1. **University World News**  
**Using intellectual property to actualise universities’ potential (Africa)**  
Four African universities are among five institutions that have been picked to participate in a continental intellectual property (IP) pilot project, aimed at helping public teaching and research organisations build capacity for developing and implementing institutional IP policy and strategy. The project is being implemented by global IP organisation the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) in collaboration with two continental bodies, one Anglophone, the African Regional Intellectual Property Organization (ARIPO), and the other Francophone, the Organisation Africaine de la Propriété Intellectuelle (OAPI). The universities include Kenya’s Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology (JKUAT), Zimbabwe’s Africa University, the Namibia University of Science and Technology (NUST) in Windhoek, and Ghana’s Koforidua Technical University (KTU). Also taking part in the initiative is Uganda’s National Agricultural Research Organisation (NARO), the only non-higher education institution in the group. The project is financed by WIPO, with support from the Japan Patent Office under the Japan Funds-in-Trust for Africa and Least Developed Countries. The institutions were picked in a competitive process that commenced in 2017, according to ARIPO Director General Fernando Dos Santos. “In 2017 ARIPO and WIPO agreed to work together on a joint project aimed at helping universities and research and development institutions to adopt accurate IP policies,” said Dos Santos. The project will be carried out in different phases that will involve assisting the five institutions in formulating or fine-tuning their existing individual IP policies using guidelines developed by the collaborators, he told University World News – Africa.  
The call for expression of interest document seen by University World News states that the goal of the initiative is to promote development of IP policies in R&D institutions, in order to stimulate local innovation and technology transfer in Africa for socio-economic growth. “The underlying idea is that universities and R&D institutions play a key role in innovation through their contribution to the production and diffusion of knowledge. However, the question as to whether universities are using the IP to benefit from products of their research and innovation or to contribute to economic development arises,” Dos Santos said. Many universities, he said, lacked clear IP policies that would help define issues such as who owns what in a research project as well as knowledge on what can or cannot be commercialised.  
There was a need, therefore, to help them adopt IP policies that will enable them to use the IP system efficiently, and reap benefits from their research and innovation.  
Read more [here](#).

2. **University World News**  
**Curriculum change – A solution to graduate unemployment (Nigeria)**  
Announcing a review of university curricula aimed at addressing graduate employability in Nigeria, Professor Abubakar Rasheed, executive secretary of the National Universities Commission (NUC), said last month the government was concerned about complaints by industry employers that the country’s graduates were “unemployable”. How did the country reach this point? According to Dr Toyin Enikuomehin, a lecturer in artificial intelligence in the computer science department of Lagos State University, the problem has its roots in outdated curricula and a system slow to transform.
“The current university syllabus has its origin in the 18th century industrial revolution propelled by the emergence of general sciences and electricity from coal. Globally, these tendencies were faithfully adhered to in the 20th century. The recent advent of alternative sources of energy, especially from the sun and the wind, coupled with electronically-propelled communication technology, has compelled universities to gradually see the need to adapt their curricula to the needs of industries”. Enikuomehin said while universities in advanced industrialised countries quickly adjusted their curricula and continued to get grants and financial support from industry for their research, tertiary institutions in underdeveloped countries, including Nigeria, still cling to the old curricula. “It is now that the NUC is realising the imperative to innovate and adapt university programmes to satisfy the demands of industries and other stakeholders,” he said. “With the current outdated curricula, our universities would continue to churn out unemployable graduates.”

