

Research Application Summary

Recreating a University for development relevance: the case of University of Juba

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Abstract

The University of Juba is a premier South Sudan's university. It was established by a legal act in 1975, and admitted its first batch of students in 1977. By 1989, it had five colleges and several hundred students when it was forced by the civil war that had began in 1983 to relocate to Khartoum, the capital of Sudan. While in Khartoum, it grew into 12 colleges and schools, and four specialized centers; 18,000 regular students, and 3,000 distant learners in Sudan and the Middle East; and about 1,600 academic and support staff. Following the declaration of South Sudan's independence in 2011, the University relocated back to Juba, leaving behind a significant part of its student population and staff; and immovable assets such as lecture halls, labs, and equipment. The number of academic staff plummeted to 137 and student population dropped to 10,000, by July 2011. From 2011 to 2014, the previous University of Juba administration struggled to ensure that teaching was going on; and the academic stability was maintained in the face of great challenges such as low numbers of teaching staff, shortage of lecture halls, lack of office space for staff and accommodation for students, among others. What's more, this situation was aggravated by the changed political and economic context; and by insecurity and political instability in the country, as well as acute funding shortages. The outcomes were mixed and hardly gratifying to staff, students, and the general public. Namely, there was persistently low staffing levels with attendant negative impact on teaching quality, falling student numbers, unstable academic calendar, funding crisis, crumbling infrastructure, collapse of postgraduate and research capacity, weakened capacity to deliver distance education programs, diminished administrative and support capacity, lost vision, the absence of sense of mission, lost visibility, and, not surprisingly, the deterioration of public perception of University of Juba's academic standing, nationally and internationally. On 31 March 2014, a new administration comprising the current vice chancellor (author of this paper) and two deputy vice chancellors (one for academic affairs and the other for administration and finance) was installed. This paper attempts to share with wider academic community and the general public the struggles of University's new administration in the last two years to recreate and transform the University into an institution of higher learning that is capable of effecting socio-economic development and social change in the new nation and the Eastern African region; by aspiring not only to be where others in the region are, but be a University capable of meeting the demands put on universities wherever they may be found in the twenty-first century. Namely, to deliver knowledge services through teaching, research, innovation, entrepreneurship, and service to community. More specifically, the paper describes the effort by the new Administration of the University to tackle the multi-dimensional challenges the University of Juba is encountering, ranging from long term matters such as the setting of a new vision, mission, and organizational values, and changing

the organizational culture; to developing a 15-year University's development master plan; and down to effecting short-term changes such as increasing the level of staffing, reviving postgraduate programs, review of academic regulations, increasing the visibility of the University, improving the general learning environment, improving financial management and governance, maintenance of lecture halls and labs; and enhancing the efficiency and efficacy of service delivery, among others. And last but not least, the paper presents and reflects on the results of a recent study by the planning and monitoring directorate of the University involving the survey of perceptions of 200 students, staff, and members of the general public in regards to the progress made by the new administration in the last two years to improve things for the better.

Key words: Institutional transformation, national economic empowerment, development, relevance, University of Juba

Résumé

L'université de Juba est la principale université du Sud-Soudan. Elle a été créée par un acte juridique en 1975 et a admis son premier groupe d'étudiants en 1977. En 1989, elle avait cinq collèges et plusieurs centaines d'étudiants quand elle a été forcée par la guerre civile qui avait commencé en 1983 à se réinstaller à Khartoum, le Capitale du Soudan. Pendant son séjour à Khartoum, elle s'est développée en 12 collèges et écoles, et quatre centres spécialisés; 18.000 étudiants réguliers et 3.000 étudiants à distance au Soudan et au Moyen-Orient; et environ 1.600 membres du personnel universitaire et de soutien. Suite à la déclaration de l'indépendance du Sud-Soudan en 2011, l'Université est retournée à Juba, laissant derrière elle une partie importante de sa population estudiantine et de son personnel, et des biens immobiliers tels que des salles de conférences, des laboratoires et du matériel. Le nombre de membres du personnel universitaire a chuté à 137 et la population estudiantine a chuté à 10.000, en juillet 2011. De 2011 à 2014, l'administration précédente de l'Université de Juba a lutté pour s'assurer que l'enseignement était en cours et la stabilité académique a été maintenue malgré de grands défis tels que le manque de personnel enseignant, la pénurie de salles de cours, le manque d'espace de bureau pour le personnel et l'hébergement des étudiants, entre autres. De plus, cette situation a été aggravée par le changement du contexte politique et économique et par l'insécurité et l'instabilité politique dans le pays, ainsi que des pénuries aiguës de financement. Les résultats étaient mitigés et peu gratifiants pour le personnel, les étudiants, et le grand public. Il s'agissait spécifiquement du calendrier scolaire instable, la crise financière, l'effondrement des infrastructures, l'effondrement de la capacité des études supérieures et de la recherche, l'affaiblissement de la capacité de dispenser des programmes d'enseignement à distance, la diminution des capacités administratives et de soutien, la perte de la vision, l'absence du sens de la mission, la perte de la visibilité et, ce qui n'est pas surprenant, la détérioration de la perception du public à l'Université de Juba, à l'échelle nationale et internationale. Le 31 mars 2014, une nouvelle administration comprenant le vice-chancelier actuel (auteur de ce document) et deux vice-chanceliers adjoints (un pour les affaires académiques et

