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PAPER:  
Donor Policies for Higher Education in Africa: A Case of the  
University of Dar es Salaam

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# **UNIVERSITY OF DAR ES SALAAM**



## **Donor Policies for Higher Education: A case of the University of Dar es Salaam**

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## **1.0 Introduction**

### **1.1 Higher Education: Definition, Challenges and Opportunities**

During the last two decades, there has been an unprecedented demand for a great diversification in higher education, as well as an increased awareness of its vital importance for socio-cultural and economic development, and for building the future, for which the younger generations will need to be equipped with new skills, knowledge and ideals. Higher education includes “all types of studies, training or training for research at post secondary level, provided by universities or other educational establishments that are approved as institutions of higher education by competent state authorities.” In almost all countries higher education is faced with great challenges and difficulties related to financing, equity of conditions at access into and during the course of studies, improved staff development, skills based training, enhancement and preservation of quality in teaching, research and services, relevance of programmes, employability of graduates, establishment of efficient cooperation agreements and equitable access to benefits of international cooperation. At the same time, higher education is being challenged by new opportunities relating to technologies that are improving the ways in which knowledge can be produced, managed, disseminated, accessed and controlled.

Despite the challenges the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century will go down in the history of higher education as a period of its most spectacular expansion. According to a declaration on higher education by the “World Conference on Higher Education” (1998), there was an over six-fold increase in student enrolments worldwide, from 13 million in 1960 to 82 million by 1995. In Tanzania, there was even a more spectacular increase; from 13 students in 1961 to about 20,000 today. But it is also the period which has seen the gap between industrially developed, the developing countries and in particular the least developed countries with regard to access and resources for higher learning and research, already enormous, becoming even wider. It has also been a period of increased socio-economic stratification and greater difference in educational opportunity within countries, including in

some of the most developed and wealthiest nations. Without adequate higher education and research institutions providing a critical mass of skilled and educated people, no country can ensure genuine endogenous and sustainable development and in particular, developing countries and least developed countries cannot reduce the gap separating them from the industrially developed ones. Sharing knowledge, international cooperation and new technologies can reduce this gap.

## **1.2 Financing of Higher Education**

Financing of higher education has been a subject of discussion and research by many institutions. For example, a task force (2000) commissioned by the World Bank (Higher Education for Developing Countries: Peril and Promise) concluded that the goals of a higher education system which spans quality, access and efficiency are best achieved by a diverse set of arrangements for institutional finance and service delivery. There are diverse systems where institutions look for funding from a single source while others seek for a combination of public and private financing.

According to David Court (2000) many universities, especially those in least developed countries like Tanzania, have not been successful in developing a system of financing which is not largely dependent on the state. Specifically, Africa inherited a model of the university in which the state paid for everything and has found it difficult to get away from this model. Dependence on the state makes it impossible for a nation seeking high quality higher education to have anything more than a small elitist university. Several African countries where the state subsidy to higher education has remained constant at the limit of what the country could afford has seen student numbers increase disproportionately to resources, the physical plant deteriorate, morale plummet, faculty depart, quality sink and research all but disappear.

### **1.3 The Role of Donors**

According to the task force and the World Bank, multilateral and bilateral donors have a role to play in the financing of higher education; in order to encourage the national and international public interest, as well as the contribution that higher education can make to social equity. Long term and concessionary loans for higher education can help governments invest in higher education in a more sustained and consistent fashion, while debt relief can be negotiated in exchange for systemic higher education reform.

Financial resources from donors are therefore vital for financing higher education, especially in developing countries. The financial support normally covers infrastructure development, capacity building (staff development and training) and research. Often research is intertwined with staff development. Each country or donor may focus support on specific areas, guided by their national policies together with bilateral agreements.

The purpose of this paper is to examine the policies that guide the donor support and University of Dar es Salaam as case study.

## **2. The University of Dar es Salaam**

### **2.1 Background**

The University of Dar es Salaam was first established in 1961 as a constituent college of the University of London. The college became a constituent college of the University of East Africa in 1963 before becoming a fully-fledged University of Dar es Salaam by an Act of Parliament No.12 of 1970.

