

Ebola epidemic currently threatening lives in Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone with few cases in Nigeria. Citizens from West-African countries especially those from the countries mentioned are either suspected, stigmatized or completely banned from entering other countries within the same ECOWAS sub-region in Africa or around the world.

As a matter of fact, one may not have made a mistake by saying that the subject of educational and cultural exchange within the ECOWAS is currently on hold as there are media reports that Cameroun had closed its borders to its immediate neighbour Nigeria over the outbreak of Ebola. Coupled with that, all sorts of travel to and from Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone from any part of the ECOWAS are completely banned for now till further notice. This report is corroborated by Cameroun's Communication Minister – Issa Tchirima Bakary who was quoted to have said: "All borders (land, sea and air) between Cameroun and Nigeria are closed. Our thinking is that it is better to act preventively rather than have to heal later those who may fall ill" (*Sahara Reporters* 2014). Currently, travelling generally within the ECOWAS had become a rigorous exercise being it personal or official, educational or cultural due to peace and security.

Funding

Funding seems to be a general problem as it may not only be limited to the funding from the school to the CIE but also includes the problem encountered by intending Exchange Programme students. Aside the usual economic differences between nations, unavailability of fund enough to cater for personal needs or tuition fees could go as far as preventing some students from participating in exchange programs like the immersion. For example, immersion is compulsory for the French and Arabic language students and some others depending on their courses. Students from the department of French nationwide often miss or are forced to defer their programs for the reason earlier stated. This is couple with the fact that a part of the ground rule in most MOUs states that: "students from each University

will pay all applicable tuition fees at the institution in order to take courses/or conduct research work while in residence for the period of stay at host institution" (Unilorin draft MOU). It is unfortunate that today, funding is still one of the most critical factors militating against the sustainability of educational exchange programs in our own part of the world.

Poor Infrastructure

The need for solid infrastructure cannot be overemphasized; the idea of hiring vehicles or renting apartments or hotels in poor conditions for the purpose of receiving foreign (staff or student) visitors is uncalled for. By now, it should be clear to us all that we have more to gain than we are giving both culturally and educationally. Though, we understand that the situation may not be unconnected with poor funding but the relevant authorities should look inwards and proffer lasting solutions to this myriad of problems emanating from poor funding. Special budgets and provisions should be made for befitting hostel accommodation, staff quarters, guest houses and cars.

Language Barriers

Perhaps it is strange to have listed language as one of the challenges facing educational and cultural exchange program but we must not also forget that "the development of man in all areas depends on the use of language;" and 'as a result of the numerous functions of language within the society, people aspire to learn more languages or become bilingual / multilingual so as to communicate wider and more effectively across their immediate speech communities" (Dada 2011: 56, 74). Thanks to the University of Ilorin for employing capable hands to cater for communication in French and Arabic languages.

Communication Gap

With the aid of a close monitoring of the activities of the CIE, we observe that there are gaps in the communication between Departments, Faculties or Centres of the University. This becomes more visible when some of these units begin to run helter-skelter in search of accommodation or befitting transport services for their