l'autre pour l'administration et la finance) a été installée. Cet article tente de partager avec le milieu universitaire et le public en général les luttes de la nouvelle administration de l'Université au cours des deux dernières années pour recréer et transformer l'Université en une institution d'enseignement supérieur capable de réaliser le développement socio-économique et le changement social dans la nouvelle nation et la région de l'Afrique de l'Est en aspirant non seulement à être là où d'autres dans la région sont, mais aussi une université capable de répondre aux exigences des universités où qu'elles se trouvent au XXI^e siècle pour fournir des services de connaissance par l'enseignement, la recherche, l'innovation, l'esprit d'entreprise et le service à la communauté. Plus précisément, le document décrit l'effort de la nouvelle administration de l'Université pour relever les défis multidimensionnels rencontrés par l'Université de Juba, allant de questions à long terme telles que l'établissement d'une nouvelle vision, la mission, et les valeurs organisationnelles, changer la culture organisationnelle, élaborer un plan directeur de développement de l'Université de 15 ans, améliorer l'environnement général d'apprentissage, la gestion financière et la gouvernance, l'entretien des salles de cours et des laboratoires, et l'amélioration de l'efficacité et l'efficience de la prestation de services, entre autres. Enfin, le document présente et réfléchit sur les résultats d'une récente étude de la Direction de la planification et du suivi de l'Université portant sur l'aperçu des perceptions de 200 étudiants, du personnel et du public en ce qui concerne les progrès réalisés par la nouvelle administration dans les deux dernières années pour améliorer les choses pour le meilleur.

Mots clés: la transformation institutionnelle, l'autonomisation économique nationale, le développement, la pertinence, l'Université de Juba

Background

The University of Juba is a premier South Sudan's university. Founded in 1975 by establishment of its legal statue, it began admitting students in 1977. By 1989, it had five colleges and several hundred students but was then forced by the civil war that began in 1983 to locate to Khartoum, the capital city of Sudan (Muludiang, 2014). There, the University grew into 12 colleges and schools, and four specialised centres, 18,000 regular students, and 3,000 distant learners across Sudan and the Middle East; and about 1,600 academic and support staff. Following the declaration of South Sudan's independence in 2011, the University relocated back to Juba, leaving behind in Khartoum a very significant portion of its Sudanese student population, academic and administrative staff, as well as most of the immovable assets such lecture halls, labs, and equipment. As a result, the number of academic staff plummeted to 137 while the student population fell to 10,000 by July 2011.

From 2011 to 2014, the then University of Juba's administration struggled to ensure that teaching was going on by all means possible, while maintaining the academic stability in the of face of myriad of challenges that included low numbers of teaching and administrative staff, shortage of lecture halls, lack of office space for staff and accommodation for students, among others. Moreover, this situation was aggravated by many new developments that include: the changed political and economic context as a result of the country's independence

in 2011 that altered the established funding and budgeting structure; the shutting down of oil production in January 2012 resulting from a disagreement with the Sudan over transit fees that negatively impacted on government's public finances; and the outbreak of civil war in December 2013 - all these factors combined, led to the decline in government funding accruing to public universities in the new republic, the University of Juba included.

Furthermore, most of students' hostels on main campus had to be turned into office spaces for colleges' administration and academic staff. Only three hostels (one for girls and two for boys taking up to 1500 students) were spared after a desperate group of students relocated to them and resisted further eviction orders from University's administration. The University administration eventually gave up the fight to kick out the students from their last stronghold. This was due to unwillingness of law enforcement agencies (mainly the police) to execute the eviction orders for fear of political backlash. The eviction would have signaled official abolishing of students' welfare system on which current generation of political leaders once benefited.

And despite these administrative attempts to resolve multiple challenges the University of Juba faced after country's independence, there was widespread conviction amongst students, staff, and the general public, that the University of Juba could do better than it was doing under those circumstances. For instance, persistent low staffing levels meant that about fifty percent of teaching at the University was carried out by part-timers with detrimental impacts on the quality of learning and faculty research output. These impacts included, delayed announcement of examination results, unpredictable and continuous shift of the academic calendar from year to year; reduced capacity to offer postgraduate programs, and low research output for the staff and students; weakened capacity to deliver distance education programs; low administrative and support capacity; low capacity to transparently and responsibly manage finances; deteriorating quality of service delivery on the campus including waste management and general sanitation; loss of vision; an absence of sense of mission by the administration; diminished visibility of University on the web and public domain; and, unsurprisingly, the deteriorating public perception of University of Juba's academic standing, nationally and internationally.

