

A Strategy for Managing PhD Research in a Resource Challenged Environment at Kenyatta University, Kenya

By

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Introduction

- Institutionalisation of quality management, as well as new approaches to teaching and learning remain the focus of institutions of higher learning in Kenya
- Ominde report , 1964; Gachathi Report, 1976; 45th Report to the International Conference on Education, 1996; the Koech Report, 1999 and Session paper No 1 2005
- Public universities in Kenya have over the years played a major role in human capacity development at all levels in the country
- To remain competitive both in Africa and in the world, Kenyan public universities need to engage in interdisciplinary collaboration amongst themselves and with other institutions
- Public universities need to have a clear understanding of the factors that facilitate and/or impede the interdisciplinary collaboration process and quality research



Public Universities in Kenya

- University of Nairobi, Nairobi
- Kenyatta University, Nairobi
- Moi University, Eldoret
- Egerton University, Njoro, Nakuru
- Maseno University, Kisumu
- Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology, Juja, Thika
- Western University College of Science and Technology, Kakamega

Duplication of programmes - compromising on their mandates

Presence and participation of postgraduate students - low



- **To cultivate rich and diverse collaborations there is need to:-**
 - **Use the process of learning and teaching as a factor in collaboration**
 - **Use collaboration as a motivating factor to receiving academic or other forms of credit including career progression and personal development**
 -
 - **remove administrative barriers**
 - **take steps to reduce risks associated with collaboration**
 - **foster an environment that encourages researchers to collaborate across disciplines**
 - **give credit to funded research projects**



Teaching and Learning at KU

- The vision of Kenyatta University is in line with the provision of the Kenya National Development Plan (2002 – 2008)
- To be a dynamic, inclusive and competitive centre of excellence in teaching, learning, research, and service to humanity
- Kenyatta University's 2005-2015 Strategic Plan targets restructuring of academic programmes and administrative units to address the vision.
- The University's teaching, learning and research opportunities cut across diverse disciplines offered to over 21,150 undergraduate students and 1,264 Postgraduate Students (Ratio 16:1).



Teaching and Learning at KU----

- Postgraduates represent only 6% of the student population
- The six schools (SE -56%; SHSS-10%; SPAS-13%; SESHs-4%; SB-13%; SHS-4%) as well as Graduate School (GS) with their 39 teaching departments have failed to attract critical numbers of postgraduate students
- SESHs and SHSS have adequate staffing levels to engage in postgraduate research - their postgraduate admission is low
- Need to enhance postgraduate teaching and training is emphasized due to current environmental pressures both in Kenya and worldwide



Teaching and Learning at KU-----

land resource use challenges need training programmes and research that build human capacity and provide repository of information for planning, monitoring and management of resources.

Training that build disaster resilient communities through strengthening capacity to mitigate, prevent, and respond to disasters within sustainable development framework.

- How then does the SESHs and the other schools come to be involved in interdisciplinary research & collaboration?
- Does the University's research agenda aim to develop research facilities and laboratories relevant to the training needs of postgraduate students?
- This questions and many others form the basis of developing an interdisciplinary framework for PhD research at SESHs.