An in-depth feature on graduate unemployment in Nigeria was published in the Daily Trust newspaper last year following a study conducted by a group of journalists involving several months of field investigations on the subject. Illustrating the scale of the problem, the study said: “Ongoing recruitment by the Federal Road Service Commission shows up the scale of unemployment in Nigeria. The commission has 4,000 job slots to fill. Some 324,000 shortlisted applicants showed up for recruitment, 105,000 of them graduates, scampering for positions as inspectors and road marshal assistants.” According to one of the study’s journalists, Maureen Onochie, the graduate applicants were of diverse academic orientations. “Most of them did not study transport as an academic discipline … I found that the majority of candidates were desperately in search of jobs with a view to taking care of themselves and members of their extended families,” she said. Another study by Dr Longe Olukayode from the department of sociology at Ekiti State University, which was published in the American International Journal of Contemporary Research in 2017, noted that “the nation cannot reasonably achieve her developmental aspirations if she cannot effectively put to productive use a large number of her graduates”.

Read more here

3. Daily Monitor

Revenue authority to collect tuition for state universities (Uganda)

The Ministry of Finance has directed Uganda Revenue Authority (URA) to start collecting tuition for all government universities across the country in a bid to curb fraud. Mr Jim Mugunga, the ministry’s spokesperson, yesterday confirmed that the new system is intended to establish how many students each university has and how much money they collect each academic year. He said the ministry realised that some tuition revenue in some public universities is abused and decided on collecting the fees using a single account by URA to minimise misuse. “We realised that there was abuse of funds in our institutions of learning because some of the tuition is being collected but not used. Some tuition is stolen while some money just disappears. So, let URA collect this money, let this money come as government revenue and let it be budgeted for and appropriated,” Mr Mugunga told Daily Monitor by telephone yesterday. It is not clear how the initiative will be implemented since institutions have varying fees structure and functional fees. He also said the new move will check the problem of ghost students, bureaucracy and costs in public universities. “The current system is bureaucratic and keeps government unaware of tuition as a revenue that flows into the institutions. It also complicates the accountability process and duplicates bank costs of running
related accounts. “Once we get to know how much each institution is collecting, we shall facilitate timely release of money back to the universities to take care of students, staff and institutional support,” he said. Mr Mugunga said the strategy will also streamline accountability, remove duplicity and minimise costs that have impeded revenue mobilisation. “Tuition is actually government revenue and not money that belongs to universities. Historically, when revenue collection was not streamlined, the ministry had allowed institutions to collect on its behalf as we built internal capacities and get most institutions networked and strengthened. URA is, therefore, ready and the most suitable agency to handle this task,” he said. The move comes a few days after Makerere University management officials appeared before the Public Accounts Committee of Parliament and were probed on why they failed to collect tuition fees from more than 80 students many of whom had already graduated and rent from several tenants in the university premises. The officials led by the university secretary, Mr Charles Barugahare, were giving responses to queries raised in the 2017/18 Auditor General’s report. Key among the queries was that the university management did not collect Shs148.9m from 81 students who sat exams in 2017. Mr John Muwanga, the Auditor General, also added in his report that 32 of the students appeared on the graduation list of January 2018 yet they had not cleared their tuition arrears of Shs65.2m. The Makerere Vice Chancellor, Prof Barnabas Nawangwe, said if URA takes over the tuition fees collection, it will be a big relief to the university. He, however, questioned how URA will manage the fees defaulters.

Read more [here](#).

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4. **University World News**

