



African Higher Education Summit

**Revitalising Higher Education for
Africa's Future**

FOR most of us here in Africa what we know has always been defined by what others know or rather what they think they know about us. Externally generated forms of knowledge and paradigms tend to shape what is possible for us as people and as nations.

At TrustAfrica, we believe that higher education should be a critical engine for redefining and repositioning ourselves for shared economic growth and social progress. We realize that our future and that of the next generation depends on improving the quality and relevance of higher education to ensure that it adequately responds to the challenges that we face as a continent.

This e-book presents some important thinking that can potentially contribute towards specific actions that need to be taken and hopefully help us forge this new future.

Aicha Bah Diallo
Chair
TrustAfrica



“All countries and all regions in the world, irrespective of their development levels and capacities, face challenges in all sectors, including in higher education.

This is mainly due to the rapid, continuous and even unexpected changes they encounter. The best and most viable means to tackle these challenges is through well-trained human capacities. However, although education for education sake is necessary, it is also vital to train university graduates to solve societal problems and contribute to socioeconomic development by matching skills demand in general. The latter, remains the key and most difficult challenge of the African countries.”

– Prof. Jeel Ezzine, Tunisian Association for the Advancement of Science, Technology and Innovation

THE SUMMIT IS FINALLY HERE!

It is my distinct honor and privilege to welcome fellow travelers to Dakar, Senegal. You will recall that in the past four years various national, sub-regional and even continental level dialogues have taken place around higher education. Our intention at this summit is to aggregate the different outputs from those gatherings, strengthen the already existing networks and above all contribute towards a more coherent and comprehensive dialogue on the actions we all need to take to enhance higher education on the continent.

I am very excited and looking forward to a very dynamic and action oriented summit. We understand that there are others who should have been here in Dakar with us but for some reasons could not make it. I hope that colleagues currently not in Dakar will take advantage of technology and follow us via our livefeed (English: <https://new.livestream.com/WorldBankAfrica/HigherEducationSummit> or <http://new.livestream.com/WorldBankAfrica/HigherEducationSummit> for French) and also our twitter livechat (@africanhesummit or follow #AHES2015). In preparing for the Summit we were reminded several times that the idea has been tried before and yielded very little- we are cognizant of that but also of the moment. The 2015 Summit is an idea whose time has come. Just look and read around you there is a new zeitgeist about Africa. We need to take advantage of the moment and remind everyone else that sustaining Africa Rising beyond the commodity boom will require the achievement of equitable access to quality education for our youth.



For us here at TrustAfrica we acknowledge the fact that Africa's inclusive and democratic transformation is predicated upon a very vibrant higher education sector supported by the state, official development assistance, the nascent but equally important local private sector and also the global and emerging forms of philanthropic giving. Higher education extends beyond an economic argument, our struggles for liberation largely benefitted from a very small minority of Africans who had gone through university education. Similarly the various struggles for democratization that culminated in the 'winds of change' of the 1990s were also nurtured from Africa's universities.

It is my hope that these traditions can continue and help us achieve the desires of many an African youth, contributing towards national and indeed continental development. The Summit should help us make the move towards concerted actions across the continent to ensure that Education as a sector is a priority and receives adequate fiscal attention from national governments. Africa's contribution towards knowledge generation especially in the Science and Technology remains very miniscule- we can only change that by increasing financial allocations, promoting research and ensuring that we double our intake of PhDs and post-doctoral fellows. Since the liberalization of the sector in the 1990s we have witnessed rapid growth in terms of the number of private universities and also an expansion of state universities but sadly this has also led to an increase in the number of unemployed graduates. The challenge of jobs (beyond employability) is a time bomb for all of us and needs an urgent systematic response. Evidently, the commodity boom has not created as many jobs as we would have wanted for our youths. The summit provides us with an opportunity not only to interrogate higher education's contribution to the job market but also an understanding of Africa's job market in terms of its needs, sizes and also how it can be restructured.

