

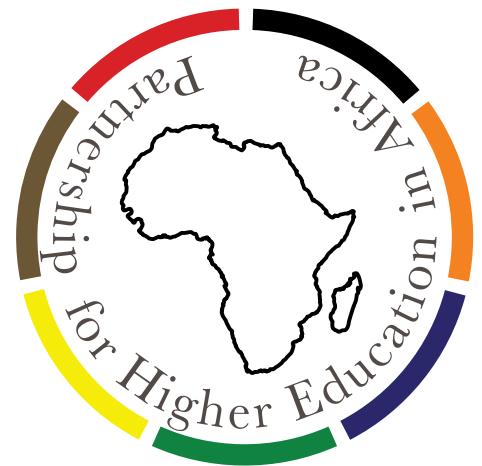
**Perspectives on Developing and Retaining
the Next Generation of Academics in African
Universities**

Report on the Workshop

Africa Grantmakers Affinity Group Conference
Regent Hyatt, Johannesburg, South Africa
5 February 2008



Grantmaker's
Affinity
Group



The Partnership for Higher Education in Africa is an initiative of seven foundations:

Carnegie Corporation of New York
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The Kresge Foundation
The John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation
The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation
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Perspectives on Developing and Retaining the Next Generation of Academics in African Universities

Session organized by the Partnership for
Higher Education in Africa
Africa Grantmakers' Affinity Group
Conference
Johannesburg, South Africa
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Overview

Most African universities are facing a critical need to replenish their academic ranks. An aging generation of academics is due to retire and universities are not able to meet the demands brought on by expanded student enrollment, brain drain, AIDS and the existing underqualified teaching staff. This report captures the key discussions and recommendations that emerged from the workshop.

Workshop objectives and structure

In designing the workshop, the Partnership for Higher Education in Africa (PHEA) had three objectives in mind:

- Develop insights into the perspectives of university senior management, junior faculty and graduate students
- Exchange ideas on strategies currently employed (among stakeholders and between stakeholders and funders)
- Engage grantmakers outside of PHEA in this issue

An unusual format was developed for the workshop, one which aimed to privilege the voices of three groups of stakeholders: university leaders, young scholars and researchers studying academic

staff development and retention in African universities. The format was an adaptation of the Kiva Process, an interactive dialogue for large groups.

The morning started with three successive sessions, one for each of the three stakeholder groups. Each group addressed a different set of questions (see appendix A for the list of questions, which had been sent to the presenters in advance). After 3-minute opening comments from each of the four in each group, the presenters engaged with each other for 15 minutes. After each stakeholder group had engaged within itself, the conversation broadened to include all 12 presenters. This allowed young scholars to react to the comments of vice chancellors and vice versa. Only after these series of conversations occurred was the discussion opened up to the wider audience comprising funders. Two small group sessions were held, the first taking off from what presenters had said and the second identifying national and institutional factors in an African subregion (East, West and South Africa). This geographically focused discussion was organized to attend to the exceptional nature of South Africa and the differences in histories and policy environments between East and West Africa. Each small group's discussions were shared orally and captured in writing, hopefully contributing to a large set of options for supporting the development and retention of the

next generation of academics. These options were clustered and laid out on a table. In the final session the 12 presenters were given game chips worth \$5 million and were asked to invest the funds across the options on the table. They then explained their grantmaking rationale to all workshop participants.

Selection of presenters

University leaders and young scholars were invited from PHEA partner universities. Attention was given to regional representation and gender balance. As a result, presenters came from eight partner universities across Ghana, Nigeria, South Africa, Tanzania and Uganda. Women made up half the presenters: two university leaders, three young scholars, and one researcher. Young scholars were chosen from universities not represented by university leaders, to afford them the freedom to speak without repercussion. Researchers were drawn from various institutions and were chosen because of their work in examining the issues of staff development and retention. They came from Ghana, Kenya and South Africa. All but one had looked at the issue in several African countries.

Appendix B is a list of presenters, and in appendix C are the biographical statements of the presenters.

Session 1: Perspectives of university leaders

Each of the university leaders addressed the following two questions:

- In developing and retaining the next generation of academics, what are the most significant constraints facing your university?
- What efforts are under way to address the constraints?

Yunus Ballim, Deputy Vice Chancellor, University of Witwatersrand, South Africa

One of the constraints faced in South Africa is in the minds of black and female South Africans as they see themselves as having limited opportunities to have academic careers. Professor Ballim stressed the need to pay attention to the lived experiences of young people in academia. The institutional culture does not always support or stimulate interest in academia and thus academia is seen as unat-

tractive for its lack of proper mentorship, poor quality of supervision, and inadequate funding and other resources. Prof. Ballim shared his experiences as a black student pursuing postgraduate studies, the difficulties he encountered as a result of institutional racism, and the value he found in having an academic mentor to provide counsel and guidance.

To address retention problems, Prof. Ballim recommended that staff spend a postdoctoral period outside their institution and that attention be paid to managing teaching loads. He also spoke of the need for staff development strategies that pay attention to undergraduate and graduate pipelines, reaching out to underrepresented students as early as their senior year of high school, enhancing the postgraduate experience, and addressing the general institutional culture. He argued that the responsibility of the University of the Witwatersrand is to develop students to take up academic positions in other institutions, preferably African institutions.

Attahiru Muhammadu Jega, Vice Chancellor, Bayero University, Nigeria

Professor Jega outlined the challenges facing Bayero University in its attempt to recruit, retain, retrain and remunerate the next generation of African academics. In recruiting, the university provides first-class students with the opportunity to take up academic staff positions, but few accept these offers. The lack of attraction for young scholars is a serious concern, especially considering the retention trends and public sector reforms. As an illustration, 283 academics (119 with PhD degrees) left the institution between 1986/87 and 1999. Public-sector reforms led to wage freezes, which adversely affected recruitment efforts. Contributing further to this are an inadequate research infrastructure and problems of academic inbreeding.

In response, Bayero has attempted to increase its capacity to do graduate training and provide opportunities for newly recruited staff to pursue PhDs abroad. From 1999 to 2007, fellowships have been provided for 175 academic staff to pursue graduate training. The John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation has supported 45 PhDs abroad and

35 PhDs in Nigeria as well as expanded links and research collaborations. The university has also provided additional facilities and increased research funds through its internally generated revenue, which between 2005 and 2007 increased by 700 percent from 33,000 to 250,000 naira. One innovation has been to introduce teaching assistantships for PhD students. In the higher education system, the National Universities Commission introduced LEADS (Linkage and Exchange of Academics in Diaspora). LEADS seeks to link African academics with academics in the Diaspora through cross-institutional exchanges of six to nine months. Also at the country level, national research foundations are being established through the Education Tax Fund.