**Re-engaging with community service in universities (Ethiopia)**

The goals of higher education in Ethiopia are closely linked to national development and poverty reduction. Higher education institutions are accordingly expected to align their major activities with national needs and societal demands. The Ethiopian Higher Education Proclamation (2009) identifies the “design and provision of community and consultancy services that shall cater to the developmental needs of the country” as one of the objectives and a major responsibility of higher education institutions. The Education Sector Development Programme V (2015) also emphasises the need for positive community engagement through various means, including research that can respond to national and institutional priorities and development plans. The same document emphasises the need for community consultation and envisages the establishment of a national multi-sectoral stakeholder panel to produce a national research and community engagement framework, institutional research and community engagement strategies, and a resource mobilisation and utilisation system for research and community services, although these are yet to be realised. The higher education sector in Ethiopia has had wide-ranging experience in community outreach activities, the most notable perhaps being the Ethiopian University Service, a mandatory year-long national service in the 1970s which required all university students to serve in rural areas. Individual universities have also been involved in various forms of community service, though their performance always varied from one institution to another. The earlier forms of such engagement at institutional level came through the opening of an extension division at the Haile Selassie I University (now Addis Ababa University) which mainly focused on adult education programmes conducted in the evenings. This offering still forms a major component of the training services provided by all Ethiopian universities. In addition to evening and distance programmes, which are popular, special
training and professional assistance have been offered by universities to their surrounding communities based on perceived needs in areas such as health, industry, agriculture, rural development, water and finance. Although most universities continue to engage in these or similar activities, only a few have distinguished themselves as leading institutions. An outstanding example is the community-based education programme pioneered by Jimma University which has as its motto: “We’re in the community”. This approach has been emulated by many other universities in the country. Most universities also use community service as a criterion for academic staff promotions. For instance, the 2013 Senate Legislation of Addis Ababa University – Ethiopia’s flagship university – regards professional services to the community at local, regional and national levels as evidence of public service and professional activity.

Read more here

5. University World News

Why Higher Education internationalisation matters in Africa (Kenya)

In recognition of its many benefits, Kenyan universities are actively working towards mainstreaming internationalisation in their institutional strategies and education programmes, according to education experts at the recent National Education Conference held at Aga Khan University in Nairobi. Dr Daniel Otieno, a senior lecturer in Kenyatta University’s department of educational management policy and curriculum studies, said several strategies are being implemented by universities across the country to achieve internationalisation. They include faculty mobility programmes and enrolment of students across borders. One of the markers of internationalisation is a significant population of international students. “Quality assurance and increased mobility are key in the efforts towards revitalising and developing higher education in our universities in the context of a rapidly internationalising higher education sector,” said Otieno in his presentation. “To achieve international status, universities should provide quality education and training, promote scholarship, innovation and creativity and inculcate moral values for sustainable individual and societal development.” He said there is also need to focus on teaching and research collaboration, maintenance of world-class international standards and international knowledge and skills transfer.

Although universities in Kenya have no explicit commitment to internationalise, he said they have demonstrated some commitment through accreditation to regional and international bodies such as the Inter-University Council for East Africa, the Association of African Universities, the International Association of Universities and the Association of Commonwealth Universities. Using the example of Kenyatta University, Otieno said the university states in its strategic plan 2016-26 that it seeks to increase its student enrolment by 10% through provision of adequate human resources and physical infrastructure. “One of the university’s strengths is its vibrant partnerships with international academia, universities, agencies and corporations. Most of the departments within the university have collaborations with international universities. Students participate in various international exchange and mobility programmes with other universities,” he said. Through the Inter-University Council for East Africa and the Association of African Universities, faculty mobility to various international and regional universities has been enhanced. This provides a vital opportunity for knowledge exchange and sharing of experiences, he said.

Read more here
6. University World News

Does higher education still prepare young people for jobs? (South Africa)

We often hear employers and business leaders lament the unfortunate gap between what new graduates have learned at university and what they are actually expected to know in order to do their jobs well. This is particularly alarming in light of the large and still growing number of unemployed youth. While education is free for students in South Africa, it is not cheap. There is a clear premium on education and the returns on investments are very lucrative for those who choose the right kinds of skills for the future. However, the value added by a university degree decreases as the number of graduates increases. At the same time, as university qualifications become more common, recruiters and employers will increasingly demand them, regardless of whether they are actually required for a specific job. So, while tertiary degrees may still lead to higher-paying jobs, the same employers handing out these jobs are hurting themselves and young people by limiting their candidate pool to university graduates.

