Game-changing, trend-setting
Collective voices on African management education, today and tomorrow
Thank you to all those who took part in this research.

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The Association of African Business Schools is an association of leading business schools throughout the African continent that promotes excellence in business and management education through capacity building, collaboration and quality improvement.

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Foreword

Over the last few years, we have witnessed the emergence of a “new” Africa, on account of its rising economic prowess and potential for growth in several spheres. Previously regarded as the world’s poorest continent, Africa is emerging as a continent to be appreciated for its wealth of opportunities.

With the increase in business activities, the management education sector, relatively young in Africa, has not been left out. Several business schools and management education providers have emerged within the continent. The emergence of regional conglomerates across the continent, growth of small businesses and expansion of multinational companies, all point to a dire need for more managers with the requisite skills to actualise the continent’s growth potential.

However, managing a business in Africa requires not only knowledge of management practices, but also an understanding of the peculiarities of doing business across borders. This report stresses the important point about the relevance of a business school’s curriculum.

Drawing from the experiences of management education providers across Africa, the report discusses unfolding trends, and indicates how factors such as demand from a growing youth population will shape the future of management education. It also highlights how business schools within Africa are addressing these and the challenges they face.

Colleagues in business schools across Africa, and indeed beyond, will benefit immensely from such a balanced account of how the market in Africa is changing and what they can do about it.

We have a responsibility to society, as business schools and management educators, to ensure that the continent gets the skilled manpower it needs to actualise its potential. It is my hope that working together – especially through collaborations like these that have resulted in this report – we can prepare adequately for the changes envisaged.

Best regards,
Enase Okonedo
Chairperson, AABS (2012-2013)

“By developing new models of education that equip students with the ability and mind-set to lead in complicated environments, business schools throughout Africa have the potential to stand at the very cusp of global management education.”
Introduction

Game-changing, trend-setting.

The nature and role of management education worldwide is changing at a faster rate than at any time in living memory. The global economic, social, technological and environmental landscape is creating new challenges and new opportunities for those engaged in educating and developing the leaders and managers of tomorrow. Business schools on every continent are being challenged to keep pace with - and also shape - the thinking of a new generation of leaders who have very different outlooks and aspirations than their predecessors.

There is a sense that traditional, Western models of management education evolved from stability and economic boom, and have often focused on making money rather than on making a difference. Within a context of economic instability amongst established economies set against the rapid growth of previously constrained nations, the necessity for leaders who can manage complexity and change is acute. Within this setting, there is a pressing, collective need to explore new models of education and learning that are future proof and fit for purpose.

The continent of Africa offers unique and varied contexts for this exploration. Parts of Africa are seeing unprecedented economic growth as a result of burgeoning political stability and the existence of abundant natural resources. Young populations in many countries have increasing access to good education and are displaying an appetite and determination for improving their quality of life. For many, the focus is becoming more about opportunity than challenge. At the same time, several African countries continue to face significant social, political and economic pressures. Whilst these are serious hurdles for development, leaders are working to overcome them in new ways.

Africa's business schools exist within this swirl of opportunity and change: some have already entered onto the global stage, some struggle even to subsist at a local level. By developing new models of education that equip students with the ability and mind-set to lead in these complicated environments, business schools throughout Africa have the potential to stand at the very cusp of innovative practices in global management education. They have the potential to diverge from or improve on dominant and often ill-fitting Western business school models, and develop a new understanding of what management education should be.

As this report shows, a number of business schools in Africa are already fulfilling such potential. Importantly, African business schools may be able to set the trends for management education worldwide. If so, what is happening within Africa today, and what will happen tomorrow, could well be game-changing for the global community of business schools.

The comparative youth of Africa's management education should be seen as an asset: educators and institutions across the continent have the opportunity to develop a new paradigm that is not only fit for Africa, but also leads the way globally. Significantly, African schools and institutions
have the opportunity to leapfrog an educational developmental stage and move directly to this new paradigm in a way that many Western schools – encumbered by history and tradition – will find difficult to do.

The need for such innovation in Africa is driven by the acute demand for management education across the continent. New approaches are emerging that focus on locally relevant teaching and learning within a global context. An emphasis on entrepreneurship, local engagement and values-based leadership are being fashioned within African business schools. These approaches demand our attention.

The Association of African Business Schools (AABS) is one of a number of organisations that are championing management education across Africa and giving a collective voice to those engaged in developing the managers and leaders of tomorrow. The emergence of AABS, and other organisations like it, is an indication of the growing confidence and connectivity of African business schools. It demonstrates a new focus on collaboration and partnership within Africa as a means of developing African concepts of what management education can and should look like.

This report seeks to explore the current state of management education across the continent. The research is underpinned by the belief that Africa offers many of the answers to the questions business schools, universities and other stakeholders around the world are debating. The approach is informed by the idea that those who are best placed to shine a light on what is happening are those who are directly engaged in delivering management education to learners in all parts of Africa. This report reflects a resolutely African view of African business education and represents an extensive exercise in listening to those who are actually shaping the future. The objective has been to capture these views, ideas and experiences and reflect them honestly and without bias.

The methodology has been to survey the key thinkers and practitioners working in management education in Africa today. Whilst every country in Africa has a unique management education environment, the collective voices of those within the continent contribute to an important narrative. By listening to these voices, we can recognise and gain informed perspective on the value of work that business schools, higher education institutions and others across Africa are engaged in.

This research is both timely and unique: for too long, Africa has been seen by many of those beyond its shores as either a commercial opportunity to exploit or as a place that is beset by challenges too large to solve. This report has been compiled in order to offer a different view, one that acknowledges that challenges remain but that embraces the innovation, the dynamism and the individual and collective drive of those working in management education. Many of these individuals are challenging accepted models of management education and bringing new thinking and ideas to the table.

By building greater awareness of the dynamics of management education in Africa, business schools and related organisations around the world will be the better for it.
Key messages
Our research has identified a number of key narratives that are shaping the way in which business education across Africa is evolving.

- The growing economic strength of many countries in Africa is changing the context for management education. Doing business in Africa is now rising up the agenda for governments and industry alike and this is generating significant interest globally (though not necessarily understanding) in the programmes and activities of business schools and other education providers in Africa.