Funmi Bickersteth, Deputy Vice Chancellor, Obafemi Awolowo University, Nigeria

Professor Bickersteth provided a snapshot of the recruitment, retention, training and remuneration issues affecting Obafemi Awolowo University (OAU). At OAU, there are 30,000 students and 1,000 academic staff, of which 263 are professors. In the last five years, 76 professors have retired. Other challenges to faculty development are related to postgraduate training, curriculum and gender breakdown of the next generation of academics. At present at OAU, 72 percent of female students are in the humanities because of the high costs for science and technology infrastructure. Approximately 1,000 of the 3,592 postgraduate students are female (28 percent). Professor Bickersteth attributes gender inequities to the insufficient resources available for females in the undergraduate pipeline, since only 3,500 of the 30,000 students are female (12 percent). Constraints to retaining staff include limited opportunities for sabbaticals (time is used locally to do consultancies necessary to supplement income), uncompetitive salaries, outdated research and teaching environment, heavy workload, and an imbalance between teaching and research in reward systems. Despite limited opportunity to publish internationally, publications are still valued over teaching.

In an attempt to counter these challenges, OAU is engaging alumni, maintaining links with resource

centers, encouraging staff to seek fellowships, holding workshops on proposal writing, developing equipment in OAU's Central Science Laboratory, offering leadership skills for senior administrators, and reaching out to academic staff in the Diaspora through its staff exchange program.

Lillian Tibatemwa-Ekirikubinza, Deputy Vice Chancellor, Makerere University, Uganda

At Makerere University, among the problems are the high academic qualifications needed for recruitment, the lack of poor staff exposure to new ways of working through study abroad and staff exchange, government remuneration based on rank and not merit, aggressive recruitment by the private sector, and inadequate research facilities. As a result, scholars trained abroad find it difficult to return to ill-equipped home institutions. This is most evident in the Faculty of Medicine.

Professor Tibatemwa-Ekirikubinza reported that the university has generated funds internally and obtained support from development partners to assist in institutional efforts to develop and retain the next generation of academics. The institution has engaged the government to increase the salaries of academic staff. Legally, universities have autonomy, but in practice the overwhelming bureaucracy constrains their ability to mobilize external funding. Other efforts to address faculty retention include commercializing intellectual property management of research, downsizing support staff numbers, conducting collaborative research with more endowed universities, and engaging alumni. More could be done on the last; the university was founded in 1922 and the number of alumni is large. The following summary captures the concerns and suggestions coming out of the discussion among the university leaders.

Constraints on developing faculty

- *Perceived limits:* Most presenters felt that undergraduate and pretertiary students are not sufficiently inspired to join academia. Young people simply do not consider academia as a career option because they perceive a lack of mentorship, funding and other resources. Black students in

South Africa and female students in general, tend to view themselves as having limited opportunities to pursue an academic career.

- *Gender distribution:* There are considerable gender differences in enrolments across disciplines and levels. At Obafemi Awolowo University, 72 percent of female students are in the humanities, and less than a third of all postgraduate students are females. Insufficient resources for females in the undergraduate pipeline contribute to this.
- *Institutional culture:* The culture of the universities does not support or encourage students' engagement in the world of ideas. Presenters argued that students are not convinced about spending the rest of their lives on campus; even their own experiences as students have convinced them otherwise. Issues that demotivate students from aspiring to be academics range from poor supervision to the examples of existing academics.
- *Competition:* Universities are often unable to compete in the labor market. Traditionally universities in Africa retained their brightest students to serve on the faculty; however, it is no longer perceived as an honor to be retained by the university. The university also has to contend with aggressive competition from the corporate sector, which too is eager for talent.
- *Poor remuneration:* In most of sub-Saharan Africa, academic staff members are poorly paid, a situation that has been exacerbated by government freezes on university staff wages.
- *Outdated research and training facilities:* Given the gradual deterioration of facilities and the high cost of replacing them, universities have been forced to use outdated research and training facilities, which cannot support postgraduate studies.

Constraints on the retention of academics

- *Aggressive recruitment strategies from the private sector:* Universities find it increasingly difficult to compete with the private sector. Junior and senior

academics are targeted by the corporate sector and private tertiary institutions.

- *Competing norms for appointment and promotion in private universities:* At Makerere University, the recruitment system places high emphasis on the quantitative academic achievement and seniority during appointment and promotion. Private institutions competing for the same staff place less emphasis on these traditional factors and promote their staff faster, sometimes with lesser qualifications, and pay them better.
- *Bureaucracy around hiring:* Hiring systems in most public universities are very bureaucratic, characterized by lags in communication and the need to navigate multiple administrative layers. In some universities, such as in Ghana, even the vice chancellor sits on the selection panels. In Obafemi Awolowo University, in a year when 76 professors retired, no one was hired. Bureaucratic obstacles discourage many qualified prospective academics.
- *Workload issues:* The hiring challenges and expanded enrolments of the last decade have had a negative effect on faculty workload. With fewer professors to handle the teaching, both the number and the size of classes increase, and time available for research and scholarship suffers. This is particularly detrimental to young academics.
- *Teaching vs. research:* The upward mobility of young staff is compromised by pegging promotions primarily to research accomplishments to the exclusion of teaching, even as teaching demands are ever increasing. Some faculty members at Wits are employed just to teach, and their promotion options are very limited. Presenters argued for improvements in the way teaching is evaluated and that teaching be included as an important element in considering promotions. It was acknowledged that an academic is expected to be involved in the three core areas of teaching, research, and community engagement. Evaluating the quality of teaching is a difficult challenge, but one that must be addressed.

- *Lack of mentoring and professional development opportunities:* Young academics need continued intellectual stimulation and professional development in curriculum, pedagogy and workload management. There is a need to institutionalize such efforts.

Efforts being made to address the constraints

The presenters identified various efforts under way to address these constraints. These included strategic plans, as well as discrete initiatives using institutional and external funding.

