EDUCATION

Established in 1971, University of Benin is 6th out of the existing 170 Universities in Nigeria. It is one of 43 federally funded Universities. With a students' population of 60,000, it is one of the largest Universities in Nigeria. Established in 2015, CERHI is a World Bank supported program and the only tertiary educational program of its kind in the West Africa aimed at building capacity within West and Central Africa for addressing region's high rates of fertility, maternal mortality, unsafe abortion and HIV/AIDS.

INSTITUTION

1. University/institution: **University of Benin, Edo state, Nigeria**
2. Component, faculty or department concerned: **Centre of Excellence in Reproductive Health Innovation (CERHI) Programme, Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology**
3. Programme's title: **PhD in Reproductive Health economics**
4. Training/speciality: **Reproductive Health**
5. Year of creation and context: 2014
6. Site(s) where the programme is taught (Town and campus): University of Benin, Ugbowo campus, Benin City, Edo State. Nigeria
7. Programme director:
 - a. Surname, first name: Okonofua, Friday
 - b. Profession and grade: Professor of Obstetrics and Gynaecology, and Reproductive Health
 - c. Main subject taught: Masters in Reproductive Health

METHODS AND RESULTS OF THE PREVIOUS ACCREDITATION(S)

8. Methodology and agency
The Programme has been fully accredited by the Nigerian National Universities Commission (NUC) in 2016. The CERHI program was fully accredited by the APHEA (Agency for Public Health Education Accreditation) in June 2019, after a site visit by technical officials of the APHEA to the Centre in April 2019.

Results: Positive.

HUMAN AND MATERIAL RESOURCES DEDICATED TO THE PROGRAMME

9. Human resources

Core academic staff: 7 Professors, 2 Associate Professors, 3 Senior Lecturers

Other academic staff from the University teaching courses in the programme: 4 Professors; 2 Senior Lecturers

Non academic staff: 2

10. Material resources

The laboratory material appears to be recent and does not show significant evidence of intense use.

Teaching

- 2 ultra-modern theatre halls with 85-person seating capacity each;
- Interactive smart boards, video conferencing equipment, projectors, televisions, flip chart stands and markers, and air conditioners in the lecture theatres;

- Post graduate study rooms equipped with tables and chairs and mini projectors where the post graduate students conduct their discussion class;
- 24-hour internet;
- A 150KVA generator which provides light all the time;
- A 32-seater coaster bus that conveys CERHI students and faculty for outreaches in and out of Edo state.

CERHI Library

- Standard metal shelves for shelving books and journals in the various centered courses to aid easy access and retrieval;
- Forty (40) computers in the e-library for the Centre use in the area of internet based research and communication;
- State of the art reading tables and chairs to aid comfortable and extensive research;
- Over 2000 contemporary books used for both research and teaching at the Centre;
- Fully subscribed electronic scholarly databases relevant to fields covered by the Centre, including databases Ebscohost, Hinari, Science Direct, Springer and Wiley;
- The building and its furnishing create ambience, appropriate for scholarship and conducive to learning, access to information and the delivery of high quality services; which range from Reference and Information services Current awareness services, Selective Dissemination of Information (SDI), User-Education, Literature searching, Internet services, E-library services, Photocopying/reprographic services among others.

CERHI Laboratory

Medical laboratory include:

- Auto Haematology analyser to measures all the hematological parameters in the human blood and thereby aids in the diagnosis of various diseases;
- Auto chemistry analyser (Cobas c311) to measures chemical parameters in the human blood (state of the art from Roche diagnostics);
- Automatic sperm analyser to analyses semen automatically for sperm quality by assessing concentration, motility, morphological characteristics and other parameters to determine fertility;
- Makler sperm meter to analyzing semen for indicators of fertility and infection;
- Ion selective electrode to estimate the electrolytes in the human blood which aids in diagnosing various diseases;
- Biosafety cabinet;
- Microscope;
- Spectrophotometer to measure the concentration of biochemicals present in the blood;
- Centrifuges to separates blood and other body fluids based on their specific gravities before further analysis is carried out;
- Electrophoresis machine to determine genotype of individuals as well as certain blood disorders;
- Microplate reader and washer to estimate the concentration of hormones in sample;
- Refrigerator and freezers.

