

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

1. University World News

Universities' key role in the future of global food systems (Global)

African academics say that partnerships and collective action across different sectors, including higher education and research, are needed to actualise the resolutions agreed upon at the United Nations Food Systems Summit held on 23 September in New York. “The common message and commitment to global partnership for collective action, and the urgency to address the climate change challenge, as well as other environmental hazards, resonates well with the commitments that emerged from several national and regional dialogues, including those facilitated by RUFORUM,” said Professor Adipala Ekwamu, executive secretary of the Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture (RUFORUM). The key issue, however, is the implementation of the agreed action points of the eight-month regional dialogues that preceded the summit, he said. For Africa, what is needed are efforts to revamp investments in various agriculture initiatives, and adequately invest in science, technology and innovation and in human capital development to elicit the necessary responses and change. “Africa must also engage more actively in harnessing digital technologies and its renewable energy resources. Above all, we will need to maintain focus on ensuring inclusivity in the different undertakings. Continued academia-science-policy interaction will help us leapfrog forward,” Ekwamu said. The UN event recognised the fact that food systems cannot thrive without all sectors working together as one; hence, the need to involve various sectors of government, and the need for interaction of “multiple scientific disciplines”, as well as traditional and indigenous knowledge. The summit also emphasised the need to scale up public and private financing for food production as well as science and research. According to Kay Muir-Leresche, retired professor of natural resource economics and member of the RUFORUM international advisory panel, the role of universities in the future of food systems “needs much greater emphasis – not as ivory towers but as the spigots that can play a central facilitating role”.

Read more [here](#)

2. The New Times

Correctional facilities could offer university education (Rwanda)

Convicts could start receiving university education at correctional facilities if a new bill on correctional services is voted into law by the Parliament. Its relevance was approved by the Chamber of Deputies on Friday, October 8, 2021, and the next step is to be scrutinised by a responsible parliamentary committee. The new bill is part of the efforts to review the correctional system by integrating education in the convicts' rehabilitation process. It aims to make inmates more productive, according to Amb. Solina Nyirahabimana, the Minister of State in Charge of Constitutional and Legal Affairs in the Ministry of Justice. The draft law provides that the institution in charge of correctional services establishes a programme to empower convicts with appropriate skills and knowledge for self-sustainability and help them to become law-abiding citizens. The bill has proposed the integration of new terminologies matching with the correctional service in general, whereby some will be replaced by the terms reflecting the policy of correction. Examples of terminology changes include prison to be replaced by the correctional facility, prisoner by convict, and prison guard by correctional officer. Talking about education programme, the bill proposes that the institution in charge of correctional services puts in place strategies and programmes for literacy of convicts. The institution also establishes an educational programme in reference to the government programme for the education of incarcerated persons at primary, secondary and university

level (for general education) and technical and vocational education training (TVET), according to the bill. MP Leonard Ndagijimana said that it was fine for the convicts to get skills in TEVT, but expressed worry over university education as it might make people indulge in crimes. “People might commit crimes knowing that they will serve imprisonment terms say for five years, be able to complete university studies by the time of their release, get degrees and apply,” he said, urging caution to ensure that this move does not cause the proliferation of crimes in the country. MP John Rukurwabyoma said that making prisons more conducive for living than the outside world, would result in people committing crimes intentionally in a bid to be jailed to access services such as education, and welfare. “We should balance to ensure that we provide good services in prison, but in a way that they are not better than those outside jail,” he said. Read more [here](#)

3. KCB

Universities urged to offer courses relevant to market demands (Kenya)

