MAKERERE UNIVERSITY
CHANGE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Notes on Benchmarking Visit to Stellenbosch University
16th to 21st March 2014

Note:
This is my tentative report to the Principal, CHUSS, based on the notes taken during the discussions we had with SU officials. The benchmarking team will compile an official report which they will share with university management.

1.0 Introduction

The Change Management Committee (CMC) is charged with implementing institutional change in accordance with the reforms recommended by the University Research, Administrative and Financial Reforms (URAFR) Committee. Resource mobilisation and management is one of the areas where reforms were recommended by UNAFR. As part of the activities to implement the resource mobilization and management function, the Change Management Committee undertook a benchmarking visit to Stellenbosch University within the framework of IDRC support. During the visit, the benchmarking team had opportunity to meet various management teams of Stellenbosch University and to participate in the launch of the HOPE Project, which is championed by the university.

2.0 Members of the Benchmarking Team

The team included the following members of the Change Management Committee:

i.	Assoc. Prof. Barnabas Nawangwe	-	Deputy Vice Chancellor (F&A)
ii.	Assoc. Prof. Goretti Nabanoga	-	Deputy Principal, CAES
iii.	Assoc. Prof. Aaron Mushengyezi	-	Dean, SLLC
iv.	Dr. Vincent Sembatya	-	Director Quality Assurance
v.	Ms. Catherine Kanabahita	-	Gender Mainstreaming

3.0 Areas of Focus for Benchmarking Visit

1. Postgraduate and International Office

(Meeting with Mr. Robert Kotze, Senior Director Postgraduate and International Office)

(a) Brief overview:
- Stellenbosch University will mark 100 years in 2018.
- It has 5 campuses and 10 Faculties – it has 27,823 students. One quarter of the students are housed within the university – i.e. about 7,000 students.
- The Postgraduate and International Office coordinates postgraduate training and international programmes. Stellenbosch University has a total of 28,347 students, of which 3,219 or 11% are international students. 10,197 of the student population (36%) are postgraduate, out of which 1,744 are international (1,302 or 75% of the international students are from Africa).

- The university has adopted a bi-lingual policy (English/Afrikaans) for the language of instruction in class. The new policy has attracted Black, Coloured and Indian (BCI) students to study at the university.
- International students account for 12.5%.
- Academic staff: 917. Lecturer-student ratio: 1:24.

(b) Finances:

Government grants	36.0%
Tuition	22.0%
Donations	28.8%
Sales of products and services	1.9%
Interest on dividends	5.7%
Realised profit on disposal of investments	4.0%

(c) HOPE Project

- Through the HOPE Project, the university has aligned its vision and mission to key themes in order to have a greater impact on human social, economic and technological development in South Africa and on the continent.
- It has also created Centres of Excellence and Research Chairs that are funded 85% by government and the private sector.

(d) Public-Private Partnerships (PPP)

- Research agenda is linked with industry and this attracts funding from business entities.
- Government matches 1:1 for funding received from the private sector.
- Academic staff apply for consultancy work from industry, and this adds to their monthly income. They are also paid by government for articles they publish.

2. **Finance Management**

(Meeting with Mr. Manie Lombard, Chief Director Finance)

(a) The Finance Department has a team of 150 people.
(b) Collection of funds is centralised – the university runs "one account" (operationally).
(c) For transactions of less than 250,000 Rand, the unit gets 3 quotations; for those above 250,000 Rand, they tender.
(d) The different units (Faculty, Department, etc) have a finance function for initiation and appraisal of transactions.
(e) All transactions are electronically processed – they no longer use manual vouchers and cheques. All appointed signatories at Level A and B must log in by 3:30PM each day to authorise payments.
(f) All requisitions by cost centres are done online. As soon as a requisition is initiated, the system automatically checks the account balance for that budget line. If the available funds are inadequate for the transaction, the system automatically stops the requisition process and the initiator cannot proceed.
(g) It takes a maximum of 3 days to process and pay any transaction – urgent transactions can be completed within one day.

(h) Their finance system is home-grown – it was designed by the university.

3. **Strategic Initiatives and Human Resources**

(Meeting with Prof. Tobie de Coning, Chief Director, Strategic Initiatives and Human Resources)

- The unit has a staff of about 50 people.