The university was established to be an institution where people would be trained to highest level for a clear and independent thinking, analysis and for problem solving at the highest level. These were attributes that had bearing to the policies of the ruling Party, TANU. Specifically, the university had three social functions including:

- (i) To transfer of knowledge from one generation to another;
- (ii) To act a center where frontiers of knowledge would be advanced through scientific research, and;
- (iii) Through teaching, to meet the high level demand for trained and skilled human resources needed for development.

The main campus of the University of Dar es Salaam offers a variety of academic programmes in the liberal arts, sciences and engineering and technology.

## **2.2 Growth of the University of Dar es Salaam**

### *2.2.1 Growth at the Main Campus*

The university that started as one Faculty of Law in temporary premises in the city of Dar es Salaam has now grown to include three campuses i.e., the main campus, Muhimbili University College of Health Science (MUCHS) campus and the University College of Lands and Architectural Studies (UCLAS) campus. The Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences and the Kiswahili Research Institute were established in 1964. The university further established a number of faculties and institutes as permitted by the enabling Act which established the university. While growing at the main campus continued, the Institute of Marine Sciences was established in Zanzibar. The former Faculty of Agriculture, Forestry and Veterinary Medicine located in Morogoro later budded off to become the now Sokoine University of Agriculture (SUA). Very recently, the Tanzania School of Journalism was integrated into the UDSM to establish the Institute of Journalism and Mass Communication. Similarly, the Kunduchi Fisheries Research Institute has been integrated into the UDSM to establish a Faculty of Aquatic Science and Technology.

### **2.2.2 The Muhimbili University College of Health Sciences (MUCHS)**

MUCHS grew from what was a School of medicine, established in 1963 to augment the small numbers of graduate doctors from Makerere University. In 1968, the School of Medicine was upgraded to a Faculty of Medicine of

the Dar es Salaam University College, a constituent college of the University of East Africa. When the University of Dar es Salaam was established in 1970, the Faculty of Medicine became that of the University of Dar es Salaam. MUCHS was established in July 1991 as a Constituent College of the University of Dar es Salaam offering academic programmes in the health sciences.

### ***2.2.3 The University College of Lands and Architectural Studies (UCLAS)***

The University College of Lands and Architectural Studies (UCLAS) came into being by upgrading the then Ardhi Institute into a constituent college of the University of Dar es Salaam in July 1996. The Ardhi Institute was established by an Act of Parliament in October 1972 as an institution of higher learning under the Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development. After becoming a constituent college, the main focus of the college is to become a center of excellence in the land development management, environment management and human settlements development.

## **2.3 The Institutional Transformation Programme (ITP)**

### ***2.3.1 The Corporate Strategic Plan (CSP)***

Since 1985, the Tanzania society has been subjected to major challenges economically, politically as well as socially. While the economy of the country was changing from centralized to market-oriented economy. The political system also changed from a single party to a multi-party democracy. These changes resulted in increased competition in the demand for, and supply of goods and services. The search for better quality of education increased through the public/private mix policy, a number of private institutions of higher education were established. Presently, the university is undergoing a transformation programme as a way positioning itself better to meet the challenges.

In 1994, the University Council approved the Corporate Strategic Plan (CSP) as a concept document defining the UDSM Institutional Transformation Programme philosophy and approach. This was a long-term plan lasting for 15 years, but was reviewed in 2002. The new CSP (2003 – 2012) puts emphasis on capacity development, quality assurance and outreach activities closely focused on the university's core mission functions of teaching, research and service to the community.

### **2.3.2 The Five Year Rolling Strategic Plan (FYRSP)**

The University level FYRSP is designed to be a self-explanatory plan of action spelling out the central aspects of implementation of the CSP. It is specifically designed as a management tool in responding to the challenges that the university is facing. It articulates concrete measures based on a comprehensive analysis of the university status i.e. where the institution stands, identifying the core strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. The FYRSP sets strategic goals to be achieved throughout the five years. Therefore, clear institutional and donor policies are needed to enhance the university capacity to achieve its set goals.

