

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

1. University World News

New partnership puts university teaching in the spotlight (Africa)

African universities need a systematic change in teaching and learning approaches to help lecturers deal with growing student numbers and inadequate facilities, and to produce graduates who can make meaningful contributions in today's knowledge-based economies. This message was a key driver of discussions at a pedagogical leadership training session aimed at lecturers in the social sciences from five countries in Africa, held in Nairobi, Kenya, from 8-14 July. The session marked the start of a three-and-a-half-year pilot training programme for higher education lecturers that aims to catalyse systematic change in teaching and learning at all levels in African universities. The programme, known as the Partnership for Pedagogical Leadership in Africa or PEDAL, is to be implemented by the Partnership for African Social and Governance Research (PASGR) with funding from the United Kingdom's Strategic Partnerships for Higher Education Innovation and Reform. Participating institutions at this stage include the University of Ibadan in Nigeria, the University of Ghana, Uganda Martyrs University, the University of Dar es Salaam in Tanzania and Kenya's Egerton University. "This programme aims to transform teaching and learning in African universities through innovation," said Beatrice Muganda, director for higher education at PASGR. Muganda, who leads the implementation of the programme, said that the uptake of PEDAL could result in more innovative teaching and learning methods, assisting in the development of higher-level thinking, greater innovative capacities and in the better application of content-specific knowledge and skills in different contexts. Muganda said PEDAL will eventually extend its reach to other universities. The target, she said, is to train over 1,000 university teaching staff who will use this initiative to deliver social science programmes to benefit over 7,000 students. Some of the courses targeted in the training included research and public policy, gender and development studies, refugee and migration studies, economics and development studies. Paul Effah, president of Radford University College, based in Ghana, said there was a need for university lecturers in Africa to be better equipped so that learning becomes more rewarding. "Most of our university lecturers have knowledge in technical skills but that does not necessarily translate into good teaching," said Effah. Click this [Link](#) for more details

2. University World News

'Sustainable development needs both arts and sciences' (Africa)

"Sustainable development requires both the sciences and the arts to work together and complement each other for execution of development agendas," according to Professor Samuel Sefa-Dedeh, vice president of the Ghana Academy of Arts and Sciences. Speaking on the sidelines of the academy's recent conference on Sustainable African Cities held in Accra, Ghana during the first week of July, Sefa-Dedeh said the arts and sciences cannot work in isolation and their amalgamation is necessary in sustainable development. He said innovations developed by university academics and researchers from the scientific world in fields such as agriculture, health and engineering need academics from the arts to help the public and policy makers make sense of research and find mechanisms to roll out technologies. Sefa-Dedeh said that the academy has sought to develop its

service to Ghana through collaborations with other national bodies on the essential issues affecting science and humanities, governance, and the formulation and implementation of policies. The academy has also established formal and informal links with Ghanaian universities that enable collaboration on a number of activities concerning research and development. “We have also undertaken assessment of issues especially in the higher education sector making workable recommendations for improvement,” noted Sefa-Dedeh. He said the academy had, for example, registered its concerns over requirements for the pre-university science and mathematics courses, which were now drawing larger numbers of students to the fields. Delegates at the conference, organised by the Ghana Academy of Arts and Sciences in collaboration with the German National Academy of Sciences Leopoldina, Network of African Science Academies and the Academy of Science of South Africa, endorsed the need for increased interaction and collaboration between the arts and sciences to enable Africa to find local solutions to challenges facing urbanisation on the continent. Sefa-Dedeh called on governments in Africa to support academies which could, through think tanks and other fora, respond to a range of emerging development challenges such as climate change. He challenged other academies in Africa to form smart collaborations and share knowledge to advance development agendas on the continent. “That’s how we can achieve sustainable development: if the humanities and science work together,” said Sefa-Dedeh.