The Kenya National Qualifications Authority (KNQA) has challenged local universities to put more emphasis on courses that are relevant to the current market demands. The KNQA Director-General, Juma Mukwana, lamented that majority of the students are listed in irrelevant human resource courses leading to many unemployed graduates. “Kenyans have academic qualifications but they do not make sense because many are taking courses that the economy does not need now,” said Mukhwana. Speaking during a National Industrial Training Institute (NITI) Board of Directors meeting at Whitesands Resorts in Mombasa, Friday, Mukwana encouraged both the universities and students, to prioritize courses that the economy is looking for. “We have so many students doing arts courses such as business management and sociology, while the market is looking for graduates of ICT, science and construction,” Mukhwana said. Mukhwana noted that such a scenario has created a situation where there are jobs without people and people without jobs in the same economy. He gave an example of the emerging push to harness the Blue Economy in the country, saying Kenya lacks skilled people who can do underwater welding. “This has forced shipping companies to import skilled labour to do underwater welding,” said KNQA boss. He stressed that there is a need for the education sector to align training and certification to the needs of the country. Mukhwana observed that Chinese have dominated the construction industry in Kenya, yet there are locals who have done civil engineering and graduated from recognized universities. He also said 30 per cent of all the qualifications being used in the Kenyan market, whether in government or private institutions are fake. “We are now establishing a national database with universities, so that graduates are captured into the database for the employers to identify proper skills with genuine qualifications. He disclosed that the Authority in partnership with the National Industrial Training Authority, is developing a new qualifications framework that will ensure skilled workers are adequately certified, so as to match the economic needs of the country, with the skills required.

Read more [here](#)

4. EIN Press Wire

IEB’s International Secondary Certificate launches in Namibia, Eswatini and Mozambique (South Africa)

The Independent Examinations Board (IEB) has launched the International Secondary Certificate, (IEB-ISC), a qualification comparable to existing local and global qualifications that mark successful achievement at the end of secondary education and provides entrance to tertiary study. The ISC was developed by the IEB in response to recent changes in South Africa’s regulatory framework for the

National Senior Certificate (NSC) – the matric school leaving qualification. “Given the long association that the IEB has with independent schools throughout the continent, it has developed the ISC qualification to serve them together with any other independent educational institutions that offer education services outside South Africa. The ISC is housed under the IEB’s new operational unit - IEB International – and is being introduced in Namibia, Eswatini and Mozambique in 2022. The intention is to expand the ISC to independent schools in other countries across the continent, and potentially even further afield. Independent schools that operate outside South Africa and distance educational institutions including online schools that provide tuition for students outside South Africa, may register with the IEB to offer the ISC qualification,” explains Anne Oberholzer, CEO of the Independent Examinations Board (IEB). A quality, internationally comparable school-leaving qualification with roots in Africa. University of South Africa (USAF) has already evaluated the IEB-ISC qualification and curriculum documents and has determined that a candidate who obtains the IEB-ISC will have met the minimum requirements for admission to degree study programmes in South African public and private Higher Education Institutions, with the proviso that the IEB offers the qualification in a foreign country and the candidate obtains the qualification with Merit or at the Advanced level and is offered a place at a South African University. Furthermore, the ISC has been benchmarked by Ecctis Ltd in the UK which has developed comparability statements which compare the ISC to the education systems of the UK and Australia respectively – and Ecctis has found the ISC comparable to both. Ecctis has benchmarked the 20-credit subjects as equivalent to the AS level, while the 30- and 36-credit subjects have been benchmarked as equivalent to A-level. In respect of Australia, the ISC is considered comparable to the Australian Senior Secondary Certificate of Education standard. In New South Wales, this level is represented by the Higher School Certificate. Ecctis Ltd. performs the function of evaluating foreign qualifications on behalf of the UK government.

Read more [here](#)

5. Unisa

Unisa innovation set to bridge digital divide, improve quality of education (South Africa)

The digital divide in South Africa is indisputable, with most of its population without access to computer hardware, a limited understanding of digital means of communication and experiencing internet affordability challenges. This is particularly the case for communities in rural areas, who are compelled to travel long distances to urban areas – and therefore spend more money – to access information and communication technologies. To tackle the digital divide problem, Mbuso Ngcongco identified a need for a computer vision application in July 2018. To bring this idea to reality, he was encouraged to register for a Bachelor of Science in Computing (BSc) at Unisa, to learn how he could implement his solution to bridging the digital divide in South Africa. Three years later, his idea has turned into an innovation, called "The Digitiser". The Digitiser is a portable scanner, built from recycled plastic and other waste materials, with an effective optical character recognition (OCR) function. It can be operated through a mobile phone, laptop or computer on which the application has been installed. The Digitiser enables students to effectively scan and submit their assignments, wherever they are. "The innovation is highly interactive," says Ngcongco. "Equipped with a high-power processor, it is an application of machine learning. Like a child it is very eager to learn and ever so willing to help us do things better, faster and easier." His goal is to use technology to improve the quality of education and, in particular, target learners in the Foundation Phase to facilitate effective teaching. Ngcongco lives by his mother’s principle, that is, the three Qs: qala, qhubeka, qeda, meaning one should start, persevere and always finish what one has started, regardless of the circumstances. He had enrolled at another university in 1997, but could not finish, because he did

