Planning for a Distance Learning Centre

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Focus

- Introduction
- Review of the Introduction to Fundamentals of ODL
- Close and Open Education Systems
- A case for Distance Learning Centres
- Processes and Procedures for a DLC
- Resourcing a Distance Learning Institution
- Uniqueness of ODL & Blue print
- Conclusion

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What is DL?

- DL has many labels: ‘Correspondence’, Telematic, ‘Distributed’, E-learning, ‘Online Learning’, ‘Virtual Learning’
- Instruction by a mode other than the conventional face-to-face method
- Characterised by physical separation between the teacher and the learner, instruction delivered through a variety of
- Media including print, and other information communication technologies to learners

Characteristics

- cost-effective system of instruction independent of time, location, pace and space
- used for a variety of learning situations: primary, secondary, tertiary, vocational and non-formal education
- thrives on economy of scale
- focused on QA, well designed instructional packages, student support

Open Learning

- *Open Learning* - flexibility of and access to instruction in order to ensure broad availability of educational opportunities to all

- Openness disregard age, previous level of academic achievement, and other factors, creating artificial barriers to education as a life-long pursuit in a democratic environment

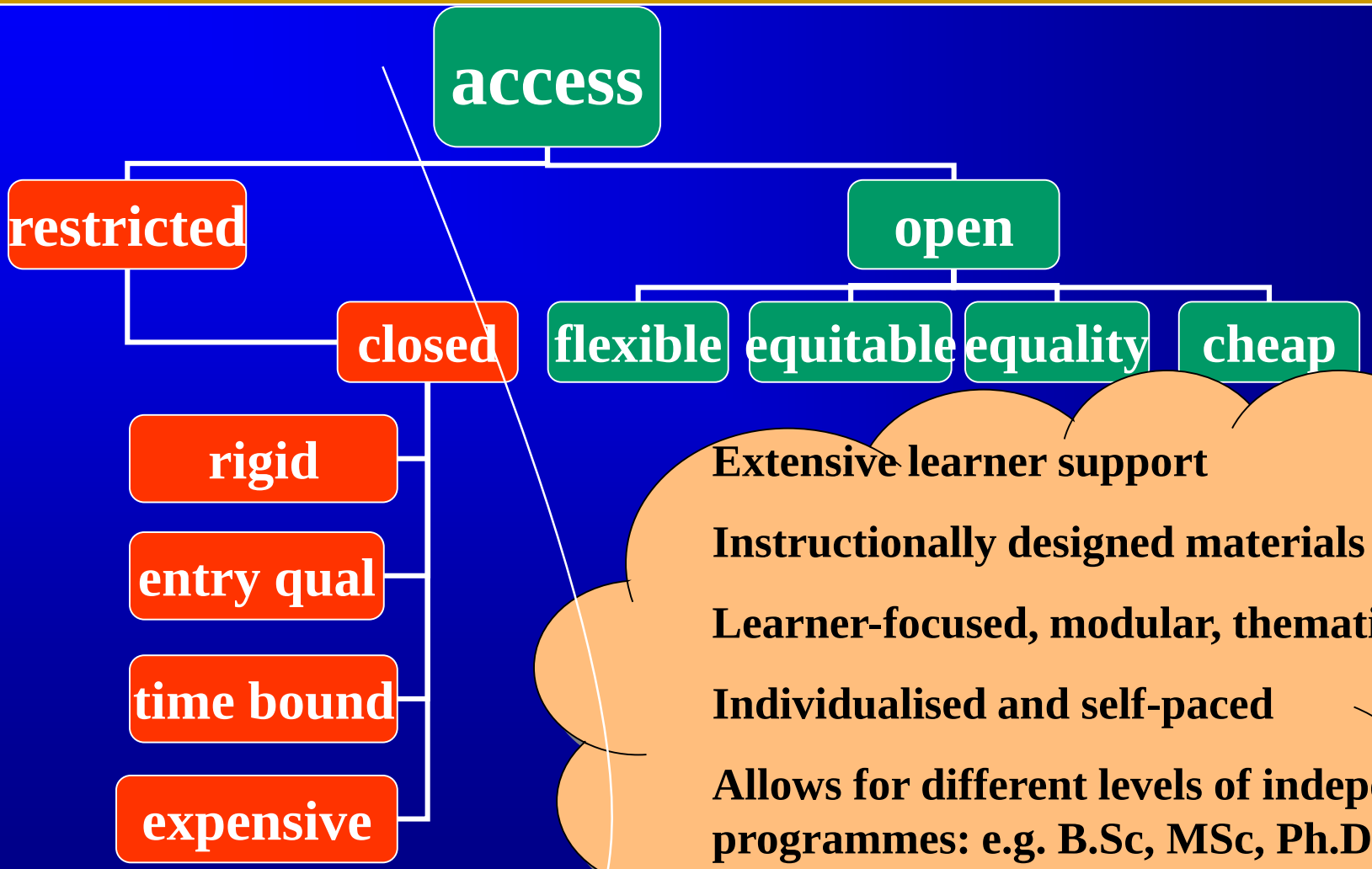
Modes of ODL

- Mixed mode: convergence, Deakin Uni
- Franchise mode: offshore licensing
- Industry special universities
- Cross-border collaborator mode
- Dual Mode: UI, OAU, Charles Stuart
- Single mode: NOUN, OUUK, OUHK, UNISA

ODL on Higher Ed

Pre C21st	C21st
Text-based	Web-based
Multi-media	Multimedia
Physical libraries	Digitalised libraries
Packaged courses	Just-in-Time courses
Single community	Dispersed community

Close and Open



Factors shaping ODL

- Quasi-separation of learner and tutor/institution
- Provision of Instructional materials and student support services
- The use of technology to mediate instruction
- Two-way communication between student and institution for management purposes
- Use of one-to-one, learning groups or tutorial groups for counselling, tutorials and management

History of ODL in Nigeria

- 1947 – Oxford University Extra mural studies at the UCI
- GCE of London and Cambridge as correspondence
- Rapid Results College and Wolsey Hall as first set of organised distance learning programmes in Africa
- 1960 – English Radio Programme by NBC, ETP of NTV
- 1972 – ABU University of the Air
- 1974 – COSU, COSIT, DLI of UNILAG (first tertiary Dual mode Univ)
- 1978 – NTI
- 1983 – NOU (planning started in 1976)
- UI – 1988, UNIFE (OAU) - 2003
- 2002 – NOUN
- Other DLI/DLC

Open Access: a 21st Century Imperative

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Demographic Trends

Demographic Trends

Area	Population (millions)	Natural increase	Doubling times (years)
World	6 000	1.7%	40
Asia	3 000	1.8%	38
Africa	1 000	3.1%	25
Europe	510	0.3%	266
Kenya	34	3.0.%	27