- *Intensifying alternative routes to supporting PhD studies:* Universities are creatively developing alternative routes to help their young staff acquire PhDs, including institutional partnerships with better resourced universities in the North.
- *Early identification of talented undergraduates:* Bayero University has undertaken to identify talented students in their third year of studies and is motivating them to consider a career in academia. A Wits program supports first-generation secondary students in rural areas.
- *Improving infrastructure to support research:* A variety of strategies are being employed to improve the research infrastructure, such as expanding research links with resource-rich universities in the North; engaging broader social support, such as from the university, alumni and corporate worlds; and improving links with academic staff in the Diaspora.
- *Expanding the resource base:* The need to address resource constraints cannot be overstated. Increasing the money available for research and other core functions of the university has been priority, with universities increasingly looking internally for funding. Examples include Makerere developing the intellectual property rights policy to commercialize intellectual innovations and Bayero's use of private sector and university partnerships at Bayero.
- *Supporting staff to compete for fellowship programs:* Makerere University has set in place a support system for staff competing for prestigious re-

search fellowships. Obafemi Awolowo University holds workshops to assist young researchers sharpen their research proposals before submission to competitive requests for proposals (RFPs).

- *Providing opportunities for postgraduate students:* All the presenters indicated that their universities had in place a program for graduate teaching assistantship.
- *Reducing workloads:* Bayero University is using full-time equivalents to compensate for excessive workloads and making an effort to distribute teaching workload across semesters.
- *Advocating at national levels:* Following the change of leadership in Nigeria and the ushering in of a regime more friendly to higher education, universities began advocating better wages for academic staff. Efforts are also under way to build national research foundations to enable the movement of research funds into universities.
- *Stretching the available resources:* Universities are employing strategies to stretch available resources. Obafemi Awolowo University has assembled funds to build a central science laboratory that departments can share.
- *Long-term planning:* Makerere, for example, has introduced a 10-year strategic plan.
- *Human resources restructuring:* Universities have adopted human resources restructuring programs, including the downsizing of non-core staff and outsourcing some of the non-core functions, freeing up funds for academic staff.

Session 2: Perspectives of young scholars

The young scholars were asked to answer the following questions, drawing on their experiences in their respective institutions.

- What has helped and hindered your progress in building your career in academia? Consider your experience pre- and postdoctorate.
- What would make a big difference in your building a successful career?

What has helped?

- *Early decision to go into academia:* One presenter strongly felt that she did not just drift into academia; it was an early decision, a personal move from career to do a softer version of engineering.
- *Constant communication with home institution:* One of the fears young scholars hold, especially those who undertake their studies outside the country, is of isolation. Keeping in touch with the faculty during the duration of the course helped immensely during re-entry.
- *Exposure advantage:* Undertaking training outside the home university added value, especially to cementing the value of academia.
- *Academic mentorship:* In the University of Cape Town (UCT), allocating a university mentor helps young scholars maneuver the world of research and academia. Within departments, allocating the scholar specific tasks leads to the scholar being given co-supervisory roles.
- *Existing institutional programs:* Universities such as UCT have institutionalized initiatives such as the Emerging Researcher Program to support young scholars. Makerere University holds seminars to train young researchers in vital skills such as how to turn their research into articles for journal publication. The University of Dar es Salaam has in place a system that allows students to enroll for their PhDs while still undertaking their normal loads.

What has hindered?

Combining full-time teaching and administrative work with PhD studies is quite strenuous. This also resonates in workload issues.

- *General disinterest:* It was argued that the university administration does not treat academic staff as intellectuals; they are treated more as employees. This hinders intellectual stimulation, as more administrative-type duties are allocated to the “employee.”

- Given the *oversubscription of universities*, generally no attention is paid to human resources satisfaction of faculty. This demoralizes young staff, as there is no motivation to improve or sharpen their work.
- *Faculty culture:* Some faculties are inflexible regarding what they consider research-worthy areas, making young scholars apprehensive about their study choices. The UCT Faculty of Engineering was mentioned in this regard.
- *Poor communication* between the faculty, students and the young scholar regarding their specific roles.
- *Diversity of teaching expectations:* Upon returning to campus, young academics may have to teach courses that fall within their general study area but of which they may have little expertise.
- *Lack of racial and gender equity*, specifically in the “hard” sciences and South African context: one scholar commented on the awkwardness of being the only female and black student in the class.

What would make a big difference in your building a successful career?

- *Encouragement and the provision of space to enable young academics to do their work:* Support to write and publish their work in journals, opportunity to build capacity and to gain skills like writing policy briefs.
- *Training:* More specific training should home in on making young scholars better researchers.

Panel session from the young scholars

A review of the factors that inspired the young scholars and drove them to join academia revealed that almost all young academics had a deliberate interest and desire to join academia and were not defined by compensation. Each presenter discussed a number of personal and professional difficulties that could have discouraged them from remaining in academia, although they opted to remain.

Comments from the young scholars

Nana

- *Hindrances:* Public universities are oversubscribed so there is no real competition, and therefore little concern about image and improvement. Little is done to develop academic staff as intellectuals. Training in research techniques is lacking because PhD graduates are seen as finished products rather than lifelong learners.
- *Help:* Encouragement, challenges and an explicit set of expectations (such as publishing a dissertation). Having space and time to write and think so as to be intellectually stimulated; assistance in areas such as publishing.

Linda

- *Hindrances:* Engineering faculty is narrow-minded in its definition of research, so she has to constantly justify her salary. Poor communication of staff role by Human Resources (HR). Excessive workload.
- *Help:* Constant support by HR; national and international research rigor; teaching rewarding and valued. Integration with current research departments.
- *The good:* Mentorship. Having a specific role, such as being appointed as academic mentor to Carnegie program. Long-term plan by HR. Inclusion in mainstream departmental research projects. Emerging Researchers Program – attendance at rigorous seminars that focus on publishing doctorates and networking.

Evelyn

- Attracted to academia by the prospect of attracting and teaching female students.

Eric

- *Hindrances:* Constant pressure of having to teach a diverse number of courses.

Cross talk – plenary session

Evelyn: Before joining academia she was interested in joining or pursuing her academic field. Need to inculcate among young people the desire to contribute meaningfully to academia rather than focus on what can be gained.

Linda: Feels socially awkward and isolated as the only black female student in the department. Need to create an environment and space in which marginalized students can feel comfortable and integrated. It takes 5½ years for some black students to complete studies.

Nana: The task is to manage and balance various career activities. There are discrepancies between what you are expected to do and what really counts toward career advancement and promotion. Teaching and consultancies should be valued as important by the department.

Eric: Mentorship takes away time from research. Option to pursue postdoctoral work is attractive as it provides the opportunity to conduct research.

Session 3: Perspectives of researchers

The four researchers were asked to address the following questions, drawing on the investigations they have conducted.