not realise how much of a privilege it was to study at a university at that time. "When I dropped out, several people advised me to go back and complete my studies. Two of them are a Durban-based architect and businessman, Yusuf Patel, and the late prominent attorney, Suleman Lockhat, who mentored me like his son," Ngcongco reflects. Today, at 48 years old, he is in his final year for the BSc degree. In addition, he has been running a successful consulting business since 2002, developing database systems for small businesses in KwaZulu-Natal and Gauteng.

Read more [here](#)

6. Daily Monitor

Janet wants science to be taught in local languages (Uganda)

The Minister of Education and Sports, Ms Janet Museveni, has concurred with the recommendation from a section of educationalists that science be taught in local language at primary level. "Teaching science in local language will make sense to us and we will become transformational when we really get involved in teaching science in mother tongue at primary level," Ms Museveni said yesterday. "When you bring it in mother tongue it becomes real and meaningful, and then perhaps we can have more scientists in our society," she added. An educationalist from Makerere University's College of Education and External Studies made the suggestion. Ms Museveni also said the government is committed to support research and innovations in universities to provide high quality data to inform policy decisions. "I urge educationalists to prioritise projects that are crucial to social and economic transformation," she said. The First Lady also encouraged educationalists to undertake research around issues that affect education. "All education stakeholders are aware that in order to transform the sector, there is need to generate interventions focusing on teacher education," she said. Ms Museveni also said since the Covid-19 pandemic has brought a new normal educationalist [should] extend the expertise in open distance and e-learning beyond Makerere University to benefit the other higher education institutions in need of this knowledge and expertise. Mr Henry Busulwa, the Principal Investigator of the research findings on Interdisciplinary Enhancement of Science Education in the Uganda Primary Thematic Curriculum, said more effort needs to be put in to promote STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) subjects "since our scientists are still few."

Read more [here](#)

7. The Citizen

Kenyan and German universities in partnership to nurture entrepreneurship skills (Kenya)

A group of German and Kenyan Universities are spearheading a campaign aimed at making students think business, and work towards becoming entrepreneurs, as job opportunities continue to shrink and the number of graduates continue to bulge. Five Kenyan universities including Mount Kenya University, Kenyatta University, Karatina University, Dedan Kimathi University of Technology and Chuka University have been collaborating with universities from Germany including Leuphana University, Bonn- Rehn – Seign University of applied sciences, Leipzig University, Wismar University, University of Saarland among others to identify students with unique ideas, develop them and assist them to start businesses. The project, which is being funded by German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) and German's Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, has already seen about 750 students trained. So determined have been the institutions to scale the heights of entrepreneurship, that in Karatina University, the institution has made entrepreneurship a compulsory programme for all the students, in turn making many students who were not studying business related programs, develop interest in entrepreneurship. This

has also led to the emergence of several businesses including Value Added Purple Tea Project, an enterprise that is promoting consumption of Purple tea as a healthy drink that can prevent lifestyle disease and enhance human immune system. The participating universities held the 1st International Conference on Entrepreneurial Universities of Africa at the Mount Kenya University. The meeting provided a platform through which Collaboration for Entrepreneurial Universities (CEPU) and Developing Entrepreneurial Universities in Kenya. The projects under which the universities are operating disseminate their findings on possible toolkits to creating entrepreneurial Universities in Africa, as well as demystify an entrepreneurial university in a dynamic world.