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3. Daily Nation

[JKUAT and MERU Universities get new Vice Chancellors \(Kenya\)](#)

Professor Victoria Ngumi is the new Vice-Chancellor of Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology (Jkuat). Prof Ngumi replaces Prof Mabel Imbuga who has retired after serving the institution for the last 10 years. Until her appointment, Prof Ngumi was deputy vice-chancellor, administration, at the University. In her previous post, she was responsible for corporate planning, staff recruitment, training of administrative staff, promotions and discipline, personnel administration, health care services, registry administration, transport, and central services. The new appointment, dated July 18, was made by Education Cabinet Secretary Amina Mohamed. Ms Mohamed has also appointed Prof Romanus Odhiambo Otieno as the new vice chancellor of Meru University. Prof Otieno replaces Prof Japheth Magambo whose term was not renewed following deadly student riots at the institution early this year. Before his appointment, Prof Otieno was deputy vice-chancellor in charge of academic affairs at JKUAT. He headed the academic division, which is tasked with planning of academic programmes, preparation of syllabuses, and teaching. The office is also responsible for student’s affairs— including admissions, keeping records, and welfare. In their new capacities, Prof Ngumi and Prof Otieno will act as the chief executives of their respective universities.

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4. University World News

[Will the fee increase solve universities' funding woes? \(Uganda\)](#)

While a tuition fee increment for higher education – the first in 10 years – may be the most viable way to address immediate financial woes facing universities in Uganda, it is not a sustainable way to address higher education funding gaps, say academics. At Uganda's oldest public university, Makerere University, tuition will increase by 15% for all undergraduate programmes with effect from August 2018 for the next academic year. Five other public universities are expected to follow suit, which include Busitema, Gulu, Kyambogo and Muni universities and Mbarara University of Science and Technology. The minimum annual fees for undergraduate students will be UGX5 million (US\$1,340), up from UGX2.69 million (US\$720), the government has announced. This will bring the institution closer to meeting the unit cost per student. The increment will not affect continuing students or government-sponsored students. Student fees are a major source of income for Ugandan universities and studies show they constitute at least 60% of annual institutional budgets. The Ugandan government contributes only 0.3% of gross domestic product to higher education, compared to the Kenyan and Tanzanian governments which each contribute 1%. Fees paid in most Ugandan higher education institutions are lower than unit costs, as students pay only 40% of the annual cost of their programmes. The recently-announced increase is seen as a way to improve the quality of higher education and will put tuition fees in Uganda's universities on par with others in the region. In the case of Makerere, it follows recommendations from the university council and the student body, as well as consultation and benchmarking exercises against the University of Nairobi in Kenya.

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5. University World News

[Skills mismatch under the spotlight at Yaoundé meeting \(Cameroon\)](#)

Africa is likely to miss out on the fourth industrial revolution if universities do not focus on entrepreneurship courses or transform their current education curricula so as to give graduates the right skills for the job market, according to education experts. Experts at the annual board of governors' meeting of the African Capacity Building Foundation (ACBF) in Yaoundé, Cameroon, from 19 -20 July said African universities should now shift their focus to three key issues in the industrial revolution: mobility, energy and telecommunications. "Africa needs to create skills around these three issues and it is only at the university level that such skills can be created. Without these skills it will be difficult to keep pace with developed countries," said Professor Roger Nanfosso, vice-chancellor of the University of Dschang in Cameroon. "There has been an emphasis on giving incentives to create employment for the youth on the continent. Although this is important, the real issue universities need to address is youth entrepreneurship. Incentives will only address the problem partially and the cycle of youth unemployment goes on and on." The ACBF is the African Union's specialised agency for capacity development. The theme of the meeting was "Youth employment in Africa: A focus on developing the critical skills" Erastus Mwencha, chair of the ACBF's executive board, said the disconnect between tertiary education and labour market needs necessitates a sustained policy focus, particularly with regard to effective programmatic design and intervention. An ACBF study in 2016, Capacity Requirements for the Implementation of the First 10 Years of the AU Agenda 2063, indicated that Africa had about 55,000 engineers of an estimated 4.3

million needed. Similarly, the continent only had about 80,000 agricultural scientists while needing an estimated 150,000 agriculturalists.