Research Laboratory

The research laboratory has been designed to cater for the research needs of the academic community around the Centre by providing steady power supply and specialized instrumentation at a fee. The equipment include:

- Ice maker for making ice cubes which can be used to maintain the integrity of volatile materials while on the bench;
- Freeze dryer to preserve various substances by extracting the fluid in them;
- PH meter and Distiller to measure PH and purify water respectively;
- Colony counter to estimate exact bacterial numbers for research purposes;
- Analytical balance to weigh salts and other solid compounds;
- Cyflow counter to count cells populations in biological fluids;
- Fume cupboard to protect a user from exposure to harmful substances;
- Atomic absorption spectrometer and Liquid chromatography - mass spectrometry - to do molecular analysis of organic and biologic substances.

Genetic Laboratory

- PCR equipment.

International Students Hostel

CERHI has a designated international postgraduate hostel used by students enrolled in the Reproductive health program. It also has a Guest House used by regional and international staff and students visiting the Centre.

STUDENT POPULATION: EVOLUTION AND TYPOLOGY OVER THE LAST 4 YEARS

S/No	YEAR	FEMALES	MALES	INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS	NATIONAL STUDENTS	TOTAL
1	2015/2016	-	1	-	1	1
2	2016/2017	1	-	-	1	1
3	2017/2018	-	1	1	-	1
4	2017/2018	1	-	1	-	2

II. EVALUATION PROCEDURE

COMPOSITION OF THE EXPERTS PANEL

- Dominique LAURAIN-MATTAR, Professor, University of Lorraine, committee leader
- Valérie SCHINI-KERTH, Professor, Strasbourg University
- Frédéric RELAIX, Professor, Paris-Est University
- Mathilde COLAS, Student graduated from University of Technology of Troyes.

Hcéres was represented by Pierre COURTELLEMONT, science advisor.

ON-SITE VISIT DESCRIPTION

- Date of the visit: June the 10th, 2019.
- Organization of the visit: the visit was made the 10th of June, on the NUC site, during one day. On-site meetings with the management team, academic staff, closed meetings by videoconferencing with partners, alumni and students.
- Cooperation of study programme and institution to be accredited: perfect cooperation by all stakeholders, with the support of NUC team.
- People met (on NUC site):

Friday Okonofua, Centre Leader
 Sede I. Peter, Project Coordinator,
 Juliana A. Afemikhe, Head of Department, Nursing
 Agpoigho Enuke, lecturer, Nursing Department
 Kehinde Osazee, CERHI Coordinator,
 Clement Ighodaro, Head of Department, Health Economics
 J. A. Osaikhuuomwan, Head of Department, Obstetrics and Gynaecology
 Joseph Balogun, visiting Professor (Chicago University)

Teachers by videoconferencing
 Partners and alumni by videoconferencing
 Students by videoconferencing

III. PRESENTATION OF THE STUDY PROGRAMME

1 – PRESENTATION OF THE STUDY PROGRAMME

- The institution delivering the programme is the University of Benin Centre of Excellence in Reproductive Health Innovation (CERHI) Programme.
- The PhD study programme offers training in Reproductive health economics (RH), addressing the reproductive processes, functions and systems at all stages of life, and includes fertility regulation, safe motherhood, infant and child survival, sexually transmitted disease including HIV/AIDS, and the prevention of unsafe abortion.
- The PhD training programme is structured in Training of students and technical experts/policymakers through short courses on relevant fertility, maternal mortality, HIV/AIDS and reproductive health policy topics in the region, in order to develop regional laboratory capacity to support HIV/AIDS and other reproductive health related problems.
- The center benefits from a large number of national, regional and international partnerships that enhance the learning environment for students, promotes faculty development, collaborative applied research and new knowledge in the field of reproductive health.

2 - PRESENTATION OF THE PROGRAMME'S SELF-EVALUATION APPROACH

The Accreditation report to Hcéres was prepared under the guidance of the director Dr Okonofua, with the involvement of teaching teams.

