

## Media Monitoring: Extract of Press News on Higher Education in Africa

### 1. Quartz Media

#### [Africa needs another million PhD scientists to develop homegrown solutions \(Africa\)](#)

It's been a recurring refrain: Africa still lags woefully behind the rest of the world in generating new scientific knowledge. As figures collated by the World Bank in 2014 show, the continent—home to around 16% of the world's population—produces less than 1% of the world's research output. These are painful admissions to make, but there are several projects and initiatives that offer hope amid all the bad news. One is a major funding and agenda setting platform, the Alliance for Accelerating Excellence in Science in Africa based in Nairobi, Kenya, which was established by the African Academy of Sciences in partnership with NEPAD. It will award research grants to African universities, advise on financial best practice and develop a science strategy for Africa. It also offers an opportunity for African scientists to speak with one voice when it comes to aligning a research and development agenda for African countries. Another is the US's National Institute of Health and Wellcome Trust's commitment to invest nearly \$ 200 million into Africa-led genomics projects, biobanks and training of bioinformatics personnel. This investment targets diseases that affect the African continent and gives African scientists the opportunity to set priorities with regard to health interventions and skills development. Click this [Link](#) for more details

### 2. Business Daily Africa

#### [A strong university champions transparency student feedback \(Kenya\)](#)

The ability to think critically, examine phenomena, build confidence to adapt, boost economic resiliency, and contribute towards community empowerment all form reasons for prospective students to pursue undergraduate education. However, not all university education is created equal. In continuation of Business Talk's mini-series on tertiary education in Kenya, last week this column investigated selection criteria that every student and parent should utilise to choose a university for undergraduate studies. Today, we delve into part two of selecting an undergraduate programme. First, how much does the university collect, evaluate, and modify programming based on undergraduate student feedback? The tertiary education sector stands as a famous example of an industry slow to respond to market demands and customer feedback. Unfortunately, since undergraduate students consume service but others, such as parents, often pay for the education, then the low elasticity demand for bad lectures, slow administrative services, or dismal campus environments builds complacency. Prospective students should ask admissions personnel for concrete examples of when undergraduate student feedback forms following a course actually changed something in the classroom. Universities should remove poorly evaluated faculty from lecturing responsibilities.

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### 3. Mail and Guardian

#### How collaboration can help grow and transform agriculture in Africa (Africa)

It's been four years since African leaders met in Equatorial Guinea to commit themselves to boosting agricultural growth across the continent. This is an important way to create real change in Africa. During the gathering, all the African Union's heads of state signed the Malabo Declaration. It offered a blueprint for Africa's agricultural sectors, to be achieved by 2025. For example, the declaration called for at least 10% of any nation's public expenditure to be allocated to agriculture and rural development. It also set out plans for increasing countries' food security by intensifying agriculture in a way that didn't destroy the environment. There has been some progress in attaining these goals, as a recent status report conducted by the African Union Commission shows. But there's still a great deal of work to be done. The report shows that in 2015 and 2016 only ten of the 47 signatory states reached or exceeded the target of 10% investment in public expenditure in agriculture and rural development. These are Malawi, Ethiopia, Angola, Egypt, Sudan, Mauritania, Mali, Senegal, Burkina Faso and Equatorial Guinea. Some other countries had invested as little as 0.6% of public expenditure in these crucial sectors. Only 20 of the 47 signatories are on track to meet the declaration's goals by 2025. Click this [Link](#) for more

### 4. The Conversation

#### University writing groups provide an unexpected space for change (General)

In a seminal paper on what constitutes quality in education, scholars Lee Harvey and Diana Green argue that a "quality education" is one in which a student experiences a "personal transformation" as a result of enhancing and empowering mechanisms. They claim that students are "enhanced" when they are positioned at the centre of the learning and assessment process, and are "empowered" through being involved in the decision-making around their own transformation. Such transformation conversations, especially in African contexts, almost always include contested debates on curriculum. Notably, scholars have highlighted how the problem is not only what universities teach – that is, the curriculum – but also the way they teach it. This refers to ways of teaching that can sufficiently engage with and problematise "normal" practices in higher education spaces. So the question becomes: what can universities do to enhance both personal and curriculum transformation? We set about answering this question in a study about university writing groups. These groups are inspiring and empowering spaces run by and for students. Here, students use feedback from peers to develop their writing practices. It's a collaborative and collegial environment. Writing groups might also have unexpected benefits for transformation, as our research has shown. In South Africa, calls for the decolonisation of university practices and curriculum have dominated transformation conversations. Writing groups provide a space where students can learn and engage with these complex issues.