Base in teacher education
Heavy on postgraduate diploma



Kenyatta University
Identity



School of Environmental Studies and Human Sciences

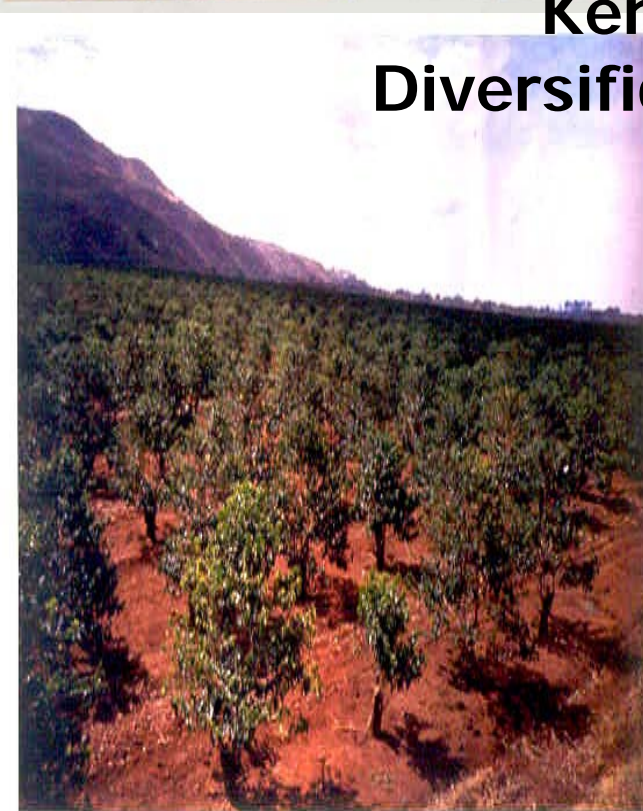
Land Use Planning For Sustainable Agriculture