IV. EVALUATION REPORT

AREA 1 – THE POSITIONING OF THE DOCTORATE

The PhD in Reproductive Health economics course at CERHI is strongly positioned within local, national, regional and international range of study programmes in order to provide clearly identified target student audience with multi-disciplinary, high quality knowledge and skills required to carry out applied research in Reproductive Health economics. The Programme objectives of the doctorate are clearly defined to promote acquisition of critical thinking, searching, analyzing and making policy inference. The PhD in Reproductive Health economics programme objective contributes to capacity building in the institution. The programme is very active in research and is strongly positioned within local, national, regional and international range of study programmes, with increasing recognition by governments in the West and Central African region, high number of foreign students joining the program, well identified academic, governmental bodies and industrial partnerships. The doctorate has a clear and operational policy on international orientation through a large and increasing number of partner institutions which strongly benefits doctoral students and ensure a long-term financial stability of the training. Addition of specific partners for a few specialized areas would strengthen the programme.

Area 1-1: The doctorate's distinct features and objectives are clearly defined

The PhD in Reproductive Health economics course of the Centre of Excellence in Reproductive Health Innovation (CERHI) at the University of Benin, Nigeria is designed to provide students with detailed background knowledge and skills required to formulate and execute preventive programmes and to carry out applied research in Reproductive Health. Objectives with regard to knowledge and skills to be acquired are clearly stated. The name of the study programme is clear with regard to its objectives and content. CERHI has an information booklet and policies (Students' Handbook for MSc Reproductive Health) are communicated to all students and contains the objectives and content of the programme.

Area 1-2: The positioning of the doctorate is consistent with its environment

The programme objectives of research, innovative thinking for economic empowerment and sustenance of economic growth are complementary to the university's objectives, as assessed by the university senate. The doctoral students participate in tutorials and training, including short courses and hands-on activities. The programme is very active in research and has a policy that is well disseminated. For instance the students are sent on internship to research on health data collection and analysis for health policy generation (Ghana Health Services, Department of Health Economics Leeds University United Kingdom, National Bureau of Statistics, Ministry of Health etc.), which is key in the research field given the general lack of reproductive health indicators in the West and Central African region. Some research units are involved in the doctorate. The doctorate interacts with the socio-economic and socio-cultural environments, including with state and federal ministries of health, research centres, among which are Women Health Action and Research Centres (WHARC), hospital, association of traditional Birth attendance (ATBA) and Women affair ministries. The doctoral training have a clear and operational policy on international orientation through (for instance) international links with Ghana Health Services, Department of Economics Leeds University, Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, International Pregnancy Advisory Services (IPAS) and others. The complete lists of active national, regional and international academic partners involved in education and research, are provided, including some of the important signed partnership agreement. Development of an appropriate business plan to support sustainability would strengthen the programme.

AREA 2 – ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT OF THE DOCTORATE

The doctorate's organizational structure is based on a well-structured, identified and defined scientific, teaching and administrative team. Governance of the doctorate is adapted and involves doctoral student representatives Management is based on clearly defined rules, with a clearly written academic calendar. The doctorate has material and human resources, including pooled resources, that are consistent with its objectives. Excellent operational internal and external communication tools are available. Appropriate internal quality assurance mechanisms are in place. Student recruitment methods are widely disseminated, clearly defined, transparent. Precisely accessible, explicitly stated and fair rules for recruitment have been established for the PhD in Reproductive Health economics programme, including gender balance issues. Doctoral students recruited have the appropriate conditions for preparing their doctorate. Overall organization and management are excellent.

Area 2-1: Effective organization and management is in place for the doctorate

The doctorate's organizational structure is based on a well-structured scientific, teaching and administrative team. The role and responsibilities of faculty members are well defined. Appropriate organograms, roles and responsibilities of Key staff and Committees with the roles and responsibilities of faculty, administrative staff and committees in CERHI academic Regulations and Teacher's Code include the University of Benin's Academic regulations and teachers code containing guidelines for teachers, students, examiners etc. The governance of the doctorate includes the Project Management Committee Meeting (PMC) consisting of the centre's key officers, representatives of the university's management, heads of departments, departmental coordinators and student representatives. The program also has a Coordinator whose work is to make the academic welfare of students a top priority during the meetings.

