

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

1. University World News

New journal to boost dissemination of African research (Africa)

A new African journal is to boost access to research output, particularly for African university academics, through a new peer-reviewed and open access publication that aims to increase intra-African research collaborations across scientific disciplines. The quarterly journal Scientific African is owned and operated by a community of Next Einstein Forum scientists and is published by Elsevier. It was launched last year during the Next Einstein Forum (NEF) Global Gathering in Kigali, Rwanda. The editor-in-chief of the journal, Benjamin Gyampoh, said that the pan-African content of the publication would provide learning materials for teaching and research in African universities. “As the journal produces many issues, African universities will find a one-stop resource for excellent scientific content in basically all disciplines,” he said, adding that this will facilitate teaching and research using examples and scenarios that students can relate to and appreciate within their context. Speaking to University World News in an exclusive interview, Gyampoh said the publication also aims at creating opportunities for collaboration for Africa’s academics and researchers. Gyampoh, who is the immediate former executive director of the African Academy of Sciences, said: “With our open access platform and low author processing fees, we are making it possible for Africa’s researchers to publish their work in a highly visible journal and allow them to identify collaborators.” The journal, whose first edition was published in December 2018, and the second of which is expected in the first quarter of this year, allows African academics to publish their research findings and build academic research capacity. The scientific disciplines currently accepted by the journal include chemistry, information technology and engineering, economics and business, environmental sciences and geosciences, life and health sciences, mathematics, physical sciences, social sciences and policy, conservation and sustainability studies, and agriculture and food security. Read more [here](#)

2. Ghana Web

Ministry plans centralised university placement system (Ghana)

Ghana’s ministry of education is planning to introduce a placement system for admission into tertiary institutions in the country aimed at reducing the stress and expense currently involved in the admission process. This comes after a nine-member committee chaired by Professor Cliff Tagoe made the proposal for a centralised university admissions and placement service (CAPS) in the Tertiary Education Policy Document submitted on 1 November 2018 to the ministry of education. CAPS will replace the current stressful and expensive system of applying to different universities. The Minister of State in Charge of Tertiary Education Professor Kwesi Yankah said exploratory visits had been made to the United Kingdom and Nigeria by the ministry of education and vice-chancellors and registrars to study how the system works in the two countries. “One proposal currently under contemplation by the Ministry of Education has also incidentally been proposed by this draft Policy document. “It is the Proposal for a Centralized University admissions and Placement Service (CAPS), which replaces the stressful and rather expensive system of applying to separate Universities in Ghana with a Centralized system, where the applicants list their choices of University on a single

platform. “A Central administrative and technical set up then facilitates the process of placement,” the Committee said. The Minister of State in Charge of Tertiary Education Prof Kwesi Yankah revealed this on Friday in an ongoing stakeholder meeting in Koforidua, Eastern Regional Capital. He said exploratory visits have been made to UK and Nigeria by the Ministry of Education and Vice Chancellors and Registrars to understudy how the system works in the two countries. He added that a national committee in centralized admissions for Universities to be chaired by Prof. Adow Obeng, former Vice Chancellor of University of Cape Coast currently President of Presbyterian University college will be formally inaugurated on Thursday, January 17, 2019, to facilitate the process.

Read more [here](#)

3. University World News

[Union sounds alarm over brain drain, lecturer conditions \(Algeria\)](#)

The Union of Algerian Doctors and Researchers, a body representing senior university academics and researchers, has raised the alarm regarding national research capacity and output as the country continues to suffer the effects of a massive brain drain to foreign countries. In a statement reportedly released in early January, senior academics and researchers called on the authorities to take heed of their demands for government to contribute to the search for solutions to their problems. The union called for higher education to reconnect with the skilled Algerians abroad for the benefit of the Algerian economy. The authors of the statement also called on the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research to take appropriate measures to link scientific research outlets with the needs of the Algerian economy and society. The union said it was developing a national project for scientific research aimed at providing realistic solutions and alternatives for developing and encouraging research, according to Ennahar, a daily independent newspaper. This call is not the first, since the other representative of Algerian researchers, the National Syndicate of Researchers, also made a public statement at the end of its meeting held on 23 and 24 December in Algiers, in which it listed a number of demands. Among these demands was tenure for permanent researchers in the civil service, a policy which was suspended in 2008, and the immediate review of the status of permanent researchers. The researchers also requested a revision of salary scales to guarantee dignity to permanent researchers, an end to discrimination between the sectors of scientific research, a review of salaries for academics, the establishment of a permanent scientific research and technology ministry that includes all scientific research institutions, an end to the 'marginalisation' of permanent research and the right of researchers to access continuous training.

Read more [here](#)

4. Quartz Africa

[African countries should be building private-public partnerships in higher education \(Africa\)](#)

Private-public partnerships have become a common strategy for countries all over the world to meet their development goals. In the global north, these partnerships – which bring capital and expertise together – tend to focus on developing infrastructure. That includes energy, ports, rail and fibre networks. Such partnerships have also benefited some sectors of society in African countries and elsewhere in the global south. In Africa’s education sector, public-private partnerships have been largely limited to infrastructure developments and the provision of education. It’s time for the

continent's higher education sector to develop its own partnership models that deal with a different currency: knowledge. Public-private partnerships should centre on the production, transfer and use of knowledge for social and economic development. First, the sector must interrogate why strategic public-partnerships are important. What are the advantages? Who benefits? And, are there accrued benefits for those beyond the partners involved? It's also vital to examine partnerships that already exist. Their successes and failures must be interrogated. There is good work being done on the continent. Now the success stories must combine their efforts for greater impact. Ideally, public-private partnerships in the higher education sector should involve a combination of several actors: the private sector, academic researchers and governments. Other scientific resources, such as science granting councils, have a role to play, too. The National Research Foundation in Southern Africa, National Council for Science and Technology in Eastern Africa, and Programme d'Appui Stratégique à la Recherche Scientifique in Côte d'Ivoire are examples of such councils.

