

KYAMBOGO UNIVERSITY IN THE 21ST CENTURY

The 21st century higher education landscape is characterized by the demands of a competitive but largely resource constrained global economy. Nations through their national development strategies and regional economic blocs have to take advantage of their comparative advantage and opportunities created by the global dynamics in trade and international cooperation. The 21st century will therefore require Universities to operate in an internationally competitive environment and adopt a more entrepreneurial business culture in mobilizing resources and their utilization for research and education. On the other hand governments will continue to advance higher education as a public good required for its economic and national survival. The University will be managed with the flexibility to respond appropriately to market forces in higher education economy.

Direct public funding into Universities will continue to decline and Universities will be expected to mobilize resources from the private sector. Tuition fees will not be adequate and their share of University funding should decline through public-private partnerships in investments and research funding. However, because higher education impacts on the development agenda and its derivatives are required for competitiveness in the global economy, governments or their agencies will invest heavily in research for industrial competitiveness, policy development and advocacy, peace and security, and human well-being, that is, food, health and recreation.

The demand for higher education will increase nationally because of a young population and internationally because of a global economy driven by research and investment in new products. Highly skilled and talented human resources who are critical for University development and success will be mobile, competitive and expensive. Creativity and innovativeness in employment regimes will be required to attract and retain them in the service of the University. On the other hand, it will be the responsibility of the University to identify, nurture and mentor talent for research, knowledge creation and transfer. Indeed knowledge transfer through a pedagogy that mainstreams research, creativity, critical thinking, problem solving will be characteristic of curricula at the University regardless of subject or discipline.

First, Kyambogo University must invest heavily in a robust information and communication technology architecture and organizational framework for long term sustainable systems efficiency. This will require retention of professional and technical competence in the University whose agenda is process re-engineering for a performance based work culture. The integration of ICTs in workplace processes, learning and research at the University will continue to distinguish those Universities that lead social economic transformation of their nations and produce for them the human resource required for development. Learners will find information on the web provided by their professors, and professors will be available online for interactive engagement in addition to highly structured knowledge building lectures. For the learner and the professor at least 50% of contact time will be spent in organized knowledge creation and transfer processes that assure the University of its Curricula objectives. Kyambogo University will have to reconfigure the learning space and curriculum delivery strategies for blended learning using the internet and electronic library resources in addition to traditional forms of learning resources.

Secondly, Kyambogo University through a proactive collaboration with industry, employing agencies, and international research and development networks should be a transformation agent through knowledge transfer and workplace practice engagement. As a result, the University will partner with the private sector in identifying and funding researchable problems of direct interest to the private sector. A new paradigm of engagement with the public sector will also lead to funding for problem-solving. This kind of applied research will distinguish the graduate school and profile the research agenda of the University.

In this regard emphasis will be given to areas of niche that informed the establishment of the University and gives it a competitive advantage in the knowledge economy; Engineering, Science, TEchnology, Education and Management (ESTEEM). The University will have to grow its reputation for creativity, discovery and product development for social economic impact. It will have to choose its collaborating partners deliberately and align its internal agenda to the research agenda. The University must create the necessary conditions for attract Professors and growing a community of scholars. A programme of scholarships and research funding, especially for ESTEEM will need to be established with the possibility of training Academic Staff from other institutions of international reputation.

Thirdly, the University should generate resources from its investments and assets for Sustainable Institutional Development. Kyambogo University has to graduate from the physical infrastructure it inherited from its former institutions at the time of the merger to an infrastructure engineered to house learning and research for at least 50,000 students, 20% of whom should be in the graduate school. The infrastructure should provide adequate space for research laboratories and workshops, learning space for students, Offices for Academic Staff, recreation, accommodation and other facilities found in a world class University. In particular, Student Accommodation, Housing Estate, Hotel and Conference Centre, Industrial park should be appropriately marketed for development by the private sector. Scientists will have to use the research laboratories, workshops in research and development for the private sector in a framework that brings funds into the University.

The comfort of offering an education subsidized by public funds must be abandoned for an aggressive research led education that attracts scholarships and funding. In the 21st century, University education will be guaranteed by a sustainable research agenda directly linked to national development and sustainable development goals of the United Nations. Success in the 21st century calls for an integrated strategy in which ICT, human resources management, organizational structure and design, physical environment and financial resources are constructed to provide the necessary conditions for an entrepreneurial research led University providing lifelong education for the productivity of its learners and scholars, and enabling the country to compete globally for a quality life of its citizens. Towards this agenda, I offer to serve as the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Finance and Administration) who by law is responsible for planning and development, and is the Strategy leader manager of the University.

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