Management is based on clearly defined rules, with a clearly written academic calendar which is normally adopted by the project management committee, on behalf of the faculties, after first and second readings. The calendar articulates and specifies all expected academic activities including internships and seminar presentations. The doctorate has material and human resources, including pooled resources, that are consistent with its objectives. The least qualified academic staff is senior Lecturer. Others are associate professors and Professors with relevant knowledge in the courses allocated to them. Academic experts from national and regional partners are also engaged in lecturing, and increasing the remuneration for academic resources partners may improve the attractiveness. Interactive boards, video conferencing facilities, smart boards and effective projectors for effective power point presentations and pedagogy are available. The list of faculty is also provided. The doctorate has operational internal and external communication tools. The departmental academic board, as well as the central Project Management Committee meetings are held on a regular basis with students' representatives present. Resolutions are communicated through *Whatsapp* group chat, emails, internal memos and information on the notice board. CERHI maintains and regularly updates its website and has other communication channels, including social media with which it communicates internally and externally, including website, social media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn), newsletter and traditional media (radio, newspapers, and TV). Internal quality assurance mechanisms are in place within the doctorate. These include reports of the field work, written examinations in

two semesters, presentation of two seminars before they present their PhD thesis proposal. Thesis supervision includes one supervisor from the department and the second is any other expert in the area of investigation from any other department or faculty in the university, or if necessary from any of the regional partners.

Area 2-2: There is an explicit policy for recruiting and funding doctoral students, which is adapted to the PhD program

While there is no funding policy for doctorate degree, CERHI provides funds for doctoral students who apply to be supported on the research work in partners. The low number of regional students reflects the limited availability of scholarships to support students' enrolment. The student recruitment methods are clearly defined and are transparent, widely disseminated in CERHI's and University of Benin's website, Association of African Universities (AAU) website, the CERHI students' recruitment leaflet and Student Handbook for PhD Health Economics. Student induction services are suitable for all types of doctoral students, including one-week orientation for all new students to know their whereabouts including the use of CERHI library and other students' services. International students are in contact with the Program Manager who picks them from the airports or bus parks and immediately makes them comfortable by providing rooms and other amenities they will need. Doctoral students recruited are provided with opportunities to remain at the forefront through participation in research projects, conferences, seminars, international forums and access to the latest international literature.

AREA 3 – SUPERVISION AND TRAINING FOR DOCTORAL STUDENTS

The PhD in Reproductive Health economics programme includes a set of teaching units that are consistent with the objectives and permits gradual specialization. A workplan is established of the PhD, student progress is monitored by two supervisors that ensures that appropriate conditions are in place. The reciprocal commitments of doctoral students and thesis supervisors are clearly defined and known by the students. Appropriate measures to combat fraud, plagiarism and corruption are applied within the doctorate. Appropriate boards and committees have been established to deal with conflict, discrimination and harassment. Doctoral students have access to scientific teaching and professional training. The teaching proposed is based on the expertise of research units and socio-economic partners associated with the doctorate. The doctorate has set clear and suitable objectives with regard to the duration of theses taking into account the profiles of doctoral students and any special conditions. Explicit, fair and transparent criteria for authorizing thesis defence are provided to doctoral students, faculty members and thesis supervisors.

Area 3-1: The doctorate applies a strict doctoral student supervision and follow-up policy

A PhD workplan is established for every student. Precise and explicit rules are set for supervision and follow-up of doctoral students, including two supervisors for each student. One from the student's department and the other from any other department or faculty in the university but with relevant interest in the PhD research topic. The student must submit two copies of the work each time such that each of the supervisors can have a copy to read. The supervisors schedule a meeting to discuss their observations with the students and resolve on the areas for corrections. Each of the supervisors must be seen to have played their rolls by endorsing the final work. They must be present at each seminar presentation of work from proposal to final defence. The reciprocal commitments of doctoral students and thesis supervisors (or directors) are clearly defined and known by the students. The doctorate includes individual and regular follow-up of doctoral students, with clearly defined, coherent and transparent procedures for doctoral students and thesis supervisors. Thesis defence schedule is designed by the Post graduate coordinator and approved by the departmental academic board which the student and supervisors must catch up with. Supervisors must chronicle with dates and signatures a record of supervision. Students on their part, signs with the departmental secretary dates of submission and collection of manuscripts. Measures to combat fraud, plagiarism and corruption are applied within the doctorate, including anti-plagiarism test result alongside evidence of all school and departmental charges to the school of postgraduate studies before final results are sent to the university senate for final approval. The University subscribes to the anti-plagiarism policy of the office of the IPTTO (Intellectual Property and Technology Transfer Offices), and has provided guidelines to the University to identify the same. Antiplagiarism software (TURNITIN) is available in the University to scrutinize the work of staff and students for originality. The University also has an ethical review panel that oversees all research works done within the context of the programme. In case of conflict, discrimination and harassment, successive boards and committees have been established.