It is my hope that we do not make this summit another talking workshop but rather we devote our energies and expertise into identifying factors that inhibited progress and with renewed confidence address many of these challenges. It is indeed time for a bolder vision that asserts Africa and her people's position in the global market of knowledge generation, innovation and creation of new opportunities for the continent.

Tendai Murisa
Executive Director
TrustAfrica

WHY THE FRUITS OF EDUCATION ARE SO ELUSIVE IN AFRICA

By Charles Onyango-Obbo

The fruits of education have rarely been more elusive.

According to the World Bank, it takes on average five years for a university graduate to secure a job in Africa. Therefore it is the graduates from the relatively richer families who can afford to be unemployed because they will still have a roof over their heads, food, and their families can finance their job search – paying for a professional to do their CVs, and for internet costs to distribute it to prospective employers.

The irony, then, is that it is poorer students who need a job of some sort to finance their search of suitable employment!

One of the approaches to dealing with the problem of growing unemployment among graduates has been to push for a type of education that enables students “to be job creators of job seekers”.

The second related approach seen in countries like Uganda and Ethiopia is choosing “bias toward science and practical” subjects. So if you are going to study Physics or Architecture at university, you will qualify for a state scholarship. But if your interest is History or Political Science, then you don’t.

While the goal of this might be noble, the results have been dismal. All over Africa youth unemployment has continued to rise, and in Tunisia, for example, it is highest among young people with post-graduate degrees. And, according to some reports, in many countries most science graduates today do not work in science.

A way out might be to reimagine new forms of partnerships and collaboration between private businesses, research institutions, and even donors with higher education institutions in which students use the stronger school brands to get a foothold in the employment market, rather than their individual wits after graduation. We saw the first feeble steps in that direction in Kenya, where after IBM decided to locate its Africa Research Lab in the country, it asked universities to bid to host it. The Catholic University in Nairobi won.

The lab has some programmes with students, but for them to get bigger, a lot has to change in the broader



education policy environment in Kenya and the continent at large where countries want to go this way.

It suggests to me that African governments and educational institutions, will have to cede their monopoly over curricula, and on things like how teaching is done, and examination systems.

But perhaps the most important thing that needs to come down is the wall between the sciences, “practical subjects, and the arts and social sciences.

Two examples come to mind. A foods factory outside the Rwanda capital, Kigali, is thought to have achieved one of the best waste treatments standards on the continent. But that scientific achievement ran into a problem - they could do little else with the clean treated water but to pour it into a valley and feed into a stream from which villagers draw their drinking water further on.

The treated water is much cleaner than the water running in the streams, but the local communities won't use it because to them, treated water from waste is “dirty”. Getting them to accept to drink the treated instead, and thus live healthier lives, is a problem that social scientists would help with. In countries where they are considered “useless” and not practical enough, and thus don't get state scholarships, where would you find the social scientists for the job?

Secondly, anyone who researches deeply on Africa online, will be appalled by how disorganised and scattered material on the continent is, in addition to how comparatively little of it there is. One reason is that there is an incredible lot of work on Africa that is offline, because it has not been digitised. Quite a bit of digitisation has been done though in the last 10 years, but a lot of it is still available online, or not searchable if it is, because it was not properly indexed or tagged.

The need to ease problems like these points to ways in which we might do higher education differently. If I were digitising a history of King Shaka to bring it online, I would have a team of Shaka historians, techies, designers, and photographers, working together. So why not have them study together too?

By the end of 2015, many African countries will have completed the migration to digital TV. There will be thousands of new channels without content. This is not because there are no African stories, but because we didn't teach young people smartly.

We should have taught literature students computer and film editing skills; or taught computer students literature.

We are fortunate, though. The African Higher Education Summit signals an awareness that the current system is broken and we need to explore for solutions. At Mail & Guardian Africa it is wonderful to partner on this journey, because seeing that discontent with the state of higher education in Africa, is exciting enough of itself.