And given the above backdrop, a new administration led by this author, assisted by two deputy vice chancellors (one for academic affairs and the other for administration and finance), was installed on 31 March 2014. This paper attempts to quantify and share with wider academic community and the general public the struggles of University's new administration in the last two years and a half to recreate and transform the University into an institution of higher learning that is capable of effecting socio-economic development and social change in the new nation. The paper also describes briefly the results of a survey of perceptions of 200 students, staff, and the general public in regards the progress made by the new University of Juba's administration.

The rest of the paper is divided into 14 sections. Section one has introduced the paper. Section 2 describes the vision, mission and strategic goals of the University; section 3 to

13 gives narrative of initiatives and measures taken by the administration to overcome challenges; and section 14 describes the results of a study conducted to assess progress; while section 15 draws the final conclusions.

Setting new directions for the university

Setting of New Mission, Vision, and Strategic Goals. The motto of the University of Juba since its inception in 1975, and which appears on its official logo, has been “Relevance and Excellence.” However, none of the previous University of Juba’s administrations has either a documented mission statement, nor expressed vision or a written strategy and plans on how “relevance and excellence” could be realized. Given the deteriorating perception in the face of multiple challenges described in the introduction to this paper, and as was once noted by Hutchinson (1956) in the context of the central role of leadership in the development of the American university: “a university needs a vision of the end; and without a vision there is aimlessness and vast chaos”. And echoing the words of David Riesman (Kerr, 2001) it could be said that the institution (read University of Juba) had somewhat lost its initial “ferment.” Against this backdrop, the new administration came into office on March 31, 2014, and began to reexamine the utility of old moto of the University in the light of changing context of South Sudan. And after much study (Kerr, 2001; Mamdani, 2007; Sanyal, 2007; Akec, 2012; Africa Agenda, 2063), brainstorming, and reflection; a new mission, vision, strategic goals, and core values were drafted and discussed in the Deans Board and then presented to the University Council in December 2014. The mission, vision, strategic goals, and core values are all described below.

First, in order to give the University a stronger sense of purpose, a consensus was reached to reposition the institution as: “a leading educational centre of excellence that is committed to national economic empowerment and social transformation through provision of quality education, pursuit of relevant research, promotion of innovation, facilitation of technology transfer, revival of national cultural heritage, protection of environment, and service to community.” The mission statement is meant to address and speak to South Sudan’s specific socio-economic needs in short, medium and long term in a way that may serve Africa’s Agenda 2063, and South Sudan’s Vision 2040. Then University set eye on a new vision which is “to become a dynamic regional and world-class centre of excellence in teaching, research, innovation, and service to community by 2030.”

In order to achieve the mission and vision of the University, eleven strategic goals to be achieved by 2030 were identified, and endorsed by the University Council as follows: Widening access to quality higher education; internationalization of academic programs and workforce; pursuit of high impact socio-economic research; community service and empowerment; assisting in the nation’s successful integration into global knowledge-based economy; facilitation of technology transfer to strategic economic sectors; revival of cultural heritage and creative industries; promotion of sustainable development and protecting the environment; enhancing internet connectivity and leveraging ICT in teaching and research; producing transformational leadership; and harnessing alumni contribution in rebuilding of the University of Juba.

Furthermore, an implementation matrix containing the set of action plans and activities necessary in order to achieve the goal have been discussed and agreed. The matrix also gives indicators for measuring the progress towards the attainment of each goal. For example, to widen access to quality higher education, the University of Juba plans to introduce new academic programs, open community colleges or campuses in states where there are no universities, expand in distance education, and affiliate many of teacher training colleges around the country, among others. By so doing, student population is predicted to rise to at least 60,000 in the next 10 to 15 years, of which about 6,000 will be studying at postgraduate level. To internationalize, the University would work hard to increase the number of international students and academic staff to 10% and 20% respectively. Also, in order to anchor the recreation of University of Juba on clear guiding principles, the University has agreed to adhere to a set of core values. These values are: encouragement and cherishing of free and independent thought; celebration of scholarship, excellence, creativity, and initiative; working as a team; maintenance of an inclusive, safe, and clean working environment for students and staff; providing equal opportunity to all; and maintaining the autonomy of our University to manage its affairs using its internal governance structures.

Finally, the setting of mission, vision, core values, and strategic goals was followed in June 2015 by adoption of a new motto for the University which reads: “Inventing the future, transforming society.” The new motto was approved by the University Council after wide consultation with the academic staff. It is currently embedded in all University’s literature. The motto made great sense given the challenges South Sudan currently faces in training skilled human capital it needs in order to build a prosperous future for its citizens. The motto spurs the University of Juba to take a pivotal role in national transformational agenda and be a catalyst for bringing about a prosperous future for the citizens of South Sudan and the continent at large.