Area 3-2: The doctorate offers diverse teaching and organizes supplementary events

Doctoral students have access to scientific teaching and professional training, including relevant softwares employed in their various researches and areas of specializations, and software training seminars and workshops. Methods for accessing and validating this teaching are clearly defined and known by users. Students have to present seminars with feedback from faculty members, and have to attend inaugural lectures as well as guest lectures organized by the centre and the university.

Area 3-3: The doctorate is based on explicit rules for thesis duration and defence

The doctorate has set clear and appropriate objectives with regard to the duration of PhD with a full time programme of a minimum of three years and a maximum of six years. In order to be granted thesis defence, students present two seminars on the thesis on internal level, at the department, in presence of the departmental members and invited faculties from other departments and the external and final one at school of post graduate studies in front of the board of external examiners. These are clearly stated in the students' handbook. Organization rules for thesis defence (composition of the examination board and role of its members, convening notice, manuscript submission, etc.) are communicated to doctoral students and supervisors via the Academic regulations and teacher's code. Doctoral students are invited to submit a soft copy of their work which post graduate board of examiners meets over to ensure that all criteria, format and quality conditions are met. If necessary corrections are recommended. After this the synopsis is submitted and the student is scheduled for external examination base on the scheduled date by the school of post graduate studies.

AREA 4 – INTEGRATION OF DOCTORS INTO THE JOB MARKET

Doctorate integration in the job market is excellent and mainly coming from interaction with the partners that provide students job opportunities. Success rate in access to further studies and job market are outstanding, and effective monitoring systems is in progress with establishment of an alumni group and the objective to establish records of the employment rate and status of their members.

Area 4-1: The doctorate includes mechanisms to promote the integration of doctors into the job market

Doctorate integration in the job market is mainly coming from interactions with the partners. Internship trainings, conferences and outreach programs are providing opportunities and students are expected to take an active part in finding job opportunities.

Area 4-2: The doctorate has effective monitoring of the integration of doctors into the job market

The programme is recent and only a few students graduated so far. Effective monitoring systems are not yet in place but in progress, with the objective to establish records of the employment rate and status of their members. However, success rate in access to further studies and job market are outstanding. An alumni group has been established to create an "alumni" directory or network of former doctoral students.

Area 4-3: The data collected is analyzed, communicated and used

The programme is still young, and data collection has not started yet.

V. CONCLUSION

The PhD programme offers training in Reproductive health economics (RH), addressing a critical regional challenge, the reproductive processes, functions and systems at all stages of life, and includes fertility regulation, safe motherhood, infant and child survival, sexually transmitted disease including HIV/AIDS, and the prevention of unsafe abortion. The programme is recent and only a few students graduated so far. The PhD in Reproductive Health course at CERHI is remarkably well structured and managed, with an adequate number of qualified staff, appropriate communication regarding learning and job outcomes. The training programme is strongly positioned in order to provide students with high quality knowledge and skills required to carry out applied research in Reproductive Health.

Outcomes in terms of job opportunities and further studies are outstanding through an impressive network of partners and specific PhD programme available on-site. Industry partners are identified (i.e. General Electric, Nigeria ; Emzor Pharmaceuticals ; Philips International ; Fidson Pharmaceuticals ; Thomson Reuters), deliver lectures on-site, interact with students on matters relating to employment opportunities, participate in the curriculum design and regularly attend management committee meetings to advice on program curriculum review. The PhD in Reproductive Health economics course at CERHI is strongly positioned within local, national, regional and international range of study programmes in order to provide clearly identified target student audience with high quality knowledge and skills required to carry out applied research in Reproductive Health economics.

CERHI has an information booklet and policies (Students' Handbook for MSc Reproductive Health) are communicated to all students and contains the objectives and content of the programme. The programme is very active in research and is strongly positioned within local, national, regional and international range of study programmes, with increasing recognition by governments in the West and Central African region, high number of foreign students joining the program, well identified academic, governmental bodies and industrial partnerships. The doctoral students have a clear and operational policy on international orientation through a large and increasing number of partner institutions which strongly benefits doctoral students and ensure a long-term financial stability of the training. Addition of specific partners for a few specialized areas would strengthen the programme.