- The landscape of management education provision across Africa is very mixed. The continent offers world class post-graduate management education alongside dynamic locally-focussed provision. There is a sense that the leading African schools can help drive the success of those smaller, less developed schools. There is also a feeling that the way in which many schools in Africa are innovating to overcome challenges can provide valuable lessons for management learning and teaching worldwide.

- Demand for better management education is increasing throughout Africa, and there is a real need for provision to expand to meet this demand. There is a predominant focus on executive education, short interventions and business support services. Shorter, flexible and more hands-on learning are increasingly seen as the most effective ways to deliver management education. Entrepreneurship education has become a critical aspect of the offer with a raft of initiatives looking to support small to medium-sized businesses and entrepreneurs alongside a greater emphasis within post-graduate management education on enterprise. The MBA is not widely seen as the most relevant choice for many students.

- The global shift towards new concepts of business and leadership based on the ‘triple bottom line’ is beginning to thrive in Africa. The emergence of a more values-driven approach to management education underpinned by notions of sustainability and responsibility is gaining ground and it is here, within an African context of economic growth, set against a backdrop of challenging social problems, that this concept can really take flight. There is a view that, as many African economies look set for rapid development, there is real opportunity for the development to be lead in a sustainable and ethical manner, and that business schools have a vital role to play in this.

- Western solutions to the challenges of management and leadership are not, on their own, fit for purpose for modern Africa. There needs to be an awareness of global best practice, but Africa needs to develop its own concept of what the business school should be. There is evidence that this process has begun, but it is at a very early stage. There sometimes remains a reticence in several African business schools to stray far from traditional Western models.
Although there has been significant innovation, a rapid growth of the education market, and improvements in every aspect of provision, there remain great challenges to overcome around the quality, relevance and availability of management and leadership education. Amid the positive voices, there is an acknowledgement that if the provision and quality of management education does not develop within Africa, real problems may emerge: many students will continue to be attracted to study outside of the continent, and non-African institutions and providers will continue to operate without fully taking account of the local context or engaging in meaningful partnerships.

Funding continues to be an issue for the majority of schools in Africa. Even the most innovative and successful initiatives often rely on donor support and are unable to operate on the basis of a sustainable business model. There are some successful examples of management education emerging that will light the way for others to follow, but new funding models are needed to ensure programmes can be scaled up and made available at a cost that learners can afford. A number of organisations, including the African Management Initiative, have begun to explore such models.

“Western solutions to the challenges of management and leadership are not, on their own, fit for purpose for modern Africa. There needs to be an awareness of global best practice, but Africa needs to develop its own concept of what the business school should be.”

There is a slow but noteworthy shift away from a ‘certificate culture’ wherein candidates are primarily interested in the acquisition of a qualification. Instead, African learners and educators alike are starting to become more aware of the need to gain the knowledge, competencies and behaviours they require to work. The provision of relevant and practical knowledge in accessible forms is likely to be far more important than a narrow focus on assessment and certification. The opportunity for mobile and online open learning to make a real impact on a large number of African learners is clear.

Market growth is being driven by a rapid expansion of private provision, both from within African states and from international companies or institutions. The quality and relevance of this private provision is hugely varied and dependent on the markets within which the provision is offered. Where there is competition, the offer can be of value. Where there is little choice, the offer is often questionable.

The new generation of students in Africa have different aims and attitudes from their predecessors. Many are now less interested in careers in finance and consulting and more motivated by entrepreneurship, innovation, and engagement with their community. There is also a steady shift towards students staying in Africa and there is a trend towards graduates taking up jobs and educational opportunities in their country or region of origin.

“What kind of society do we want and what does business do to get us there?”

“How do we bring ethics and social justice into what business schools do?”
Some business schools exist within socially and economically trying circumstances which is both challenging and valuable to their remit. They are best placed to respond to challenges such as climate change, mass urbanisation and poverty, although they still struggle with basic educational challenges of infrastructure, technology and facilities.

There remains a fundamental lack of understanding of the African context amongst many Western organisations: some have a rather negative, out-dated view of business and commerce in Africa and this hinders attempts at building partnership based on equity and mutual benefit.

Opinions are mixed on the value of those non-African organisations that have entered the management education market in Africa. The consensus is that non-African institutions and business schools still view the continent as an opportunity to make money and build their brand, rather than as a place where they can make a positive impact. The trend of non-African business schools using “fly in, fly out” faculty is a concern, but the paucity of qualified local African faculty remains a challenge. As African institutions gain in confidence, this state of affairs is likely to shift. International partnerships between African business schools and international schools must be brokered on the basis of equality and mutual benefit rather than opportunism and short-term gain.

So what will the future hold? Our interviewees suggest some key areas where changes will be seen over the next 5–10 years:

- As provision expands, the market will drive the nature of that provision. There will be an increasing focus on offering education and business support where it is really needed, which is at the lower end of the market, and includes SMEs, start-ups and entrepreneurs. In many parts of Africa, this demand will shift towards certified programmes for school leavers, entrepreneurs, and in some cases, the informal economy. Post-graduate studies will continue to be the choice of some, but the core responsibility of business schools should be to support business growth. This will mean that the involvement of business schools needs to be at every level of business and education.

- The traditional MBA, with its high costs and less flexible structure, will become less relevant to business in Africa, particularly as it is likely to remain unaffordable or inaccessible for most students. Management education must offer a greater level of support and flexibility to existing business owners and entrepreneurs, on a local level. Business schools in Africa will continue to evolve their offer in order to support and engage with learners in different ways. New models of delivery will emerge that are more economically sustainable and that offer greater access to different types of learners.

"New approaches are emerging in African business schools that focus on locally relevant teaching and learning within a global context. An emphasis on entrepreneurship, local engagement and values-based leadership is being fashioned."
• The management education market will continue to diversify throughout Africa in order to address the specific needs of very high numbers of learners. This process will see an increase in private provision alongside more public-private partnerships. Those business schools which are already well established in Africa are likely to expand their offering to other parts of the continent.

• Technology will play a greater role in empowering students and will provide greater access to courses, programmes and content. Access to online and mobile learning has the power to democratise learning in Africa if governments provide the right kind of support and educators and institutions play their part. This will drive an opening up of the market, both in terms of enabling different providers to offer content and services and bringing a greater number of learners within reach of educational content.