Read more [here](#)

5. Inside Education

Naledi Pandor: Youth entrepreneurship key to job creation in South Africa (South Africa)

Higher Education Minister Naledi Pandor says her department will support President Cyril Ramaphosa's bold plan to create 257 000 job per annum by promoting entrepreneurship in the post-school sector. According to Statistics SA, South Africa's unemployment rate is high for both youth and adults; however, the unemployment rate among young people aged 15–34 was 38,2%. This means that more than one in every three young people in the labour force did not have a job in the first quarter of 2018. In an interview with Inside Education this week, Pandor pointed out that small business development was one of the critical solutions to job creation and has vowed to raise the matter with the president during the upcoming cabinet Lekgotla – a meeting of cabinet ministers, provincial Premiers, and directors-general, takes place annually to prepare for the State of the Nation Address in February. The Banking Association of South Africa (BASA) shows has identified SMEs as productive drivers of inclusive economic growth and development in South Africa and around the world. The association reports that some researchers have estimated that in South Africa, small and medium-sized enterprises make up 91% of formalised businesses and provide employment to about 60% of the labour force. BASA also states that SMEs' total economic output accounts for roughly 34% of GDP. "While contributing significantly to the economy, SMEs foster diversification through their development of new and unsaturated sectors of the economy. In addition, innovative and technology-based small and medium enterprises can provide a platform for local, regional and international growth," reads a BASA report on SMEs.

Read more [here](#)

6. Mail and Guardian

[African universities move up the ranks \(Africa\)](#)

Higher education institutions in Africa have moved up university rankings. This is according to the 2019 Emerging Economies University Rankings. According to the rankings, compiled by Times Higher Education, African countries were better represented than in previous years. Egypt holds the position as the most represented African nation on the ranking, while the highest ranking African institution on the table is in South Africa. The list ranks 442 universities from 43 countries, across four continents. The rankings use the same 13 performance indicators as the World University Rankings to judge institutions on their teaching, research, knowledge transfer and international outlook. But these indicators are recalibrated to reflect the development priorities of universities in emerging economies. This is why the minister of higher education has focused some of her attention on bringing together new graduates with small businesses. With 19 institutions included in the 2019 list, Egypt more than doubled its representation on the rankings and achieving its strongest performance yet. Seven of these feature in the top 200, up from just two in 2018. The University of Cape Town retained its position as the the highest ranked African university on the table, coming in again at number nine. South Africa also has seven institutions ranked in the top 200. South Africa now has nine institutions on the table, up from eight last year. The Tshwane University of Technology appeared on the table for the first time in 2019, making it the only ranked South African technikon. According to the rankings, University of the Witwatersrand has shown improvements across the board, allowing it to move up one spot to take 11th place. Stellenbosch University has also significantly improved in the last year, moving up 14 places to 24th in 2019. However, each of South Africa's other previously ranked institutions — including the University of KwaZulu-Natal, the University of Pretoria and the University of Johannesburg — have fallen in ranking this year.

Read more [here](#)

7. MastersStudies

[Zambian Higher Education Ministry Adds 1,000 Scholarships \(Zambia\)](#)

Zambia's government recently announced it plans to provide 1,000 scholarships to five additional public universities. The funds are the result of loan recoveries the ministry has been working on since September. Here's a closer look at the development, as reported by The Zambian Observer.

According to the Ministry of Higher Education's public relations officer, Chiselwa Kawanda, 40 percent of the scholarships will be merit-based. Additionally, 30 percent will be designated for women, while an additional 30 percent will benefit applicants from rural communities. The Patriotic Front of the Copperbelt applauded the announcement for diverting from its traditional inclination to offer education loans to students from just two universities. PF Copperbelt vice-chairman and Kitwe mayor Christopher Kang'ombe said, "With this decision, more students, totalling 1000, coming from poor families will have equal opportunities to get educated and acquire the qualifications to compete for employment opportunities in the job market." Kang'ombe also heralded the government's decision for being in line with the Patriotic Fund's education objectives, "We promised better education from primary to tertiary level and increasing number of students loans is a fulfillment of this pledge," he said.

Read more [here](#)

8. The Citizen

Free tertiary education necessary, but could be detrimental – World Bank (South Africa)

South Africa's new education policy to offer free tertiary education to students from poor households is necessary to address inequalities, but could negatively affect the national budget, said the World Bank on Tuesday. The bank predicted that South Africa's economic growth – which the National Treasury has estimated at 0.7% for 2018 – would accelerate to 1.3% in 2019 and 1.7% the year after, driven by the implementation of structural reforms announced last year. The education policy, announced by former president Jacob Zuma in December 2017, would effectively give free learning to 90% of academically eligible students to meet the national goal of doubling post-school education and training (PSET) enrollment by 2030. But the plan would exert pressure on an already stretched fiscus, limiting South Africa's ability to both expand enrollment in institutions of higher learning and improve the quality of education, the World Bank added. The strain would be equivalent to about one percentage point of gross domestic product, leaving fewer public resources to increase admission capacity without compromising education quality, said World Bank South Africa program leader Sébastien Dessus. "Nonetheless, this constraint should not deter this objective if difficult but necessary trade-offs are made," Dessus added. For South Africa's economy to become sustainable sooner, it would be necessary to address its skills gap, which perpetuated inequality and fueled policy uncertainty, the World Bank said. It said the country could increase college enrollments more rapidly and reduce inequality faster by re-balancing budgetary resources and policy reform attention towards interventions that improved the quality of education.

Read more [here](#)

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