

MAC DNA

Malawi's Academic Development Need Analysis

Background

Higher education is playing a crucial role for Africa's development.

Universities are not only essential for training future scientists, experts and professionals. They are also generating knowledge to inform sustainable solutions in a variety of fields, such as health, food security or climate change mitigation. Universities thus have the potential and power to contribute towards improving general life conditions.

However, ineffective university management and lacking academic leadership abilities are limiting this potential. In many cases, academics are nominated into mid-level management positions, as deans, department heads or research group leaders, at a relatively young age. They often do not have enough experience and lack the necessary management skills. Also, academic leaders often face problems in balancing multiple functions.

This not only impacts on a university's teaching and research performance but also on its institutional functioning.



In Malawi, a country ranked among the least developed in the world, higher education has developed relatively late, compared to the rest of Africa. However, the increasing access to secondary education over the last ten years is creating a growing demand for university education. Further challenges that universities are facing include the need to internationalize higher education, the necessity to diversify financial resources, or the importance of adapting to new forms of technological educational delivery and digitalisation.

This presents a significant challenge for Malawi and its higher education system.

Good university management is thus key.

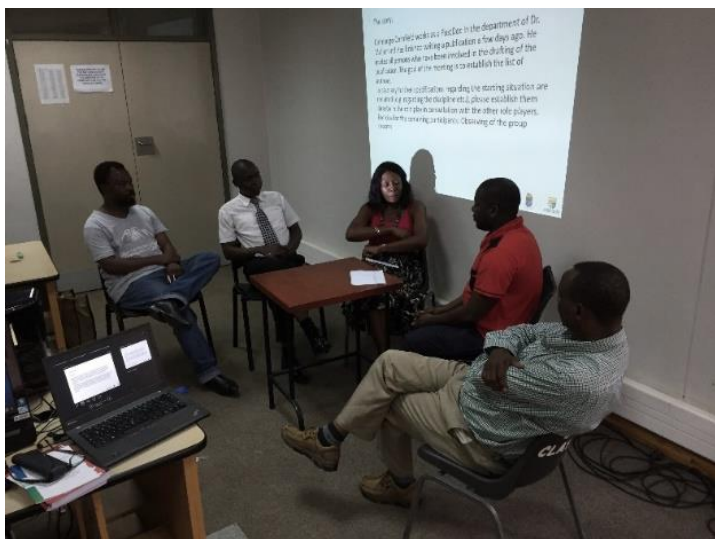
Project objectives

MAC DNA aims at developing a better understanding of current skills and capacity needs of academics in management and leadership positions at Malawian universities.

Research activities include data collection by means of a broad survey among academic leaders in Malawi with a view to assessing major needs and gaps, as well as interests and priorities in skills development. In order to further deepen the survey's outcomes and findings, individual interviews are conducted with university employees in junior, mid-level or senior leadership positions as well as with academics aspiring to leading roles. The data analysis will be used for elaborating a framework of skills and capacities that are particularly important for academic management and leadership in Malawi's Higher Education.

The project's results and findings shall help identifying key priority areas and will serve as a basis for developing targeted trainings for academic leaders in the future.

Under the coordination of the University of Vienna and the Kamuzu University of Health Sciences (KUHeS), the project involves three other universities in Malawi: Mzuzu University, Malawi Assemblies of God University (MAGU) and Daeyang University.



Coordination: University of Vienna (Research Services and Career Development), Kamuzu University of Health Sciences (KUHeS)

Partners: Mzuzu University, Malawi Assemblies of God University (MAGU), Daeyang University

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