- What are the major constraints facing African universities in developing and retaining the next generation of academics?
- With regard to this topic, what do we understand reasonably well and what are the critical gaps in our understanding?

Major constraints

- *Policy framework:* Lack of will to form a proper policy framework to guide the development of higher education. This is evident in many sub-Saharan countries where higher education hardly features in any of the goal-setting instruments.
- *Lack of a scientifically verifiable funding formula:* In sub-Saharan Africa, South Africa is the only country with a proper funding formula for the education system, including higher education. The lack of a funding formula deemphasizes the role of higher education in the socio-economic map.
- *Predominance of traditional methods of research:* Individual consultancies crowd researchers' academic time with donor-driven research agendas.

Research hence becomes individualized, poorly supported and uncontrolled, and most earnings are channeled into individuals' coffers.

- *Leadership and capacity deficit:* Universities lack leadership enshrined in a clear vision, backed with strategic plans and the vigor to move good plans forward. In addition the decision-making process at most institutions is stalled by layers of bureaucracy.
- *Recruitment procedures:* Unnecessarily long and uncompetitive.
- *Lack of support for successful programs:* There have been private initiatives to offer good PhD programs. Two good examples are the African Economic Research Consortium (AERC) program, and now the Africa Population and Health Research Center (APHRC). Getting governments to buy in, however, is challenging.

What do we understand and what are the critical gaps in our understanding?

What do we understand reasonably well?

- Political will for higher education reform is mostly donor driven. Developers of goal-setting documents such as poverty reduction strategy papers (PRSPs) have yet to be written in the higher education agenda.
- Devolution in universities has begun, which will allow for reduced response time and less bureaucracy.
- Most universities have begun putting institutional reforms in place, including alternative funding (second- and third-stream funding). This has brought about more financial stabilization, and universities have begun to attract hitherto lost staff.
- The changing political environment all over Africa is creating better space for higher education, that is, better governance systems that are more tolerant of higher education.
- Overall student enrollments have markedly

increased. In South Africa, however, the statistics point toward reduced numbers of first-time PhD registrations. This is in the context of an overall increase in numbers of students pursuing their PhDs, indicating a possible pile-up in the system.

- The increase in enrollments and the pressure to absorb them has in some countries like in South Africa brought about what Prof. Mouton referred to as “the cumulative disadvantage effect.” Previously disadvantaged students arrive on campus thoroughly unprepared, having gone through poor pretertiary institutions. This in turn affects the quality of their degree studies.
- *Globalization of the intellectual market:* The fluidity brought about by globalization has created market for academic talent. Mobility of staff has increased.
- *Private sector:* The emergence and proliferation of private universities is creating pressure on universities to compete, most times unfavorably. This competition is driving further away the creation of nodes of excellence.
- *Aging of active scientists:* The numbers of aging scientists have now been well documented.
- *Specialized institutions vs. comprehensive universities:* A response of universities to survival pressures has been an increase in, and diversity of, course offerings. This move is denying universities the requisite depth of expertise characteristic of specialized institutions.
- *Traditional notions of remunerating teachers:* Merit-based increments.
- *Data:* Many universities do not keep good data to track these changes and their efforts in mitigating the new challenges.

What are the critical gaps in our understanding?

The gaps were mostly expressed in questions that the presenters posed to the meeting.

- Are donors ready to take a more holistic ap-

proach to education – one that features an equal funding spread across various sectors of education, and that create synergies between various levels of education?

- What roles do regional bodies (NEPAD, African Union, and Association of African Universities) play in developing higher education in Africa? What explicit role can they play in advocating for higher education?
- Anecdotal evidence shows that the quality of supervision is declining. This also applies to the quality of theses produced. (Data for these statements have been drawn from student interviews and collation of the number of arbitrations.)
- Have there been tracer studies around models of supervision, and exceptional ones identified?
- Why is it that even after the shift in funding focus of the World Bank, and the resumption of support to higher education institutions, these developments do not register in local communities?
- What is the possibility of replicating successful cross-disciplinary programs like the AERC PhD program?

Session 4: Exchange among presenters

The panelists' exchange brought out an interesting debate around the trend toward deinstitutionalizing knowledge. Prof. Mouton attributed this trend to the lack of established research norms. In well-established institutions the standards required to undertake research are rigorous and institutional. In Africa, however, the nature of academic science revolves around individuals. The motivation to build knowledge is almost non-existent, as many academic staff undertake research primarily to get promoted. Ultimately, no real knowledge is transferred to others.

Debate was also spirited on comprehensive and specialized institutions: presenters felt that while it was necessary to separate specialized institutions to build specific skills, comprehensive institutions

were invaluable as a source of a wide range of knowledge production because of the diversity of courses. Presenters saw the need to raise the competence of comprehensive universities to make them competent knowledge producers.

Building nodes of excellence within the specialized and comprehensive universities was seen as important. In Brazil, bringing the best thinkers in metallurgy together with PhD students to help them develop their proposals was the beginning of creating networks and nodes of excellence.

- *Policy-makers*: Deep-seated feeling of policy-makers on the rates of returns of universities. They are deeply invested in this notion and completely fail to see the need for higher education. This is a challenge to developing universities. Foundations and other keen funders have a role to play in engaging governments to change these negative or indifferent attitudes toward higher education.
- *Role of African universities*: The role of the African university was revisited. Given the dearth of knowledge production in African universities, presenters reviewed the five core roles of the university in Africa:

Bastions of academic excellence

Guardians of democracy

Knowledge producers

Reservoirs of expertise

Research nodes

Other issues raised in the panel discussion

- *Co-authorship*: A review of the co-authorship trends shows that African researchers mostly preferred to publish with academic colleagues from the North. The correlation of this phenomenon to funding patterns was high. Sometimes this took colonial trends, such as Madagascar and its partnerships with universities in France.
- *Building capacity through adopting ICT*: African scientists do not collaborate with other African scientists but there is significant North–South

collaboration. Some of these collaborations go back to colonial times, as in Madagascar. There is need to create local scientific communities and adopt ICTs in building regional networks.

- *Individual and institutional competition for funds:* This blocks collaborative research between faculties, institutions and individuals, and causes further fragmentation of already weak institutions.

Session 5: Small group discussions

Workshop attendees and presenters were placed into four groups. Each person wrote down and shared a phrase that captured his or her attention. These phrases or “lessons” were subsequently written on index cards, collated and shared with all the groups.