Read more [here](#)

8. University World news

Lecturers are key to ending colonial epistemicide (Africa)

In an article titled “Universities and the legacy of colonial epistemicide” published in University World News on 9 September 2021, Phaedra Haringsma discusses colonial epistemicide, its consequences and mitigating solutions. She defines colonial epistemicide as the process of ‘killing and erasure of indigenous knowledge’. As the author puts it, it is equal to “silencing of indigenous expressions”. She goes on to assert that colonial conquest brings epistemicide as the colonisers impose their epistemologies on the colonised population through education. According to the author, the European modernity project is another form of colonial epistemicide in that it emphasises predominantly European epistemologies to the exclusion of others. The author quotes perspectives of post-colonial scholars such as Rosalba Icaza Garza, Clemente Abrokwa, Toyin Falola, and Yirga Gelaw Woldeyes either to support her assertions or to illuminate specific issues. Decolonisation is a concept without universal definition. Every definition of decolonisation is context-embedded, suggesting that decolonisation in West Africa is different from decolonisation in South Africa. Similarly, decolonisation in the United States is different from decolonisation in Nigeria, for example. The simplest definition of decolonisation of the African university is the process of undoing all legacies of colonialism. But what does decolonised African higher education really look like? Does decolonisation mean a process for determining what should be included or excluded from African higher education course curricula? Is decolonisation about eliminating Western knowledge systems from African universities’ course curricula and replacing it with African indigenous knowledge and values? Alternatively, does decolonisation entail inclusion of African indigenous ways of knowing, knowledge and values in African university curricula and the exclusion of Western knowledge and values that are deemed irrelevant or destructive to African development or realities? The latter conceptualisation seems an appropriate definition because we have to be careful in our decolonisation discourse not to throw away the baby with the bathwater, so to speak. Right after attaining political independence, this conceptualisation served as the blueprint for decolonisation in West Africa, although the process has stalled. Admittedly, numerous strands of Western knowledge are relevant to African development or realities despite the fact that they were framed in a culturally different environment. For instance, in the research domain, Euro-American research theory and the practice of participant consent, anonymity, focus groups, interviews and data analysis are all relevant to research in Africa.

Read more [here](#)

9. The Herald

UZ to benefit from French partnership with African universities (Zimbabwe)

The University of Zimbabwe is set to partner French and other African research bodies in a project that aims to promote agricultural research to boost food security on the continent. At the just-ended Africa-France summit which was held in the southern French city of Montpellier, two major French institutions – CIRAD – the French agricultural research and cooperation organisation and INRAE, a public research institute, announced that they are actively working together, with some 20 African agricultural research bodies, to develop a joint study, training and innovation programme. UZ is part of the programme which will focus on agro-ecology, preserving natural resources, health, food security, developing territories and jobs. The project aims to support African research organisations to have sufficient research and higher education resources to find solutions to major challenges in the fields of agriculture, food and environment in the wake of growing threats coming as a result of climate change. French research bodies will partner with African institutions to step up scientific exchanges – in terms of skills and knowledge – between Europe and Africa, with a view to boosting the impact of agricultural research carried out on the two continents. “With strong African networks and a solid presence on the continent with some one hundred expat scientists, CIRAD is a firm believer in the power of collective intelligence for taking on global challenges linked to food security. It was therefore, only natural that we turned to INRAE,” said Elisabeth Claverie de Saint Martin, CEO of CIRAD. France invited about 3 000 people for the summit, including young entrepreneurs, researchers, students, artists, sports personalities and representatives from associations on the African continent to discuss economic, political and cultural matters. “To face the challenges of health and food security while preserving the planet’s resources, it is crucial to combine research know-how on a global scale. A world leader in research on the links between agriculture, food and the environment, INRAE is committed to stepping up knowledge- and skills-sharing with CIRAD and African research bodies. “The research alliance between France and Africa is indispensable to finding lasting solutions to the challenge of food security,” said Philippe Mauguin, CEO and chair of INRAE.

Read more [here](#)

10. Inside Higher Eds

Studying Abroad, Speaking Out (Global)