The doctorate's organizational structure is based on a well-structured, identified and defined scientific, teaching and administrative team that includes experts from national and regional partners. Operational internal and external communication tools are in place. Governance of the doctorate is adapted and involves doctoral student representatives Management is based on clearly defined rules and academic calendar. Appropriate internal quality assurance mechanisms are in place. Precisely accessible, explicitly stated and fair rules for recruitment have been established. While there is no funding policy for doctorate degree, CERHI provides funds for doctoral students who apply to be supported on the research work in partners. Student recruitment methods are widely disseminated, clearly defined and transparent. Overall organization and management of the PhD programme is excellent. The doctorate programme includes a set of teaching units that are consistent with the objectives and permits gradual specialization.

A workplan is established of the PhD, student progress is monitored. The reciprocal commitments of doctoral students and thesis supervisors are clearly defined and known by the students. Appropriate measures to combat fraud are in place, and dedicated boards and committees have been established to deal with conflict, discrimination and harassment. Doctoral students have access to scientific teaching and professional training based on the expertise of research units and socio-economic partners associated with the doctorate. Explicit, fair and transparent criteria for authorizing thesis defence are provided to doctoral students, faculty members and thesis supervisors. Overall supervision and student training are excellent. Doctorate integration in the job market is mainly coming from interaction with the partners that provide students job opportunities. Success rate in access to further studies and job market are outstanding, and effective monitoring systems is in progress with establishment of an alumni group and the objective to establish records of the employment rate and status of their members. The overall assessment of the PhD in Reproductive health economics is outstanding.

PAST ACHIEVEMENTS

To address the regional challenge in develop Reproductive health trainings, strengthening the West Africa capacity of countries to carry out research and innovation in Reproductive health that address their specific needs, building and sustaining Reproductive health leaderships, CERHI was selected among nearly 250 applications submitted from Universities in answer to a call for proposals from the World Bank in 2013 for Africa Centres of Excellence (ACEs) in West and Central Africa. CERHI was one of 22 cohorts of initial centres under

ACE 1 chosen by the WB in W/C Africa in 2014. ACE 2 Centres came on for East Africa in 2017. CERHI is now one of 17 Centres under ACE3 Impact projects in Nigeria for another 4-year period, starting from March 2020.

TODAY'S CHALLENGES

Today's challenges are numerous for CERHI. Notably, to stimulate indigenous research and innovation in Reproductive Health needed to drive policies and programs in the region. The necessity to mobilize local, regional and international support for improving Reproductive Health in West Africa.

OUTLOOK TO THE FUTURE

For the future, CERHI aims to develop regional laboratory capacity to support HIV/AIDS and other reproductive health related problems, build capacity within West Africa's tertiary educational system for implementing high quality training and applied research for reproductive health professions to tackle policies and programs for reducing the region's high burden of fertility, unsafe abortion, maternal mortality and HIV/AIDS. This will be achieved by CERHI acting as a training hub for the next generation of leaders in Reproductive Health in West Africa, and by CERHI becoming a leading institution providing innovative and transformational changes on matters relating to population and development and the improvement of the living standards of citizens in Africa.

STRENGTHS

- Very well structured and managed training programme, with an adequate number of qualified staff
- National, regional and international academic partnerships, with industry and organizations relevant to reproductive health
- Excellent learning and teaching facilities
- Excellent job outcome opportunities, notably due to a significant requirement for properly trained reproductive health economists in Nigeria and West Africa.
- Modern laboratory for research and service delivery, one of the few specialized reproductive health in the region
- International Advisory Board includes academics from leading Universities from Europe and US
- Multi-disciplinary approach to program delivery
- Excellent communication strategies for the program and its curriculum
- Outstanding visibility of the program within the West and Central African region
- Excellent internships in a wide network of partners which prepares students for job readiness.

WEAKNESSES

- Poor reproductive health indicators in the West and Central African region.
- Low numbers of regional students due to limited scholarships to support students' enrolment.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Keep up with your very important training programs and research
- Improve reproductive health indicators in the West and Central African region via discussion with the government
- Reproductive health program being nascent in the West African region, staff training needs to be optimized
- Develop an appropriate business plan to support sustainability
- Implement a PhD funding policy
- Establish records of the employment rate and the situation of doctors into the job market
- Increase remuneration for academic resources partners
- Encourage post-doctoral training for the best PhD student to promote research excellence
- Increase the number of external collaborators to cover all areas of training.