Charles Onyango-Obbo
Director and Editor
Mail & Guardian Africa



THE STATE OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN AFRICA

Higher education plays a critical role in development, particularly in the global context in which knowledge-based innovations and products fetch high value on the market. Beyond economic benefits, higher education also offers scope for cultural and community development.

Unprecedented growth

Over the last few decades Africa has witnessed tremendous growth in its higher education and research sphere. This is to a large extent a manifestation of the recognition by African stakeholders, including political leaders of the value of higher education in achieving their visions of prosperity, peace and integration. International agencies, once sceptical about the value of university education in Africa's social economic development, are now among the chief advocates of revitalisation of higher education in Africa.

Lagging research capacity

As a whole, Africa spends less than 0.5% of its GDP on research, a level of funding that poses a major challenge to the continent's development. Its lack of capacity regarding research and knowledge creation has meant further marginalization. Africa has the world's lowest ratio of researchers per million inhabitants and an average of only 35 scientists and engineers per one million inhabitants. Its annual share of research publications is less than 1.5%.

“The summit should disseminate decisions reached in this workshop, circulate them widely and fight for implementation. We could achieve team work in higher institutions, unity, openness, collaboration and work towards education and research that meet societal needs.”

- Prof. Francisca Okeke
University of Nigeria

Many higher education institutions in Africa do not yet have adequate research capabilities and their contributions have been found to be less relevant to development needs. Furthermore, the scale of change is inadequate if the African higher education sector is to compete with those in other parts of the world.

Low quality outputs

Challenges in recruiting and retaining faculty staff with senior academic qualifications and research experience, include limited postgraduate opportunities, low graduation rates and discouraging conditions of service. Most institutions have been unable to recruit additional academic staff to cope with increased enrolment figures, either because of shortage of funds or unavailability of qualified candidates. The staff shortages in many African universities are compounded by the fact that the average age of faculty members is relatively high and are exacerbated by brain drain.

The slow expansion of postgraduate education has seriously constrained innovation as most research skills are commonly acquired during master's and doctoral study. The lack of academic staff with PhDs has adversely affected the quality and depth of the instruction provided to undergraduate students and the ability to provide graduate students with adequate supervision.

Supply vs demand

A significant increase in student enrolment in African universities in order to absorb the increasing demand for higher education is fuelled by the massification of primary and secondary education. Private higher education, which accounted for 22% of higher education students on the continent in 2006, is growing faster in many African countries, due in part to major policy reforms carried out by governments. However, the deregulation of the higher education sector has resulted in contradictory outcomes.

In most African countries, the increase in tertiary enrolment has not translated into a comparable improvement in employment opportunities. This is partly due to the mismatch between the number and type of graduates and the needs of the labour market. Indeed, there are growing complaints by employers that graduates are poorly prepared for



the workplace. Thus there is a triple crisis of graduate unemployment, underemployment and

unemployability. Several studies point to a need to match employer requirements and the curriculum developed by higher education institutions.

A number of “centres of excellence” are being established in Africa, notably the AU’s Pan-African University (PAU), which promotes cooperation among African countries in targeted areas within specialised regional centres to enhance quality, research, and postgraduate education. A concrete initiative that seeks to nurture quality and

exemplify excellence, the PAU is globally competitive and relevant to Africa’s need and aspirations.

Commitment

There is need for increased commitment on the part of governments and the private sector to invest in higher education, science and technology, research and innovation. Various options need to be explored for developing clear funding mechanisms and policies.

These can only be achieved through dialogue. Many processes have not been subjected to continental dialogues involving the majority of stakeholders in the sector who have been demanding a platform for an Africa-wide dialogue to reposition the higher education sector to serve the needs of the continent and its people.

This need is reflected in the lack of coordination among interventions by African governments, private actors and networks, and international development partners resulting in fragmented efforts that reduce impact.

“Too many governments on the continent still confuse ‘public’ with ‘state’. The net effect is that there is still too much interference into the appointment decisions of universities with adverse consequences for the higher education project. In addition, as a result of this the autonomy of too many universities is severely eroded. Now I am not a supporter of autonomy for its own sake. I do believe that autonomy should be coupled with social accountability. But this social accountability must not mean subservience to the state or to its Ministers and/or President. Unless we fix this, higher education will be continually compromised.”