World –9billion in 2025

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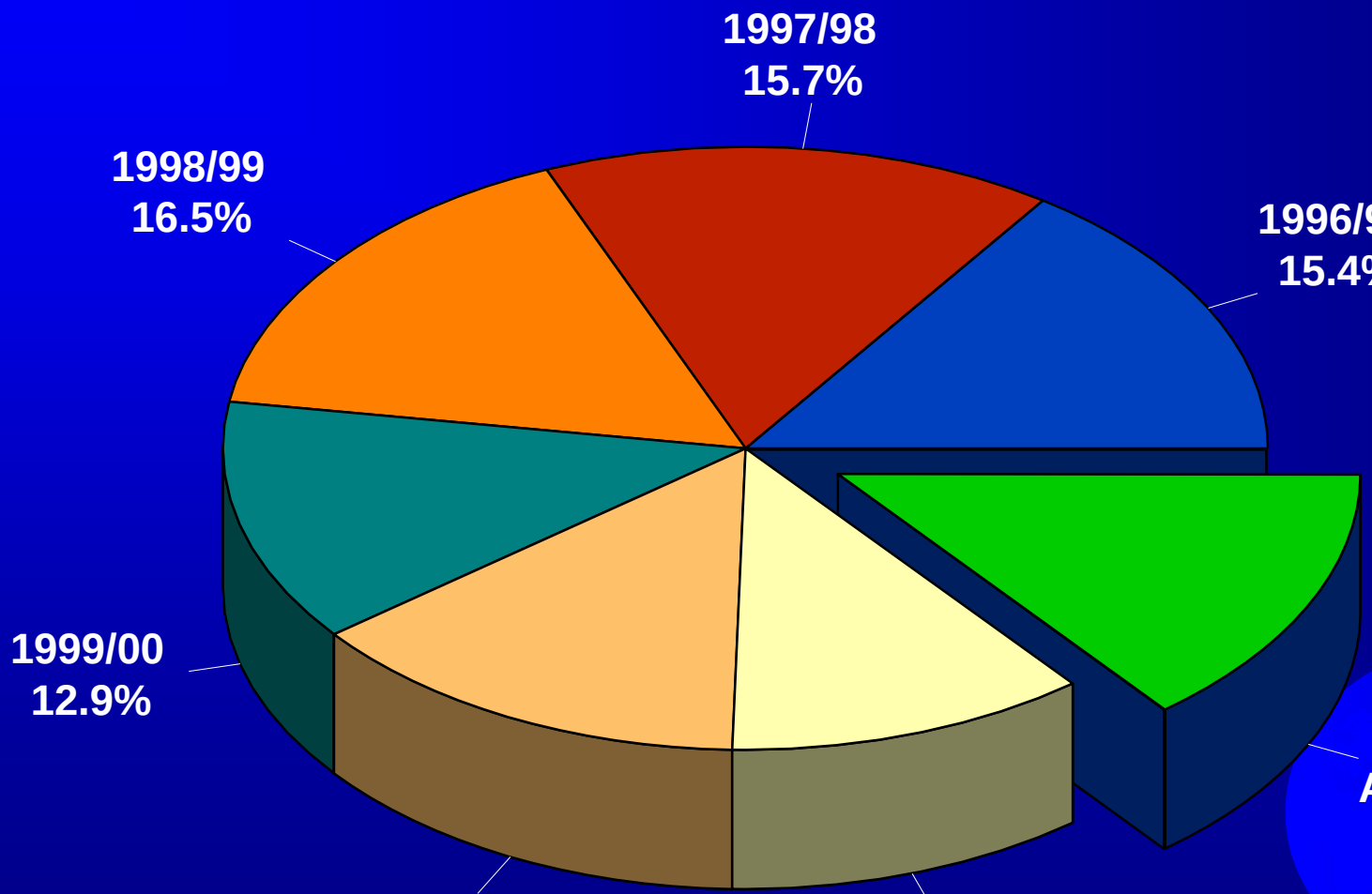
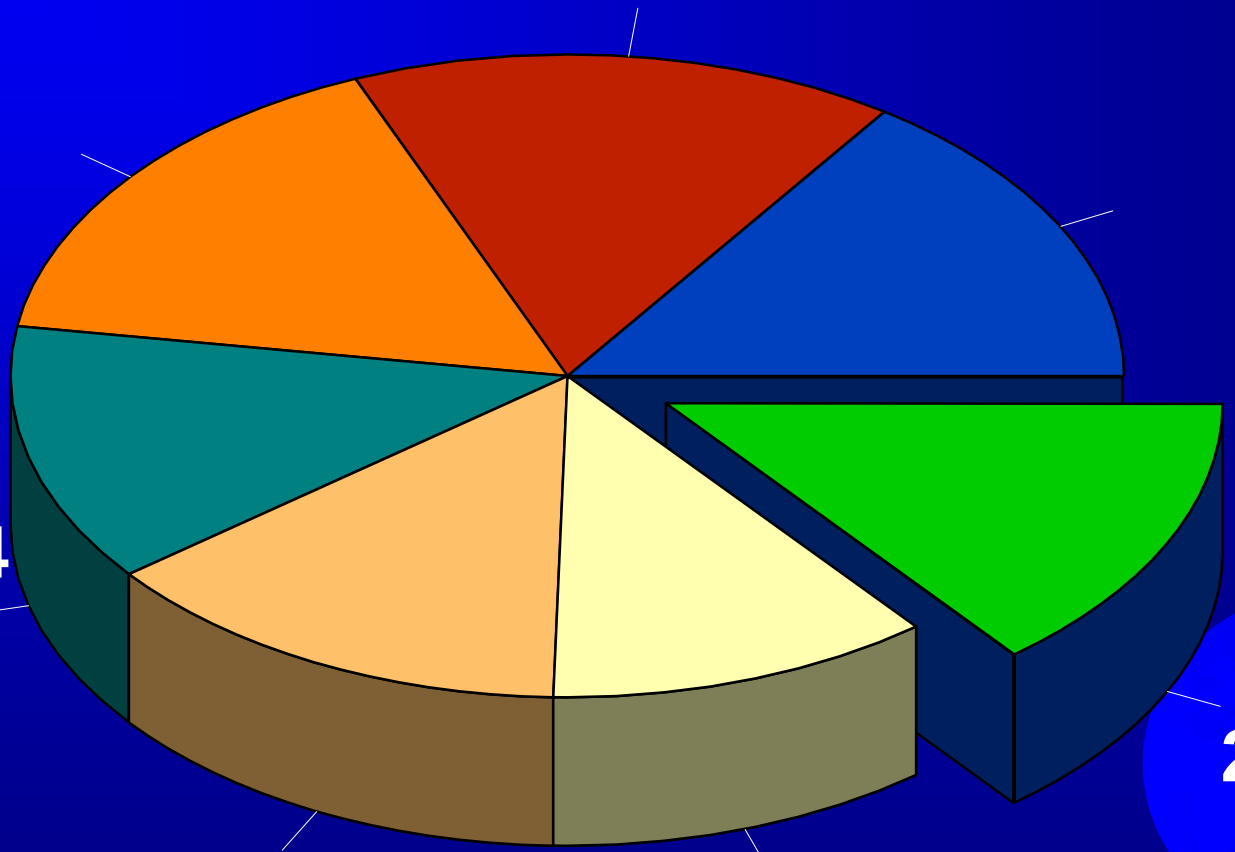
Rising Enrolments

