Dissemination of Graduate Tracer Study Results in Higher Education Institutions: Opportunities and Challenges

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Presentation Outline

- Graduate studies defined
- Objectives of GTS
- Scope of GTS
- Dissemination of tracer study results
- Key areas of KU tracer study results
- Objectives of KU GTS results
- Dissemination opportunities & challenges
- Some discussion questions
Graduate studies defined

• Similar terms found in literature:
  - Graduate survey (40,700 Google hits)
  - Tracer study (98,000 Google hits)
  - Alumni research (U.S.; 99,000 hits)
  - Follow-up study (graduates) (179,000 hits)
  - Graduate career tracking (Hungary; 6 hits)

• Target population:
  - Graduates of an institution of higher education (regardless of degree type)
  - Normally surveyed after graduation
Objectives of KU graduate tracer studies

1. Institutionalization of tracer studies at KU
2. To evaluate & improve various curricula
3. To revise relevant policies affecting various programmes
4. To provide empirical evidence on the marketability of programmes at KU

Data from KU 2010 graduates
DISSEMINATION OF TRACER STUDIES RESULTS
Key areas of KU tracer study results

- Socio-Biographic Characteristics, Education and Work Before Study
- Study Conditions and Provisions, Study experiences
- Job Search and Transition to Work
- Employment and Work
- Work and Competencies, Relationship Between Study and Work
Objectives of KU GTS dissemination of results

- To inform students and parents on career choices – which degree programmes are marketable
- To inform Deans of Schools and lecturers if the degree course matches the skills being taught in various programmes
- To inform university management on quality of programme and need for curriculum review, if study conditions are optimal,
- At macro level, results to help Commission for University Education (CUE)– inform policy on new programmes and curricula designs
- Share knowledge on GTS methodology with other researchers
Dissemination opportunities at Kenyatta University (KU)

- Featured on KU website
- Appeared in the KU internal weekly newsletter
- At macro-level: We hope to publish results in peer-reviewed Journals and book chapters
- Presentations at faculty and universitywide seminars
- University self appraisal report presented to CUE
How did you find your first job?

- Response to an advertisement: 34%
- As walk-in applicant: 25%
- Recommended by someone: 21%
- Information from friend's office: 6%
- Job fair or public employment service office: 5%
- Arranged by school job placement officer: 2%
- Family business: 2%
- Others: 5%
Dissemination challenges at KU

• Tracer studies less understood
• Tracer studies not yet institutionalised at KU
• Pessimism amongst the target groups
• Low level of awareness amongst the target groups at KU
Some discussion questions

How best can we package key messages from tracer study results for the different target groups?

• How can we overcome overall dissemination challenges experienced in our tracer studies?

• Having disseminated tracer studies results in our institutions, what would you do differently next time?

• What is the future of tracer studies in our institutions?
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