

Summary notes of GACER Executive Meeting of 23 September, 2010 at Institute of Education

Present: Rajesh (Chair), Budd, Nirmala, Lean and Nobert (via skype) Regrets: Peter Taylor

Rapporteur: Lean

Agenda:

- 1 Welcome – Rajesh
- 2 Updates/Review of past 18 months (lean, Rajesh, Nirmala, Budd)
- 3 Publishing reports
- 4 Niche/role of GACER
- 5 Structure and Resources

2. Updates/Review of past 18 months

2.1 The last GACER mtg was held in Belfast, just before the **4th Living Knowledge Conference on 26 August, 2009, Queen's University Belfast**. GACER members participated actively in various sessions in the Living Knowledge Conference. A panel on "Creating Structures and Spaces from Community-Engaged Scholarship: The Global Alliance and Community-Engaged Research" was convened by GACER. OCBR and PRIA also contributed in the pre-conference science shop summer school and poster sessions respectively.

2.2 Lean reported on the Penang UCEC Conference "University-Community Engagement for Sustainability" that is jointly organized by USM, GACER and UNESCO-APEID, 23-26 November 2009 in Penang, Malaysia where Rajesh gave a keynote on "Democratisation of Knowledge: Challenges for Engaged Scholarship" and Budd contributed a plenary presentation on "Building the Foundations of a University Office of Community-Based Research: Challenges and Achievements at the University of Victoria, British Columbia, Canada". Nobert and Henk also did a plenary on "From Information to Participants: Science Shops as Mediators Between Science and Society". Both of them also conducted a post conference training workshop on "Establishing Science Shops", while Budd, Rajesh and Lean did a capacity-building workshop on "Building Effective Community-University Research Partnerships". This is the first U-C engagement conference in Asia. The idea of a bi-annual Asian conference and the formation of an Asian network on community-university engagement was mooted at the closing panel of the conference. Thailand has been proposed as the next possible venue with the possibility of Chulalongkorn University hosting in 2011. This GACER meeting suggested the formation of an advisory committee to work towards instituting the proposed Asian network since nothing has developed since the conference. Budd will explore this with the VC of USM as a follow-up to the global dialogue while Lean and Rajesh will work to set up this committee and the possibility of the second Asian conference in 2012.

2.2 Rajesh reported that **PRIA** will be participating in the with the annual India conference on higher education in November. As well, there will be a symposium on Professional Education and Development with President David Turpin of the University of Victoria scheduled later in November. Rajesh proposed the need of a hard and soft copy booklet on GACER compiling an inventory of all its activities to date, some of the issues that it addresses and its future program.

2.3 Since June (2010) Budd has kindly taken on the role of Secretary of GACER and has facilitated the Global Dialogue event, including the drafting of the Global Communiqué, with Paul Manners, Mike Osborne, Nirmala and Lean as members of the drafting committee. Budd will continue to facilitate follow-up action arising from the Global Dialogue

2.4 Nirmala reported on the status of the global research project. All deliverables have been submitted. A web-based report will be put together in addition to the proposed book.

2.5 Nobert updated on the status of the living knowledge website, which will also host the GACER website. The forthcoming newsletter of the living knowledge network will report on the virtual global dialogue.

2.6 Budd noted that GACER will lend its networking support to the African Community Based Research Conference planned for Dakar, Senegal at the end of March, 2011 and to Paul Manner's first National Conference on Public Engagement and Higher Education, December 7 and 8 in London. Henk Mulder will participate in that event as well. Budd is also meeting with various funders in the interest of finding additional ways to find support for GACER's work beyond this year. Budd will also be moving to Sevilla, Spain in January and will continue to build opportunities there. In April and May, Budd will be in Istanbul with a GACER focus once more.

3. Publication/Reports

3.1 The IDRC-SHRRC global project has been completed with all the deliverables submitted. The final report is being prepared by Budd and Nirmala.

3.2 A proposal has been submitted to the U of Manchester from the IDRC-SHRRC research project. See appendix A for the book outline.

3.3 GACER will collaborate with GUNI (including the Tallories Network) for GUNI's 2012 conference and book project on community-university engagement. Budd will represent GACER at GUNI's 2010 conference November 23-26 in Barcelona.

4 Niche/Role of GACER

4.1 The discussion deliberated on the possible role/s of GACER, specifically what GACER can possibly offer that other global networks are not yet doing, by galvanising their collaboration. The thrust of the various existing networks were briefly reviewed to delineate the need and potential niche for GACER:

Taillories Network: mainly among universities with leadership from universities and more specifically University Presidents. Community-university engagement is largely from perspective of universities with a strong focus on students' service learning.

GUNI: an important space for HEIs with involvement of global south. Well-funded. Has progressive leadership with interest in progressive role of HE.

PASCAL: Pascal International Observatory highlights regional impact. It has the ability to link universities with local government (PURE).

Commonwealth Association of Universities: has a network for community extension and engagement in universities. It has strong links in Africa where other networks are weaker.