• There will be a continued shift away from a reliance on a certificate culture towards an environment where value is based on individual and collective impact. This process will see African business schools evaluated more on the success of their alumni and their impact on the local economy than on how many formal qualifications they award.

• As current debates in Africa already show, there will continue to be a tension between the need to establish new institutions set against investment in, and the evolution of, existing schools and colleges.

• There is a need to develop a more informed and holistic model of quality assurance that is less rooted in the traditional and widely accepted concepts of what currently constitutes quality in management education. A system that is born in Africa and that is underpinned by African values is something that has support, and could well be a mechanism to improve quality and benchmark provision.

• There will be an acceleration of the collaboration and partnership work – supported by AABS among others – between African institutions. This will be critical in helping to forge an African agenda for management education and in raising standards and sharing best practice across the continent.

“Business schools should follow good businesses, not the other way round.”

“We need to be caretakers of the environment; caretakers of society.”
Part 1
The Context for Management Education in Africa

With fifty-four countries, nine territories and more than a billion people, Africa is perhaps the most diverse continent on the planet. Every country, every region has its own dynamics, its own challenges, history and culture. While poverty remains a profound issue in many parts of the continent, Africa also has some of the fastest growing economies in the world. Within this multifarious context there are trends that apply to many countries and that shape the landscape for management education.

African Economic Growth

Confidence in the economic power of Africa is having a significant impact on inward investment, the interest of international companies in operating in Africa and, subsequently, the role of education in skills development (including management and leadership skills development). Many countries across Africa have vast economic growth potential due to young populations and a wealth of natural resources. According to World Bank estimates, six of the top ten (and twelve of the top twenty) fastest growing economies between 2013 and 2015 will be African.

In booming economies, the demand for skills at every level increases. Capable leaders are needed to overcome the challenges that come with economic growth. The unpredictable future of many African countries will necessitate the ability to manage change and complexity. The question now is how Africa is meeting this demand, and what role management education can play.

Greater prosperity is supporting the emergence of a larger middle class. This will create greater personal wealth and, with it, the ability to self-fund education and training. As economies mature, we will see the growth of economic sectors that are relatively new to much of Africa, such as IT and hospitality, as well as further growth in sectors like energy and mining. There is also a growing level of sophistication around sectors such as agribusiness, logistics and healthcare.

As the economies of Africa strengthen, there will be a shift away from a reliance on development funding, which is inherently short-term. This will bring benefits of longer term sustainability, particularly to areas like business support.

The majority of African countries would be defined as developing economies (although only South Africa is considered an ‘emerging market’). Developing economies are typically uncertain, challenging markets beset by wealth inequalities and complex political and economic history. The business school has an important role to play in helping to address these challenges and, in so doing, helping to stimulate investment and growth.
Global Economic Turmoil

The global financial crisis of 2007-2008 hangs heavy over almost every economy in the developed world. Whether these economies will ever fully recover is a point of debate, and some suggest that various developed countries have in fact now drifted into an emerging market dynamic. What is clear is that many organisations need to do business in Africa if they are to prosper and succeed: Africa as a whole may begin to support the rest of the world, rather than the other way around. Non-African organisations are rapidly realising that they need to understand how to do business in Africa and how to build meaningful partnerships in the continent. It is no surprise that China, itself an emerging market, has turned much of its attention to Africa in recent years.

Whilst the “brain drain” of both students and academics has been a great challenge for many African business schools, as a consequence of the economic problems seen in North America and Europe, these countries are losing their appeal for African students looking for opportunity. Many Western countries now have less positive job prospects, tougher immigration laws and do not offer the promise of a bright future in the way they once did. This is likely to be one driver behind the changing attitude of students towards leaving Africa, and one which could bode well for business schools within Africa.

Increasing Political Stability and Focus on Leadership

Doing business throughout Africa is becoming safer, easier and more profitable, both for international, pan-African and more local organisations. Political stability underpins economic growth and a number of African states have achieved this. They are starting to see the benefits in terms of inward investment, increasing GDP and a better environment for business. That said, there are parts of Africa that still face significant instability – in Mali, Egypt and Libya the political and social situation remains unstable. However, politics is now not the dominant agenda for Africa: more often than not, it is the economy that takes precedence.

Governance at every level remains an issue even where political stability is evident. Without the right type of governance, the environment cannot be created within which business can thrive and management education can prosper. As part of this, leadership remains a critical challenge for many African states both within the public and private sectors. There is a need for civic, political and business leaders who are ethically driven and globally aware. Democracy requires that political leaders have competencies and skills to lead without corruption and dishonesty: politicians are increasingly being held to account and voters want to see evidence that they have the capacity to do the job.

The Growing Importance of Entrepreneurship

Africa is increasingly seen by the rest of the world as the continent of opportunity in terms of business and enterprise. Whilst aid and development from outside Africa is worth billions of dollars per year, a
greater, long-term focus on, and support for, African-born entrepreneurship and enterprise is emerging. This includes support for existing national and local businesses alongside investment in entrepreneurs. Much of the funding for these activities is coming from individual states, although programmes are also being run by donor agencies and NGOs. It is likely that private investment coming into Africa will continue to increase – probably rapidly – in the coming years. Yet donors are starting to understand that investment in small businesses, start-ups and enterprise has a huge return on investment not just economically, but also socially. The increased emphasis on supporting entrepreneurs and SMEs is driving the business school agenda, although there are concerns that many of the aid-funded interventions are too short-term in nature.

Despite economic growth, many countries in Africa are seeing rising levels of unemployment amongst young people and graduates. This is partly down to ineffective skills development, but is also due to the fact that there are not enough jobs for those entering the workforce. Within this context, job creation, self-employment and enterprise have become an economic and political priority. There is an increasing trend towards individuals, particularly young people, wanting to run their own business. That said, in some African countries, the government is still the largest employer and this informs student aspiration.

Rising demand for business education

The rise in demand for education and training at every level is mirrored in the need for greater access to management education programmes. The need is particularly acute for certified programmes and business support services. Set against this is a chronic lack of provision of management education. The number of business schools and business support programmes is dwarfed by demand – and the demand will grow. There are only around 100 fully operational and identifiable business schools in the whole continent of Africa, whereas there are an estimated 4,000 in India alone. A number of countries in Africa do not appear to have any business schools whatsoever. The relative youth of the business school sector compounds this challenge, as many schools are still finding their feet.

