

Project Development Write-shop
Dates: 19th to 21st October, 2017

Venue: Lilongwe University of Agriculture and Natural Resources, Malawi
Hosted by: RUFORUM member Universities in Malawi and the Malawi Government

Concept Note

Background

Higher education is generally accepted as a key driver of economic growth through generation of knowledge, skilled and pro-active human resources and technologies and innovations that transform society. Recognising its importance, most African countries have embraced investments in expanding access to higher education through increasing student enrolment within universities and establishment of new universities with their own resources and with support from development partners. This move, however, has compromised quality of delivery of higher education because the available resources are not matching the requirements needed to deliver quality. The number of students is much higher than available staff yet the limited Government resources constrain universities from recruiting additional staff. The available infrastructure (class rooms, laboratories and equipment) are not sufficient for effective teaching, research and outreach as mandates of the universities. The effect of financial constraint has been exacerbating by inefficiency in resource utilization at the higher education institutions. African universities therefore need to mobilize additional resources to support delivery of their mandate of research training and outreach if they have to remain self-supporting institutions in the long run.

For universities to successfully mobilise resources, strategies for resource mobilization need to be in place. Structures of university operations and processes for resource mobilisation and management should be created for quality control, packaging and marketing of the university as an investment destination by diverse categories of funders. In addition, the faculty should be skilled in developing quality programme/project proposals that can be funded by development partners and private sector. Important in resource mobilisation is also effective project management. Aspects of managing partnerships, quality control, timely reporting and transparent financial management and reporting are key in maintaining the university as a key investment destination.

Given the urgent need for universities to mobilise resources for quality training, research and facilitate innovation at national level, The Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture (RUFORUM) has embarked on providing a platform for Faculty of its member universities to share lessons and experiences in best practice resource mobilisation and effective management of projects and programmes. These workshops are organised at national level with member universities or at regional level in response to active Calls for proposals where University Faculty develop fundable Projects. RUFORUM is therefore organising a write-shop at the Lilongwe University of Agriculture and Natural Resources in Lilongwe, Malawi to provide a platform for Faculty to share lessons and best practices in resource mobilisation and project/programme management in research and training for development.

Objectives of the write-shop

The overall objective of the write-shop is to provide a platform for Faculty of Lilongwe University of Agriculture and Natural Resources (LUANAR) to share experiences and lessons on best practice resource mobilization. Specifically; the write-shop aims to achieve the following

1. Facilitate Faculty at LUANAR to develop proposals for submission to an active Call for proposals
2. Share lessons with Faculty at LUANAR on grants and partnership management in research for development
3. Share lessons with Faculty of LUANAR on financial management and reporting for impact

Approach to the Write-shop

For proposal development, a background presentation on the importance and avenues for mobilising resources for research for development and training at the university will be made by RUFORUM. An active Call for proposals will be identified by the RUFORUM facilitation team and teams at LUANAR guided to propose research/training topics in 3-5 areas on which proposals will be generated. The 3-5 teams will share their concepts/ideas and partnerships with the facilitation team in advance to facilitate development of proposals and programming of assistance during the write-shop. The participants will then be taken through the proposal development process.

On project management, a background presentation with a focus on global best practice and experiences from RUFORUM on project management will be made. Leaders of three projects currently running in LUANAR will be identified to present their experiences in project management and highlight project management challenges which will be discussed with all the participants. A special session will be allocated to discuss financial and narrative reporting and communications and project marketing for visibility.

Expected outputs of the Write-shop

1. A shared understanding among LUANAR Faculty on the importance of resource mobilisation for research and training as university faculty
2. Draft proposals for submission to an active Call for proposals
3. Staff gain skills on best practice project management

Target beneficiaries of the Write-shop

1. Directors of institutes such as Post graduate studies, Deans of students and Deans of faculties
2. Faculty at the university
3. Other non-academic staff such as academic registrars
4. Director of public relations and marketing

Draft Agenda

Time	Activity	Responsible person
Thursday 19 th October 2017		
Problem Analysis & Logical Steps in R4D Project Design		
08:30-09:00	Setting the stage	All Participants
09:00-10:30	Interpretation of Selected Call	Facilitators
10:30 – 11:00	BREAK	

11:00 – 12:00	Team Composition in line with Call Requirements	All Participants
12:00 – 13:00	Problem Analysis & Idea Consolidation	All Participants
13:00 – 14:00	LUNCH	
14:00 – 15:30	Group Work & Plenary Presentation on Problem Analysis	All Participants
15:30 – 16:30	Conceptualizing Basic Principles in Designing Grant Winning Research for Development Projects	Facilitators
16:30 – 17:00	BREAK	
17:00 – 18:00	Group Work on Experiences with Application of Basic Principles in Grant Making	All Participants
Friday 20th October 2017		
From Problem Analysis to Crafting Objectives: The Log frame Approach		
08:30 – 10:30	Group Work and Critic on <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conceptual Frameworks • Theory of Change • Log frame Approaches to Designing R4D projects 	All Participants
10:30 - 11:00	BREAK	
11:00 – 13:00	Focus on Log Framing Approach & Polish components in the first Column of the 4 x 4 Matrix	All Participants
13:00 – 14:00	LUNCH	
14:00 – 16:30	Populating the other components of the Log frame – OVI, MoV, Risks/Assumptions & Pre-conditions	All Participants
16:30 – 17:00	BREAK	
17:00 – 18:00	Plenary Discussions & Feedback	All Participants
Saturday 21st October 2017		
Demystifying the Log frame Approach as a springboard for all Relevant Sections of R4D Projects		
8:30 – 10:30	Turning and packaging listed activities into Work Packages Narrative	All Participants
10:30 – 11:00	BREAK	
11:00 – 13:00	Using the Goal, Overall Objectives/purpose and Objectives to develop a convincing Background and associated components (Introduction, Justification, Rationale and Outputs/outcomes)	All Participants
13:00 – 14:00	LUNCH	
14:00 – 16:30	Using Log frame to construct other relevant sections of the Call	All Participants
16:30 – 17:00	BREAK	
17:00 – 18:00	Work Plans to Finalize Project Drafts & Evaluation	All Participants