Prof. Adam Habib, Vice-Chancellor and Principal
of the
University of the Witwatersrand

ARCHITECTS AND VISION: BUILDING A GAME CHANGING HIGHER EDUCATION SUMMIT

By Samantha Spooner

Every movement has had its architects, those who sacrificed for the sake of the greater good. The African higher education summit is no exception given its vision of transformation across contemporary Africa's 54 countries characterised by extraordinary complexity, diversity and unevenness that defies easy generalisation. This, according to Prof. Tiyaambe Zeleze, Vice President of Academic Affairs at Quinnipiac University and author of the Summit Framing Paper.

Breaking ground

In pursuit of this end, TrustAfrica has over the years supported and catalysed a series of convenings that enabled scholars, policy makers and civil society organizers to deliberate and produce game-changing ideas. This included a special initiative on national policy dialogues for transforming higher education in Ghana, Nigeria, Tanzania and Uganda, which was funded by the Carnegie Corporation of New York and TrustAfrica. During these dialogues, TrustAfrica forged partnerships with entities such as the umbrella bodies of vice-Chancellors. Soon, several factors became apparent to the TrustAfrica team:

- 1) Higher education policy is largely dominated by the government;
- 2) The role of the private sector, civil society and higher education actors is fairly limited;
- 3) There was a distinct absence of platforms for national and continent-wide dialogue; and
- 4) There was a need for a comprehensive development plan for the future of the sector.

"Following the dialogues, all the stakeholders demanded that we should help to create this platform," said Dr. Omano Edigheji, TrustAfrica Summit director who led the initial engagement sessions, with support from Carnegie.

The architecture

Dr Bhengkosi Moyo and Dr Akwasi Aidoo were two of the principal architects behind the creation of the African Higher Education Summit (AHES), both working with TrustAfrica at the time.

Moyo commented on how the initial plan was relatively modest, working on the assumption that all was well in higher education across the continent, only to discover a need so dire it could not be ignored.

In an interview with University World News in 2013, Aidoo said that his expectation was to set the stage for the development of a strong and concerted advocacy movement or alliance for higher education in Africa, "people and organisations that can work together to advance higher education, and implement the charter principals and action plan that will come out."

Aidoo described this as an opportune time for such a critical event as people are more aware of higher education. He also stated that the summit would ask the question, "How can higher education become more relevant in the 21st century in relation to the challenges and the opportunities that Africa faces in higher education?"

Since then, several organisations have gotten involved in the process, among them nine African organisations. TrustAfrica are the coordinators, organising and forging partnerships with a wide range of actors. They went and brought together the African Union Commission (AUC), Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa (CODESRIA), United Nations Africa Institute for Development and Economic Planning (IDEP), Association of African Universities (AAU), and the African Development Bank (AfDB), the National Research Foundation (NRF) of South Africa and the government of Senegal, who is serving as the host of the summit.

TrustAfrica Executive Director Dr. Tendai Murisa said, ““We think all these organisations are movers and shakers in their own right, and that by bringing them together into a place like this, we can revitalise interest and try to make sure that higher education is back on the policy agenda.”

In reality, despite over a half century of interventions and waves of reforms, higher education in Africa today, consists of institutions, systems, and practices that lack distinct values and goals, or a mission and vision connecting them to the major challenges of their local and global contexts.

However, according to another chief architect, Prof. Omotade “Tade” Akin Aina, “Africa’s higher education is now experiencing a period of recovery the last decade has seen a revitalisation due to the return of resources, including private funding, and the renewal of resources, privatisation and deregulation.”

“Science, technology and innovation (STI) in Africa is still finding its feet. Many policies exist in various institutions across Africa and everyone is talking STI – it’s at its nascent point. Africans have realized that without advanced scientific capabilities, they can’t go past their current state of receiving solutions from the outside, for even their most basic needs. They have to shift their development priorities towards advanced STI competencies and infrastructures, in order to expand employability for their citizens, solve their development challenges, and integrate into the global economy.”