I. COMMENTS OF THE INSTITUTION



CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE IN REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH INNOVATION (CERHI) UNIVERSITY OF BENIN

Ugbowo Campus, P.M.B 1154, Benin City, Edo State, Nigeria

Email: info@cerhi.uniben.edu

URL: <http://cerhi.uniben.edu>



August 23, 2019
Professor Francois PERNOT
Director, Europe and International Department
2 rue Albert Einstein – 75013, Paris. France

Dear Professor Pernot,

Comments on Evaluation Report of Postgraduate Courses at the Centre of Excellence in Reproductive Health Innovation (CERHI) at the University of Benin, Benin City, Nigeria

On behalf of CERHI, I wish to appreciate the technical team from the HCERES that visited Nigeria in June to assess the MSc Nursing (Reproductive Health), MSc (Reproductive Health) and the PhD (Health Economics) of the Centre of Excellence in Reproductive Health Innovation (CERHI) at the University of Benin, Benin City, Nigeria for suitability for international accreditation.

We have reviewed the comments of the technical team with respect to the three programmes. We deeply appreciate the very useful and thoughtful report and recommendations. Some of our specific responses to the recommendations include the following:

MSc Nursing (Reproductive Health)

We will ensure that the recommendations made for programme improvement are taken into account in our future development of the MSc in Nursing (Reproductive Health). We will seek ways to recruit more regional students into the program. The Centre is in the process of developing simulation rooms that include high fidelity manikins for use by students. We are certain that these would be available before December 31, 2019. Since we have graduated the first set of students from the programme, we have developed and are currently implementing a policy and system for graduate training and the follow-up of alumni.

MSc (Reproductive Health)

We will ensure that the recommendations made for programme improvement are taken into account in our future development of the Centre and the MSc program in reproductive health. These include international students' recruitment, and policies on programme sustainability and quality assurance.

PhD (Health Economics)

We will ensure that the recommendations made for programme improvement are taken into account in the future development and implementation of the PhD programme in Health Economics. We will develop a PhD funding policy that will ensure that we obtain external and sustainable funds to attract students. We will also develop a post-doctoral training for the best PhD students to promote research excellence in the discipline.

In conclusion, we assure the HCERES that CERHI will continue to work very hard to fully consolidate the three programmes, going forward. In particular, CERHI has developed and is currently implementing a Business plan that includes eight business units to enable it to sustain its funding and program implementation over time. Once again, we are grateful for this report, and look forward to many years of collaboration and partnership with HCERES to promote educational excellence in the field of reproductive health in the African region.

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ACCREDITATION DECISION

Ph.D. Health economics (Reproductive Health)

Centre of Excellence in Reproductive Health
Innovation (CERHI), University of Benin, Edo
state, Nigeria

—
September 2019

SCOPE OF THE ACCREDITATION GRANTED BY HCÉRES

Hcéres has built its evaluation process based on a set of objectives that Higher Education Institution must pursue to ensure recognised quality within France and Europe. These objectives are divided up into six fields among which are the accreditation criteria.

As for the « External Evaluation Standards », the accreditation criteria have been specifically designed for foreign HEI. The accreditation criteria were adopted by the Board on June 2016 and are available on the Hcéres website (hceres.fr).

The accreditation committee, meeting his accreditation decision, has wholly taken into account the final evaluation report of the HEI. This accreditation decision is the result of a collegial and reasoned process.

The accreditation decision issued by Hcéres shall not grant any rights whatsoever, whether in France or abroad. The decision to accredit an institution confers an accreditation label and does not infer recognition in France of the qualifications issued by the accredited institution. The Hcéres accreditation process therefore has no impact on the qualifications recognition process in France.

ANALYSIS OF THE ACCREDITATION CRITERIA

AREA 1: THE POSITIONING OF THE DOCTORATE

Accreditation criterion

The positioning, the content and the objectives of the doctorate are clearly defined. Its interactions with the stakeholders (lead institution(s), foreign partners, socio-economic environment) are formally set out and effective. Its links with the research units and the institution's scientific policy are effective.