Urban development, Environmental resource managem



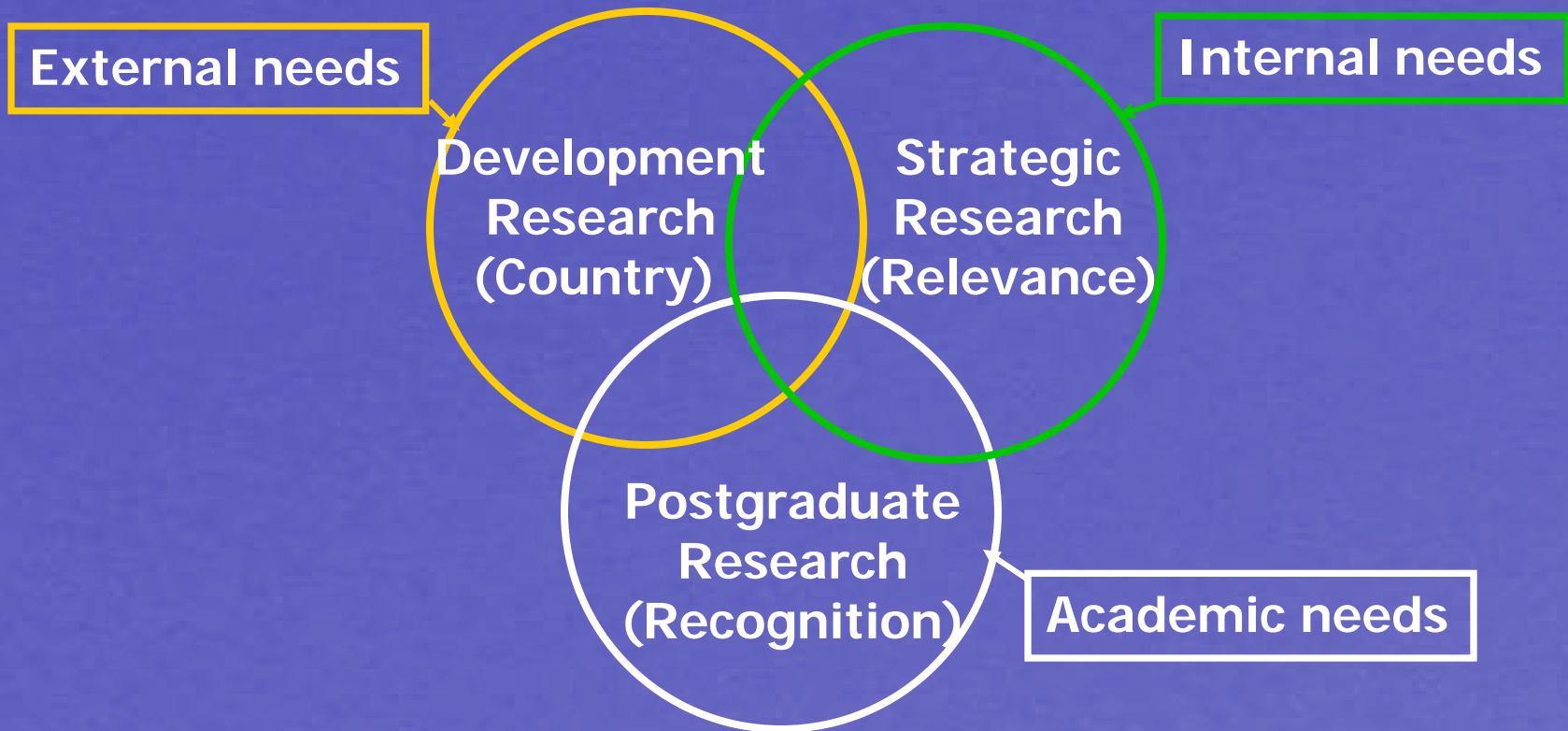
Kenyatta University

Diversification of programmes



Kenyatta University's research agenda

Research needs institutional assessment

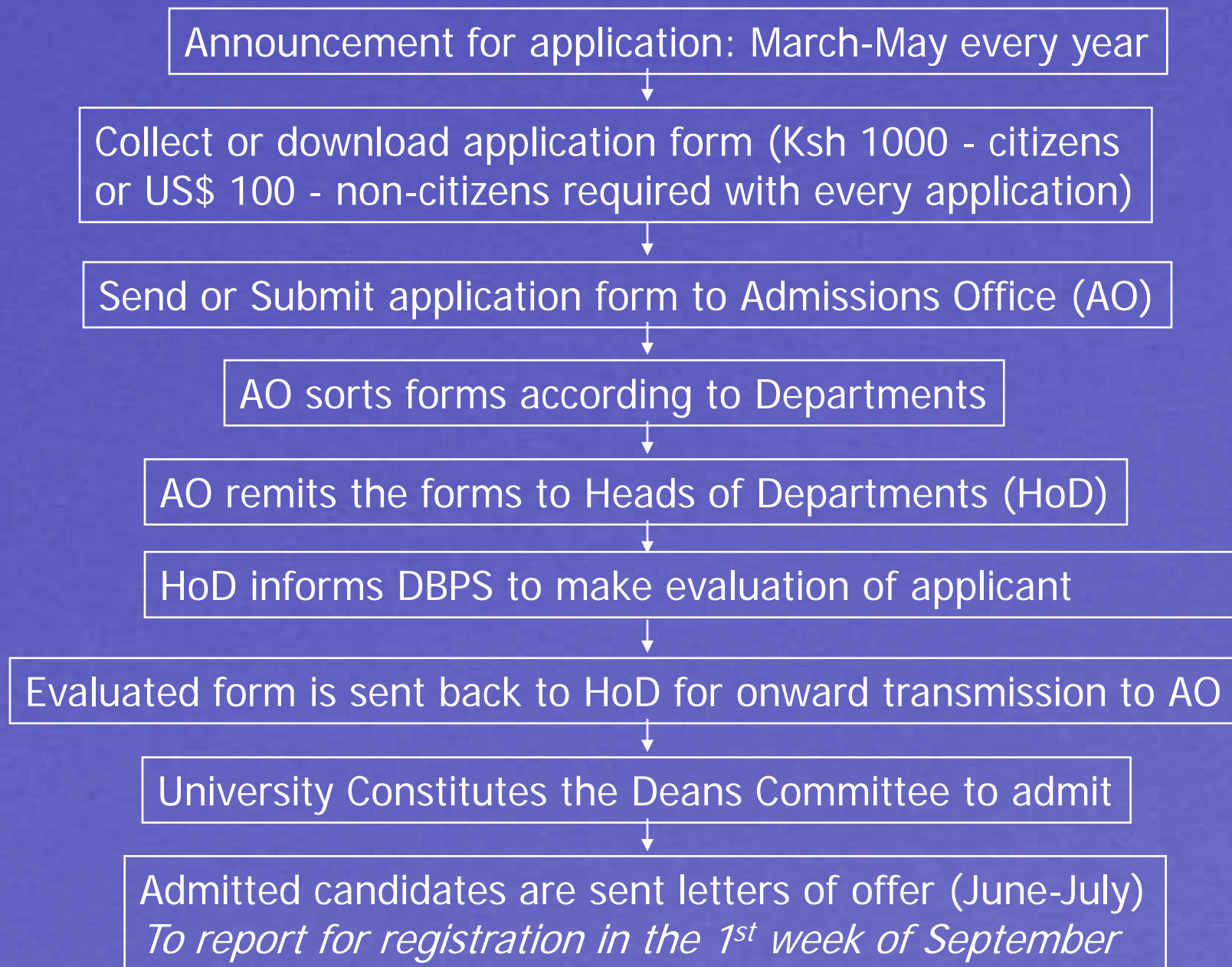


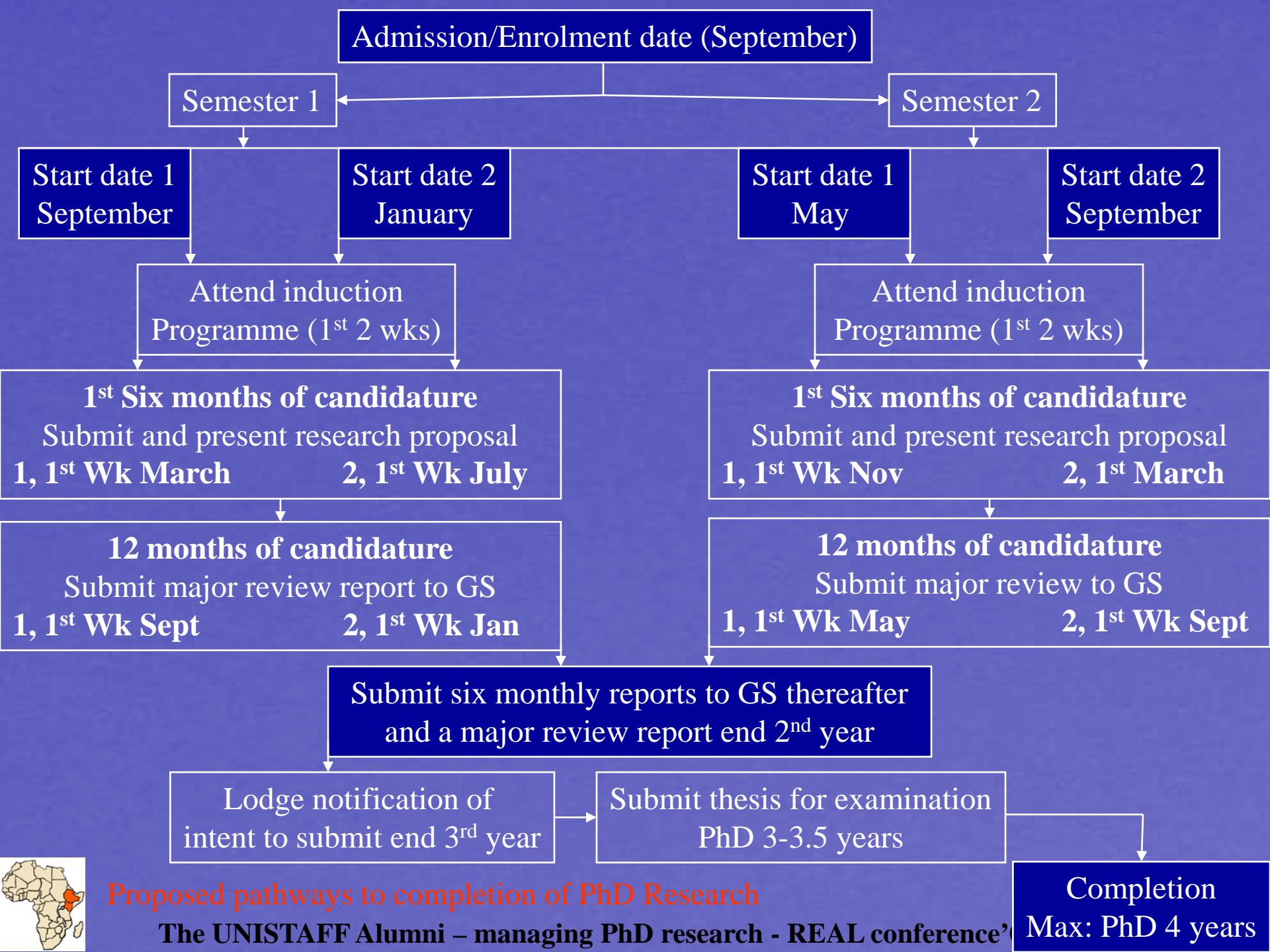
Progression in the PhD Degree Programme

- Admission with a masters degree or equivalent
- PhD research candidates should consider:
 - Appropriateness of the school
 - Ability of school to provide quality, experienced supervision
 - Relevance of research interests and background
 - Capacity to meet the ongoing time, logistical and other requirements
 - Ability to support oneself for the duration of the research
- make an application for admission on a prescribed form



Procedure for processing application for PhD candidates





Progression in the PhD Degree Programme ---

- Critical areas
- induction programme – working space, resources accessibility, communication procedures, library, counselling services etc
- complete enrolment process and proceed with research proposal with supervisors
- proposal approval process requires that the SBPS agree on the concept presented



Progression in the PhD Degree Programme ---

Role of the supervisor

- Provide the necessary infrastructure (office, computer, Internet connection)
- Helps find the necessary funding or facilitates linkage for support from collaborating institutions