What’s more, the need to define a new mission, vision, and motto were in recognition of the fact that the changed political setting of an independent South Sudan places new responsibilities not just on the University of Juba, but also on the entire higher education sector in the new nation. Indeed, all universities across the continent, University of Juba included, are obliged to reorient themselves in order to remain relevant to addressing the burning developmental challenges of the communities they serve, and that of the African continent as expressed by Agenda 2063 and corresponding national agendas such as South Sudan’s vision 2040.

Like anything else, little can be achieved without managing finances and increasing revenue streams. Thus, the next section looks at steps taken by the University administration to improve financial management, transparency, and increase in revenues.

Improving financial management, transparency, and revenues. For more than a decade, the University of Juba operated a decentralized financial management system. The revenue generated from tuition fees was split between administration, colleges, and

other administrative units, according to an agreed formula. Under Sudanese government, universities were paid all the staff salaries in addition to relatively smaller amounts for operation, services, and development. This funding model was partially adopted by the government of South Sudan through a commitment to payment of salaries of staff but nothing towards operation, services, and infrastructural development. Hence from July 2011, the University has been depending on the fees it collects from students which are too low to operate and develop its infrastructure. Comparatively speaking, the University was managing financially better before independence. After July 2011, the University struggled financially. This is primarily because of the marked drop in the number of students from 18,000 to below 10,000 and partly because of the diminished government financing of universities. With the exception of peace and development studies, most postgraduate programs that used to be source of revenue stopped and thereby hurting the tuition revenues.

And despite all this changed circumstances, the University continued to operate the decentralized financial system. The situation was aggravated by the fact that the University never appointed a well-qualified financial director since July 2011 when it relocated back to Juba. No analytical financial reports were produced regularly in order to allow the financial health of the University to be gauged. As a result, by January 2014, the main administration's account at the central bank was overdrawn by SSP 650,000 South Sudanese pounds (worth USD 150,000 at the time). At the same time, the collective balances in the colleges' accounts was about 0.9 million South Sudan pounds (USD 225,000). Analysis of colleges' spending between January 2014 and June of same year showed that approximately 40% of the money went into payment of additional incentives to staff under different names such as extra-hours, examination allowances, marking, and so forth.

Amongst measures taken by the new administration to improve financial management at the University of Juba includes changing the system of fee payment from payment to the accountants at colleges to direct depositing into a centralized fee account at the bank. A branch of Ivory Bank (one of national South Sudan's commercial banks) was opened at the campus with the facilitation by the University's administration. Then an academic who was teaching at the School of Management Sciences' Accounting Department with professional experience in accounting was appointed as the University's financial director. Next, the decentralized system of financial management was reviewed by a committee and put on a hold. The elaborate incentive system that had been in operation for decades was also reviewed and many privileges were abolished as they diverted scarce resources from maintenance, equipment, and other vital services. Some of the reforms included the payment of agreed monthly operation funds to Colleges and Schools as petty cash that must be accounted for before the next payment is made. Those academics who have been assigned administrative roles such as deans of colleges, directors of schools and centres, college registrars, and departmental heads were paid monthly responsibility allowance. University staff whose task demands working beyond official working hours or weekends or on public holidays were paid incentives that is commensurate with the nature of the job.

Furthermore, in order to reduce costs of paying part-time lecturers, all academic staff members are now required to teach a minimum of three courses across the University before being considered for any additional payment besides their monthly wage. Previously, teaching a subject at another department even within same college did incur extra-load compensation. The deans' board receives monthly financial report as a new push for financial transparency. To the author's knowledge, this is the only University in the country with such a transparency policy.

Overall, the financial standing of the University has improved markedly. The annual income rose from about SSP 6 million for fiscal year 2013/2014 to about SSP 14 million (USD 800,000) for fiscal year 2014/2016. The balance in University collective accounts in June 2015 was about SSP 2 million compared to SSP 800,000 in June 2014. The increase in financial standing was due to a combination of factors that include: improved collection and eradication of leakages, increase in the tuition fees for first year students (2015/2016), and better financial management and controls. As a result, it was possible to maintain more lecture halls, labs, and office spaces; and consequently, improved learning environment at the University of Juba.