Lessons and ideas picked from the discussions

Group 1

- Reconnecting the idea of the university
- Possibility of building synergies
- The negative (recessive) gene: gaps in leadership and the climates in which we work as academics
- Academics treated as employees and not intellectuals
- Development and higher mismatch: Who advocates higher education?
- Epistemic communities: How do we consolidate epistemic communities?
- Higher education policy research: finding ways to acquire the research and put it before policy-makers
- Limit of possibilities and the challenge that this presents to those concerned with changing the academic culture

Other discussions

- Balance between intellectual development and physical sustenance
- Role of universities and academics: historical concept and role of universities, and how this role has become more complicated

- Challenge of training students extending beyond institutional constraints
- Theme of limited possibilities: captured the issues and lack of opportunities for change in university culture

Group 2

- Deinstitutionalization of science, research and knowledge: building a critical mass of researchers
- Global nature of knowledge
- Global economy as a context in which African universities function and compete
- Development of communities of scholars
- Importance of recognition and reward for teaching
- Personal motivations for joining academia: altruism (desire to make a difference) vs. making a salary
- Re-examining the nature of African universities: What are they now, what should they be in the future?
- Universities and professors – don’t have to teach everything

Group 3

- Individualization of research
- What are the steps from PhD to intellectual?
- How do you get people excited about the world of ideas?
- Tensions: world-class scholars at regional institutions
- Differentiation: community of scholars
- Institutional culture not adequately supporting PhD students
- Need for regional and socio-historical contextualization of the challenges that face different institutions
- Workload management
- Need for the academic to be expressed in three areas: teaching, research and community engagement

Group 4

- Epistemic communities
- Nodes of excellence
- Community of scholarship
- Deinstitutionalization of research and knowledge
- Inadequate recognition of faculty
- Old notions of faculty
- Management of the institutions: improved human resource management
- Visionary leaders

Discussion

- Effect on publishing and recognition that results from the hierarchy of journals
- Positive role to play in creating research networks
- South–South collaboration

Session 6: Small geographic group discussions

Workshop attendees and presenters were placed into four regional groups. Each group focused on the institutional and national factors that influence the nature of the problem and potential solutions for developing and retaining the next generation of academics.

East Africa

Challenges

- Expansion of number of students in contrast to the slow rate of staff recruitment to keep up with the “massification” of higher education
- Rapid increase of numbers in individual universities
- Change in funding patterns and decrease in funding for East African universities.
- Commercialization of universities, vocationalization, which deflects professors from teaching and supervising
- Following of global trends, integrating polytechnics into universities
- Perceptions of internal and external sources
- Academia: the need to retool for delivery

- Core functions of the 21st century university (democracy, generation of funds, training for skills)
- Consultancy: should it count toward promotion?
- Heavy workload
- Caps on recruitment
- How real are the establishment figures?
- How do we manage research?

Solutions

- Encourage collaborative initiatives between the private sector and the university. Activities should be embedded in the core functions of the universities.
- Outsource items, such as housing at the University of Dar es Salaam.
- Commercialize research and innovations: giving value to the research before academia commercializes its results. Intellectual property rights, and do these rights support the young scholar? Does the patent, which is secret and does not get into the public domain, count towards evaluation? Institutionalizing patent registration as a form of evaluation, as a solution.
- Limit intakes, to improve lecturer–student ratios.
- Develop a funding formula.
- Rethink relationship between working PhD student and supervisor by strengthening the postgraduate board of studies. Enforce existing laws and supervision guidelines.
- Make universities the ones to drive the quality issues. Ensure supervision guidelines are enforced.
- Individual efforts: University of East Africa – conduct audit of student postgraduate trends.
- Provide funds to support full-time PhDs.
- Manage programs.
- Which route? Development partners and individualized research vs. university pursuing its own research agenda.

- Make the case for contribution of higher education by advocating for increased government support to higher education.
- Enhance publication culture: strengthen in house journals and stretch this to regional networks.
- Develop ICT infrastructure.
- Support gender equity (use the university's strategic plan and set targets and indicators).
- Build training capacity.
- Develop mentoring in faculties; provide post-doc support; learn to walk the academia ropes.

South Africa

- Quality of pretertiary school education
- Lack of preparedness of students for graduate school
- Affordability in state allocations
- Distance between old and new academics
- Reforms in South African universities over the last four years
- Brain drain
- Poor remuneration packages
- Need to develop capacity in South African universities
- Average age of people completing PhD is 40; those completing master's, 45

Solutions

Solutions were divided into two categories: governmental and institutional.

Governmental solutions

- Government advocacy for higher education: government formula with attention to student-to-staff ratio
- Provision of fellowships
- Development of ICT infrastructure
- Need to make case for the socio-economic importance of higher education

- Reduce student-to-staff ratios

Institutional solutions

- Give faculty pedagogical training.
- Make quality assurance efforts in the university, including supervision.
- Buy teaching time to enable academic staff to engage in research.
- Strengthen research management by creating incubators for research and training.
- Provide mentorships and systems for entry into higher education of marginalized groups.
- Demystify degree acquisitions.
- Cluster students based on disciplines.
- Provide courses in research methodology.
- Provide full financial support so that PhD candidates do not have to work part-time.
- Support the African Academy for Doctoral Research – virtual institution with physical branches.
- Provide pedagogical training.
- In a community of scholars, exchange opportunities and provide opportunities for leadership for young academics.
- Provide more support for research network.
- Upgrade facilities and labs.
- Retain senior scholars and integrate them in developing young academics.
- Generate a sense of ownership among students so that they become “insiders” rather than see themselves as “outsiders” within their institutions.

West Africa

Solutions

- Build community of scholars: research groups.
- Set up mentoring programs.
- Support graduate training.
- Workload issues: create the space for scholars to pursue research, teach smaller class sizes, and

receive instruction in pedagogical techniques.

- Diaspora community: tap into and engage those in them in building the West African scholarship community.
- Internal initiatives: set up institutional regulatory and policy reforms.
- Support collaborative institutional links.
- Build national grantmaking institutions to support research.

Session 7: Report from geographic group discussion and areas of investment

Using the set of ideas for intervention that came out of sessions 5 and 6, which were then collated into eight general categories, presenters assigned symbols of financial resources to their priorities and discussed their reasoning. Each presenter was given five chips, which represented 5 million dollars. Chips were color coded so as to identify the areas of investment of each group of presenters: university leaders (blue), young scholars (green) and researchers (red).