4.2 In light of the above it was pointed out that GACER has a special focus in (a) emphasizing community-university research partnerships in knowledge co-creation; and (b) encouraging both university and community structures to work together. As such it positions GACER to hone in on the dimension of democratic knowledge co-creation, valuing equally both communities and universities. The constituency of GACER comprises universities and citizens/civil society and movements, with active leadership from civil society organizations. An important area of work is to influence those who put money into knowledge creation to recognize and take this on board, as in the case of how the living knowledge network has influenced EU in the funding of science shops. The approach and methodology is also multi-disciplinary and transdisciplinary, combining the application/integration of the different sciences, including the social sciences and arts.

4.3 In the context of knowledge democratization, attention to the issue of open access and technology in a digital world was also highlighted, especially in the case of CSOs getting open access to publications and research reports/findings. What is GACER's role in facilitating CSOs to get open access? The issue of open access in community university partnerships is indeed a highly relevant matter. How can HEIs ensure open access of their research beyond the research ethics committee, which does not even exist in many countries. Nobert pointed out that there is already a movement and lot of current work in this area. He has agreed to map out for GACER the key actors in this field and what they are already doing.

4.4 Another related possible area of focus by GACER that has emerged from consultations with networks for the Global Dialogue and in the drafting of the Global Dialogue Communiqué is an alternative assessment of HEIs in contrast with the current ranking system.

4.5 Lean raised the need to follow-up on initiatives that have been undertaken, like our advocacy role in influencing the UNESCO World Conference on Higher Education Communiqué in Paris, 2009. It was suggested that GACER can facilitate, together with GUNI on the monitoring of the UNESCO WCHE Communiqué, especially at the regional level for GUNI's Conference in 2012.

4.6 In summary it was pointed out that strategically, GACER as a network of networks will be well positioned to play an advocacy role in research partnerships between communities and universities, especially in fostering the collaboration of existing networks to assert a stronger collective force in this area. As well it can facilitate and host some relevant working areas/projects on relevant themes like the alternative assessment of HEIs as mentioned in 4.4. The democratic co-production of a knowledge space by universities and communities (to include citizens, CSO and movements) linking to open access is emerging as the core niche for GACER to build its thrust.

5 Structure/Resources

5.1 It was noted that the current structure of GACER is not well developed yet but has created an open space for participation by the various networks and from different continents.

5.2 Rajesh suggested that we identify 2-3 areas of work and invite people to lead them as projects. The suggested possibilities are (a) Asian Regional Network and Capacity Building, (b) Alternative University Appraisal System) (c) GACER-GUNI monitoring of the WCHE Communiqué (d) linking with open access structures

5.3 The meeting ended with a vote of thanks from the chair and recommendation that Budd, Nirmala and Lean have a short review meeting after the Global Dialogue to decide on action plans.

Appendix A - proposed contents of GACER book

Contents of the book

Introduction

Chapter One

Contexts and background including methodologies and data obtained - Budd L Hall, Rajesh Tandon, Edward Jackson and Jean-Marc Fontan

Section One: Stories and Structures

Chapter Two (or could they be two chapters-Global North/Global South?)

Case Studies (not in order---uneven lengths/depth...how to present?)

- Bouncing Back: Resilience, Inclusion of Disadvantaged Youth-Brighton, UK
- Cheers-Older Adults and Alcohol Consumption-Brighton, UK
- From Our Land: Community-Based Learning in Indigenous Communities in British Columbia
- "We are Environmentalists": The Community-Based Recycling Movement in Brazil
- Cleaning up Our Lakes-Biopollution in Lakes-Denmark
- A Toast to Clean Drinking Water for our Town-Romania
- Benefitting from Our Own Forests-Small scale forest workers in Bolivia
- Ancient Knowledge in New Times: Indigenous Approaches to Community Governance-Bolivia
- Enhancing Local Capacities in Environmental Governance-Philippines
- Knowledge from the Hills-Mountain Research Centre-India
- The Legacy of Tagore-Rural Extension in West Bengal, India
- Tools for a People's Economy- Creation of the 'Fiducie de la Chantier' in Quebec

Chapter three: Role of Global Networks-Juliet Millican, University of Brighton

Chapter four: Developing Training Materials for CURP- the PRIA Experience-Mandakini Pant, PRIA, Indida

Chapter Five: Sustaining Community University Research Partnerships -Edward Jackson, Carleton University

Section Two: Impact of Community-University Research Partnerships

Chapter Six: Influencing Teaching and Learning in Higher Education Institutions-Felix Bivens, Swannee University, USA

Chapter Seven: The Role of the Science Shop Movement in Influencing Policies - Norbert Steinhaus, Bonn Science Shop and Living Knowledge Network

Chapter Eight: An Evaluation Model for Partnership Research - Jean-Marc Fontan and Denis Bussieres

Chapter Nine: Measuring the Impact of CURP - Nimala Lall, University of Victoria

Section Three: Enhancing The Role of CURPs for Sustainability and Poverty Reduction

Chapter Ten: Tensions and Opportunities-Learning from the Stories? Budd L Hall, University of Victoria

Chapter Eleven: What is to be done? -Rajesh Tandon, PRIA, India and Edward Jackson, Carleton University