There is also a rise in middle management executive education, but this market is highly fragmented, fast-moving and quality is an issue. The executive education market is driven mainly by private training providers, international institutions and corporate in-house training and is relatively unregulated. That said, several leading African business schools have begun offering well organised and high quality executive education.

Increased access to technology

The global trend towards greater use of technology by learners and educators is having an impact in Africa, and there is huge potential for
growth. Africa is recognised by many within the technology community as being a continent where technology is likely to have a rapid and profound effect on people’s lives in the next 5-10 years.

Mobile technology in Africa has evolved very differently than the rest of the world: mobile commerce is widespread and highly sophisticated, far more so than many Western countries. The World Bank has estimated that the African mobile IT industry could be worth $150 billion by 2016. As internet access also widens, the possibility of harnessing technology for education is vast. The process will support the gradual democratisation of learning as students are able to gain access to the world beyond their own context.

Technological developments provide business schools, faculty and students with the opportunity to become part of global networks and global conversations, but also become more accessible to local students. This increased connectivity and accessibility will change the way students learn and teachers teach. Students are perhaps always likely to be better with technology than many of their teachers at every level of education and this is placing real demands on educators to catch up or risk being left behind.

The changing nature of management education in other parts of the world is also having an impact on the context in Africa

Questions about current management education models

The management education models that are common to many international business schools are based on principles and values that are, in some cases, coming under increasing scrutiny in terms of their appropriateness for the economies of the 21st century, particularly in light of the 2007-2008 financial crisis and the perceived failure on the part of those educated within this context to address the problems that arose. If these Western models cannot deliver in their own countries, they are arguably going to be less relevant still in countries where the context is considerably different.

“In many ways, technology will be a game-changer when it comes to education.”

“More and more, people will want the skills and competencies, not just the certificate.”

“Africans are starting to define an African idea of the business school.”
A typical MBA continues to be one of the most expensive qualifications money can buy. There is a growing question as to whether the price can be justified and whether business schools have become too focused on generating revenue as opposed to generating leadership. More widely in academia, the fact that many academics within business schools focus more on theoretical research and less on teaching informed by current management practices is a burning issue. As open access to research gains popularity, traditional models of academic publishing are being further questioned.

Furthermore, the approach, value and relevance of international rankings have come under fire, with some questioning whether the underpinning model of how business schools are ranked and rated is fit for purpose, or takes account of the diversity of management education worldwide.

Pressure on academic institutions to find new markets

International education institutions and private education providers are fully aware of the rapidly growing market in Africa for their services and products. Although these types of organisations have been active across Africa for many years, as markets open and boundaries subside, an increasing number are looking to Africa as their next commercial opportunity.

The interest in the African market is driven in part by tougher operating conditions and pressure on revenues from traditional business at home. Public financing of higher education has come under fire in many Western countries, and the emergence of a strong business school sector in places like India, China and Latin America has dented the overseas student market on which many institutions relied. Too often, however, these institutions do not understand the markets into which they are entering and are ill-prepared when they launch or partner.

Growth of Partnerships

The era of the autonomous business school has come to end. In recent years, business schools have rapidly formed partnerships with each other, with many institutions having up to fifty formal partner schools. This has led to widespread student and teaching staff exchange programmes, as well as the sharing and understanding of different approaches to management education. The Global Business School Network was created in order to build a network of schools in developed and developing countries, in order to enhance the provision of management education in emerging markets.

The realisation that many business schools in developing markets may also be able to provide solutions for those elsewhere is increasing, and the symbiotic benefits of partnerships across borders are beginning to become more commonplace. Partnerships between business schools and
“You have to fully understand the context if you want to come and open up a business school in Africa.”

businesses are also becoming more widespread, as schools look to ensure that students gain an educational experience that is immersed in real, relevant, and cutting edge business practice.
Part 2
Views on Management Education in Africa in 2014

With demand increasing exponentially and providers looking to meet that demand, the market for management education in Africa is flourishing. This is driving new initiatives, new partnerships and new ideas.

What stage of development is management education in Africa at right now?

There is an emerging confidence within the community of African business schools. Many schools are maturing, having been established within the last 10-15 years. They are becoming more confident about their purpose and about pursuing their own vision for management education.

Alongside this, there is a shift away from a reliance on the Western model of business education towards a more clearly defined approach based on local context which draws from international best practice.

It is, however, a highly mixed picture across the continent with the market at very different stages of maturity depending on the country and the region. That said, schools are starting to benchmark themselves against international or regional standards with the help of organisations like AABS. This will further improve quality standards. The potential for an African-focused system of accreditation is something that is viewed positively.

In what ways are African business schools specifically ‘African’?

The approach adopted by many African schools now is to have an international outlook, but one which is placed firmly within a local context. With more multinationals sending students to business schools across Africa, there is a greater international mix to the student body. That said, the content of curricula needs to be highly relevant to the local context and teaching should directly reference what is happening within the surroundings of the school. In fact, developing a local or African context to what is taught is, in itself, very valuable as it offers significant opportunities for students to reflect on critical social and economic issues as part of their studies.

Some schools in Africa are trying to play a dual role by offering an education that is global, which is in tune with what many students want. However, there is also both need and demand for a localised focus that can help students make a difference in the communities within which these business schools operate, and the environments the students will go on to work in.
How are new ideas about business and the economy shaping African management education?

A new concept is emerging, born out of the specific context in Africa - that the future for management education is about sustainable development, responsible management, ethical leadership and a model of capitalism that serves the people and the community as well as the shareholders.

Business schools in Africa have the opportunity to expand provision and to design that provision in a way that is fit for the 21st century. Importantly, they can leapfrog a developmental stage and go straight to this new model of learning that traditional, established schools with the baggage of history would struggle to develop quickly.

African business schools are already leading the way in developing a sustainability-focussed model, and others are now learning from what Africa has achieved, and what it hopes to achieve. Africa has the social and economic context within which this new concept can flourish. Although these principles are gaining credence, the old model still holds sway in many cases.