The eight areas of investment were:

1. Building communities of scholars

- Organize research networks.
- Open innovation research network with collaborative and mentorship requirements.
- Engage the Diasporic in building communities of scholars.
- Fund research projects that are “webbed,” – draw on different layers of expertise within higher education institutions.
- Set up industry research incubators where young researchers can create ideas with corporate salaries.
- Link institutions collaboratively.

2. Support for graduate training

- Support platform for PhD development in specific subject areas – multi-university and engagement with international specialists.
- Organize comprehensive financial support for

PhDs – no loans and no part-time jobs.

- Make four-year basic degree and master’s awards programs sector specific.
- Institute PhD awards programs.
- Retain senior scholars and develop their capacity to serve as competent supervisors and mentors.
- Work with African Academy for Doctoral Research.

3. Institutional regulatory and policy reform (bottlenecks)

- Manage workload to create room for scholarship.
- Strengthen research administration and management at universities.
- Enforce institutional policies for PhD students and recent postdoctoral students – study leave, loads, etc.
- Universities create reward systems for innovation, including commercialization and public domain contributions.
- University quality assurance efforts include postgraduate supervision issues.
- Component “ownership” of university investment in intellectual culture is missing.
- Develop social and cultural capital to enable continued higher education degree incentives.
- Encourage departments and institutes to focus on issues of clustering graduate students in common disciplines.
- Create system to channel research through universities in such a way that researcher gets time and credit for work done.

4. Publishing

- Support young scholars’ publishing efforts.
- Strengthen in-house and regional journals.

5. Mentoring and professional development

- Provide leadership opportunities for young academics.
- Systematize mentorship and orientation from

entry with a particular focus on marginalized groups.

- Provide training and capacity building for faculty, such as in proposal writing and supervision.
- Provide training in research methodologies.
- Train in pedagogy techniques to handle large classes.
- Set up postdoctoral fellowships.
- Fund projects that provide research funds, mentors and workshops and buy out teaching time.
- Provide opportunities that make degrees less of a mystery, particularly for “high conceptual demand” degrees; encourage individual collaborations that are more structured and directed towards undergraduate learning.
- Cluster students in common disciplinary areas across institutions to work together and hold common workshops.

6. *Government advocacy and funding*

- Advocate increased government support of universities (per capita, staff, research).
- Secure government funding for postgraduate fellowships.
- Create government funding formula with attention to student–staff ratios and teaching quality.
- Reduce student–staff ratios through hiring, reduced enrollment, etc.
- Make the case for contribution of higher education to social and economic development, especially to policy-makers
- Build national grantmaking institutions to support research.

7. *Institutional infrastructure*

- Improve ICT infrastructure on university campuses.
- Upgrade facilities and labs.

8. *Pipeline*

- Institute program to identify and support underrepresented high intellectual achievers in the

last two years of high school in preparation for their university entry.

- Implement McNair-type program for undergraduate scholars (like Mellon – bridge program for undergraduate to master’s to doctoral.
- Support promising potential academics in the final year of study and honors programs.

Rationale for investment decisions

In general, presenters chose their areas of investment based on three factors: overlap of categories, limited resources and greatest comparative leverage. Support was overwhelming among university leaders to build a community of scholars, which they felt was important in developing and retaining the next generation of academics, but no investment was promoted in the area of institutional regulatory and policy reform. A university leader argued that such reform was an internal issue that did not require considerable investment in contrast to other areas of investment.

The greatest portion of investment for researchers was support for graduate training, with no investments made toward mentoring or professional development. This was based on a general view that graduate training programs encompass mentoring and professional development. As such, there was no need to make a separate investment in mentorship and professional development. Young scholars’ major support went towards “institutional regulatory and policy reform (bottlenecks),” which was believed to be important in reforming the institutional culture so as to create a favorable work environment for young academics.

Although all presenters agreed to the importance of the pipeline, no investment was made toward that area as focus was placed on higher education issues rather than pipeline because it seemed a greater priority.

Areas of investment

Areas of investment	University leaders	Young scholars	Researcher	Total investment (million dollars)
Building communities of scholars	7	3	5	15
Support for graduate training	4	1	10	15
Institutional regulatory and policy reform (bottlenecks)	–	7	2	9
Publishing	2	3	1	6
Mentoring/professional development	4	5	–	9
Government advocacy and funding	1	1	1	3
Institutional infrastructure	2	–	1	3
Pipeline	–	–	–	–

Appendix A. Workshop program

Perspectives on developing and retaining the next generation of academics in African universities

Workshop at AGAG conference organized by PHEA

5 February 2008

9:00 am – 4:00 pm

Overview

Most African universities are facing a critical need to replenish their academic ranks. An aging generation of academics is due to retire and universities are not able to meet the demands caused by expanded student enrollment, brain drain, AIDS and the existing underqualified teaching staff.

In this session, funders will engage with young scholars, university leaders and researchers studying academic staff retention in African universities. These presenters will speak to the nature of the problem, the disincentives for staying in academia, and what they see as promising approaches to develop and retain academics, encourage in-migration and counter depletion. Each group of presenters will address a different set of questions and then react to their colleagues' comments. This will be followed by a series of small group sessions to promote conversation among presenters and with the funders. A record of the discussions will be compiled.

Agenda

9:00 am *Welcome*, introductions and workshop overview

9:30 am *Session 1. Perspectives of four university leaders*

Three-minute opening statements from each of the four university leaders addressing the questions:

- In developing and retaining the next generation of academics, what are the most significant constraints facing your university?
- What efforts are under way to address the constraints?
- A round of comments from each university leader, reacting to what the other university leaders said in their opening statements

10:00 am *Session 2. Perspectives of four young scholars*

Three-minute opening statements from each of the four young scholars addressing the questions:

- What has helped and hindered your progress in building your career in academia? Consider your experience pre- and postdoctorate.
- What would make a big difference in your building a successful career?
- A round of comments from each young scholar, reacting to what the other young scholars said in their opening statements

10:30 am *Session 3. Perspectives of four researchers*

Three-minute opening statements from each of the four researchers addressing the questions:

- What are the major constraints facing African universities in developing and retaining the next generation of academics?

- With regard to this topic, what do we understand reasonably well and what are the critical gaps in our understanding?
- A round of comments from each researcher, reacting to what the other researchers said in their opening statements

11:00 am *Session 4. Exchange among presenters*

Three-minute reactions from each presenter to any other presenter

11:45 am *Session 5. Small group discussion (8–9 with facilitator at each table)*

Presenters join the audience of funders to discuss issues in greater depth.

