The ingredients of a successful internationalisation project in Africa
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There is often criticism that study abroad programmes usually benefit the students who have the means to travel and that the host institution and country benefit little from it. In my many years of work in higher education (HE) internationalisation, which included hosting students from many countries, the challenge was to structure a programme that benefits all stakeholders and maintains the quality of the programme.

In 2017, just before I retired as Director of the International Office, I was invited to a meeting in Paris where the French government and *Alliance Francaise* hosted the South African HE sector. The meeting was to facilitate joint activities between HE institutions of both countries. This is where I met Christian Michel, the Director of the Efrei Engineering School of Digital Technologies, Paris. Having discussed the possibility of collaborating at the meeting, I set out the next morning by train, braving the cold, and walking over building rubble to meet Christian. We agreed to host their students for a structured stand-alone IT course twice a year, for five years.

Right from the start, I planned to ensure that we break the mould of the usual structure of such projects and make it a win-win-win for the visitors, the hosts, and the country. The South African university (the host) developed the curriculum, catering for the high standards of Efrei, thus internationalising the curriculum. The visiting students and the local students benefited from an enhanced curriculum. **(Internationalisation of the Curriculum)**

Financial sustainability was ensured through the fees paid by the visiting university, which were used to cater for the following:
- Appointing a SA social entrepreneur, Varkey George, as the logistics coordinator who ensured quality housing, transport, and well-being of the visiting students**. (Benefiting the private sector)**
- Appointing a French-speaking African student to be the mentor of the visiting students. **(Internationalisation at Home)**
- Setting up a buddy system whereby the visiting students were paired with local students. **(Intercultural Competence)**
- The faculty at the university could use any surplus funds generated for their outreach programmes, one of which was the digitalisation of health care in rural communities in Africa. **(Social Responsibility)**

It is advisable that practitioners of internationalisation give due consideration to ensure that the various aspects of internationalisation (as mentioned above) are considered and that all stakeholders involved receive due recognition when setting up projects.

The early morning trip on that cold morning in Paris was worth the effort, as it fulfilled my dream of setting up a sustainable partnership that benefits all. Five years later, it is still a successful programme!