However, from January 2016, operating costs began to spiral out of control due to the devaluation of national currency against the dollar (from SSP 10,000 exchange against one dollar in parallel market in June 2014 to SSP 17 to a dollar in December 2015; then to SSP 75 to a dollar in free market in November 2016 and still falling). The change of exchange rate policy led to hike of prices in the market of largely import-oriented, oil revenue-dependent South Sudan's economy. This followed a change from a system of fixed exchange rate policy by the Central Bank in December 2015. As a result, from January 2016 the University's fuel expenditure jumped from SSP 80,000 per month to SSP 420,000 due to increase of prices of fuel. Overall spending at the University of Juba jumped from SSP 400,000 per month in 2014 to SSP 5 million per month by October 2016. And in order to keep up with price inflation, the University had to triple tuition fees for academic year 2016/17 in order to raise SSP 79 million (or USD 1.1 million compared to USD 800,000 in the last academic year for operation and services alone) in addition to SSP 116 million (USD 2.1 million) paid by the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning to meet salaries of its 1566 staff. This brought the University into conflict with the Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology (Akec, 2016). This conflict has not been resolved up to the time of this paper.

Raising academic and administrative capacity

Following independence of South Sudan, the number of academic staff fell to 137 from more than 650 in June 2011. By 31 January 2014, there were 291 academic staff, 94 (or 32 percent) of which were teaching assistants and the rest was composed of lecturers (107), assistant professors (70), associate professors (16), and full professors (4) (Table 1). As of July 2016, that is about twenty-seven months since the new administration took over, the number of academic staff had risen to 578 from 291 in 2014 or an increase of 98.6% percent (almost doubling the numbers). Of these, 179 (or 28 percent) were teaching assistants, 216

lecturers, 124 assistant professors, 42 associate professors, and 17 full professors (Figures 1 and 2). Overall, there was an increase of 379 or 30% across all staff categories from 1215 in January 2014 to 1594 in July 2016. Reasons behind the increase in the numbers of academic staff include the return of a number of junior academic staff to University from postgraduate studies, promotions and upgrade of current academic staff, the marked improvement in the levels of pay of academics at universities in South Sudan from July 2015, elimination of arcane recruitment policies that restricted hiring, and adopting a more aggressive approach to academic staff recruitment. Over all, since January 2014, the University of Juba has recruited or promoted 13 more professors, 26 new associate professors, 54 assistant professors, 109 lecturers, 85 teaching assistants, 29 technicians, 54 administrative staff, and nine support staff (Table 1, Figures 1, 2,).

The general staffing increase has had a positive impact on the performance of the University, financially and academically. Financial impact includes spending less on part-time staff and extra-hours of teaching by internal staff and hence saving resources. Academically, there has been relative improvement in speed of processing of examination results for bachelor and diploma programs from an average 5.5 months in 2014 to three months in 2016. Ideally, examination results need to be announced within six weeks. There is hence still plenty of room for improvement as would be highlighted by the results of a recent student and staff opinion survey to be discussed later in this paper.

Reform of academic regulations

In order to institute a student centric University with higher completion rates, the new administration convinced the University Senate to effect a number of reforms in academic regulations. For example, for decades the practice had been that if a student failed certain number of courses and his or if her grade point average (GPA) was below certain threshold, he or she was discontinued or dismissed. Namely, the student is asked to leave the University and could only be readmitted if he or she retook and passed all the subjects as 'external candidate' in the year-class in which they were dismissed.

Table 1. Comparison of staffing distribution at University of Juba in January 2014 and July 2016

Category	2016	2014	Variance
Professors	17	4	13
Associate Professors	42	16	26
Assistant Professors	124	70	54
Lecturers	216	107	109
Teaching Assistants	179	94	85
Technicians	71	42	29
Administrative/Clerical Staffs	298	244	54
Manual Support Staffs	647	638	9
Total	1594	1215	379

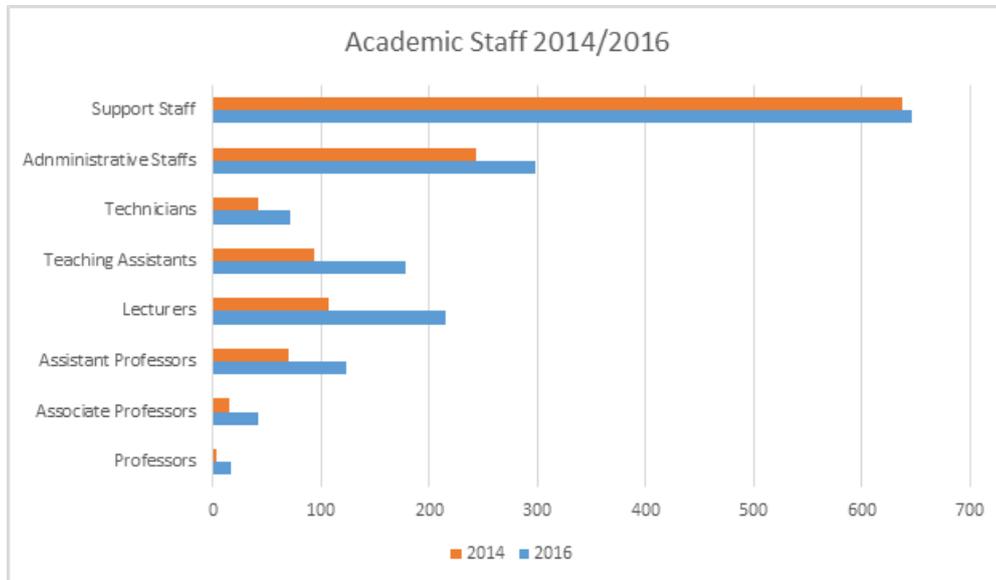


Figure 1. Composition of staff at University of Juba in January 2014 and July 2016.