- Each person writes down a phrase that captured their attention
- These are shared with the small group
- Discussion commences on what was heard
- Each participant records 1–3 conclusions or lessons they take away from the discussion. These will be collated and shared after the workshop.

12:30 am Lunch

- Comment cards from session 5 will be displayed. Organizers will identify issues viewed as most pressing

1:30 pm Continuation of session 5 discussions

2:00 pm *Session 6. Small geographic group discussions*

Small groups will be reorganized into three, focusing on East Africa, West Africa and South Africa

- Each group will discuss institutional and national factors that influence the nature of the problem and potential solutions for developing and retaining the next generation of academics
- Each group will report back to the full group

3:00 pm *Session 7. Report from geographic group discussions*

Using the set of ideas for intervention that came out of sessions 5 and 6, the presenters will assign symbols of financial resources to their priorities and discuss their reasoning.

3:45 pm *Closing*

- Next steps
- Vote of thanks

Appendix B. Presenters

University leaders

Yunus Ballim, Deputy Vice Chancellor, University of Witwatersrand, South Africa
Funmi Bickersteth, Deputy Vice Chancellor, Obafemi Awolowo University, Nigeria
Attahiru Muhammadu Jega, Vice Chancellor, Bayero University, Nigeria
Lillian Tibatemwa-Ekirikubinza, Deputy Vice Chancellor, Makerere University, Uganda

Young scholars

Nana Akua Anyidoho, University of Ghana
Linda Kotta, Dept. of Chemical Engineering, University of Cape Town, South Africa
Eric Kra, Faculty of Engineering Sciences, University of Ghana
Evelyn Mweta Richard, University of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania

Researchers

Caroline Kabiru, African Population and Health Research Center, Inc.
Paschal Buberwa Miho, University of Namibia; author of 2007 WGHE study
Johann Mouton, University of Stellenbosch, South Africa
Wisdom Tettey, University of Calgary, Canada; author of 2006 World Bank study

Appendix C. Biographical statement of presenters

University leaders

Yunus Ballim is the Deputy Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs at the University of Witwatersrand. In 2007 he was appointed Vice Principal of the university. He holds BSc, MSc and PhD degrees in civil engineering. Between 1983 and 1989, he worked in construction and precast concrete industries. In 1989 he was awarded the Portland Cement Institute Research Fellowship based at the University of the Witwatersrand (Wits), and in 1992, he was appointed lecturer in Civil Engineering. He currently holds a personal professorship at Wits, and he was the Head of the School of Civil and Environmental Engineering from 2001 to 2005. His research is mainly in cement and concrete materials and he has published around 70 peer-reviewed articles in this field. From 2003 to 2005, he served as the founding president of the African Materials Research Society. He also held the Bram Fisher-Oxford Fellowship in 2000. He presently serves as a member of the Commission for higher education in South Africa.

Funmi Togonu-Bickersteth has been Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic) at Obafemi Awolowo University (OAU), Ile-Ife, Nigeria, since August 2007. She joined the young Department of Psychology of OAU in 1979 as Lecturer II and became a Professor in the department in 1995. She served as the Director of the Centre of Industrial Research and Development from 2002 to 2000. Her areas of academic interests include aging and poverty, entrepreneurship development, policy development and policy analysis. In addition to teaching and research, she has had opportunities to work outside the university system on issues of national and global concern. Specifically, she served as a member of the United Nations Committee on Development Policy from 2000 to 2004 and was also the National Programme Manager for the ILO International Programme on Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC) between 2000 and 2002. She has also benefited from diverse training programs, including those aimed at assisting OAU diversify the sources of funds to better meet the challenges of providing quality

education and promoting cutting edge research in the university.

Lillian Tibatemwa-Ekirikubinza is Deputy Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs at Makerere University, Uganda. She was Deputy Dean of the Faculty of Law at Makerere University and was appointed part-time commissioner of the Uganda Law Reform Commission in 1999. She has been active in the Ugandan offices of the Association of Women Lawyers, and Women and the Law in East Africa. Dr. Tibatemwa-Ekirikubinza earned her PhD in law from the University of Copenhagen, Denmark; an LLM in commercial law from the University of Bristol, UK; an LLB (Hons) degree from Makerere University and a postgraduate diploma in legal practice from the Law Development Centre, Kampala. She has published widely in areas of women's law; children's rights and constitutionalism. Among her publications are the books *Women's Violent Crime in Uganda: More Sinned Against than Sinning* (1999), *Offences against the Person: Homicides and Non-fatal Assaults in Uganda* (2005) and *Criminal Law in Uganda: Sexual Assaults and Offences against Morality* (2005).

Attahiru Muhammadu Jega is Vice Chancellor of Bayero University, Kano, Nigeria. He was previously Academic Deputy Vice Chancellor of Bayero University, and served as director of the Centre for Democratic Research and Training, Bayero University, Kano. He was a visiting research fellow at the Department of Political Science, University of Stockholm, Sweden, at St. Peter's College at the University of Oxford, and a visiting senior research fellow at the Nigerian Institute of International Affairs. Professor Jega currently serves as a member of the Presidential Committee on the Assessment and Monitoring of the Millennium Development Goals, and as a Member of the Presidential Advisory Council on Youth Affairs. He was conferred the national award of Officer of the Federal Republic in December 2005 in recognition of his work toward the development of Nigeria and its people. He received his MA and PhD degrees in political science from Northwestern University.

Young scholars

Nana Akua Anyidoho is a Research Fellow at the Institute of Statistical, Social and Economic Research (ISSER) at the University of Ghana. She has a PhD in Human Development and Social Policy from Northwestern University, and a BA in Psychology from the University of Ghana. Before entering academia, she worked in the corporate world as a business consultant and in the development arena as a field worker. Dr. Anyidoho was appointed to the faculty of the University of Ghana in 2005. She currently serves on the university's Academic Board and as a tutor of an undergraduate residence hall.

Linda Kotta was born and raised in the black township of Umlazi on the south coast of KwaZulu Natal in South Africa. She attended local township schools until standard 5 (grade 7), at which point she left for boarding school and attended the Sacred Heart convent school for black girls in Verulam, also on the north coast of Natal. After grade 8, she continued her education at Uthongathi, a private non-racial school on the north coast of Natal. Her sporting career and studies in the sciences started and flourished at Uthongathi. She received her BSc in Chemical Engineering at the University of Natal. She worked in the gold processing industry, followed by environmental consulting, and a master's degree in Education. She is currently a member of the academic staff in the Department of Chemical Engineering at the University of Cape Town, where she is also pursuing her PhD.