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6. University World News

[Higher education and research agreement for closer cooperation \(Morocco-Tunisia\)](#)

The Moroccan and Tunisian authorities in charge of higher education and research have signed an agreement to encourage the establishment of a university network and greater student mobility. The agreement was signed under the Ibn Khaldoun cooperation programme in Gammarth, Tunis, by Khalid Samadi and Selim Khalbous, respectively Moroccan and Tunisian secretaries of state for higher education and research, reported Libération of Casablanca. The programme focuses on the funding of joint higher education and research projects, setting up long-term partnerships between universities and research institutions, and multi-party cooperation through coordination of experts, teacher training, exchanges of doctoral students, teachers, young researchers and administrative personnel, as well as common research and innovation. In the 2018-19 academic year mobility grants will be allocated to 200 Moroccan and Tunisian postgraduates to specialise in medicine and engineering studies, and a call for bids will be launched for projects of common interest in fields such as renewable energies, water and the environment, reported Libération. An inaugural conference of university presidents from the two countries will take place in Agadir, Morocco, in December, which will discuss how to take advantage of digital technologies to promote higher education and scientific research. Joint research projects are to be launched at the end of July, post-doc mobility programmes and Moroccan-Tunisian research laboratories are to be established at the start of the new university year. Measures to simplify exchanges of technical data and evaluation of scientific research also figure in the programme, reported Libération. – Compiled by Jane Marshall.

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7. Africa Development Bank

[ADEA and Partners Launch 2017/2018 Education Research in Africa Award \(Africa\)](#)

The competition for the 3rd and 4th editions of the Education Research in Africa Award (ERAA) is now open. Launched in 2012, the Award aims to promote high quality education research, produced by African universities, research centers and research networks. There are four award categories: (1) emerging educational researcher, (2) accomplished educational researcher, (3) outstanding mentor of educational researchers, and (4) enabling institutional environment for education research. The research works of candidates can focus on a wide range of thematic areas, but the following will receive special attention: technical and vocational skills development (TVSD); early childhood development and education (ECDE); information and communication technology (ICT); science, technology and innovation (STI); gender issues; special education needs; teacher training and the teaching profession. This year the Award will also give special attention to education, training or capacity building works related to the African Development Bank's five operational priorities known as High 5s: energy, food and agriculture, industrialization, continental integration and improving the quality of life for the people. Research on education is crucial for African education systems to function well. It provides decision-makers with the information they need to orient policy, conduct reform and enhance the quality, equity, relevance and efficiency of their education and training

systems. Yet, education research in Africa remains limited and underused. Among the main factors explaining this, there are the inadequate institutional environment for education research and the persisting weak involvement of higher education in the policy-making process. The terms and conditions of participation in the competition are available [here](#). The organizing committee strongly encourages women to participate in the 2017/2018 Education Research in Africa Award.

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8. City Press

[Transforming higher education by investing in academic staff \(South Africa\)](#)

There is a positive correlation between the research output of universities and the percentage of academics at universities who hold doctoral degrees. However, just 43.8% of the permanent university instructional and research staff at South African universities held doctoral degrees in 2015. Male staff are more likely to hold doctoral degrees than female staff. White academics are more likely to hold doctoral degrees than black academics. The historically disadvantaged institutions and the universities of technology generally have lower academic staff doctorate percentages. The data shows that South Africa is clearly not where it needs to be in terms of the percentage of academic staff that hold doctoral degrees. There are also still prevailing patterns of inequality in terms of who is more likely to be qualified at the doctorate level. There is agreement across the system that efforts to increase the number of academic staff who hold doctorates must be accelerated. It is for this reason that the department of higher education and training introduced the university capacity development programme which represents a significant contribution by the government and its partners. About R1 billion will be invested annually to support its implementation, with the bulk of the funds going to universities to support the implementation of approved university capacity development plans. The university capacity development programme is unambiguously and unapologetically transformative in nature. It seeks to transform teaching, learning, researching and leading towards enhanced quality, success and equity in universities. The university staff doctoral programme is part of the broader university capacity development programme which is being implemented by the department and universities to strengthen capacity in three areas: student development, staff development and programme or curriculum development. In terms of the staff development focus area, the university capacity development programme will put in place a range of initiatives to support the professional development of academic and professional staff at all levels of the academic and professional career continuum, from assisting to identify, recruit and nurture new talent to enabling capacity development of university leaders and managers.