How are African students changing?

Rather than automatically looking to study overseas, there is a shift towards students wanting to stay in their country of birth and use their skills and competencies to build businesses, become leaders and have an impact in their own society. That said, many students are still choosing to study overseas and this is largely dependent on political, social and economic issues.

There is also a change in the nature of the students who are interested in engaging with management education. This is driven by a shift in aspirations amongst young people coming into the business school. There is a greater awareness of social and environmental issues and a greater sense of social responsibility in students, which is driving demand for a particular type of course. Again, this is culturally defined, and many students are still motivated by the prospect of a well-paid job.

African students are becoming more independent, which is also a factor in the type of courses and programmes that they want to take. Students are more eager to take part in education which addresses entrepreneurship and social responsibility, in typically shorter, more flexible courses. In part, this is due to higher levels of self-funding with students who are not tied to companies and are free to pursue their own interests.

The next generation tend to be more environmentally and socially aware and this is reflected in their employment choices. This change in student make-up is echoed in the fact that more students are deciding to change their jobs or working practices as a result of studying on forward-thinking management courses. In this way, business schools are changing the way students think, and contributing to the way businesses operate.
How is the role of the business school in Africa changing?

The business school landscape in Africa is market-led. Whereas many business schools around the world have designed educational provision and offered it regardless of their local environment, increasingly, business schools in Africa are understanding what their own market really needs in terms of education, and are then designing provision to meet this need. This often means less of a focus on the MBA and increased provision of relevant programmes to corporates and the SME sector.

There is also a role for business schools in partnering with government to develop SME policy and offering business services. As a part of this, the business school can help to change the culture of business and introduce new thinking into management and leadership education.

Several mature African business schools are looking beyond their traditional markets and engaging with entrepreneurs in poorer areas near to them. For example, Gordon Institute of Business Science in Johannesburg is working in poorer areas of the city to engage with businesses within the informal economy, as is the University Stellenbosch Business School in Cape Town. Lagos Business School are also active in offering personal business advisors to local businesses as a part of their entrepreneurship work.

How are approaches to teaching evolving?

A gradual shift away from didactic methods of teaching and less of a reliance on the idea of the ‘sage on the stage’ is occurring within business schools in Africa. There are places where old teaching and learning methods still persist, but the more dynamic schools are adopting new approaches that are changing the student experience. These methods are dependent on having talented faculty who are well-trained. Good faculties can be hard to find, and and it is often a challenge, particularly for the less well-established schools.

Business schools in Africa are starting to embrace more collaborative, experiential methodologies for teaching and learning and there is greater focus on learning that takes place outside the classroom. Allied to this is a growing trend towards internships and more emphasis on work-based learning.

How is the importance of enterprise and entrepreneurship being reflected in what business schools and others are providing?

The increasing focus on entrepreneurship is bringing a different set of students into African business schools who are able to benefit most from short, focused interventions. There is also an increase in the networking activities undertaken by business schools – many African business schools are playing the role of business hub by connecting local businesses to each other. Entrepreneurship is becoming a core component in many
post-graduate courses (rather than an elective). Executive education which is targeted at SME owners and managers is on the increase, and is being driven by market demand. The Centre for Entrepreneurship at WITS Business School is a good example of the type of work that is emerging – their Masters of Entrepreneurship programme is enabling existing entrepreneurs to build their businesses and find success. Almost every business school in Africa offers executive education, and demand often outstrips supply.

That said, there are still huge barriers in many countries when it comes to supporting entrepreneurs and SMEs. The enterprise eco-system in many places suffers from a lack of market access, poor infrastructure, lack of support services, poor access to finance, shortage of information or resources, and a lack of access to technology. Within this challenging context, education and training can only go so far.

What role are African business schools playing in addressing the leadership challenge?

There is an increasing need to focus on the role of management education in Africa to shape the next generation of leaders, rather than to simply develop the next generation of managers. African business schools understand this challenge, and are beginning to address it through the programmes they offer and the partnerships they forge. A particular focus for business schools within Africa is addressing the leadership demands within the public (and governmental) sector. For example, at WITS, the Business School is working with the School of Government to develop civic and political leaders.

There are questions over whether the prevailing thinking around leadership (that is often driven by a Western construct) is fit for purpose in 21st century Africa. There is a different model of leadership across Africa that is informed by the cultural context which has to be effectively built into the programmes that schools are teaching. There is also a feeling that Africans, as a whole, are typically more used to a collegiate model of decision making.

Some African business schools are not yet fully embracing a more modern concept of leadership, and some are stuck with an outdated notion of leadership as a technical skill rather than exploring the personal and social aspects of leadership that are so vital to successful, sustainable business. At the same time, real progress is being made: the Centre for Creative Leadership in Ethiopia is providing significant impetus to this concept of leadership training for Africans in Africa.

How has the market for management education in Africa changed over recent years?

Rapid growth in demand has seen diversification of the market to address the massive shortfall in provision. This demand has been met by a mix of public and private sector institutions. Typically, an offer that gives greater focus to short, modular, accessible interventions and is less geared around

“We need a new kind of faculty and we need to develop this faculty in a different way.”

“There are lots of quick-fix entrepreneurship competitions, but there is no real sustainability.”
full or part-time post-graduate study has emerged.

Private training providers in Africa are looking to engage the growing market through their own offer and through partnerships with international providers and education brands. As an example, there are more than 100 private education institutions in Addis Ababa alone, but just one public university, which demonstrates the way that the market is opening up in some territories.

High quality international provision can have a positive effect on the market by raising standards of education and creating competition. An expansion of provision is viewed as broadly positive, although not without its issues, not least the potential for a misalignment to emerge of what is offered and what is really needed. An increase in public-private partnerships, if successful, is likely to have a significant impact on the landscape of business education across Africa.

What role do international partnerships play?

International collaboration has been essential to the growth of the business school paradigm in Africa. However, partnership has not always been equitable and there are still issues to address. The historical context for partnership has been that international institutions partner with weak universities to offer local provision, without needing to demonstrate a commitment to the long term or to capacity building. This remains the case, although is changing in some African regions.