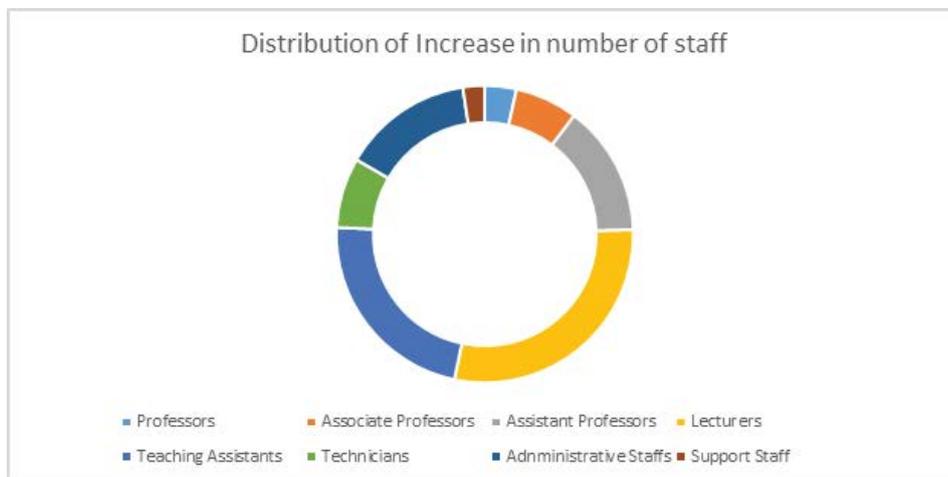


Figure 2: Distribution of increase in number of academic staff at the University of Juba

One major reform was the abolition of discontinuation system. Now under the new regulation, students can repeat a class for as many times as they wish until they pass and move to next class or give up voluntarily. And when repeating, students only retake those subjects they have not passed or in which they have marginally achieved a pass such as a “D” grade. What is more, as long as student’s great point average (GPA) is above 1.5, he or she can be promoted to next higher class. The bottom-line is that no student can graduate before retaking and clearing all the subjects which they have failed. This last reform is

a major shift from system in which students were not promoted to next class before the supplementary or substitute examination results were out. It was one of the causes of persistent delays in the start of new academic year. With its abolition, new academic year has been starting on time (late October or early November). Previously, students would take the final exams in July and academic year does not resume until December of the same year or January in the following year. Ideally, the University should close during the third week or end of July and reopen for new academic year by the first week of October. This is the challenge which will be addressed by speeding up processing of examination results. Often, exam results are delayed for many reasons. Part-time lecturers may not hand in their marks in good time for processing. In other cases, a full-time academic staff may be taking more courses than he or she could manage and has difficulty meeting their deadlines. Once the marks are out, some examination officers struggle with the examination processing software which was inherited from Sudan and on which very few examination officers have had training. The University administration is putting in place measures as well as devising new strategies in order to overcome some of the enumerated hurdles to timely processing of examination results.

Improving Institutional Capacity and Efficiency of Service Delivery. In order to improve institutional capacity and efficiency of service delivery, nine directorates have been instituted. These are directorates of human resource management (as upgrade of personnel unit); finance (upgrade from existing finance unit), procurement; planning, innovation, and quality assurance; engineering and construction management; estate and facilities management; internationally funded projects; research and publications; and ICT. Each of the directorates with the exception of human resource, engineering and construction management, facilities and estate management, and procurement are headed by a senior academic staff member. Before the creation of estates and engineering directorates, all services were lumped under the office of resident engineer. Different units such as public health, services, carpentry, and electrical, mechanical workshop were headed by low qualified staff. Waste management was poor and maintenance work was slow. The reorganization and restructuring has clarified lines of communications and made it easier to apportion success or failure. Overall, service delivery has improved, although there is still more to do by the way of training in order to improve skills and change some of the old attitudes and work cultures that were responsible for poor performance.

University of Juba physical master plan. The several public universities which were established in South Sudan in the last four decades have grown in unpredictable ways, partly because of displacement by war and partly because the founding administrations of those universities gave more attention to tactical issues of survival and less attention to the long term and strategic development of these universities. University of Juba was started on a secondary school site and until it moved to Khartoum in 1989 and its expansion there from 4 to 12 colleges, there has never been a proper building masterplan. This time around, the new administration took a more strategic and long term view approach, bearing in mind the University's vision, mission, and goals. This masterplan covers the next 15 years of the life of the University and focuses on Juba downtown campus.

