Integrating Experiential
Learning Across
University Curricula:
Experiences from the
University for
Development Studies,
Tamale, Ghana

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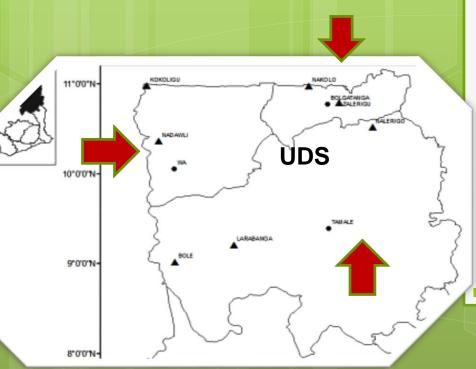
PROFILE OF UDS



- Ghana has ten regions, which include the three regions of the North.
- These regions are the least developed and most deprived in terms of economic and educational resources, and that is where University for Development Studies (UDS), is located.







UNIVERSITY FOR DEVELOPMENT STUDIES



MANDATE

- UDS was established in May 1992 by PNDC Law 279, with the mandate to work towards the total development of the northern regions in particular and Ghana as a whole.
- It recruited its **first batch of thirty nine students** into the Faculty of Agriculture in September **1993** with inherited structures from the former Nyankpala Agricultural College.
- Currently, UDS has four main campuses at Wa, Navrongo, Tamale and Nyankpala.

MISSION



 The University's philosophy is Pro-poor and geared towards Self development and Sustainability.

- UDS is promoting equitable socio-economic transformation of communities through
 - practically-oriented,
 - community-based,
 - problem-solving,
 - gender-sensitive and interactive research, and
 - teaching, learning and outreach programmes.

UDS APPROACH TO INNOVATIVE TEACHING & LEARNING

- UDS was established to: 'blend the academic world with that of the community' in order to provide constructive interaction for the total development of Northern Ghana in particular and the country as a whole.
- UDS operates the Trimester instead of the Semester System.
- The First and Second Trimesters are devoted to academic work and Third Trimester devoted solely to community-based practical training.



UDS APPROACH TO INNOVATIVE TEACHING & LEARNING

Sept-Dec First Trimester



Written

Classroom theory

Jan-May Second Trimester



Our Flagship Programme

June-July Third Trimester



presenting

interacting with

findings to Lecturers Students



Trimester Field Practical Programme (TTFPP

The Third Trimester Field Practical Programme (TTFPP)

- TTFPP is **mandatory** for every student of the University.
- In the programme, every student spends 8 weeks each academic year in a rural community.
- Students are put into groups of 10-15, combined from different faculties in every community.
- Students in local communities, carry out Community profiling, Needs Assessments and write an Intervention Proposal intended to solve problems identified in the selected communities.

The Success of Community-Based (TTFPP & PBL) Education in UDS

- Our Community-Based programmes reduce the traditional approach, where students' participation in the course of lecture is very limited.
- Some benefits Students derive from the Communitybased approach include:
- ✓ learn to live in groups and work in teams;
- ✓ cultivate the habit of interdisciplinary approach towards solving problems;

The Success of Community-Based (TTFPP & PBL) Education in UDS (2)

- ✓ observe and learn the prevailing conditions of rural dwellers in Ghana and appreciate their plight;
- ✓ develop relevant project topics during their undergraduate or post graduate programmes;
- ✓ serve as teachers in some of the basic schools without adequate staff in the rural communities;
- ✓ serve as **role models** in the rural communities they visit;

The Success of Community-Based (TTFPP & PBL) Education in UDS (3)

- easily accept posting to rural communities after graduation;
- ✓ exploit **business opportunities** available in the rural communities;
- ✓ disseminate key UDS research outputs and some important national information (eg. census, elections info);
- ✓ Students gain relevant experiences from field work from experienced farmers in the rural areas.

Pictures of the TTFPP



Students entering their communities



Students being advised by the Director in the community



Pictures of the TTFPP

Students with an irrigation facility in a community





Students helping community members to harvest their maize



Pictures of the TTFPP



Students interacting with local artisans in the community



Students presenting their findings to the assessors and community





 Internationalization of the TTFPP (Application starts from September to May each year)

 Admission of foreign students into the TTFPP from May to July of every academic year.

 The full text with details can be downloaded from our website http://www.uds.edu.gh/docs/ttfpp.pdf).



Possible UDS-4H Collaboration to promote Agriculture in Youth. (1)

- Each academic year, we send about 8000 students into 800 rural communities in about 20 districts in Ghana.
- Each community or district has more than 10 Agricultural Technology student.
- With the help of 4H/any partner, UDS can establish model farms in each community or district with its students.

Possible UDS-4H Collaboration to promote Agriculture in Youth. (2)

- These farms will be managed by UDS undergraduate students during their TTFPP for 8 weeks, and mentor/train high school students in the communities or districts to manage it for the rest of the year.
 - This will help eradicate the notions held by most Africans that Agriculture is for the illiterates and poor people and promote agricultural technology adoption in Africa.

Conclusions

- The UDS' unique model and novel approach to tertiary education in Ghana cannot be overemphasized.
- The establishment of UDS with its community-based programmes has **radically changed** the socioeconomic and health **development** in the three Northern regions of Ghana.
- UDS has further helped to **bridge the wide developmental gap** between the Northern and Southern regions of Ghana and contributed immensely to the total development of Ghana, despite its location within the country's poorest regions.



Recommendations

- The approach to tertiary education adopted by UDS can be **scaled up**, especially for use by the newly established or planned to be established Universities in most African countries.
- To promote community-based and internationalization of education in Africa, undergraduate students from all over Africa are invited to be part of the TTFPP of UDS from May to July of every academic year.

Acknowledgements





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YUNIVESITHI YA FREISTATA













THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION!

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