– Prof. Nkem Khumbah, University of Michigan

Murisa adds that the summit will seek to determine a firm position on investment in the sector and what needs to be done to deliver on the vision of transformation.

“If higher education is going to play a central role for Africa’s transformation, what kind of investment is needed. And if higher education is going to contribute to increased growth, what kind of graduates do we need? What does the relationship between the marketplace and the university in Africa look like, and what needs to be done?”

Building the future

In acknowledging that this transformation will involve practical and epistemological ruptures with previous ways of doing things and a reconstruction of structures, relations, cultures, and institutions, the African Union Commission will utilise the summit outcomes to feed directly into the 2016-2025 continental education strategy.

Of particular importance are initiatives that will ensure gender equity, changes in organisation and the process of knowledge production, and a re-envisioning of universities’ funding sources and mechanisms. Carnegie Corporation’s president, Vartan Gregorian states that, “throughout our engagement in Africa, the Corporation has especially prized its relationships with African universities and scholars. We, along with many African educators, believe that universities are essential tools for the renewal of Africa’s culture, economy, and institutions. This is the spirit that has led to this week’s extraordinary gathering.

We are immensely pleased that the key outcome of the Summit will be the formulation and adoption of an African Higher Education Declaration, a framework for the transformation of the sector in the next 50 years.

SUMMIT CONSIDERATION: AFRICAN UNION HAVE THEIR SAY

By Wachira Kigotho

Expanding tertiary education enrolment and post-graduate training, improving low graduation rates and conditions of service for academics, are among the priority issues to be debated at the major African Higher Education Summit being held in Senegal, says Dr Beatrice Njenga, head of education at the African Union Commission.

Njenga said that while Africa had witnessed tremendous growth in higher education, the continental gross rate of tertiary education enrolment still stood at only 10% against a world average of 27%.

“Our objective of creating robust higher education is embedded within the African Union’s development agenda of the ‘Africa We Want in 2063,’” said Njenga. The summit will focus sharply on challenges facing the sector across the continent.

Concept paper

According to the summit concept paper, while tertiary education expansion in Africa has led to greater access, in most cases quality has been compromised. Amid efforts to meet burgeoning demand, governments through major policy reforms have

deregulated higher education and encouraged the establishment of private universities and privately-sponsored students in public universities – so-called ‘parallel’ students.

“But deregulation of the higher education sector has resulted in contradictory outcomes, as higher enrolment rates under conditions of limited resources have contributed to lower quality,” the concept paper points out.

Most universities have been unable to recruit additional academic staff to cope with increased enrolment, either because of a shortage of funds or the unavailability of qualified candidates. In addition, the African professoriate is aging rapidly.

Njenga noted that staff shortages in African universities have been exacerbated by brain drain. “Besides general staff shortages, most African universities are faced with challenges of retaining lecturers with higher academic qualifications,” she said.

Ways forward

The Dakar summit is expected to pave the way forward on how to overcome limited postgraduate opportunities in African universities, low graduation rates and discouraging conditions of service for lecturers and professors.

According to the concept paper, delegates are aware that many universities across the continent do not yet



have adequate research capabilities and many of their contributions have been found not to be relevant to development needs.

“The slow expansion of postgraduate education has constrained innovation, as most research skills are commonly acquired during masters and doctoral study,” says the concept paper.

The crux of the matter is that the lack of academics with PhDs has adversely affected the quality and depth of instruction provided to undergraduate students and the ability to provide postgraduate students with adequate supervision.

Njenga said the African Union Commission delegation at the summit would encourage African governments to start spending more than 1% of gross domestic product on research.

According to UNESCO, as a whole Africa spends less than 0.5% of GDP on research – a low level of funding that poses a major challenge to the continent’s development agenda.