Criterion assessment

The PhD in Reproductive Health economics course at CERHI is strongly positioned within local, national, regional and international range of study programmes in order to provide clearly identified target student audience with multi-disciplinary, high quality knowledge and skills required to carry out applied research in Reproductive Health economics. The Programme objectives of the doctorate are clearly defined to promote acquisition of critical thinking, searching, analysing and making policy inference. The PhD in Reproductive Health economics programme objective contributes to capacity building in the institution. The programme is very active in research and is strongly positioned within local, national, regional and international range of study programmes, with increasing recognition by governments in the West and Central African region, high number of foreign students joining the program, well identified academic, governmental bodies and industrial partnerships. The doctorate has a clear and operational policy on international orientation through a large and increasing number of partner institutions which strongly benefits doctoral students and ensure a long-term financial stability of the training. Addition of specific partners for a few specialized areas would strengthen the programme.

AREA 2: ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT OF THE DOCTORATE

Accreditation criterion

The doctorate's organisation and management are clearly defined and rely on material and human resources adapted to the requirements of programmes at ISCED level 8. Internal quality assurance mechanisms are in place and effectively used in order to improve continuously the doctorate. The doctoral students recruiting is formally set out, their funding is fair and sustainable.

Criterion assessment

The doctorate's organisational structure is based on a well structured, identified and defined scientific, teaching and administrative team. Governance of the doctorate is adapted and involves doctoral student representatives. Management is based on clearly defined rules, with a clearly written academic calendar. The doctorate has material and human resources, including pooled resources, that are consistent with its objectives. Excellent operational internal and external communication tools are available. Appropriate internal quality assurance mechanisms are in place. Student recruitment methods are widely disseminated, clearly defined, transparent. Precisely accessible, explicitly stated and fair rules for recruitment have been established for the PhD in Reproductive Health economics programme, including gender balance issues. Doctoral students have the appropriate conditions for preparing their doctorate. Overall organization and management is excellent.

AREA 3: SUPERVISION AND TRAINING FOR DOCTORAL STUDENTS

Accreditation criterion

A strict policy of supervising and follow-up of doctoral students is set. Doctoral students have access to various teaching and professional trainings and take part in scientific/professional actions. Explicit rules are defined concerning the thesis duration and defence. Measures to combat fraud, plagiarism and corruption are applied within the doctorate.

Criterion assessment

The PhD in Reproductive Health economics programme includes a set of teaching units that are consistent with the objectives and permits gradual specialization. A workplan is established of the PhD, student progress is monitored by two supervisors that ensures that appropriate conditions are in place. The reciprocal commitments of doctoral students and thesis supervisors are clearly defined and known by the students.

Appropriate measures to combat fraud, plagiarism and corruption are applied within the doctorate. Appropriate boards and committees have been established to deal with conflict, discrimination and harassment. Doctoral students have access to scientific teaching and professional training. The teaching proposed is based on the expertise of research units and socio-economic partners associated with the doctorate. The doctorate has set clear and suitable objectives with regard to the duration of theses taking into account the profiles of doctoral students and any special conditions. Explicit, fair and transparent criteria for authorizing thesis defence are provided to doctoral students, faculty members and thesis supervisors.

AREA 4: INTEGRATION OF DOCTORS INTO THE JOB MARKET

Accreditation criterion

The doctorate implements systems to promote the doctorate and the integration of doctors into the job market. The integration monitoring and analysis are effective and used to perform the continuous improvement of the doctorate.

Criterion assessment

Doctorate integration in the job market is excellent and mainly coming from interactions with the partners that provide students job opportunities. Success rate in access to further studies and job market are outstanding, and effective monitoring systems is in progress with establishment of an alumni group and the objective to establish records of the employment rate and status of their members.

ACCREDITATION DECISION

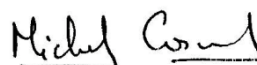
Considering the accreditation criteria analysis detailed above, the accreditation commission takes the following decision:

“Five-year unreserved accreditation decision”

and draws attention to the various recommendations made by the committee of experts in its evaluation report, and above all, to develop an appropriate PhD funding policy.

SIGNATURE

For HCERES and on behalf of



Michel COSNARD,

President

Date: Paris, September 4th, 2019

Les rapports d'évaluation du Hcéres
sont consultables en ligne : www.hceres.fr

Évaluation des coordinations territoriales
Évaluation des établissements
Évaluation de la recherche
Évaluation des écoles doctorales
Évaluation des formations
Évaluation et accréditation internationales



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