This 15-year masterplan will allow the administration to conduct a thorough analysis of the needs of the University in terms of building infrastructure based on the allocated area of lands, the institutional academic and business needs, the demands of local community in terms of development, and analysis of environmental conditions of the sites. The data generated will then be integrated to produce a strategic plan for development of building infrastructure that will be executed in the next 15 years in a prioritized fashion (Fig. 3).

The University Master Plan is to be a tool for advancing the University’s mission.

The choice of 15-year time-span is to make it long enough to permit strategic thinking and relatively short to remain relevant in the face of the accelerated phase of change that characterises 21st century construction technologies. It is envisaged that some of facilities and amenities will include college spaces, 500-bed hospital, guest houses, staff and students residents, main library, an international school, student union building, car parks and greeneries, access roads, amongst others.

Expansion of Postgraduate Programs. Since 2011, the Centre for Peace and Development Studies has been the only provider of postgraduate programs (postgraduate diploma and masters in areas of peace and conflict resolution, humanitarian, international and diplomatic studies, and strategic studies). At time of writing, the numbers of postgraduate students were 1000 of which 41 are studying at PhD level. As of 2015, new programs have been started in: public administration, business administration, accounting and finance, economics, law, human rights, and political sciences, and international studies. By January 2017, programs will be launched in veterinary sciences, animal production, geology, agriculture, and forestry, among others. It is projected that postgraduate students will exceed 2000 by end of 2017 and 6000 by 2030.



Figure 3. Components considered in designing University of Juba master plan

Opening of community colleges in states. In line with University's strategic goal 1, namely expanding access to quality higher education, the University is set to establish Community Colleges in states of South Sudan. The first to be established is Kuajok College for Human Resource Development and Extra-Mural Studies in Kuajok, the capital of newly established Gogrial State. The statue to institute the College has been signed by Chairperson of University Council and will be endorsed by the University Council once it convenes early in the New Year. Teaching will start in earnest by February 2017 with about 300 intermediate diploma students in areas of business studies, public administration, accounting and finance, development communication, finance and banking, and computer and information technology. Lessons learned will be applied in setting up of similar colleges in other states across South Sudan, and especially those states which do not host a public university. These community colleges will be the nuclei around which new campuses of the University of Juba will spring up across the whole country.

Resumption of graduation ceremony

The last graduation ceremony before independence of South Sudan was in 2003. In 2015, the new administration mounted a new graduation ceremony for 3,500 graduands on 28 April 2015. The graduation ceremony was presided over by the President of the Republic of South Sudan. It boosted national moral greatly. The event was described by the President as an achievement in record time. This was followed by a second graduation ceremony on 26 May 2016 in which about 1,900 students graduated.

Establishment of university's investment and trading arm

University of Juba Enterprises Limited (UJE) is a company wholly owned by University of Juba and limited by guarantees. It was set up in September 2014. Its mission is to create a financially independent University and aims to be a regional and global company in technology and innovation by 2030. The UJE is directed by an academic and former member of Board of Directors of KCB. Last year, UJE ordered 3500 gowns for graduation ceremony and will be collecting hire fees from graduands as part of revenue generation. It has board of directors and an office space at Lundin House at University of Juba downtown campus. It has also signed a franchise agreement with IFC to train students and business owners in SME sector in human resource management, business administration, and hotel management. The Enterprise is also planning to enter agribusiness sector by operating a farm, investing in clean energy, printing business, and real estate, among others.

Renting off university accommodation properties to university staff

The University has about 114 houses, flats, and rooms in guest houses. For many years, staff of University occupied those facilities for free. Since February 2015, all staff have been obliged to pay one third of the market value of the accommodation they occupy. Rates are not flat but reflect quality and the size of the property being occupied. From February 2015 to January 2016, the University raised about one million South Sudanese pounds which is being used to install security solar lights in staff and student residence.

Improving university public visibility. One of impacts of reduced human capacity at University of Juba was lack of publications such as newsletters, scientific journals, programs brochures, and website, among others. The last public document available that gives out information about the University was an academic calendar published in 2008. The website disappeared as it fell behind with its annual subscription. Efforts have been exerted to reverse this reality. For example, the University website has been reactivated with new information and different domain name (www.jubauni.net); Juvarsity, a monthly newsletter of University that stopped publishing after independence in 2011 has been resumed since 2015. In 2015, the University resumed publishing an annual statistical year book that provides detailed statistical information on all aspects of the University. In October 2016, University of Juba, College of Natural Resources and Environmental Studies hosted an exhibition corner for the University at the RUFURUM Biennial Conference in Cape Town South Africa held 14 to 21 October 2016. A directorate for research and publications has been established and is planning to launch two Journals: one for the sciences and another for humanities, arts, and social sciences. These journals are intended to publish and share research output produced by the staff of the University of Juba.