The changing nature of the involvement of non-African institutions and organisations stems from the need for those organisations to engage more equitably in partnerships and collaborations with African schools - not least because many African markets are becoming more important internationally. What is more, non-African stakeholders are increasingly looking to the continent as a place where they can learn and understand better the dynamics of emerging economies.

"Some African business schools are not yet fully embracing a more modern concept of leadership, and some are stuck with an outdated notion of leadership."

"What kind of society do we want, and what does business do to get us there?"

78% of business schools surveyed have ties with international business schools

82% have links with schools within Africa.

62% have ties with schools in the same country.

The majority of schools are more interested in forming better links with schools within Africa than any other region.
Vitally, partnerships need to be about building local capacity, rather than taking advantage of a market opportunity. There are still too many examples of the international partner failing to deliver anything meaningful and sustainable for the local provider, despite commitments made in the early stages of the partnership.

There is an increase in collaboration between African business schools out of which will develop a more common concept of management education in Africa. This is being driven in part by increasing membership of international networks. The Association of African Business Schools is a highly valuable facilitator in bringing African business schools together. Other organisations, such as GBSN are developing meaningful and equitable relationships between business schools globally, including those within Africa.

“Developed world institutions have to think carefully about what they offer to switched-on and smart Africans.”

“If a partnership is not mutually beneficial, it is not win-win. Instead, one side loses, whilst one takes advantage.”
What are the challenges for management education in Africa?

The growth of business schools and improvements in provision should be set against the reality of operating within a difficult context. It is clear that establishing, running and growing a business school in Africa remains hugely challenging. A lack of funding and shifting political tides creates ongoing uncertainty for many. A number of key questions were explored in relation to the challenges facing business schools in Africa. Here are the responses to those questions:

What issues exist with the candidates coming into business schools?

A good school is partly about the ability of the candidates coming through the door. The basic educational level of students coming into management education is mixed with some not meeting the expected criteria particularly for post-graduate studies. The way schools approach entry criteria into post-graduate programmes varies. Whilst the GMAT test has some traction - and GMAC are currently investing in the continent to build awareness – take up is low and institutions tend to operate their own entrance criteria. In some cases, this will be driven by a financial need to fill places, rather than by any sense of maintaining the educational standards of candidates coming into the school.

Many candidates still have the ambition to get a government job and their choices and interests are defined and narrowed by this ambition. Some students also believe that planning and organising are the most important aspects to managing and leading but this is limiting: there is sometimes a fear of instinctive leadership and bold decision making amongst students.

What are the challenges in terms of infrastructure?

There is an ongoing battle to improve facilities, with significant problems in many countries across the continent. In some countries, there are problems with energy supply, building maintenance and damaged classrooms. There are also some territories that have been through turbulent political times and the legacy has been an education and training infrastructure that is outdated and in need of rebuilding – Libya is a case in point.

It can take time to make things happen, particularly within public universities. In some cases, building new facilities would be a better option than trying to upgrade old buildings, but there is often a reticence to do this, as short term costs are higher. One of the key challenges is around the IT infrastructure. Often this fails to meet the standard required of modern learning environments and internet connectivity is not sufficient to support the need for online access. Poor infrastructure is partly responsible for the lack of scalability across Africa. There are some highly effective
programmes producing great content but the challenge is to get that content out to those who need it. It is difficult to do this without the right infrastructure.

Is quality and access good enough in business schools?

Alongside the success stories, and amidst the rapid growth, there remain significant questions as to the quality of both public and private provision in many African countries. There are islands of great quality, but these sit within a sea of mediocrity.

By some estimates, there are only around eight business schools in the entire continent that would be recognised as good, solid places that operate like a traditional (Western) business school. Although some say that is not where the need is, this paucity of globally recognised provision puts Africa well behind every other continent in terms of post-graduate and executive education provision. There is also a significant gap between the established schools and those others which are emerging (although the same could be said in many other parts of the world).

Some public institutions are expanding and setting up remote campuses but they have, in the opinion of some, spread themselves too thinly and the quality then drops. Their offer is underfunded and this affects the quality of teaching, the facilities, and the connection with industry.

In some parts of the continent, provision is just not there – in Lesotho for example, the chronic underfunding of management education means that there are no post-graduate management programmes, despite a clear demand from the market. Students have to travel to neighbouring South Africa for their studies.

And management education remains out of reach from the vast majority of African citizens who simply can’t afford even the most basic courses and programmes, let alone an MBA.

How are issues of funding and cost affecting business schools and students?

Despite high demand, many business schools are not well-funded and cannot improve if they are not run on a commercial basis. This is partly due to the fact that a majority of schools in Africa are situated in public universities and are reliant on funding from that institution to improve facilities. In most cases, that funding is not forthcoming (or is not sufficient to meet the need).

The current model of executive education is not scalable in the way that it needs to be. A three day executive education programme can cost more than $200. This is too much for the vast majority of Africans, despite the

“We need to become self-sustaining without relying on scholarships.”

“If students pay for their education, they will be committed.”
growing prosperity amongst the working population in some countries. It is still not fully clear what a sustainable funding model looks like that can support better student access and promote affordability. Approaches that are supported by new technologies are, however, likely to hold some of the answers.

Some programmes still rely on sponsorship and corporate funding. This type of support will continue, but it will be difficult for this model to be scalable to the level that is needed across the continent. The Goldman Sachs 10,000 Women project is a great programme that has had real impact in several African countries, but the fear is that it is not financially sustainable or scalable in the long term.

Access and funding can be a particular issue in rural areas in Africa where the practicalities of delivery create higher costs and greater barriers. The majority of success stories now are currently from urban centres.

One of the challenges for funding is that the majority of donor agencies are reticent to fund private companies, and so typically support public institutions and programmes. However, much of the innovation is happening in the African private sector so a significant opportunity is being missed. A greater focus on public-private partnerships in future might help to address this issue.

Is there still an over-reliance on the Western business school model?

There remains, in some countries, a lack of confidence to break away from the traditional Western notion of what a business school should offer. Colonial ties are still strong in some parts of Africa and the thinking on educational models has not shifted significantly over recent years.