## **3. Linkage and Internationalization of academic functions**

### **3.1 University policy on external links**

The University of Dar es Salaam, like many other universities worldwide has realized that it is a part of the global village. Throughout, the university has strived to establish linkages with universities and other institutions in Tanzania as well as outside Tanzania. The primary objectives of establishing linkages include marketing of academic programmes and sharing experiences and resources through exchange programmes. Realizing the advantages of establishing linkages with internal and external institutions and organization, the University of Dar es Salaam has as its sixteenth strategic objective, 'Increased number and productivity of UDSM linkages with other institutions'. The key strategies related to the objective include strengthening and expanding links with local and foreign institutions and development partners. This has made it possible for the university to



maintain a number of links totaling 94 by year 2004. The productivity and effectiveness of these links have varied from one to another. Generally, the links have significantly contributed towards:

- (i) Human resources development;
- (ii) Student exchange;
- (iii) Research funding;
- (iv) Jointly taught postgraduate courses
- (v) Joint research and publications;
- (vi) Provision of current literature;
- (vii) Teaching and learning facilities;
- (viii) Sabbatical leave opportunities etc.

While most of the links with external development partners come with conditions that must be fulfilled in order to enhance smooth operation, the university does not have a comprehensive and systematically determined external policy and operational procedures. What exist are various decisions developed over the years as a result of responding to specific situations.

### **3.2 Administration of external links at UDSM**

The University of Dar es Salaam operates a Links Office that is primarily concerned with the administration of links between the university and other external training institutions. The Directorate of Planning and Development and the Directorate of Research and Publications handle external links on matters related to research.

## **4. Strategic donor support to the University of Dar es Salaam**

### **4.1 Strategic funding sources**

The major strategic donor support to the University of Dar es Salaam increased following introduction of its Institutional Transformation Programme (ITP). The Government has however, remained the major financier of the university activities supporting human resource personnel emolument, recurrent budget, security of employment, land etc. The

contribution of development partners to the university in the last five years is given in the table below:

Source	Year				
	1998/99	1999/2000	2000/2001	2001/2002	2002/2003
URT	11,493,644	11,740,747	15,134,016	14,601,845	15,171,591
NORAD	2,682,851	1,185,641	906,500	1,241,529	1,250,000
Sida/SAREC	3,785,714	3,989,571	4,685,714	4,450,400	4,166,000
MHO	1,241,472	2,148,438	2,148,438	2,045,454	3,286,964
NUFU	475,844	500,137	931,804	332,902	755,344
VLIR	643,789	601,643	613,514	613,513	339,772
Carnegie			1,964,410	1,288,848	1,237,742
Others	1,011,942	1,010,800	360,228		
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>21,335,256</b>	<b>21,176,977</b>	<b>26,744,624</b>	<b>24,574,491</b>	<b>26,207,413</b>

Source: University of Dar es Salaam Five-Year Rolling Strategic Plan 2003/04 – 2007/2008. The figures are in US \$.

#### 4.2 Strategic funding priorities

Guided by national policies in their respective countries, development partners have their priorities and areas of interests for cooperation. The University of Dar es Salaam has observed that although there exists circumstances where development partners would focus the support, the trend is however, to concentrate on one major area and little in others. This has a positive impact instead of spreading resources thinly over large areas. The general priority areas of donor support is presented in the table below:

Source	Areas of funding focus						
	T&L	R&P	SD	INFRASTR	ROCM	Lib IT	ICT
Sida/SAREC	M	P	P	N	M	M	P
NORAD	M	N	P	P	M		
NUFU	P	P	M	N	N	M	
MHO	P	M	P	M	M		
VLIR	P	P	M	N	N		
Carnegie	P	M	M	M	M	P	P

Source: University of Dar es Salaam Cooperation Programmes Report, 2004.

#### Key:

P=Principal area; SD=Staff Development; M=Moderate focus; INFRASTR=Infrastructure; N= Negligible/not priority; ROCM= Reform/organization Cultural management; T&L=Teaching & learning; Lib IT=Library Information Technology; R&P=Research & Publication; ICT=Information and Communication Technology.

## **5. Donor policies on higher education**

### **5.1 Relationship between development partners and the University of Dar es Salaam**

The University of Dar es Salaam has since its establishment maintained close relationship with a variety of development partners who have to a greater extent influenced the development of the university. The relationships have been guided by Contract Agreements drawn by the two parties. The university's experience with donor policies can be categorized into the following areas:

- (a) Policies on funding;
- (b) Policies on research priorities;
- (c) Policies on research operations;
- (d) Policies on human resources capacity development;
- (e) Policies on human resource involved in the collaboration;
- (f) Policies on areas of collaboration.