ADMISSIONS


1997/98
15.7%
1998/99
16.5%
1996/97
15.4%
1999/00
12.9%
Average
17.5%
2000/01
14.1%
2015/16
11.1%

JAMB UTME



2013/2014
1.3M

2014/15
1.4M

2015/16
1.5M

2017
1.7M

A Case for DLCs

- National Policy on Education
- All towards more access to students (unmet demands, marginalised, unreached)
- The 5 Indices of Indispensability
  - Demography
  - Rise in Enrolment
  - Life long Learning
  - Globalisation: IT, Trending in Education and Future needs
  - Knowledge movement
- Rise in number of Universities
  - Broadening of academia: governance and operations
- Source of IGR

Processes & Procedures

- The generation of the Idea
- Development of Concept and Blueprint
- Approval of the VC and Presentation to Senate
- Ratification by the Governing Council
- Seek approval of the regulatory body (NUC, Professional bodies, etc)
- Carrying along the whole of the Institution
- A study tour of similar institutions and related Organisations

Models of DLCs

- **Stand alone** with full compliments of academic and administrative staff, DLCs in Nigeria. They are part of the University and are autonomous.
- **Integrated into the Dual mode** Universities. The DLCs provide support services such as course material development, running of the study centres, dealing the QA in DL
- **Mixed Mode** where the DLC sets up shop with administrative and academic managers but use the academic staff of the parent University
- **Franchise or Contract or Out-source** it out to professionals. The University negotiates the fee or sharing formula for the proceeds.
- **In-country managing centres** for Cross border education providers

Foundation Staff

- Appointment of a Director, Deputy Director and Deputy Registrar/Head of Administration
- Appointment/Deployment of staff – Administrative and Academic
- Liaison Officers for Schools/Faculties/Institutes
- Human Resource Development

What's in a Name?