Eric Kra graduated with a BSc in Agriculture (Mechanization) from the University of Ghana in 1986. After working for three years as a teaching assistant at the University of Ghana he made a career change and studied for an MS in bio-resource engineering at the University of British Columbia, Canada. He returned to Ghana in 1992 and was appointed lecturer in the Agricultural Engineering Department (then under the Faculty of Agriculture), University of Ghana. About five years later he was granted study leave for a PhD. In 2002 he was awarded his PhD in irrigation engineering by Utah State University. He returned to his position at the

Agricultural Engineering Department (now under the recently formed Faculty of Engineering Sciences). Because of staff shortage his teaching has not been limited to one department—he teaches courses in the Agricultural Engineering Department, the Computer Engineering Department, general courses in both the Faculty of Agriculture and Consumer Sciences, and the Faculty of Engineering Sciences. His research interests include irrigation system design, computational fluid mechanics, crop water requirements, post-harvest losses, and innovation studies. He is a member of the Ghana Institution of Engineers, the American Society of Agricultural and Biological Engineers and the American Society of Civil Engineers.

Evelyn Mweta Richard earned her Licentiate at the Umeå School of Business, Sweden (2006), MBA at Makerere University, Uganda (2000), and BCom at the University of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania (1996). At Dar es Salaam, she is an academic staff member and a PhD student. For eight years, she has lectured on finance-related courses, particularly International Business Finance, Corporate Financial Management, Financial Statement Analysis and Risk Management. In addition, she supervises both undergraduate and postgraduate students. Ms Richard has participated in researching how to boost employment through small enterprise development. She further participated in a pilot study assessing the needs of procurement entities of local government authorities in Tanzania. With her supervisors, she wrote a conference paper, "Credit Risk Management System of a Commercial Bank in Tanzania." She has a publication on "Credit Risk Management Policy and Strategies: A Case of a Commercial Bank in Tanzania." She is a member of the Academic Staff Assembly and the Dar es Salaam University Finance Association.

Researchers

Caroline Kabiru obtained her PhD in Health Promotion and Behavior from the University of Georgia (USA) in 2005. She also holds an MPH degree from the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill (USA) and a BSc degree in Environmental

Health from the University of Georgia. Following her doctoral studies, Dr Kabiru worked as an instructor at Georgia Perimeter College and as a postdoctoral fellow in the Institute of Gerontology at the University of Georgia. Prior to joining the African Population and Health Research Center (APHRC), she completed a short-term consultancy with Urban Harvest, an initiative of the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR), in Nairobi, Kenya. At APHRC, Caroline is involved in research projects focusing on sexual and reproductive health and adolescent transitions to adulthood. Her research interests include adolescent health, sexual and reproductive health, and environmental health.

Paschal B. Mihyo is a specialist in public law and public administration with a PhD in law. Currently, he is Professor of Politics and Administrative Studies at the University of Namibia (UNAM), based at the Centre for Public Service Training. Before joining UNAM he was Dean of Studies (1992–1995) and Head of the Human Rights Programme at the Institute of Social Studies, where he worked for 17 years, Coordinator of the African Technology Policies Studies Network in Nairobi for two years (1996–1998) and Director of Research and Programmes at the Association of African Universities (2004–2005). He has provided technical advisory services on higher education for the Association of African Universities, the Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA), the African Development Bank, the Directorate-General for International Cooperation (DGIS) of the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida/SAREC), the World Bank and other agencies. He has published several books and articles on higher education, social policy and ICTs in community development in Africa. He has recently completed a study for the ADEA Working Group on Higher Education on staff retention in African universities and possibilities of linking up with the African Diaspora.

Johann Mouton is Director of the Centre for Research on Science and Technology (CREST) and

Professor in the Department of Sociology at the University of Stellenbosch. He received his Doctorate in Philosophy at the Rand Afrikaans University in 1983 with a thesis on the philosophy of science. He taught in Philosophy at Potchefstroom University (1976–1977) and Rand Afrikaans University (1978–1982), after which he joined the Human Sciences Research Council where he was appointed as Head of the Centre for Research Methodology (1983–1990), Director of the Group for Information Dynamics (1990–1993) and Executive Director of the Centre for Science Development (1993–1994). He joined the University of Stellenbosch in 1994. He is currently project leader for various research programs in science and technology including a program on knowledge utilization funded by the Carnegie Corporation of New York, a project on changing modes of knowledge production in the higher education sector funded by SANPAD, the South Africa–Netherlands Research Programme on Alternatives in Development, a study on the state of women in the science, engineering and technology (SET) sector in South Africa commissioned by the Department of Science and Technology, as well as a project on indigenous knowledge systems funded by the National Research Foundation.

Wisdom Tetey is an Associate Professor and Assistant Dean (Research and Graduate Programs) in the Faculty of Communication and Culture, at the University of Calgary. His research interests are in information technologies, diasporas, knowledge mobilization, and state capacity building, particularly in higher education, with a regional focus on Africa. He has published extensively in these areas and is currently leading a World Bank Institute-sponsored initiative aimed at networking the Diaspora Ghanaian academics to support graduate student training in Ghana. He has served as a consultant and policy analyst for various organizations including the World Bank (higher education in Africa), the World Bank Institute (Diaspora Mobilization), the United Nations Development Programme (Mass Media and Information Technologies), and the Third World Academy/SciDev (Brain Drain).

Moderator

Suzanne Grant Lewis is Coordinator of the Partnership for Higher Education in Africa, a collaboration of seven US foundations supporting the transformation of higher education in nine African countries. She is a Research Scholar at the NYU Steinhardt School of Education. Dr. Grant Lewis was a Harvard faculty member 1997–2006, where she co-developed and directed the International Education Policy Program. Her research focuses on policy efforts to address educational inequalities in sub-Saharan Africa. She has a long-term commitment to developing educational research capacity in sub-Saharan Africa. She has published on the notion of participation in school governance, South Africa's education decentralization, the promotion of democratic decision-making in education, the role of microcomputers in African development and the national primary learning assessment in Namibia. Dr. Grant Lewis spent over five years in southern Africa as an adviser on research, policy and planning to the Namibian and Malawian ministries of Education and worked in various capacities in Kenya and Tanzania for six years. She earned her PhD from Stanford University and has been awarded Fulbright fellowships for research (Tanzania) and teaching (South Africa).