

CONCLUSION

Obviously, by selecting technological universities (former Soviet polytechnic institutes) the government tends to foster innovations in applied research and development and underestimates the strategic priority of basic research in various fields, while building a new economy of a knowledge and democratic society. Also, the amount of program funding could hardly provide dramatic changes.

However, as an experiment with a new autonomous organization, this program could be quite stimulating in the development of Russian higher education, by opening new opportunities for R&D at universities. Participating institutions will not be able to appear among top world institutions in the near future but will indicate if innovations are possible in the routine construction of Russian higher education. ■

Russian Universities' "Midrange" Collaboration Strategies

IGOR CHIRIKOV

Igor Chirikov is a researcher in the Laboratory for Economic Sociology, National Research University—Higher School of Economics, Moscow, Russia. E-mail: is@gorod.org.ru.

An intriguing trend in the change of modern universities is the engagement in forms of collaboration, especially regarding cooperation strategies on the international level. In Russia, two opposing strategies are commonly used by universities: first, the establishment of formal relationships and councils that in reality do not produce any collaborative projects or programs; second, large-scale mergers of regional universities initiated primarily by the government despite university objections. However, some universities have chosen to undertake a "midrange" cooperative development—a consortium of several educational and science organizations with a participation of regional government and hi-tech enterprises.

UNIVERSITY MERGERS IN RUSSIA

Connections and mergers within the Russian higher education system are influenced by the historical context of state policy development. In the 1990s drastic social and economic changes forced Russian universities to operate under insufficient state financing and weaker connections with industry. At the same time, the marketization and commercialization of higher education formed the main impetus for university development. Since 1991, the relative number of students per 10,000 of the population increased 2.5 times (to 475 in 2008).

Universities started to expand enrollments, trying to respond to the demand of all prospective groups. Almost all strong universities initiated regional expansion, establishing branches (oriented toward fee-based programs).

As the market became saturated, there was no need for effective collaboration. Every university tried to concentrate as many resources and students as possible within the institution. Models of interaction and structural forms produced during the Soviet period lost relevance to university strategies. Industry-based educational activities were limited to infrequent exchanges of professionals and the widespread practice of professors being simultaneously employed at several universities. Therefore, many councils and associations of universities had become organizations offering merely a veneer of cooperation, with no real projects and outcomes.

Mergers were rarely initiated by universities. The two most important mergers executed in Russia (Siberian Federal University in Krasnoyarsk and South Federal University in Rostov-on-Don, both founded in 2006) assisted development in certain Russian regions. In both cases four universities were integrated into one organization; the resulting institutions faced similar problems and obstacles during the merger process. The resulting organizational structure is inflexible and characterized by excessive centralization. Moreover, the mergers have resulted in an increased heterogeneity of the university, which encourages the creation of groups disconnected with the new institutions' overall objectives. Finally, the occurrence of serious legislative gaps undermines the establishment of large projects. As a result, the federal universities are currently not performing as expected.

CONSORTIA: PROFILE OF THE MODEL

A consortium of universities represents an alternative model to both weak and formal contractual forms of collaboration and to the rigid model of institutional mergers. Currently, four leading universities located in Tomsk are starting to implement this model. The participating universities include a tradi-

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tional comprehensive institution and a medical one and two polytechnic institutions with strong participation by local government, the scientific centers of the Academy of Science, and hi-tech enterprises in the planning process.

Universities and other participants of the consortium have identified a set of common problems possibly to overcome with the help of intensive arrangements: in the sphere of education—doubling of courses, unfair educational competition in the region, low proportion of young teaching staff, and decreasing competitiveness for the most talented school-

leavers and bachelor's degree recipients; in the sphere of research and innovation—a small number of large research projects and inefficient marketing. This prediction of common problems allowed universities to create a set of shared goals and principles for further collaboration. The consortium will focus on the development of interdisciplinary research, acceleration of the innovation process by means of integrating education and research, the collective positioning in national and global markets, and increasing economic efficiency of universities. Such ambitious goals are going to be achieved with the use of a flexible two-level organizational structure. On the first level (center), the universities will conduct large collaborative research projects and develop double-degree master's and PhD programs. On the second level (periphery) the universities will conduct their educational programs and research projects.

The emergence of new strategies reflect some factors that stimulate universities to look at each other not only as competitors, but as partners.

Two arrangements are relevant for planning practical issues—the development of the City Credit Transfer System and the Common Technology Transfer Office. The first format allows students to take courses for their bachelor's or master's degree at any of the city universities. Universities approve the amount of courses available to all students in Tomsk; then, a student can add some of the courses to the curriculum, attend them, and pass final exams. The rationale for the second arrangement is the pressing need to be competitive on the market of new technologies and innovations. This office is aimed at overcoming the territorial remoteness of Tomsk and mediating between investors, hi-tech companies, and researchers.

NEW INCENTIVES FOR COOPERATION

The emergence of new strategies reflect some factors that stimulate universities to look at each other not only as competitors, but as partners. First, the risk of decreasing enrollments and problems for extensive development will force universities (especially in the regions) toward efforts for collective positioning and attracting talented school-leavers. Second, due to the considerable changes in state policy supporting higher education, Russian universities will need to develop effective strategies to obtain or retain status and additional funding. Collaboration can form a significant part of such strategies. Third, Russian universities are starting to understand importance to be included within the networks of the global knowledge economy and develop interconnections at the institutional level. In many respects the successful development of the Russian higher education system depends on the success of international engagements. ■

Ethiopia: The Dilemmas of Expansion

LIZ REISBERG AND LAURA E. RUMBLEY

Liz Reisberg and Laura E. Rumbley are research associates at the Center for International Higher Education at Boston College. E-mail: reisberg@bc.edu; rumbley@bc.edu.

Ethiopia is one of the poorest countries in the world. More than three-fourths of the nation's primary economic activity involves small-scale agriculture, not only highly inefficient but extremely vulnerable to variations in climate and international market prices. In order to move from an agrarian to a modern economy, Ethiopia requires citizens with more education. This necessity is especially critical in a country with the 15th-largest population on the planet and a median age of barely 17 years. Accordingly, the government has expanded the higher education system while growing enrollment, both at breakneck speed.

Ethiopia had only two universities for much of the 20th century. Since the mid-1990s, the number of private institutions have expanded, with a simultaneous growth of the public sector. Today 19 additional public universities represent either newly established institutions or colleges merged and upgraded to university status. There are also 26 regional teacher education colleges and approximately 60 accredited private postsecondary institutions (only one recognized as a university).

The pace of growth has been intoxicating, and the challenges of current circumstances in Ethiopia make the expansion of the higher education system all the more daunting. The country reflects the tensions that Sir John Daniels graphically presents in his "iron triangle," where access, cost, and quality are precariously balanced against each other.

STRONG (MALE) ENROLLMENT GROWTH

At all levels, access to education in Ethiopia has improved significantly, with greater numbers of students completing secondary education and continuing on to postsecondary study. Ministry of Education statistics show that during the 2000/01 academic year, undergraduate enrollment at public universities (not including distance and evening enrollment) was approximately 34,000. By 2007/08, regular undergraduate enrollment had increased to more than 125,000. Many more men than women, however, are benefiting from expanded access: less than 30 percent of the undergraduate enrollment and barely 10 percent of graduate enrollment is female.

QUALITY CHALLENGES

While difficult to measure, quality has cause for concern. The number of instructors has not kept pace with enrollment growth. In 2000, slightly more than 3,400 teachers provided instruction at Ethiopia's universities. In 2008/09, there were