The conference aims to chart the way forward on how the continent could avoid further marginalisation for lack of knowledge creation through research and innovation. Currently Africa has only 35 scientists and engineers per one million inhabitants and its annual share of global research publication is less than 1.5%.

Although several centres of research excellence have been opened across Africa through the African Union Commission and the World Bank, the desire to improve universities is likely to result in a call for

“It is important to factor the expectations, in terms of knowledge capacity and society rules, of the university system. There needs to be a clear understanding of what is expected of African Universities in this era. It is a rather broad objective to say that we’re aspiring for a knowledge-based society in Africa and we must therefore have the capacity to fully understand the problems and challenges faces by the universities and provide & invent solutions which are relevant to the African context and people.”

- Prof. Sule-Kano Abdullahi, Beyero University Kano

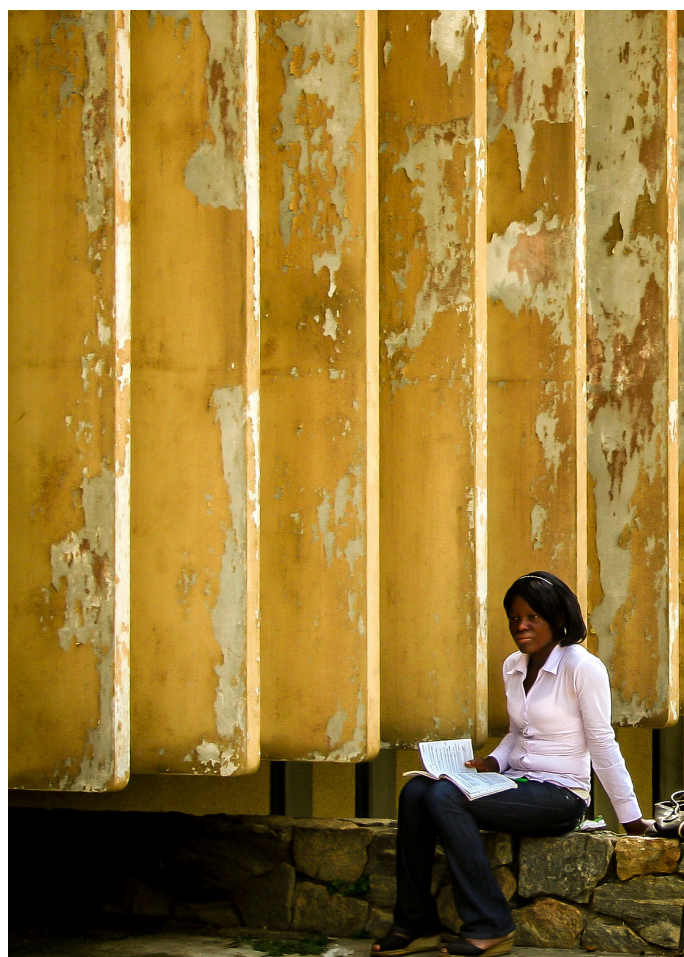
the creation of more competitive regional centres to enhance quality, research and postgraduate education.

The most worrying issue of all is that in most African countries, the rise in tertiary enrolment has not translated into a comparable improvement in employment opportunities and most students and parents have started doubting the value of higher education.

The summit will discuss the mismatch between the number and type of graduates and the needs of the labour market. Labour experts are expected to raise issues regarding the emerging ‘triple crisis’ of graduate unemployment, underemployment and unemployability.

According to Njenga, the summit will highlight challenges besetting the African higher education sector and in essence create a shared vision for the future. Its agenda is to harness fragmented interventions in order to spur progress in African higher education, but only time will tell whether this goal will be achieved.

** This article was originally published by University World New- a summit media partner.*



FOOD FOR THOUGHT Proposals for Transformation

Credit: Paul Tiyambe Zeleza, Vice President of Academic Affairs Quinnipiac University

The main aim of the summit is to create a continental multi-stakeholders' platform to identify strategies for transforming the African higher education sector. Following pre-Summit meetings, and the critical examination of a vast literature on African higher education, a concept paper came together to capture with the primary intention of identifying the transformations, challenges, and opportunities facing African higher education, which can then in turn guide planning for the future.

