1. Morocco World News

**Morocco Working Towards University Scholarships for All Students (Morocco)**

The Government is working towards ensuring 100% of Moroccan students receive a university scholarship, the Moroccan Minister of Education Said Amzazi told Parliament on Monday. In response to a question about broadening scholarship eligibility in Morocco, Amzazi noted that 95% of students attending university currently receive a scholarship. Maghreb Press Agency (MAP) reported that, according to Amzazi, 382,000 students received a university scholarship during the 2018-2019 academic year. The number of scholarship recipients increased by 4% from 2017-2018; an extra 27,000 scholarships per year, he added. The Ministry’s scholarship budget has increased from MAD 540,000 in 2012 to over MAD 1.8 million in 2019. Each province of Morocco has a quota of scholarships to allocate to students who have completed their high school baccalaureate certificate. They can award scholarships to 80% of applicants, which means 20% of applicants currently miss out. Scholarships are awarded based on financial need, Amzazi clarified. University education is seen by many as a ticket to a better life, in Morocco, or overseas. However, figures released by the Moroccan statistics agency (HCP) in April show the difficulties that Moroccan university graduates then face when finding employment. On average 17.2% of Moroccan university graduates were unemployed last year, with figures rising to 25.9% for students with postgraduate qualifications.

Read more [here](#).

2. Daily Nation

**Universities must brace themselves for major reforms (Kenya)**

Kenya’s universities face a serious crisis and require painful reforms to survive. Issues of funding, quality, management and manpower deficit are threatening to cripple these institutions. It is momentous that the Commission for University Education (CUE) has been given up to the end of July to conduct an audit and turn in a report to guide reforms in the sector. If the tough-talking Cabinet secretary for Education George Magoha pursues this line, then we should prepare for painful tectonic transformations that will redefine the higher education landscape for the better. Cosmetic and platonic changes will not help. The changes should be far-reaching and define the sector for the 21st Century while aligning it to the Competence-Based Curriculum (CBC) that has been rolled out in lower primary school. Arguably, the university education sector has gone through enormous vicissitudes over the years. The past three decades have seen a major expansion of university education, growing from one public university in 1984 to 31 public universities and six constituent colleges in 2019. An additional 36 private universities have been licensed. It is the era of uncontrolled expansion between 2009 to 2016, that created the most serious challenges. With massive expansion, individual universities went ballistic in admitting privately sponsored students. To enhance their competitiveness, they also opened outposts all over the country, some across the borders. This market-competitive model stimulated useless competition across universities. What mattered most in this rat-race was the numbers of students admitted. There are indications that we drastically compromised quality. There is also evidence that not much of the money generated was
ploughed back into the development of infrastructure to support learning. But universities are not to blame entirely for everything that went wrong. The thinking within government was that in the era of decreased State funding for universities, the policy would help generate revenue for public universities through privately sponsored students. This model introduced what I want to call academic capitalism. Universities moved to prioritise marketisation of their programmes and services. The results were disastrous. Public universities found themselves, unfortunately, adopting private values that are not in line with the age-old principles that govern knowledge generation, dissemination and social responsibility. Repercussions of commercialisation of education include the obvious quality problems. This has made it possible for issuance of fake degrees. The opening of substandard outposts and unethical practices has cheapened university education. If the CS is serious then, these are some of the issues to address. Universities did not anticipate and mitigate against possible risks.

Read more [here](#).

3. The Mast
Towards a proposal to fund public universities in Zambia (Zambia)

Zambians should understand that the University of Zambia (UNZA) is an important institutional physician to help heal Zambia’s current economic infirmity. This is the main reason that UNZA must be at the centre of economic life in Zambia. Sadly, UNZA is a widow. UNZA itself is seriously sick. UNZA is in intensive care, in a coma. True to its new title of a widow (twenze bantu) UNZA is but the short last line of a paragraph hanging at the top of a page in our nation’s undesirable history. Therefore, we should begin at the beginning, which in this case is, physician heal yourself. I am saying this because despite assurances from government that salaries will now be paid on time, I am disgusted and flabbergasted that salaries to academic and support staff at UNZA are constantly delayed. Not long ago, I had sounded warning bells that professors will soon be reduced to council workers. That being said, without timely payment of salaries, professors are now academically castrated to the extent that they can no longer muster the missionary zeal to speak about the ailing economy. So, I am not surprised that UNZA is not at the epicentre of public economic policy discourse in Zambia. If there are any secret illuminati advising government on economic policy, they are probably thinking from their bellies, not their heads; hence the weird economic policies we see. A public university is a sine qua non for national development. UNZA is a public good. Its importance is even more compelling now as the world enters the 4IR, the Fourth Industrial Revolution. Countries that value economic development should also value public university education. Such countries accord their highest national accolades and honours to highly skilled individuals who constitute the professoriate. There are countries where professors are senior to cabinet ministers and are even issued with diplomatic passports. In such countries, universities are now hiring rarely skilled, multi-talented, multi-disciplinary, inter-disciplinary, and trans-disciplinary professors to prepare and lead national 4IR programmes. In Africa, these efforts are in line with the African Union’s new scientific dream that seeks to use our public universities as catalysts to re-establish a new Wakanda in our lifetime. Governments are creating pools of their most talented and rarely skilled individuals to lead national economic reconstruction efforts. Alas, due to ill-funding from government, what is happening in the public university sector in Zambia is against the grain. Our public universities can seriously interrogate our ailing economy. Instead of speaking truth to power so that we adequately
fund our public universities, the country is superfluously fixated on hare-brained political teletubbies quick to leap to ad hominem attacks about their political opponents. If you think knowledge is expensive, try ignorance. But, let me warn you, panga-wielding political nincompoops have never developed any nation.

