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

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Community engagement

Policy framework

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

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

locality - interest on specific outputs

national - geographic location, industry

regional/international - Common purpose

......formal & informal.......
WHY UNIVERSITIES?
GENERAL MANDATES FOR UNIVERSITIES

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

◆ Agents of change
◆ Knowledge hubs (specialized studies)
◆ Resource mobilization (financial,
◆ Blend in with local communities, and
◆ Varied expertise – solving societal challenges
◆ Specific assigned roles
◆ +……..
Policy framework
WHERE ARE WE??

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

Status quo??

……from RUFORUM study report:

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

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

◆ Demand driven research to solve a specific problem (eg. manufacturing/processing/marketing)

◆ Joint on site research (farm, hospital, school, +...)

◆ National priorities (Problem identification/solving res. → solutions)

◆ Socially responsive research
Consultancy units

On request/competitive bidding

Clients: Govt., NGOs, Companies, Embassies, individuals
U-CE (OUTREACH)

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

- ACE II (World Bank)
- SEP
Challenges
CHALLENGES

◆ Documentation (scattered)
◆ Funding
◆ Staffing levels
◆ IPR & Patents
◆ Structured U-CE programmes
◆ Alumni records and engagement
Way forward
RUFORUM-University Community Engagement (2017) report:

1. Increasingly, HEI and research organizations are being required to make strategic commitments to engaging with the public (= REQUIRED: policies; guidelines; procedures), and
2. Researchers & academic staff must be recognized and valued for their CE activities

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

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

◆ Establishment/adoption of more centres for CE activities,

◆ Enhanced partnerships with local and international stakeholders,

◆ Increased fund mobilization from external donors to enhance partnerships with international stakeholders.
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Thank you
BIBLIOGRAPHY