Many African students still want what they consider to be a superior education that is based on the Western model or, even better, one that is delivered by a Western business school. Furthermore, many students still see management education and, in particular, a post-graduate management education, as a ticket to a future outside of Africa. As confidence in management education in Africa grows, and the concept of the “West as best” is questioned, this state of affairs may well alter. Part of the challenge for progressive African business schools is to effectively communicate that their educational provision can be more relevant and valuable to African students than other Western models.

What are the challenges around teaching and faculty?

In some places, there is an acute shortage of local expertise and experience. It can also be very difficult to attract new faculty from overseas - whether African expatriates or non-Africans - particularly if the perception...
is that security and political stability are not guaranteed. Part of the challenge African business schools face is to develop faculty at doctoral level but these people are difficult to attract, particularly to some parts of the continent. These types of individuals - who have vast experience to draw on - can mentor the school, but are often in short supply.

There is a feeling that there is still too much of a reliance on didactic teaching, much of which emanates from faculty who have not been given the opportunity to develop themselves in line with modern standards and practices. Some progress has been made towards a more dynamic model of teaching, but faculty need to be supported in reaching these new standards.

There are also many late-blossoming academics in African business schools, but too few young, dynamic faculty members have the confidence to take business schools in a new direction. This is partly a cultural issue based on the belief that wisdom comes only with age.

Are African business schools producing enough research and contextualised content?

There is a shortage of local case studies and African research, despite the clear need to contextualise programmes. Research has to cut across the African terrain and has to be developed to support the programmes that are being delivered. Right now the whole of Africa has a research output that is less than that of the Netherlands. That said, research can be seen as a luxury: the first job of the business school is to get the teaching right. Only then should the focus turn to the research function within the school.

There are examples that are working very well – the Enterprise Development Centre in Nigeria is now developing contextualised, relevant case studies, and is producing video case studies which have real impact for busy entrepreneurs. The Mediterranean School of Business in Tunisia is also developing more local case studies to support their teaching programmes, rather than for international publication. This is an important point: the focus of research within African business schools should be, first and foremost, to support student learning. This is broadly in line with the shift occurring within academic management research globally.

Is international recognition important?

The vast majority of schools in Africa still have no form of international accreditation or recognition. There is a sense that the typical approach to accreditation is largely based on a Western concept of what a business school should be. International accreditation criteria are changing, with an increasing focus on sustainability, responsible leadership and so on. This may begin to enhance the opportunity for some African schools to become internationally accredited.

“The real goal is about making local materials accessible to learners.”
There is some scepticism towards the value of international accreditation, particularly at this stage of management education development in Africa. What Africa needs is good schools which are able to develop good candidates, and support economic development. Accreditation is not essential to this objective.

There are questions over the ability (or willingness) of accreditation bodies to fully understand the landscape in Africa beyond the small number of those African business schools that are already accredited - or their ability to communicate their understanding. However, recognition continues to be an important issue, particularly for students. This operates on an international level but also on a regional level – do my neighbours recognise and accept my qualification? This is vital for those looking to work throughout Africa or overseas. The potential for a regional accreditation system to develop in Africa is broadly welcomed.

“Most schools still lack international accreditation, and this is a challenge to their growth.”

“A model of quality assurance developed with and for African business schools would be hugely beneficial.”
Part 3
Thoughts on the Future of Management Education in Africa

Our research explicitly focussed on what management and business education in Africa will look like in the next five to ten years. This was explored as both a realistic vision and a notional ideal. The future is largely dependent on the starting point: markets that are more developed and evolved will become more specialised, refine their offer and improve quality, whereas less developed areas will continue to pursue a goal of achieving a basic level of provision. That said, all participants agree on the continued trend of growth in the market, the rise in importance of Africa as an economic power, and the increasing attractiveness of the continent as a place to do business, to learn and to develop.

Will we see the emergence of an African model of management education?

There will be a growth in the confidence of African institutions in their unique offer. Students will begin to see Africa as the first choice in where they go to study.

Management education in Africa will become the new frontier for management education globally and this will be reflected in the interest and investment in the sector going forward. The market will continue to see rapid growth – increased competition; an expansion of current schools; the emergence of new schools. This growth will drive up quality as competition increases.

A better regulatory framework at a national level will enable more effective benchmarking of quality. This is happening already in Kenya.

The new models of innovation within the sector will be fully piloted and then scaled up on a sustainable basis creating a better quality provision that is fit for purpose and available to a greater number of students.

How will collaborations and partnerships evolve?

International partnership and collaboration will continue to be central to the growth of the sector but more partnerships will be based on equity and mutual benefit.

There will also be more collaboration between African institutions. The context for schools across Africa is often very similar, so out of collaboration will emerge a stronger concept of African business education that will be influential on the world stage. As a result, there will be a strengthening of the sector as a whole in Africa, and less reliance on Western patronage.

We will also see a greater and more proactive role for business and industry in shaping this new paradigm and in taking a fair share of responsibility for it. Businesses will need to think more holistically about their role and their input.
How will the market evolve?

Rapid growth in provision will drive diversification. There will be a greater mix of providers from both within Africa and beyond. Some providers will focus more on responsibility, ethics and connection to society whilst others will remain in the ‘traditional heartland’ of business education – this will be driven by market demand.

Currently most business schools are part of, or emerge from, universities. We are likely to see a significant increase in private sector provision and, alongside this, a greater number of public/private partnerships.

There will be less of a focus on structured courses and programmes and more emphasis on flexible and affordable ways to develop competencies. There is already an emergence of new models of private provision which are likely to be replicated as they demonstrate financial sustainability. The International School of Management in Senegal is an interesting case in point.

Where will future provision be focussed?

We are already seeing a greater emphasis on executive education and an increased focus on entrepreneurship. The market need is around certificate level, diploma level and executive education rather than the MBA. This is likely to be the significant growth area in provision over the next 5-10 years.

Demand for post-graduate education will continue to grow in some markets but it will remain out of reach for the majority of students and is unlikely to attract those involved in entrepreneurial activities and SMEs. There will also be greater focus on developing the competencies and skills required for business and management, and less focus on simply gaining a certificate. This will enable providers to offer interventions that are fit for purpose rather than based on traditional academic models.

In what way will business schools evolve and grow?

As the sector matures and success stories from Africa emerge, more of the continents’ young talent will choose to study here, stay and set up businesses. The inevitable growth in provision will drive up standards and create competition between schools for the best students.