In an age of ubiquitous disruption and unpredictable job evolution, it is hard to argue that the knowledge acquisition historically associated with a university degree is still relevant. There are several data-driven arguments that question the actual, rather than the perceived, value of a university degree. A number of meta-analytic reviews have long established that the correlation between education level and job performance is weak. In fact, the research shows that intelligence scores are a much better indicator of job potential. If we were to pick between a candidate with a university degree and a candidate with a higher intelligence score, we could expect the latter to outperform the former in most jobs, particularly when those jobs require constant thinking and learning. Academic marks are indicative of how much a candidate has studied, but their performance on an intelligence test reflects their actual ability to learn, reason and think logically. University degrees are also conflated with social class. While many universities in South Africa do select students on meritocratic grounds, even merit-based selection is conflated with variables that decrease the diversity of admitted applicants. Affluent families with more money can afford to pay for better schools, tutors, extra-curricular activities and other privileges that increase their child’s likelihood of accessing an elite higher education. This, in turn, affects the entire trajectory of that child’s future, including their future career prospects, providing a clear advantage to some and a clear disadvantage to others. Having said that, universities could substantially increase the value of their graduates if they spent more time teaching their students critical soft skills. Recruiters and employers are unlikely to be impressed by candidates unless they can demonstrate a certain degree of people-skills. This is perhaps one of the biggest differences between what universities and employers look for in applicants.

Read more here

7. University World News

Research and innovation – It’s time to move up a level (Botswana)

The latest five-yearly UNESCO Science Report gives a broad picture of the status of science in the world and includes a section on Southern Africa, from which I have extracted some data relating to Botswana and its immediate neighbors. The main indicators used to describe the status of the research sector in a country are the total number of publications, number of publications compared with the population, the number of full-time equivalent (FTE) researchers in a country, and the percentage of gross domestic product (GDP) allocated to research activity. In addition, the number
of publications indexed in renowned databases (ISI, Scopus) and their quality are key indicators of research development in a country or institution. As the research data extracted from the report show, Botswana produced far fewer publications than South Africa which tops the list, but the country fares considerably better when it comes to publications relative to population size. Also noteworthy is the contribution of GDP to research in Botswana – 0.26% against South Africa’s 0.73%.

It must be noted that at the time of data collection for the UNESCO study, Botswana International University of Science and Technology, now one of Botswana’s research-producing universities, was not fully operational and was not a contributor to the research statistics. More recent Web of Science (WoS) data (below) from Clarivate Analytics, the company that does the statistics for ISI Thomson Reuters, fills in some of the gaps in terms of publications. According to 2013 UNESCO statistics which estimate GDP per capita at US$7,500, the expected Web of Science production articles for Botswana was 120 articles per 1 million inhabitants. Already, as can be seen above, the average is over 141. As indicated earlier, two universities in Botswana – the University of Botswana and Botswana International University of Science and Technology (BIUST) – are the country’s most active research universities, producing 328 WoS articles in 2018. Admittedly, a significant number of these publications come out of the health and medical sector and have strong links to United States institutions. But in addition, there are several institutions such as the Botswana Institute for Technology Research and Innovation (BITRI), the Botswana University of Agriculture and Natural Resources (BUAN), BOTHO (Botswana’s largest private tertiary education institution), in addition to the Botswana-Harvard AIDS Initiative Partnership, that are making their own contributions. All of this suggests that Botswana has a high capacity for research production. What it lacks is the appropriate organisation and management of research. It is very interesting, for example, that in its latest annual report (2017-18), BITRI, which is heavily supported by the government of Botswana, focuses on information about the organisation, its strategies, goals, funding and expenditure, and says little about its research results: six proposed technologies, no patents and no scientific articles. Maybe there are in fact others, but the lack of information confirms what I have argued in previous articles in this publication: there are a lot of forms without content. According to the World Intellectual Property Organization’s Statistical Country Profiles, only 91 patent applications from Botswana were made between 2011 and 2017, with a peak of 71 in 2012-14. Furthermore, most of the applications (62) were made in patent offices abroad, while 29 were made inside the country. Only 15 were granted.

Read more here.

