



HIGHER EDUCATION AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT: POLICY AND PRACTICE IN EAST AFRICA

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Community engagement??

Policy framework

Community of practice



Challenges

Way forward



BENDER (2008)



The *process of knowledge exchange* between universities and communities (interdisciplinary) through:

- *co-inquiry (joint research),*
- *co-learning (co-creation), and*
- *knowledge is used to benefit to academia (teaching & further res.) while solving real world problems*



CE – WHERE/HOW



HEIs and communities: Activities

locality - interest on specific outputs

national - geographic location, industry

regional/international - Common purpose

.....formal & informal.....



WHY UNIVERSITIES?





GENERAL MANDATES FOR UNIVERSITIES



1. Training (teaching & learning)
2. Research (capacity, quality, innovation)
3. Outreach (advisory & community services)
4. Consultancy (advisory & community services)

Universities – who and why



- ◆ Agents of change
- ◆ Knowledge hubs (specialized studies)
- ◆ Resource mobilization (financial,
- ◆ Blend in with local communities, and
- ◆ Varied expertise – solving societal challenges
- ◆ Specific assigned roles
- ◆ +.....



Policy framework



WHERE ARE WE??



- ◆ Specific policies generally lacking; INSTEAD, many guided by “proxy” Policies; eg.
 - Outreach Policy
 - Research Policy
 - Civic Engagement Policy
 - Gender Policy, etc

Status quo??

RUFORUM (2017) – Study on University
Community Engagement Framework and
Strategy.



.....from RUFORUM study report:

.....there is a wide variation of CE activities by Universities – generally implemented under different frameworks rather than dedicated policies on community engagement.



Community of practice 4 U-CE



U-CE (TRAINING)



- ◆ Manpower needs assessment
- ◆ Prog. Dev → stakeholder participation
- ◆ Attachments (Field/industrial/teaching)
- ◆ Tracer studies
- ◆ MoUs (Govt Inst., NGO, other Univs, etc)
- ◆ Informal collaborations – villages/groups
- ◆ Scholarships
- ◆ + others



U-CE (RESEARCH)



- ◆ Demand driven research to solve a specific problem
(eg.manufacturing/processing/marketing)
- ◆ Joint on site research (farm, hospital, school, +..)
- ◆ National priorities (Problem identification/solving res. →solutions)
- ◆ Socially responsive research



U-CE (CONSULTANCY/ADVISORY)



- ◆ Consultancy units
- ◆ On request/competitive bidding

Clients: Govt., NGOs, Companies, Embassies,
individuals



U-CE (OUTREACH)



- ◆ University outreach stations
- ◆ Short term tailored training
- ◆ Shows: Local/national/international
- ◆ Show-casing (Open days)
- ◆ Incubators (innovation, industrial, etc)
- ◆ Formal industrial/Univ dialogue
- ◆ Conventional/Social media

U-CE (SPECIAL PROGRAMMES)



Examples:

- ◆ ACE II (World Bank)
- ◆ SEP



Challenges



CHALLENGES



- ◆ **Documentation (scattered)**
- ◆ **Funding**
- ◆ **Staffing levels**
- ◆ **IPR & Patents**
- ◆ **Structured U-CE programmes**
- ◆ **Alumni records and engagement**



Way forward



EMERGING TRENDS



RUFORUM-University Community Engagement (2017) report:

1. Increasingly, HEI and research organizations are being required to **make strategic commitments to engaging with the public** (= REQUIRED: policies; guidelines; procedures), and



Emerging trend cont'd



2. Researchers & academic staff must be recognized and valued for their CE activities

.....break or overturn the glass sealing for promotions.....



WAY FORWARD



- ◆ Institutionalize CE in curriculum (for credit)
- ◆ Branding of CE efforts -adopt an area/issue
- ◆ Enhance C. engagement across borders: EA & beyond
 - MoU
 - Resource mobilization
- ◆ CE for projects with high impact (...in Agric., educ, power, water, health)
- ◆ Network of Univ-CE Networks (2014)



Way forward cont'd



- ◆ Establishment/adoption of more centres for CE activities,
- ◆ Enhanced partnerships with local and international stakeholders,
- ◆ Increased fund mobilization from external donors to enhance partnerships with international stakeholders



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Thank you



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