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9. University World News

Ministry unveils plan to attract Sub-Saharan students (Tunisia)

The ministry of higher education in Tunisia has launched several new initiatives aimed at increasing the number of foreign students, especially from Sub-Saharan Africa, to its universities. They include the establishment of a Franco-Tunisian University of Africa and the Mediterranean, and the creation of a national agency to receive and guide foreign students and facilitate the admission of Sub-Saharan students to public universities. "The higher education initiatives taken by the Tunisian ministry of higher education are a step in the right direction, as they aim at greater attractiveness of the country for young people from other African countries," said Mohamed Naceur Ammar, president of the Higher Institute of Engineering and Technology. He added in an interview with University World News: "On the other hand, they complement the efforts deployed individually by both public and private universities in this context." "More measures should be taken by other governmental departments to improve the conditions of living of Sub-Saharan students during their studies and to allow them to access the local job market," Ammar said. The new institution, the Franco-Tunisian University of Africa and the Mediterranean, is the second to be set up in Africa after the announcement of a plan in 2014 to establish the Arab-French University in the Egyptian capital Cairo. The joint university will open in 2019 and offer a dual certificate (Tunisian-French) from higher education institutes of the two countries in the humanities and social sciences, as well as new communication technologies. Access to the joint university will be free to Tunisian students through scholarships. According to the Campus France website, the French ministry for education, higher education and research said the Franco-Tunisian university is "a new step in cooperation of excellence", aiming to address the unemployment rate among youth and meet Tunisia's socio-economic needs.

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10. Times Live

Naming and shaming fake degrees (South Africa)

The department of higher education and training has proposed naming and shaming fraudsters who claim fake qualifications in an online public register administered by the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA), in the hope that this will deter others from following suit. The measures are contained in the draft National Qualifications Framework amendment bill, currently before Parliament. It aims to tighten the noose on institutions that offer bogus qualifications and individuals who fake or misrepresent their accomplishments, and is a response to the problems currently confronting employers and education institutions. The Bill contains provisions that compel education institutions and employers to report fraudulent or misrepresented qualifications to SAQA, which works closely with the SAPS to pursue cases of alleged fraud, the department's Shirley Lloyd on Wednesday told members of Parliament's portfolio committee on higher education. The department's chief director for legal services Eben Boshoff said the draft National Policy on the Misrepresentation of Qualifications which was published for public comment last year, had been withdrawn on legal advice. It had also proposed setting up a public register of individuals and providers who had misrepresented or faked their qualifications. There have been a host of recent public scandals over civil servants and top executives with bogus qualifications, such as former SABC chairwoman Ellen Tshabalala, who claimed to have a BCom and postgraduate degrees from the

University of South Africa, and rail agency Prasa's former head of engineering who was not registered as an engineer. Even cabinet has not been immune: former Arts and Culture minister Pallo Jordan resigned after he was exposed for misrepresenting himself as "Dr" when in he did not have a PhD.

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11. University World News

[Universities body to probe gender imbalance at the top \(South Africa\)](#)

The apex body representing vice-chancellors of South Africa's public universities plans to investigate why women are struggling to break through the glass ceiling en route to heading institutions of higher learning. "We hope to carry out a study this year to determine what the situation is. Hopefully, we will have a much better idea once it is done," said Professor Ahmed Bawa, chief executive officer of Universities South Africa (USAf), whose members comprise the heads of the country's 26 tertiary education institutions. According to Bawa, 58% of the students in South African universities are women and 42% men. "This gap has to begin to represent itself in the staff structures of universities. And indeed there are more women than men at lecturer level. However, we are not seeing the same trend at the senior levels. And this clearly has to be an area of investigation," he told University World News. National data on gender representation with respect to staffing in universities in 2016, drawn from the Higher Education Management Information System, shows that only 27.5% of professors in South African institutions (from a total of 2,218) are female, while the figure is slightly higher at 39.5% for associate professor from a total of 2,131. At senior lecturer level, women occupy 45.1% of the (4,890) posts, while at lecturer and junior lecturer levels, they make up 53.3% (out of 8,498 posts) and 56.6% (out of 1,035 posts) respectively. The planned USAf probe into gender imbalance at senior management levels of universities comes as South Africa prepares to celebrate National Women's Day on 9 August and the sector bids farewell to one of the country's top academics, Professor Cheryl de la Rey – the first woman and black person to breach the uppermost glass ceiling at the University of Pretoria in 101 years. Just five of the country's 26 vice-chancellors are women, with this statistic set to drop when De la Rey, chosen after a global search in which she was described as an "exceptional candidate", takes up a post as vice-chancellor at New Zealand's University of Canterbury in February 2019. "This is deeply concerning," says Bawa of the statistics concerning women vice-chancellors. "It would be fair to say that the upper echelons of higher education leadership are still very male-centred. Having said this, the role played by the five [existing] women vice-chancellors is exceptional," he said. Bawa said three areas of concern need to form part of the USAf investigation. "The first is: Are there impediments in the system that prevent women from being selected into vice-chancellor positions? The second is whether the pipeline of candidates is large enough. The answer to this is very well known. The pipeline is very narrow. We must understand why it is that women academics are not progressing into professorships at sufficiently high levels. The third is to study whether there are barriers that prevent women from applying for these vice-chancellor positions," he said.