Gauging the impact of progress on student, staff, and public perceptions. In order to assess the progress made in the first 30 months in the life of the University of Juba administration, and how this might have impacted or changed the perceptions amongst students, staff, and general public about University of Juba, an opinion survey was conducted by the Directorate of Planning, Innovation, and Quality Assurance at the University of Juba (Blackings and Bul, 2016). The study involved an opinion survey of 200 random sample of key stakeholders distributed as follows: 100 students across the colleges making up about 50% of the whole sample), 25 or 25% academics, 13% non-academic staff, and 12% random selected respondents amongst the general public.

The students, academic and non-academic staff as well as members of the general public were randomly issued a questionnaire which they completed and returned. The focus of the survey was on academic programs provided by the University, improvement in general learning environment and facilities, and changes in student welfare and related programs. About 197 questioners issued were returned. Both quantitative and qualitative information was gathered.

The outcome and analysis of the survey results. There is an overall satisfaction (65%) amongst respondents with the general performance of the current administration. Especially, the current administration was seen to compare favorably with the previous (two post-independence) administrations of the University of Juba. What's more, there was a general satisfaction by 61% respondents with the academic programs of the University under the current administration. The respondents particularly noted how the increase in the academic staff recruitment was reflected in the relative stabilization of the academic calendar of the University and in the reduction of deferred courses.

However, the rate at which students' result are being processed remains an area of

concern, despite the respondents' overwhelming believe that the academic programs of the University have significantly improved over the last two years. Moreover, some concerns were expressed about the learning environment and facilities of the University. The key area of concern was the library services, where lack of new acquisitions, space and power supply was noted by respondents. The study, on the other hand, noted with satisfaction the improvements in the opening and closing hours of the main library and the renovations of the lecture halls that were effected under the new administration.

On the flip side, the key area of dissatisfaction amongst 69% of the respondents was on students' welfare: namely, poor accommodation, sporting and feeding programs. However, the erection of the basketball court drew a positive response. Besides sporting, most feeding and accommodation are outside the current mandate of the University administration.

The current administration compared better than the previous administrations in the following areas: stabilization of the academic calendar, improvements in the students' feeding program, increased recruitment of academic staff, improvements in the general environment of the University like the lecture halls, the re-instituting of graduation ceremonies and the provision of water supply.

The findings of the present study are generally consistent with other literature, such as a survey by a national newspaper in 2015, which found the Vice Chancellor of the University of Juba, as one of the four change movers in the country.

The report highlighted a number of useful lessons that can be drawn from the survey. This includes the doubling up of efforts in the processing of students' results; cutting down the number of courses being carried forward due to staff shortage; updating of the library stock of books and journals; increasing the number of higher degree programs and electricity supply hours; and ensuring internet access as well as on-line presence of the University through a website. In addition, variations between college approval ratings and the poor physical learning environment are some of the areas that need to be improved. Some of these can be fixed with changes in attitude with the minimum of resources, while others would require massive capital input, the report noted.

Conclusion

This paper has provided a brief narrative of the struggles of the new University of Juba's administration led by the author to recreate University of Juba to be able to contribute to national socio-economic development. As seen throughout the paper, the University faces multiple challenges especially after independence during which it lost staff and assets. This was aggravated by lack of financial resources and poor public funding, poor capacity due to reduced numbers of academic staff which impacted negatively on academic calendar and University's ability to deliver postgraduate programs and conduct research. The paper also shared the new vision, mission, strategic goals, and core values that have been developed and adopted to propel the University to the next level as regional and world-class centre of

excellence in education, research, innovation, and service to community.

In brief, significant progress has been made to recreate the new university. And, judging from the recent opinion survey, the University of Juba as an institution of higher learning has made good progress in reorienting its programme to not only enhance quality of education, but its development relevance too. The survey also highlights areas for improvement, and the university administration is intensifying efforts to address the gaps. These challenges reflect the current reality and reaffirm the areas where efforts must be redoubled and enough resources sought to address them.

Overall, the paper has provides an overview of the challenges, the efforts at resolving them, and University plans and vision, and the progress achieved so far. The progress so far made provides the launching pad on which future progress can be based, and desired transformation of the University brought about so that the University can take off to become a national asset that is capable of contributing to national economic empowerment and social transformation.

Acknowledgement

The author wishes to thank Professor John Mairi Blackings and Atem Bul Atem both from the Directorate of Planning, Innovation and Quality Assurance for making the results of their opinion survey report available for this paper, and Dr. Moses Tomor Bojoi of the Academic Registry, and Mr Edward Ladu of Human Resource Management for providing me with up to date student and staff data. This paper is a contribution to the 2016 Fifth African Education Week and RUFORUM Biennial Conference.

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