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## 5. Mail and Guardian

### [How to fix former black universities \(South Africa\)](#)

Higher Education Minister Naledi Pandor says the shortcomings of some of the country's previously disadvantaged universities are because of poor leadership, which needs to be strengthened if the institutions are to thrive. Speaking to the Mail & Guardian this week, Pandor said her department can offer support to the universities but cannot be expected to run them. Of South Africa's 26 public universities, those that are recognised as historically disadvantaged are the universities of Fort Hare, Limpopo, Venda, Walter Sisulu, the Western Cape and Zululand, as well as the Mangosuthu University of Technology and the Sefako Makgatho Health Sciences University. Even with the years of government support since the country's transition to democracy, they still lag behind the institutions regarded as being historically white and better resourced — from their graduation throughput and quality of academics to their infrastructure. They are also often in the spotlight for the wrong reasons, such as the protracted violent student protests that lead to shutdowns for weeks on end, resulting in little teaching and learning taking place. Then there's allegations of corruption and maladministration against senior managers and the poor safety measures on campuses, resulting in students being attacked or even murdered. Pandor has been in the job for just three months, having replaced Hlengiwe Mkhize after a Cabinet reshuffle by President Cyril Ramaphosa. She said some people have already become impatient with her, wanting her to resolve some of the sector's long-standing issues with haste.

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## 6. Daily Monitor

### [Vocational training fast becoming a necessity \(Uganda\)](#)

Every day, employers struggle with a shortage of skilled manpower. The graduates roaming the streets are many, but those with experience in their professions are few. And with increase in the number of factories and organisations opening up, there is need for a skilled workforce. Shillingi Mwesigye, the principal Lugogo Vocational Training Institute (LVTI), says because of the giant strides of vocational training, factories no longer need apprentices. "Traditionally, every factory had its own apprentices, who could learn on the job. The factory would eventually pay for the apprentices to return to school. But the practice is dying out because vocational institutions are churning out skilled and qualified artisans. If factories get such workers, why would they still hire apprentices?" Currently, people with technical skills who can work on practical jobs are few. If you advertise a job slot of 15 people with technical skills, chances are that after screening, you will only get 10. "It has been a slow process, but now people are beginning to see the benefit of vocational training," Mwesigye says, continuing, "At LVTI, university graduates leave their offices and come for evening classes. This is because the workplace requirements have changed, to favour those who have incorporated non-formal training in their education."

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## 7. Daily Nation

### [State to slash cost of technical education by 50 per cent \(Kenya\)](#)

The government will reduce the cost of training in technical institutions by 50 per cent. Technical and Vocational Training Principal Secretary Kevit Desai said the cost of technical education has barred many young people from acquiring skills in such institutions. “We are working on reducing the cost of training. Young people can now access funds from Higher Education Loans Board to register for the courses,” he said. Dr Desai, who spoke in Nairobi when he opened a three-day workshop hosted by the Canadian government on improving education in technical institutions, stressed the need to focus on competence based programmes. The Kenya government has partnered with the Canadian government to strengthen and roll out competence based programmes in technical institutions. Ten polytechnics, among them Kabete, Eldoret, Kitale, Kisumu, Kisii, Sigalagala, Nyeri, Meru, Northern Eastern and Kenya Coast, are in the programme. The five-year project started in 2016 and is expected to end in 2021.

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## 8. Nyasa Times

### [17 University of Malawi researchers receive grants from Treasury \(Malawi\)](#)

Ministry of Education, science and Technology has presented k 8.5 million grant to 17 upcoming University of Malawi (UNIMA) researchers to carryout research in various fields. The presentation too place on thursday at Chancellor College where representatives from Government and constituent colleges of UNIMA witnessed the occasion. The chief director of basic and secondary education in the Ministry of Education Thokosile Banda said, the presentation of the cheques marks the high level commitment of Government in the education sector. She said that Government, through the ministry would make sure the researches are conducted to produce good results for the benefit of all Malawians. Government has gone to establish the Commission of science and Technology which is in-charged with coordination of all research activities in the country and that later inform policy. Said Banda.

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## 9. Daily Monitor

### [Public universities chock on debts, struggle to exist \(Uganda\)](#)

Public universities across the country are choking on debts amidst underfunding from government. All in need of billions of shillings in funding and are likely to bleed the tax payer, according to a parliamentary report, Sunday Monitor has seen. The most affected are public universities that have, in the past few years, been opened across the country such as Lira University, Kabale University and Muni University. Some of the issues include low staffing, poor infrastructure, underfunding for research and lack of commitment to student welfare. Even Soroti University, which is soon opening its doors to the public, is facing problems. Amidst all this, government is in the process of implementing President Museveni’s directive of taking over Busoga University, which was closed in December last year by the National Council for Higher Education (NCHE) after it was discovered it had awarded degrees to more than 1,000 students, majority of whom were from South Sudan, after a two-

month study in 2016. Established universities such as Makerere, for example, are not spared. Makerere University is grappling with a debt of Shs64.2b. However, an analysis of the total wage enhancement for the public universities paints an even bleaker picture. By the end of the next financial year, government will owe teaching and non-teaching staff at public universities at least Shs105b. Click this [Link](#) for more details

## 10. University World News

### [Morocco and Qatar in joint higher education initiatives \(Morocco\)](#)

Morocco and Qatar have unveiled a higher education cooperation plan that includes setting up a joint institution in the North African country's capital Rabat and a cross-border campus of a Moroccan university in the Arab nation's capital Doha, along with networking opportunities among universities to boost learning. "Hosting Morocco's branch campus in Qatar and establishing joint universities in Morocco is part of a broader nationwide strategy, known as [Qatar National] Vision 2030, that aims to transform the country into a knowledge-based economy," Samir Khalaf Abd-El-Aal, a science expert at the National Research Centre in Cairo, Egypt, told University World News. The cooperation plan was the outcome of a meeting between Morocco and Qatar's ministries of higher education, held in the Moroccan capital Rabat on 14 May, according to the website of Morocco's Ministry of Higher Education, Scientific Research and Professional Training. Qatar will provide funding to establish the Morocco-Qatar University in Rabat, while Morocco will set up a campus for the Mohammed V University in Doha. The Qatar-based branch campus of Mohammed V University is its third cross-border campus after it established two branches in the United Arab Emirates, including Mohammed V University Agdal, Abu Dhabi, and Mohammed V University, Ajman.