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12. Daily Monitor

Is creating jobs part of the role of universities? (Uganda)

Many people are inclined to blaming the increasing unemployment problem on the education system, which I would like to be categorical about in this article and argue otherwise. I remember what Prof A.B.K. Kasozi, the former executive director of Uganda's National Council for Higher Education (NCHE), said about education and what its role is in addressing society's problems. He was very keen in drawing a line between education and employment. While he argued that education should be tailored to addressing society's problems, its role is majorly to prepare a person's life and make them ready to transform the society in which he/she lives. His emphasis was on the fact that the major aim of education is not to create jobs, but citizens who are cultured, people who are distinguishable from animals, to respond to and solve society's problems, including economic welfare and to maintain civilised structures". Martin Luther King, Jr in 1947 said education has a two-fold function to perform in the life of a person and in society. The first one being utility and the other is culture. Education must enable a man to become more efficient and to achieve, with increasing facility, the legitimate goals of his or her life. The function of education, therefore, is to teach one to think intensively and to think critically. But education, which stops with efficiency, may prove the greatest menace to society. The most dangerous criminal (including some corrupt government officials), maybe the person gifted with reason, but with no morals. The question that is becoming increasingly of interest to our society is: What should our universities do in the face of the rising unemployment in the country? It is not a very easy [question](#) to answer.

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13. University World News

Calls for tighter regulation of private universities (Morocco)

A recent government warning about the use by private universities of manipulated or fake data about curricula and international partnerships to programmes that have not received official authorisation, has highlighted the need for tighter regulation, say higher education observers in Morocco. "It is forbidden to open enrolment for departments that have not been recognised by the ministry," said the statement from the Ministry of Education, Professional Training and Higher Learning, according to a local news report on 8 June. The statement warned citizens that some private universities involved in these activities had not yet themselves received institutional accreditation. Stressing the importance of credibility and social trust as pillars of academic practice, the ministry said misinformation should not be used as bait for more "customers". It said certificates and all other documents obtained in such conditions were null and void. Observers say the number of private higher education providers in Morocco is growing rapidly. "Faced with the failure of public higher education, dozens of schools and institutions of higher education are appearing to merge to obtain the private university label," said Jabrane Amaghous from Cadi Ayyad University, Marrakech. "However, most of them are not accredited and carry out fraudulent practices to attract student attention." "To fight against the fraudulent practices phenomenon, it is necessary to invest more in public universities to improve their attractiveness and to carry out a rigorous policy in control of accredited and non-accredited private universities," Amaghous said. "I recommend the creation of a unique platform for registration in higher education that allows high visibility for students." While the problem is serious, not all private institutions should be tarred with the same brush, according to

Aomar Ibourk, professor of quantitative methods and social economics and director of the Economic and Social Research Group at Cadi Ayyad University. "The private higher education sector remains heterogeneous and is broadly in line with the regulations of the ministry of higher education and some exceptions should not lead to a stigma for all these institutions," Ibourk said. "There is no general problem with Morocco's private universities as some of them play an important role in research and will ultimately contribute significantly to the emergence of Morocco." "Competition brings excellence and diversification that ultimately benefits students. It is therefore important to allow innovation and to adapt the regulatory framework that is still mainly built for public universities," he said.

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