Report on speech policies for students studying abroad speaks to tensions in balancing student rights and student safety overseas. A new report analyzing college policies on speech and political participation by students studying abroad found that colleges often have difficulty balancing students’ rights and student safety. The report by the Foundation for Individual Rights in Education speaks to the tensions colleges must navigate when they send students overseas, including to countries where speech rights are far more limited than in the United States. FIRE, which works against restrictive speech codes, acknowledges that universities “are in a delicate position” when trying to balance free speech against safety, but it warns against the adoption of vague prohibitions on student speech or political expression. “University policies on speech in study abroad programs should make clear that students are bound by their destination country’s legal systems, that they may be required to leave the program and country if legal concerns or serious threats of violence are posed in response to their expression, and that administrators may be unable to provide aid in certain situations,” the report argues. “The policies should make clear what expression has the potential to violate foreign laws or customs or partner institution policies and what speech-related consequences students can expect from state officials, immigration authorities, and partner university administrators. But universities should not develop vague policies that create additional

confusion among students and the potential for self-censorship and administrative abuse.” The report, which is titled “Studying Abroad, Speaking Out: How U.S. Universities Approach Expression in Study Abroad Programs,” contends that local context matters. “Students traveling to France, for instance, should not be given the same warnings about expressive activity as students traveling to China,” it states. “The main takeaways should be that universities should be doing a little more of the heavy lifting to make sure their students understand what speech issues abroad mean for them specifically,” said Sarah McLaughlin, director of targeted advocacy for FIRE and author of the report. “The other side of that is universities need to be very careful to understand the role they play, where they need to be warning students and they need to be teaching them, but they don’t necessarily need to be adopting oppressive speech codes of their own just because they’re sending students to countries with those codes.”

Read more [here](#)

11. Business Recorder

KP TEVTA, CFL-EBM sign MoU on workplace-based training (Global)

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Technical Education and Vocational Training Authority (KP-TEVTA) has signed Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Coronet Foods Limited and English Biscuits Manufacturers (CFL-EBM) for the implementation of workplace-based training for the youth of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Through this initiative, KP-TEVTA and CFL/EBM will jointly impart training among 300 young trainees of the province with 100 percent employment prospects for successful trainees. The duration of the training will be three months, according to details shared with the media here on Sunday. The training venture is supported by the TVET sector support programme which is funded by the European Union and the governments of Germany and Norway and implemented by the National Vocational and Technical Training Commission and provincial TEVTAs and private organizations across the country. Speaking at the ceremony, Managing Director (MD) KP TEVTA Engr. Syed Sajjad Ali Shah said workplace-based training which is introduced by TVET SSP GIZ is the present and future of technical education. He further said that the trainees who are trained at the industry floor have better employment prospects as compared to those who attain training at institutes only. MD KP-TEVTA also showed gratitude to the development partners which are the European Union, Governments of Norway and Germany for extending their financial and technical support in achieving this important landmark.

Read more [here](#)

12. US News

2022 Best Global Universities Coming Oct. 26 (Global)

On Tuesday, Oct. 26, U.S. News will release the Best Global Universities rankings, which focus on schools' academic research and reputation, not their separate undergraduate or graduate programs. Students can use these rankings to accurately compare universities – including U.S. colleges – globally, regionally and within their own country, as well as by field of study. The overall Best Global Universities ranking will encompass 1,750 top universities, up from nearly 1,500 last year. The overall ranking includes universities from more than 90 countries, a slight increase from last year. In addition, there will be 43 separate subject rankings in fields like clinical medicine, computer science and engineering, up from 38 last year. U.S. News will also publish five regional rankings of the top universities in Africa, Asia, Australia/New Zealand, Europe and Latin America. In addition, country-specific rankings will be released again this year. In the 2022 edition, U.S. News will publish 45 country rankings – including these 12 countries with large numbers of ranked schools: Canada, China, France, Germany, India, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, South Korea, Spain,

Sweden and the United Kingdom. U.S. News will publish five new subject area rankings in the following fields: Chemistry, physical (500 schools ranked), Food science and technology (200 schools ranked), Optics (250 schools ranked), Physics, condensed matter (250 schools ranked), and Polymer science (100 schools ranked). Microbiology will see an increase of 50 schools, bringing the total ranked up to 250. Electrical and electronic engineering will see an increase of 100 ranked schools, bringing the total ranked up to 500. Geosciences, oncology and psychiatry/psychology all will see an increase of 150 ranked schools, bringing the total ranked for each subject area up to 400. Material sciences will see an increase of 250 ranked schools, bringing the total ranked up to 750. Chemistry, clinical medicine and engineering will each see an increase of 250 ranked schools, bringing the total ranked up to 1,000.

Read more [here](#)

Note to Editors/PROs:

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