8. University World News

Universities face pressure over career guidance offices (Kenya)

As Kenya battles a youth unemployment and under-employment crisis, the Ministry of Education has repeated a directive for universities and all tertiary institutions to set up career offices to guide young people on career choices and job market demands. The latest directive, first made last year, comes two weeks after the country’s Cabinet Secretary for Education, Science and Technology Professor George Magoha launched a career guidance book largely aimed at university students. According to the Kenya Universities and Colleges Central Placement Service, which authored the book, it will guide prospective and continuing students and parents on career opportunities and how to progress towards those careers. While some campuses such as Kenyatta University have already
established a centre of career development and mentoring for continuing and potential students and alumni, many universities are yet to establish career guidance offices, according to local media reports. During the launch of the guidebook, University of Nairobi Vice-Chancellor Professor Peter Mbithi said that the office will help close the skills gap in the job market and enable universities to work more closely with industry. The office of career services is designed to assist students in identifying potential careers, developing educational plans and providing students with accurate information about academic progression and degree requirements, thus assisting students with proper planning of their degree and career progress. The ministry’s Principal Secretary of Education Professor Collette Suda said existing career service offices should be strengthened to enable them to address the needs of students and guide them on how to select jobs and create opportunities for self-employment. A more widely available career guidance service seems to be needed. When Dick Alielo received the results of his Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education examinations, he opted to enrol for a degree in education simply because, in the absence of any formal career counselling, it was the only degree programme offering a career path – teaching – that he could understand. “In haste, I opted for a degree in education as this was the only course with an end point I knew,” Alielo told University World News. “I knew that I would become a teacher, simply walk into a classroom and educate kids.” Hailing from rural western Kenya, Alielo wanted to pursue environmental science but had little access to career and university course information and no access to the internet. He did not feel confident about pursuing a course whose industry expectations he did not understand. “I really needed an expert to guide me and get knowledge on some of the courses I could pursue but it was not easy,” said Alielo.

9. University World News

Nigeria deploys professors to build local academic capacity (Uganda)

As part of ongoing efforts to build South-South cooperation and develop local capacity in higher learning in Uganda, the Nigerian government announced it had recently deployed 76 professors to four universities in Uganda. The universities include the Islamic University in Uganda (IUIU), Kampala International University, Bishop Stuart University and Kabale University, and the aim is to help the universities develop expertise in priority areas. “Academia is about cross-fertilisation and exchange of ideas. With such a programme, universities produce students with an open mind and a global outlook – true global citizens,” Dr Ahmed Kawesa Sengendo, rector of IUIU, told University World News. The professors are posted in universities under Nigeria’s Technical Aid Corps programme through which Nigeria sends academics to African, Caribbean and Pacific countries to develop expertise in areas where recipient countries believe they are lacking. Addressing the media at the Nigerian High Commission in Kampala last week, Lawel Bappah, director of programmes at the Directorate of Technical Aid Corps at the Nigerian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, said Nigeria had deployed 76 professors from his country to Uganda. Of these, 32 professors are currently deployed at IUIU, making up about 5% of the total teaching staff at that university and offering expertise in medicine, law and education, while nine Nigerian professors of the 76 are at Kabale University. Although Makerere University is not currently hosting any Nigerian professors, Dr Vincent Ssembatya, director of quality assurance at Makerere, said if the Nigerian government offered them, especially in the sciences, they would be glad to have them. The programme allows universities to
The Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture (RUFORUM) request professors from the Federal Republic of Nigeria in their areas of interest. Qualifying professors send their curriculum vitae which are then forwarded to the universities that select professors depending on their needs. The Nigerian government pays the professors’ salaries while the host countries provide accommodation, inland transport and pay utility bills. The programme runs on a rotational basis with a specific time frame. “At IUIU the Nigerian professors are deployed for only two years and then they send us another cohort,” said Sengendo. Currently, IUIU is hosting the fourth cohort of Nigerian professors.
Read more here

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