There are some common themes, and the paper identified six key issues for summit deliberation and recommendations:

Moving From Growth to Massification



Improving Financing and Management



Promoting Articulation, Harmonisation
and Quality Assurance



Institutional Autonomy
and Governance



Enhancing Research and Innovation



Internationalisation and Diaspora Mobilisation



1. From Growth to Massification

Africa's exponential population growth demands massive expansion of higher education. At a minimum, African countries need to reach world average enrolments by 2050 which will entail growing even faster than the rest of the world. Along with this, strides should be made to ensure gender parity in tertiary enrollments within the decade. Africa's female enrolment ratio actually declined from 39.1% in 1999 to 37.7% in 2012. This needs to be reversed.

Massification must be followed by investments in academic staff, infrastructure, library facilities, laboratories, and the like. Without it the education will be shoddy and of low quality which will be disservice to students, the economy and society.

2. Improving Financing and Management

The expansion and provision of quality higher education will require proportionally higher, sustainable, and predictable levels of public funding. For example, using a special value-added tax, Ghana established the Education Trust Fund to increase support for education at all levels, especially the tertiary level.

Other options could include cost sharing policies, national loan schemes or undertaking entrepreneurial activities, which is also becoming increasingly common. These activities range from promoting

“When focusing on the partnership between private sector employers and African higher educational institutions. The institutions should have a better appreciation of the skills needed in the corporate world from time to time, and engage in a process of continual revision and updating of their curricula to meet these needs. This should reduce the gaps between the needs of industry in their employees and the knowledge and skills set that graduates of higher educational institutions come out with. Industry should not have to devote a huge amount of scarce resources to retrain these graduates to meet their specific needs if the higher educational institutions fulfil their roles.”

– Prof Akinyinka Omigbodun, University of Ibadan, Nigeria

“Access to quality education remains a big challenge in African higher education systems. Issues relating to access and equity are about opportunity and fairness in terms of who has access and who doesn't. Africa needs to tap its untapped talent and not make access the privilege of the elites only.”

– Prof. Teboho Moja, Higher Education Program, New York University

commissioned research and faculty consultancies to establishing revenue-generating enterprises including technology firms, agricultural farms, and operating hotels, bookstores, cafeterias, and facility rentals.

To reduce costs many institutions are outsourcing services including students' accommodation and catering. Other cost-saving measures include diversifying modes of instructional delivery through distance and virtual education.

The culture of fundraising needs to be strengthened through the establishment of endowments and development foundations. It entails cultivating alumni, engaging local and multinational businesses, and attracting foreign donor support. A potential source of support that needs to be mobilized is the diaspora academic community.

In addition to diversifying their revenue streams, financial challenges facing higher education institutions require the adoption of more sophisticated and transparent budgeting models to ensure efficient utilisation of limited resources.

3. Articulation, Harmonisation, and Quality Assurance

African countries need well-articulated, diversified, and differentiated higher education systems. The continent has to have highly ranked global universities if it is to compete in the rapidly growing and lucrative international higher education market and become a serious player in research and innovation. Higher education institutions must embrace differentiation. This entails accepting the fact that not all universities should be research universities.

Articulation entails the need for harmonisation and the creation of quality assurance agencies at the continental, regional, national, and institutional

levels. This is often hampered by lack of financial and human resources, and legislative bottlenecks.

Higher education institutions need to develop more robust, transparent, and fair systems of assessment to measure their effectiveness for continuous improvement. This includes evaluation of student learning outcomes, academic staff, and institutional performance. At the regional level, there is the African and Malagasy Council for Higher Education for 19 Francophone countries and the Inter-University Council of Eastern Africa established in 2009 that serves Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, Rwanda, and Burundi.

Every regional economic community needs to establish effective regional quality assurance agencies.