Read more here

4. Nature

Black academics publish one-fifth of South Africa’s research (South Africa)

The proportion of scientific articles published by academics in South Africa who are black, coloured or of Indian origin has risen almost tenfold since the end of apartheid, to about one-third, finds a report on scholarly publishing in the country. (Coloured, referring to people of mixed ethnic heritage, is a recognized racial classification in South Africa.) In 2014, black academics authored 18% of research papers, Indian academics wrote 10% and coloured academics authored 4% (see ‘South Africa publishing trends’). Together, researchers in these groups were responsible for 3.5% of South Africa’s research output in 1990. But academic publishing remains disproportionately white, as South Africa struggles with the legacy of apartheid — the policy of racist discrimination that disenfranchised most of the country’s population, and ended in 1994. White people comprise 8% of the country’s 54 million inhabitants, but occupy about half of university posts. The system is transforming as expected, given that the number of academics has increased by just over 1% each year on average for the past decade, says Johann Mouton, director of the Centre for Research on Evaluation, Science and Technology at Stellenbosch University in South Africa and a contributor to the report, published by the Academy of Science of South Africa. South Africa’s academic institutions have long struggled with chronic underfunding, exacerbated by sluggish economic growth.

The number of black South Africans gaining doctoral degrees and staying in academia is also rising, says Mugabe who is at the University of Pretoria in South Africa. But Mugabe also notes a worrying trend revealed in the study: the increase in the proportion of research output by academics over 50 — from 18% in 1990 to 45% in 2014. Academics under 40 publish less than one-third of papers, and this hasn’t increased much since 2005. Overall, “many of the young PhD graduates are not staying in academia but going to the corporate world and public departments”, he. The total number of publications authored by South African researchers doubled from 7,230 in 2005 to 15,542 in 2014. That’s largely because of an incentive system introduced by the government in 2005, says the report. The system awards academics or their institutions roughly US$7,000 for each publication in an accredited journal, of which some universities pay up to half directly to the authors. But the report suggests that the subsidy system can act as a “perverse incentive”, because it pushes academics to publish as many papers as possible, and that it could be driving “questionable” publishing practices in South Africa. These include academics publishing in predatory journals — those that ask authors to pay fees but do not provide conventional publishing services such as peer review — and an increase in the number of journal editors and board members publishing multiple papers in their own titles, which poses a conflict of interest.

Read more here
5. University World News

PASET – Preparing youth for a digital future (Africa)

African countries need to be serious about empowering their youth in order to drive the fourth industrial revolution, according to Professor George Magoha, chair of the Partnership for Skills in Applied Sciences, Engineering and Technology (PASET) governing council. Speaking at last Monday’s opening of the Fifth PASET Forum taking place in Rwanda’s capital of Kigali, he said there was a need for universities to carry out research that responds to African problems. Magoha and other high-profile delegates to the three-day forum, which attracted participants from over 20 countries from different fields including academia, suggested that African countries should seek ways to pull resources together and invest in digital skills development among youth in higher learning institutions and technical and vocational education and training (TVET) institutions in a bid to harness the potential of emergent technologies. This could boost economic growth through more efficient production and provision of services. PASET was launched in 2013 by the governments of Senegal, Ethiopia and Rwanda with facilitation by the World Bank. It aims to address systemic gaps in skills and knowledge in Sub-Saharan Africa’s priority applied sciences, engineering and technology fields, and to build the capacity of African education and training institutions to train high quality technicians, engineers and scientists to meet the demands of the economy. This PASET forum, titled “Destination Digital Africa: Preparing our Youth for the Future”, sought to deliberate on the fourth industrial revolution and the opportunities and risks it presents to Africa, particularly in terms of unemployment as a result of disruption of job markets and digital skills requirements. Against the backdrop of McKinsey Global Institute predictions that up to 800 million workers around the world could lose their jobs by 2030 as a result of automation, Africa-focused experts were concerned that there is a digital skills gap among the youth in Africa, leaving them unprepared for the future world of work and technology. The World Economic Forum also reports that 65% of primary school children today will have jobs in the future that do not yet exist. The 2017 United Nations population report predicts that by 2050, more than half of the world’s young people under the age of 24 will be living and schooling in Sub-Saharan Africa. With 11 million new graduates entering the African job market annually, experts say it is imperative that Africa keeps up with the transformative changes and adapts its education ecosystem to ensure relevant training.