- Makes sure that research plans are realistic and in context
- Evaluates and gives feedback on research progress pointing out links with other researches
- Suggests methods and approaches to tackle any questions raised
- Provides linkage and contact with other people, organizations or publications that are relevant
- Promotes and support research work towards the rest of the academic community



Challenges to Improving PhD Research

- Self-imposed brain drain of researchers from developing countries to the north and west due to lack of incentives and funding
- Lack of investment by the institutions themselves on postgraduate funding
 - Focus on fee-paying students with little or no effort towards providing scholarship to exemplary students
- Little University sponsorship or bursary support
 - Limited extent of financial assistance for postgraduate study to members of faculty
 - The Government provides minimal individual loans to fund postgraduate students at government-supported institutions – tuition fees not research grants



KU postgraduate research challenges

Kenyatta University PhD students face teething challenges that either impede or stall their progress.

- Poor facilitation from the university
- Lack of adequate guidance and effective supervision
- Lack of commitment on the part of students
- Limited or lack of research funds and inadequate funds for supervision.
- Slow bureaucratic process towards proposal registration
- Lack of work plan in some cases and inability to give reasonable projections.
- Lack of adherence to deadlines and follow-up on supervisors
- Lack of scheduling of student activities from admission to graduation
- Administrative systems especially beyond the department are not supportive enough.



PhD student's interaction with his/her supervisor is based on trust



Possible solutions

- **Develop physical infrastructure: more office for staff, laboratories and studio space.**
- **Improve capacity: recruitment, training and development of computing and Internet access by academic and the postgraduate members.**
- **Set aside sufficient funds to run postgraduate programmes.**
- **Diversify the library services to include research librarians and linkage/loaning from external libraries**
- **Create and using external linkages and collaborations with local research institutions**



Kenyatta University using existing linkages

- **Which contribution to the research environment at KU?**
- **Visible and active linkage – the reality on the ground**
- **Impact from distance – poor communication environment (ICT)**
- **Mutual Benefits.**

Linkage with the Far East

- Capital Normal University, Beijing China
- Chinese Academy of Social Sciences
- Xian Institute of Physical Education
- Shanxi University of China- Kanagawa
- Institute of Technology, Japan
- Nagasaki University, Japan