A continental quality assurance agency needs to be established building on the work of the African Quality Assurance Network established in 2007 to help institutions seeking help in developing their quality assurance systems. In the same year, the African Union Commission developed the African Quality Rating Mechanism as part of its strategy to harmonize, revitalize, and make African higher education more globally competitive. The work of these organs must be accelerated and adequately supported.

4. Institutional Autonomy and Governance

The public interest and investment in higher education does not entail state interference into university affairs, which has had adverse consequences for the higher education project. Similarly, institutional suc-

“The greatest challenge to higher education in Africa is ensuring that we realize the potential of African youth. This will be Africa’s century, if the continent’s youth can reach their full potential. Africa has the world’s youngest demographics. 50% of its people are under 20. By 2040 Africa’s workforce will exceed India’s or China’s. By 2050, a third of the world’s youth will be African. Higher Education in Africa needs to prepare for this demographic wave. The continent can make the transition from aid to trade, but needs skilled people; project managers, business leaders, civil servants, agricultural and health professionals, engineers, scientists, university lecturers.”

– Prof. Neil Turok, African Institute for Mathematical Sciences

One of the things that motivated me to go and study in the US, at Stanford University in particular, was that it supported an environment in which academia, with some research funding from the government, can innovate and work in partnership with local venture capital to create new opportunities in various industries. These new opportunities have created many companies that have provided jobs to many graduates in the Silicon Valley and elsewhere. I’d like to see something similar in African higher education but primarily targeted to what Africa needs, working in collaboration with private and governments sectors.

– Prof. Faye Briggs, Intel Corporation

cess and sustainability is not a monopoly of management but involves staff and students.

Developing robust systems and processes of shared governance is imperative for institutions of higher education to navigate challenges and seize opportunities. But, academic freedom must be respected and upheld by both the state and university leaders as a cornerstone to sustain vibrant higher education institutions and the cultures of intellectual inquiry and innovation so essential for a democratic society and economic development.

5. Enhancing Research and Innovation

If research is to be transformative and contribute to Africa’s sustainable development, it must be vigorously supported through higher levels of funding and enabling policies. It also needs to become more locally embedded by addressing Africa’s realities and challenges. African countries and universities need to vigorously promote intra-continental and inter-continental research partnerships and collaborations, and share information and best practices.

African governments must promote coordinated research systems, increase investment in research and development to 1% of GDP, and enhance their countries’ innovation and competitiveness in the global knowledge economy. Emerging African foundations and the African private sector must also be encouraged and incentivised to invest more in research and development in partnership with higher education institutions.

Continental organs must be given adequate support and operationalised. This includes Africa's Science and Technology Consolidated Plan of Action adopted in 2005 and the African Science, Technology and Innovation Initiative charged with establishing common science, technology, and innovation (STI) indicators.

6. Internationalisation and Diaspora Mobilisation

There is an urgent need to articulate clear and comprehensive policies on internationalisation at the national, intra-continental, and inter-continental levels that most benefit the continent's educational systems, students' learning, academic staff, and research capacities.

Critical in this endeavor are the removal of immigration barriers and the development of enabling policies for professional and academic mobility throughout the continent and for the African academic diaspora. Also important are policies on the transfer of academic credits and recognition of academic and professional qualifications.

African higher education institutions must make regional and continental student and academic staff exchanges and institutional collaboration in academic programs and research a priority.

Vigorous efforts need to be made to enhance academic exchanges and cooperation with institutions in the emerging economies especially the BRICS that are increasingly vital for Africa's future in addition to the traditional connections with the western countries. This could include professor from these countries

The size of Africa's academic Diasporas is sufficiently large that, if fully mobilized, it can make a significant difference in the revitalization and internationalization of African higher education. This requires overcoming various structural obstacles by governments, universities, and academic communities on the continent and in the Diaspora. A memo prepared by the African academic diaspora in North America in preparation for the Summit offers a detailed outline on how this can be done. It proposes the establishment of an ambitious program, called the 10/10 Program, which would mobilize up to 1,000 diaspora academics every year for ten years for multiple forms of engagement with African higher education institutions and academic communities.