- Distance Learning Centre
- Distance Education Centre
- Virtual Campus/ Centre/ University
- E-Learning Centre
- Computer Enhanced Learning Centre
- Open, Distance and Electronic Learning (ODeL)
- Need to realign, rename and reassess units

Management &Administration 1

- A DLC is a mini-University, indeed quickly grows to ‘swallow up’ the main University.
- Potential of a huge student population
- Management will require two to three times the volume of work
- It must be run as a business enterprise with a customer service front end
- Semi-autonomous status
- Management to present report to VC on a quarterly basis or at agreed interval

Management &Administration 2

- The Head of the Administration must have highly competent staff.
- The Academic Office must be prepared to work 24/7 if need be.
- A Visitor Information and Call Centre must be central to all its functions
- It must be have a business and Industry orientation to financial matters – unusual, transparent and flexible
- Customer Service must be exceptional
- Highly effective and efficient Public Affairs and Media Unit

Resourcing a distance teaching higher institution

Educational Characteristics for DE

Instructional	Personnel	Management
Highly planned, organised and delivered	Design & development	Academic leadership
Interactivity	Subject matter experts	Humanizing & personalising
Flexibility	Site facilitators (RLO)	Contingency plans
Instructional feedback	Production	Free flow of communication
Advanced organisers/overviews	Student support	Scheduling instruction
Evaluation of instruction		Evaluation of systems

Physical Infrastructure

- Buildings
  - Administration block
  - Academic block
- Laboratories & Libraries
- Theatres
- Radio & TV stations
- Call Centre Facilities
- Road Networks on Campus/Centre

Schools, Institutes & Centres

- Arts & Social Sciences
- Business and Management Studies
- Education
- Science & Technology
- Units for Continuing Educ & WKPL Training
- Institutes for Training & Development

Directorates

Academic Programmes

- Instructional Material Development and Production
- Information Technology and Communication Services

- Basic & Lifelong Skills Development
- Learner Support Services
- Administrative and General Services
- Bursary (Finance and Accounts)

Learner Support

- Academic support
- Non-Academic support
  - Administrative
  - Psychological
  - Guidance Counsellors
  - Instructional facilitators
- Study Centres – regional, state, community

Course Materials

Course Development

Delivery Modes

Developed from scratch

- new materials
- new format
- library search

Course adoption

- acquired
- minor revision
- 10% modified

Open Educat'al Resources

Course adaptation

- Acquired/existing
- Major revision
- >30% modified/addition

Delivery Modes

- print
- telephone
- audiocassettes
- videocassettes
- radio broadcast
- TV broadcast
- CD-Rom/VCD/DVD
- computers
- multimedia
- e-learning
- m-learning
- Open Educational Resources

Other Support

- Production
- Warehousing
- Distribution of courseware
- Energy supply
- Maintenance of facilities

ICT in ODL

- imposes additional demand on staff and students
- many systems and subsystems of ODL require ICT and expertise
- Do not underestimate the capabilities required by staff and students
- requires new direction of capacity building