Samchoek National University, Korea

The UNISTAFF Alumni – managing PhD research - REAL conference'06



Linkage with Europe

- Antwerp University, Belgium
- Katholieke University, Belgium
- Nesna University College, Norway
- Volda University College, Norway
- Niilo Maki Institute, Jyvaskyla, Finland
- L' Insitute de Recherche Pour Le Development , France
- Alanus University, Germany
- Bayreauth University, Germany
- Trier University, Germany
- Mid Sweden University
- Jonkoping University, Sweden
- Cambridge University
- Kings College, London, UK
- Exeter University



Linkage with US Universities

- Albany State University, Georgia
- Arkansas University, Arkansas
- City College of New York
- Georgia State University, Georgia
- Illinois State University
- Indiana University
- Iowa State University
- Kent State University, Ohio
- Kutztown University
- National American University, South Dakota
- North Texas University
- Ohio State University
- Syracuse University
- University of Nevada, Reno
- University of Scranton

Summer school programme
undergraduates



Linkage with African Universities

- **Local universities – association through JAB**
- **Common support through Gov. and HELB**
- **Control over CHE**
- **University of Hargesha, Somaliland**
- **Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University, South Africa**
- **Kyambogo University, Uganda**
 - **Seeking collaboration**



Seek linkage amongst neighbours and the best

— 1	UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN	546
— 2	STELLENBOSCH UNIVERSITY	548
— 3	UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA	554
— 4	UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND	636
— 5	RHODES UNIVERSITY	683
— 13	UNIVERSITY OF DAR ES SALAAM	2,566
— 19	MAKERERE UNIVERSITY	3,628
— 27	UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI	4,508
— 36	NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF RWANDA	5,140
— 40	ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY	5,355
— 54	UNIVERSITY OF MALAWI	6,159
— 61	MOI UNIVERSITY	6,353
— 71	KABARAK UNIVERSITY	6,699

 **77 KENYATTA UNIVERSITY** **6,761**



Existing linkages with Research Institutes

- International Centre for Insect Physiology and Ecology
- Regional Centre for Mapping of Resources for Development
- World Agro-forestry Centre
- African Centre For Technology (ACTS)
- Kenya Medical Training College (KMTC)
- Kenya College of Communication & Technology (KCCT)
- Regional Institute of Business Management (RIBM)
- Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture (RUFORUM)
- International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), USA
- Tropical Soil Biology and Fertility (TSBF)
- International Association of Hydrological Sciences (IAHS)



Social Responsibility

- Nairobi Public Relations Society of Kenya
- Federation of Kenyan Employers
- Christian Children Fund, Kenya
- Braeburn College, Nairobi
- Goethe Institute, Nairobi
- The International Association of athletic Federations IAAF
- National Aids Control Council



Areas to explore: Regional Devp. Authorities

- National Environmental Management Authority (NEMA)
- Ewaso Ng'iro North River Basin Development Authority
- Ewaso Ng'iro South River Basin Development Authority
- Kerio Valley Development Authority
- Lake Basin Development Authority
- National Irrigation Board
- Tana Athi Rivers Development Authority
- Kenya Wildlife Service
- National Museums of Kenya



Areas to explore: National research Institutions

- Kenya Medical Research Institute
- Kenya Trypanosomiasis Research Institute
- Kenya Institute of Survey and Mapping
- Kenya Institute for Public Policy Research & Analysis
- Kenya Coffee Research Foundation
- Kenya Tea Research Foundation
- Kenya Veterinary Vaccines Production Institute
- Kenya Plants Health Inspectorate Services
- Kenya Agricultural Research Institute
- National Agricultural Research Laboratories
- Kenya Forestry Research Institute
- Kenya Bureau of Standard
- Kenya Industrial and Research Development Institute



conclusions

- progression of PhD Students in the research environment is time challenging
- PhD research is a process of building relationships
- key to the students is identifying resources availability for their research and where the resources are located.
- Computing and Internet access by academic and the postgraduate members is important as no academic discipline has been left untouched by ITC revolution
- linkage between public universities and the national research institutions over many opportunities and this need strengthening



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I say;

Thank you

Asante sana!

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