(a) Strategic Initiatives
- The role of strategic initiatives is horizontal – it provides an enabling role for other units.
- The mission and vision of the university provides the guiding principles for strategic initiatives and human resource policies.
- At a specific time of year, an institutional forum (for Heads of Units, and university management, Deans, etc) is held so that together they can plan strategy for the year, which strategy in turn informs the business plans of each unit/faculty. The budget then supports the business plans for the year.
- Involving all units in planning strategy for the year ensures ownership of the strategy.
- In June, a Rector's Academic Forum (RAF) is held. During RAF, academic planning is made (for teaching and learning activities and materials) and the priorities are then sent to the University Council for appropriating the needed funds.

(b) Human Resources
- The university has a workforce plan for 6 years. The plan helps the university to know who will be retiring and who needs to be developed to take over (succession plan); whether there is an internal person to take over, or whether they should look outside for recruitment.
- The workforce plan also helps to plan for and cater for diversity in recruitment – the university workforce is still largely white and male, given the university's history.
- The university offers competitive rates for payment of salaries, e.g. a Professor is paid between 800,000 and 1,000,000 million Rand per year. The DVC is paid 1.6 million Rand per year. In addition, academic staff are paid for their research output (publications).
- All vacancies are filled – if a position in the unit is not filled for a year, it is taken away because that is a sign that it is not needed.
- The university operates annual performance contracts using a scale of 1 to 5 to score staff performance. A score of 3-5 is considered normal, while a score of 1 is poor.
- If an employee scores in the normal range, s/he qualifies for the annual general salary raise (of about 6%) to cater for inflation; if s/he scores 1, s/he gets nothing.
- If a member of staff consistently scores on a scale of 1, s/he is put on a performance review plan. If s/he doesn't show improvement, s/he is fired.

- In assessing staff performance, the university looks at performance outcomes which are laid out in the employee's annual performance contract.

4. **International Academic Networking**

(Meeting with Mr. Christoff Pauw, Manager International Academic Networks)

(a) The university is a member of many academic networks in Africa and the rest of the world.
(b) Building strong networks with other universities is one of its priorities because it wants to be an important player in African and global affairs. Makerere University is one of its top partners on a number of projects. (See detailed report handed to us on collaborative projects between SU, MAK and other universities).
(c) SU puts emphasis on exchange of staff and students.
  - Funding is provided for academic staff exchanges.
  - It receives students (mainly postgraduates) from many universities, including Makerere.

5. **Communication and Media Relations**

(Meeting with Mr. Mohammed Shaikh, Senior Director Communication and Liaison Department)

(a) The communications function of the university works to promote institutional advancement, and as such the Department works horizontally with other units under Institutional Advancement, such as Alumni Relations, Fundraising, etc. It promotes the corporate identity of the university through branding materials, uniformity in printing business cards, procuring unique gifts for the university (working with community groups, etc).
(b) The Department has 21 staff and it handles the following functions:
  - Publications and literature for the university (e.g. staff magazine).
  - Brochures, booklets and flyers.
  - Electronic communication (e-comm): Facebook, twitter, etc.
  - Events: University functions, luncheons, corporate and government meetings and events outside the university.
  - Communications and speeches for the university (these have recently been moved to the VC's office).
(c) Policy on naming university buildings is in place. E.g. the donor must give 30-40% of total funds for a building project in order to qualify for naming rights (the building or facility being names after him/her; those that contribute less can also have a hall, meeting room or laboratory named after them).
(d) Radio Station
  - The Radio station is run by student volunteers; however, 5 staff are assigned to manage the radio.
  - The radio is a community station.

6. **Alumni Relations**

(Meeting with Ms. Bev Witten, Senior Director, Alumni Relations)

(a) The Department has 10 staff.
(b) The activities of the office are aligned to the institutional plan 2014-2018, and the VC's 3-point plan: inclusiveness, societal impact, and student enrolment (bursaries for poor students).
(c) They practice what they preach: as staff, they also give back to support bursaries.
(d) Strategies for the Department:
   i) Building connections with the alumni to get them excited about the university. Outreach is done through events such as "Meet the new Dean", etc. The key issue is: what stories do we tell the Alumni to excite them to give?
   ii) Early student engagement: They employ student volunteers in the Alumni Relations Office to tell them what their fellow students are unhappy about, and to give them strategies on how to fundraise from fellow students.
   iii) Communication: They send out good stories to the alumni including communicating research outputs from staff.
   iv) Fundraising: Both from campus students and staff, and from the alumni.
   v) Volunteer engagement with Alumni: They engage alumni to participate in university activities, e.g. fundraising, and they also use them (the champions) to mobilise others. They also talk to them about bequeathing part of their wealth to the university for good causes (legacy trusts).
(e) How do you start an Alumni Relations Office?
   • Start by creating a database (using initially an excel sheet) of the alumni as they graduate – you can use graduation lists, or other registration forms they fill. NB: Students can create this database as part of their research, course work for a class, or internship training.
   • Keep updating the database. Later you can use software to track your alumni and communicate with them.
   • Invest in it as a university. Keep in touch with your alumni – follow them up wherever they are using Facebook, Twitter, etc. Show interest in their successes; invite them to share their successes with students on campus, or during special events.
   • Assign staff from the Alumni office to follow them up.