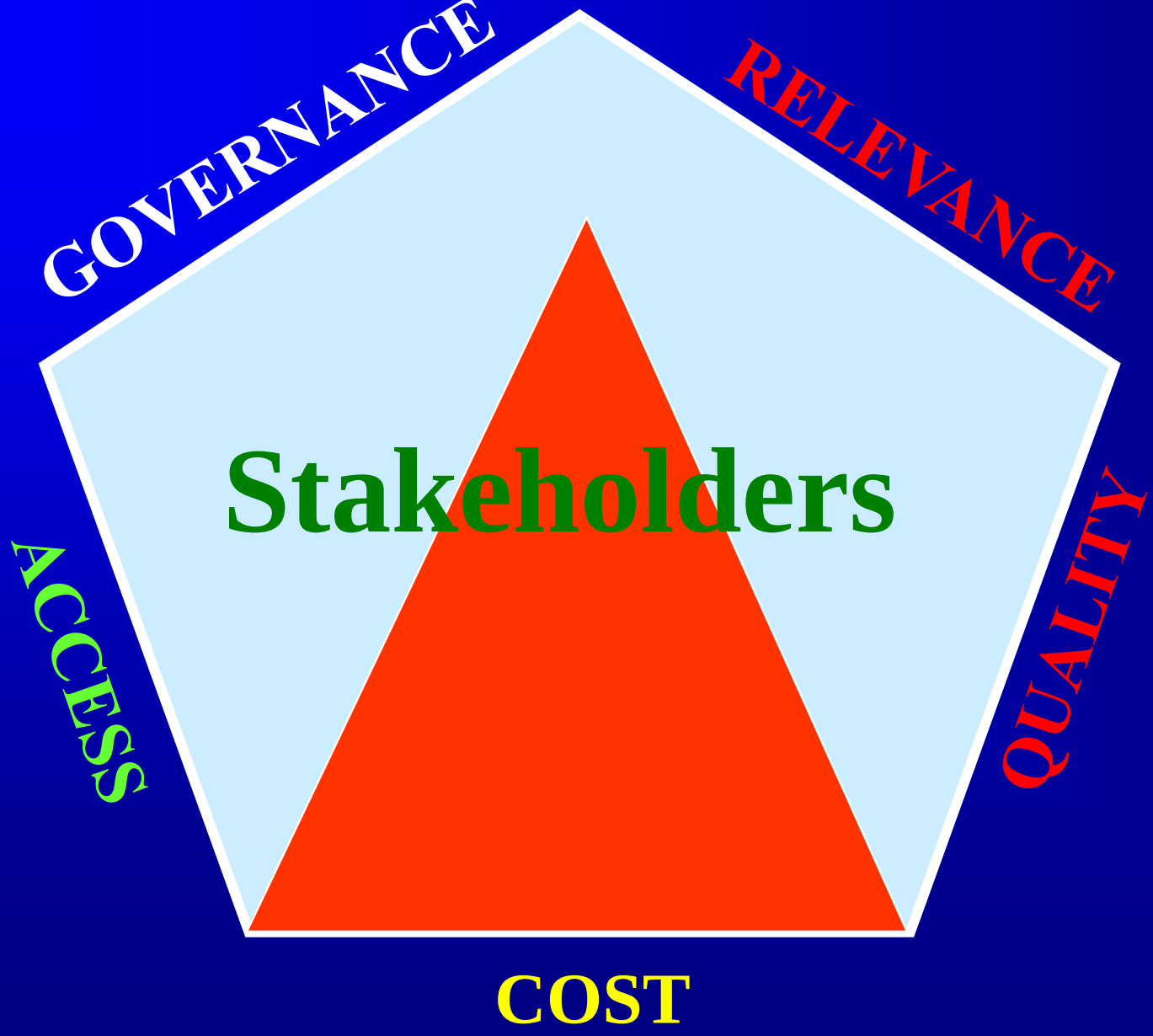
Why ODL is different and must have its own Strategic Focus

Uniqueness of ODL

- The ODL institution is quite different
- Must be treated differently
- The characteristics of an ODL institution suggest that its setting up and management are more demanding
- Adequate, appropriate and well qualified human resource must be found
- Your materials are open to the world!

The Iron Triangle of Education

The NIGAVEKAR pentagon



How Strategic?

- Does it fit the over all university culture?
- Is your mission statement used as foundation?
- Use scenario planning
- Use strategic compass
  - Identify what you do best and use as beacons
- Combine top-down with bottom-up approach

Technology

- Only a medium and not the message
- What technologies: multi-media or multimedia, effective and appropriate?
- Ensure total coverage and reach to all students
- Be as simple as possible
- Consider cost effectiveness
- Review usage and policy regularly

Quality Assurance

- course development system
- Multimedia instructional design & delivery
- learner support system
- establishment and management of study centres
- selection and management of academic tutors and facilitators
- development of E-Learning, LMS & LCMS
- TMA and E-examinations

Quality Assurance

Institutional/ Centre

- Blueprint
- Strategic Plan
- ICT Plan
- Servicom

Programme Development

Assignments, Assessment& Examinations

Delivery Mode (Technology)