African business schools will continue to evolve to meet the increased demand for business services as part of their offer. This will include a greater focus on extra-curricular activities involving employers and a more proactive role as a connector within the local business community.

The nature of courses and programmes will also change to support this trend with the embedding of internships and work experience becoming more common. The role of alumni will become more prominent as business schools give more focus to managing and connecting alumni and leveraging the network of the business school in a more effective and fruitful way.

“We need to collaborate much more within Africa rather than internationally.”

“More foreign schools will become established in Africa to increase their revenues.”
How will business schools support the development of civic and political leaders?

We are already seeing a wider role for the business school in developing civic and political leaders. This focus on the leaders of tomorrow will become more prominent as will the need to address better governance across all sectors in Africa. As an African paradigm of management education emerges, so will the need for a better understanding of what the next generation of leaders should look like. This will come through collaboration and sharing between African schools and a better understanding of the local environments within which they operate.

There is a trend towards more business school graduates going into the public sector and this will continue as business schools become more focussed on responsible, ethical leadership and partnerships with government.

How will faculty change and develop?

The challenge of faculty will be addressed - the continent is becoming a more attractive place for overseas faculty to live and stay due to increasing economic and political stability. New faculty are needed who are able to deliver the new global curricula based on principles of responsible management. Africa is the place to do this and will attract better faculty because of this.

There will be a greater focus on project-based learning and active research - this will require new teaching and assessing techniques. Models of faculty development are emerging that are based squarely on the principle of engagement with industry. The philosophy of the Enterprise Development Centre in Lagos is practitioner-led rather than academic-led. The faculty is made up of at least 60% of people with industry experience. This is the kind of approach that will act as an example to others.

How will access be promoted?

New models of delivery will emerge that tackle the ongoing challenge of affordability and give greater focus to increasing access amongst those who need it. Part of this will be to ensure that more women are given access to management and business education. The African Management Initiative is leading the way in developing models of business school development that are scalable and effective. They have designed a ‘how to build a business school’ toolkit as a template for how to develop low-cost private business schools. This has huge potential for education entrepreneurs who are willing and able to step into this space.

A great deal of work is going on to address the need to move away from scholarships and donor funding towards a more self-sustaining model. Although this will not be easy, there are great hopes that new funding models will emerge that will ensure greater access to those who need it.
How will technology impact on the future?

There is a significant distance to travel before technology will be fully harnessed to empower learners across Africa. However, there are a range of technological advances that are likely to change the dynamics of the management education market in Africa.

MOOCs (massive open online courses) have significant potential. The University of Cape Town Graduate School of Business has begun to roll-out a new free-to-access online learning platform that will help African entrepreneurs start and run successful businesses in challenging contexts. The result of more than 15 years of research and development, Free-for-All is already in its pilot phase and is currently undergoing accreditation through UCT. This type of collaboration – utilising technology – will lead the way in addressing the required increase in access to learning opportunities.

Innovation in delivery is also taking place in other areas of technology. Mobile learning will become an essential channel through which learners can participate, particularly in light of the high levels of mobile/smart phone penetration set against the paucity of access to traditional PCs. The use of radio and TV will also play a role in creating new access points for learners.

There will be an increasing focus on the virtual campus idea. Although this will not replace existing provision, virtual campuses will be able to offer certain types of learning at low cost and in a format that is convenient to many.

Technology is also changing the game for SMEs. As network infrastructure improves, this will put much more power into the hands of small businesses and potentially create a new cohort of learners for business schools.

How will the role of research evolve?

Business education is contextual. We will gradually see the formalising of the African business context through more research and case studies. The quality of research will improve in line with the growth of the market and improvements in the abilities and expertise of faculty. However, internationally published research is likely to remain the domain of the more established schools, with many others concentrating on developing materials to support teaching and learning.

There will be more locally developed case studies that are focussed on local companies and these will be generated as the result of increased partnerships both across Africa and beyond. The focus here will be on creating high quality contextualised content to support programme delivery rather than achieving international publication.

What will the role of African networks be?

The success of the African Association of Business Schools is testament to the need for stronger networks across Africa that can support collaboration...
and partnerships between schools and offer a forum for the sharing of best practice. AABS, and others, will continue to grow as the market evolves.

The importance of networks will increase particularly between students, students and business professionals, students and staff and alumni. Technology can support this as well as offering those involved the opportunity to participate in international networks.

We are also likely to witness a more prominent role for African stakeholders in international networks like the Global Business School Network.

**How will the values of the business school change?**

Business schools will not all change at the same pace or in the same way. That said, there will be greater focus on ethics, social justice and sustainability within many institutions.

Accreditation bodies will begin to recognise new approaches and priorities in management education. This has already happened: AMBA, EFMD and AACSB have changed their criteria towards impact, soft skills, and responsible management over the past few years, and these organisations will continue to reflect the agendas like the Principles for Responsible Management and 50+20 agendas. This is in line with where African business schools are heading.

The business school will increasingly be viewed as a change agent in society, able to play a role in addressing challenges like climate change, poverty and food security and not merely fulfilling the requirement to train managers.

Measurements in human wellbeing will change the perception of how important income is as a driver of individual choice. This will have an impact on the values that business schools encourage and support.
Final thoughts...

Having listened to many of the most important voices in management education today from across Africa, it is clear that we are living through a time of rapid growth set against the backdrop of immense change.

The emerging story is one of ongoing challenge but, primarily, unparalleled opportunity.

Management education can play a significant role in shaping the future of Africa’s leaders and supporting economic growth, prosperity, employment and social progression.

It is incumbent on those within Africa and those beyond to grasp this opportunity and to lead the world into a new phase for management education that is more relevant, more accessible and has a wider impact for all.
Acknowledgements

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**Individual interviewees**

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<td>United States International University, Kenya</td>
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<tr>
<td>University of Cape Town Graduate School of Business, South Africa</td>
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<tr>
<td>Faculty of Commerce and Management, University of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania</td>
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<tr>
<td>University of Nairobi, School of Business, Kenya</td>
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<tr>
<td>University of Stellenbosch Business School, South Africa</td>
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<tr>
<td>USTM – Universidade São Tomás de Moçambique, Mozambique</td>
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