## **7. Influence of National policies on donor policies**

### **7.1 The basket funding policy**

The introduction of clear policies for development by the Government has significantly influenced donor policies on higher education. The Vision 2025, Poverty Reduction Strategic Programme (PRSP) are national policies that have been adopted and supported by the donor community. This has led to the currently operated funding policy popularly known as 'Basket funding'. Under the basket funding all donors interested in a sector development pool resources and support government initiatives by supporting developments in the sector as guided by national priorities. Among disadvantages of the basket funding is subjecting higher education to other compelling national demands like health, water, food shortages, hunger, primary and secondary education etc. likely leading to reduced funding to higher education.

## **7.2 The Frame Agreement**

The Frame Agreement is a more recent mode of donor support. Under the Frame Agreement, donor policies focus on the basic agreement while leaving details to the executing institution. The Frame Agreement requires high degree of accountability, transparency and building trust between the collaborating partners. The frame agreement has advantages including providing more institutional autonomy in deciding on what plans to be implemented in line with priorities and set goals of the institution. The frame agreement facilitates monitoring and evaluation as well as reducing the workload and paper work involved during reporting. The frame agreement therefore, is to a large extent relevant to the process towards people-centred development.

In formulating the frame agreement, research priorities and other areas intended for donor support have to be identified by the University of Dar es Salaam. Over the years the University of Dar es Salaam has developed internal mechanisms and criteria for identifying priority areas for donor support. The overall objective is not only to ensure uniform distribution of resources to colleges, faculties and institutes but also to focus the donor support in accordance with priorities under the FYRSP.

Once the priority areas have been identified donors may support specific areas of their choice depending on their guiding policies. Generally, donors hinge their support on the following:

- (i) ITP. Since all priority areas focus on ITP, donors require clear indications (specifically verifiable indicators) on how the project outputs shall enhance the ITP.
- (ii) PRSP. At a higher level, some donors have of late demanded that research must aim at poverty reduction. Hence research proposals should show clear linkage between the expected research output and poverty reduction. Moreover, the research must also be demand driven.

### **7.3 Changing donor policies on financing physical infrastructure development**

The social demand for higher education has in the recent years progressively increased. Coupled with globalization, internationalization of higher education, demand for a knowledge-based society and increased competition, the need for increased access to higher education has become top priority. The University of Dar es Salaam is committed to meet the demand by expanding student enrolment into its academic programmes, reviewed its fees structures, introduced new and marketable programmes and attracting privately sponsored student. Through the donor and government support on infrastructure, the university was able to develop the existing physical as well as ICT infrastructure.

While until early 1990s donor policies favoured physical infrastructure development, the university has in the last five years observed reduced funding of infrastructure development. With reduced flow of resources from the government shortage of teaching space is becoming a threat to the university student expansion programme. The Government should therefore, continue negotiating with the donor community to support the government in funding infrastructure development in higher education institutions.

### **8. Sustainability of relationship with development partners**

The University of Dar es Salaam is committed to increasing the number, effectiveness and productivity of the relationships with development partners. Sustainability of the relationships between the university and development partners can be achieved through:

- (i) Establishing a policy and operational procedures to guide in sustaining relationships;
- (ii) Ensuring that the relationships benefits both partners;
- (iii) Reinforcing the university administrative capacity for links and international relations;

- (iv) Putting effort on collaborative research, staff development and exchange programmes;
- (v) Expanding student exchange programmes;
- (vi) Expanding focus on links with regional collaborating partners;
- (vii) Expanding joint-academic programmes at the global level.

## **9. Conclusion**

The University of Dar es Salaam has established links and relationships with many development partners from all over the world. The university experience with donors had been influenced by both national and donor policies. Donor policies on funding, research priority, human resources development have significantly increased the university capacity in those areas. With the government establishing comprehensive policies and the willingness of development partners to adopt and adapt the new policies, the frame agreement provides autonomy to institutions, inculcates accountability and has proved be an effective management tool in sustaining relationships.

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