Course Materials Development

Learner Support & Other supports

Deploy Six Sigma Quality Monitoring for ODL

Outline Programme Proposal

Detailed Programme Proposal

Print

Audio/Video

Broadcast

E-Learning

Action Plan/Blueprint

- Progressively enhance student enrolment in an ODL system
- Create demand-driven new academic programmes
- Achieve high level of staff competencies
- Create linkages with other universities and the organised private sector
- Use resources in entrepreneurial and income generating ventures
- Don't do everything, Outsource and Brand

Critical Success Factors

- Relate plan to the national policy
- Relate plan to the vision and mission of your institution
- Political will and support at the highest level of the institution
- Commitment to adequate funding
- Regular check on milestones and benchmarks on the strategic plan
- Develop appropriate organisational culture
- shared vision and committed staff

Essentials

- access and equity
- alleviation of capacity constraints
- capitalising on emerging market opportunities
- Note serious resource constraints???
- the use of relevant and appropriate ICT
- pitch your service at client's level
- Use changing learner demographics
- Conduct SWOT analysis before starting

Categories of Cost

- the costs of establishing and operating an ODL institution/Centre are divided into:
  - indirect or fixed cost
  - direct or variable cost, and
  - setting-up cost.

Cost factors

- Number of students
- Number of programmes/courses on offer
- Number of years courses are presented
- Amount of materials provided
- Choice and use of technologies
- Level of student support
- Organisational structure
- Other logistics: admissions, orientation, admin support, etc

Direct Cost

- is the (variable) expenditure on the designing, developing and delivering courses. It includes:
  - the cost of the instructional materials,
  - tutors, facilitators (part-time or full time),
  - marking/examination fees,
  - counseling and mailing.
  - initial orientation and professional development
- The direct cost is highly sensitive to student numbers

Indirect Cost

- The indirect cost is the fixed or overhead cost incurred in running an ODL venture.
- It includes the recurrent expenditure for the infrastructure, wages, such as,
  - salaries for a core administrative and management staff,
  - fixed property assets,
  - maintenance, utilities,
  - supplies and general administrative expenses.

Cost function

$$T = S\alpha + C\beta + P\check{y} + F$$

- T = total cost
- S = number of students
- C = number of courses
- P = number of courses presented to students
- α = direct cost per student
- B = direct cost of developing a course
- ў = direct cost of presenting a course
- F = indirect or fixed cost of the system
- Sα = total direct cost of teaching students
- Cβ = total direct cost of course development
- Pў = total direct cost of course presentation

Conclusion

WB's Lethal Blow on HE

- In 1988 the World Bank observed that higher education in Africa was being threatened by
  - too many graduates of programs of dubious quality and relevance;
  - deterioration and doubtful effectiveness of HEIs;
  - the astronomical costs of higher education;
  - and socially inequitable and economically inefficient financing of higher education.

Fighting the Damage

- Many countries accepted WB's advice to concentrate resources in primary and secondary education
- Higher Education lost its priority, funding growth and development
- From mid 1990s things changed and people began to defend the usefulness and relevance of university education in Africa.
- Rise in the use of ODL to boost higher education world wide and in Africa

the 37th General Conference of UNESCO, October 2013

- observed an increase in access but grossly dissatisfied with the quality of graduates.
- A recent UNESCO survey indicated FIVE main factors contributory to the low quality in higher education in Africa.
  - depreciating quality of teachers;
  - research capacity deficit;
  - inadequacies in facilities for teaching, learning and research;
  - lack of a regional quality assurance framework and accreditation system;
  - and slow adoption of ICT for delivering quality higher education including distance education.

‘Big Brother’ Fellowship

- The relationship of the DLC with the parent University must be well defined
- An MoU and MoO are desirable and should be signed to be used as reference points.
- VC must ‘own’ the Centre and give political, academic and administrative will
- VC and top management of the University must be genuinely interested, and participate as often as possible, in all DLC programmes
- The academic programmes & courses must be fully integrated into the University’s

Thank you

Good luck and my very best wishes