Read more here

6. University World News

In the digital age, the heart of the university expands (Global)

Academic libraries around the globe have historically referred to themselves as being at the heart of their institutions. Students have relied on them for access to books, periodicals and other media needed to complete assignments. Libraries have also provided their faculty with the information needed to guide their research. Their mission and vision statements have often included variations of the words ‘to collect and preserve print and non-print material in perpetuity’. Libraries operated relatively passive monopolies. While the heart metaphor may still fit, the digital age has prompted significant changes in how it manifests itself. Libraries have recognised that external-based technology has undermined their traditional monopoly of access to content.
Students and faculty no longer have to rely on their institution’s library to pursue their assignments and research. In order to remain relevant to their users, academic libraries have been pivoting their services. Spanish researchers Angel Borrego and Lluis Anglada state it plainly: “Researchers no longer build their workflow around the library.” Students no longer have to come to libraries in search of needed content. Yale’s Bass Library provides a typical example of the digital age’s impact on an academic library. While Yale’s enrolment has grown, Bass’ circulation has declined. In response, it plans to reduce its book holdings from 150,000 to 40,000. In the pre-internet age that would have been a counterproductive response. More potential patrons would have usually required adding more books to the collection. Like a growing number of their peers, Bass’ reading room will be significantly transformed, with the books and their shelving removed. The traditional reading room space will be reconfigured. New floor plans will include an array of pods or small semi-private meeting spaces with appropriate seating and whiteboards to promote group discussion. Teamwork and associated soft skills will be promoted. Group efforts will be supported by adjacent copy-print-scan equipment hubs.

Read more [here](#).

7. **University World News**

**Universities face ongoing struggle as fees hike rejected (Kenya)**

The rejection by the university regulator of a bid by Kenya’s universities to increase tuition fees offers a reprieve to students but highlights the difficult position of universities trying to deliver sustainable, quality education and meet their constitutional mandate to facilitate universal student access. Vice-chancellors from public universities have been pushing the government to allow them to increase the annual fees more than three-fold with effect from this year. This would mean that all state-sponsored students would be expected to pay an annual US$600 in tuition fees, up from the current US$265. Private universities are seeking to double their fees from the current US$700 to US$1,400 per year. If the increases were to go ahead it would constitute the first review of fees over the past two decades. The government faced massive opposition from students when it last tried to increase fees in 1995. On 9 May, universities made a fresh plea to the Education Cabinet Secretary Professor George Magoha on the proposal, citing the need to boost funding levels. But the regulator, the Commission for University Education (CUE), has called for caution on the proposal, arguing that it would lock out many students from poor families and calling for more consultation with all stakeholders. “The constitution has laid bare the opportunity for every Kenyan to have access to quality education at all levels and university education is no exception. Such provision of education comes at a cost. Any upward adjustment to university education fees, however, should be done after adequate consultation with stakeholders, including students and parents,” said CUE Chief Executive Mwenda Ntarangwi. “The commission understands that funding universities is in the hands of the government through the Ministry of Education and the National Treasury for public universities, and their respective sponsors in the case of private universities. Further, universities depend on fees paid by students. As a regulator interested in quality university education, the commission understands the role played by adequate financing in supporting quality education,” he told reporters in Nairobi. However, university administrators reckon that it is no longer tenable to run universities under the current tuition fees regime.
“Training students with the current fees and funding from government is unsustainable. The decline in revenue from self-sponsored students since 2016, following a reduction in the number of students qualifying to join universities has affected our operations,” said Professor Daniel Mugendi Njiru, vice-chancellor at the University of Embu, one of Kenya’s newest state universities. With constrained government funding, public universities have been struggling to meet their budgetary needs. Because of budgetary constraints, capitation to public universities as a percentage of total revenue has been declining, dropping from 62.4% in 2012-13 to 44.9% in 2015-16. The contribution of capitation to expenditures of public universities declined from 67.4% in 2012 to 45.4% in 2018. 
Read more here

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