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## 11. Ghana Web

### [Re-engineer Africa's university education \(Ghana\)](#)

Former President John Mahama has advised that, the curriculum of University education in Africa needs to be re-engineered to stimulate accelerated development if the continent is to remain competitive in the global space of skills acquisition and training. Mahama bemoaned that there is a mismatch between skills required by the job market and the current curriculum being used in almost all the universities in Africa. Speaking on the sidelines of the 53rd Annual Meetings of the African Development Bank in Busan, South Korea, John Mahama said churning out graduates of humanities for example in large numbers would not unlock the quest for accelerated industrialisation in Africa. It was on the theme, "Accelerating Africa's Industrialisation," which is underpinned by the Bank's High 5 strategy including light up and power Africa, feed Africa and improve the quality of life of Africans.

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## 12. Egypt Today

### Exam papers' electronic correction system to be introduced (Egypt)

Automated syllabus-based education system and examination papers' correction electronic system will be officially implemented in Egypt's universities starting the new academic year 2018/19, Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research Khaled Abdel Ghafar said on Friday. The exam paper electronic system will ensure equality and fairness amongst all students and will help eliminate all malpractices that usually occur during the examination processes, Ghafar explained during his interview with Member of Parliament and TV host Mostafa Bakry on Sada El-Balad TV channel. "We have to update our education system to keep up with the pace of technological changes," Ghafar said, confirming that Egypt is rife with the distinguished cadres in all scientific fields. "Egypt has 20 top-ranking researchers in the Nano Technology," Ghafar said. He further stressed the advancement of the Egyptian universities in the global rankings. Beni Suef University has been named Egypt's best university by the Times Higher Education Emerging Economies University Rankings 2018. The university napped the 114th spot among 378 universities in 42 countries around the world, Mansour Hassan, president of the university, said in press remarks. According to the Times rankings, Alexandria University was ranked the second-best Egyptian university.

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## 13. The Standard

### How ICT is shaping our education needs (Kenya)

Higher education is a key factor in a nation's effort to develop a highly skilled workforce for competing in the global economy. In a developing nation like Kenya, an effective formal higher education system is essential for national development. The demand for higher institution of learning in Kenya has increased in the past few decades. This can generally be attributed to the acknowledgement that globalization has created tremendous impact on higher education in the twenty-first century. Since independence, Kenya has experienced phenomenal growth in university education with the public and private sectors growing side by side and complementing each other in the drive to make higher education more accessible in the country. The growth in the number of public and private institutions of higher learning (universities) in Kenya has been accompanied by an impressive growth in student enrolments and a rise in new courses offered. From the broader perspective, the expansion of university education can be understood mainly within the context of the undue emphasis that governments, the world over, have placed on education in general and on university education in particular as an engine of socio-economic growth and development. Additionally, there has been pressure originating from a changing global higher educational landscape has had an impact on the delivery of educational services due to economic, technological, political, cultural, and scientific trends placing new demands on Kenya's education system. As a result, the education system in Kenya has increased its investment in higher learning institutions in research and development (R&D) activities with potential to foster growth in a globalized knowledge economy.

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## 14. Daily Nation

### [Adopt safe data storage, easy access \(Kenya\)](#)

If there is anything that Kenyan universities have to invest in, then that is safe data storage systems that are easily accessible; which conserve data files in a secured location and in a way that can be readily accessed by the public. Our universities have to realise that they operate in an information-centric world. Ideally, they function in a world that relies on the creation and consumption of data which must be available when and where needed. My random check reveals that most of them use approaches to data storage and retrieval of the 1980s and '90s in the 21st Century. I was shocked recently when I applied for a job in one of the universities. To verify my credentials, I was informed that an officer of the university had to travel to my institution — outside Kenya — to do only that. But this waste of resources in terms of time and money. Information that could be obtained at the click of a button was going to cost the taxpayer over \$1,000! Perhaps the officers in Kenya think that foreign universities function as they do, without proper data storage and retrieval systems. My former university, the oldest and, undoubtedly, the most prestigious in East and Central Africa, has systems that work. That is why I agree with those who criticise our institutions as functioning in archaic and untenable technological regimes that do not encourage efficiency and effectiveness. With the advancement in technology, institutions need to invest in systems that work and train their officers to use them.

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### Note to University Public Relations Officers:

To share news/events about your Universities, contact Ms Maureen Agena, Program Officer - Communications, Marketing & Advocacy, below.

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