7. **Facilities Management**

(Meeting with Mr. Chris Munnick, Chief Director, Facilities Management)

Managing University Buildings
(a) In 2000, the South African government stopped funding maintenance of buildings in universities. By 2009, SU buildings were in a dire state of disrepair – the university could only afford 10 million Rand per year to maintain about 750,000 square meters of space. In 2009, they needed 95 million Rand to maintain the buildings, but SU did not have the funds. Instead, it had resorted to crisis maintenance – i.e. repairing only what has broken down.

(b) When the new Chief Director Facilities Management took over in 2009, he carried out an assessment of all buildings and established that basing on the market value of the buildings, SU would need to save 1.8% of the replacement value of the buildings in order to effectively carry out pro-active maintenance. For the hostels, given the intensity of their usage, a total replacement value rate of 2.4% would apply.

(c) What became clear from the study was that all the cost centres (faculties and all university units) had to pay the full cost of maintaining their buildings in order to keep them operational. If this was not done, the buildings would eventually give way, and this state of affairs posed a great risk to the university's operations and to its reputation.

(d) Today, all streams of income at SU (i.e. tuition, research funds, government grants, investment funds, etc) must contribute towards full cost maintenance of university estates.

(e) The Facilities Management unit had to install an Asset Management System (using EAM software) to log in information on what needs to be repaired or replaced in each building, and when. NB: There are other Asset Management Systems such as Maximo or Pragma which can be used).

(f) To convince university management and the University Council to support the initiative, the Facilities Manager had to do a full empirical review of the full cost of maintaining the buildings. He had to carry out a high risk assessment of the facilities and demonstrate the risk to the university Council. The assessment emphasized the:
- Business risk (e.g. by delaying to fix a leakage, you pay more to repair the leakage and the physical structure of the building affected by the leakage).
- Reputational risk of SU.
- Safety hazards the university faced (e.g. one of the floors in a block caught fire).

(g) The university is now going through a Campus Renewal Campaign to improve on all its facilities and construct new buildings as well.

(h) SU abolished free staff housing in 2000. Now it pays a market rate for its staff to find their own accommodation off campus.

Managing University Transport

(a) SU no longer provides vehicles for its managers. Instead, it keeps a pool of vehicles that are used to run the university business. The cost centre/unit that needs the pool car has to budget for and pay for the costs of using the vehicle. Even the VC's office has to pay.

(b) Under the Full Cost Model, there are no free vehicles. Every unit has to pay for the vehicle it uses.

(c) All these reforms were put in place as part of the process to manage change and improve the university's estate.

8. Promoting Inclusivity of Minorities

(Meeting with Ms. Monica Du Toit, Centre for Inclusivity)

(a) The Centre for Inclusivity (CFI) is a new unit meant to address Stellenbosch's history of white dominance, in order to bring in students and staff from minority groups. It has 3 staff members.

(b) The goal of CFI is to implement a transformational plan in relation to national racial demographics.

(c) The student inclusivity dimension is changing but the staff inclusivity ratio is still low for Black, Coloured and Indian staff.

(d) Inclusivity without resources is exclusion. It has to be a deliberate effort by the institution to change the institutional culture, e.g. the residence placement policy for students in dormitories had to change to reflect an inclusive environment for all.

(e) Inclusive learning: Stellenbosch has had to develop or review its curriculum to reflect inclusiveness in what is taught, how they teach it, etc.

(f) Leadership and governance: Election of people into Senate, Council and Convocation has had to change to reflect the changing demographics, so that these organs are not dominated by Whites only.

(g) Inclusive communication climate: CFI organises diversity weeks, events on human rights, celebrating women's day, etc.

(h) Employment equity: SU has been a white dominated university and this is changing to ensure inclusivity.

9. Lunch hosted by Prof. Eugene Cloete, Vice-Rector for Research and Innovation

- The benchmarking team was hosted to a working lunch by Prof. Eugene Cloete, Vice-Rector for Research and Innovation. Prof. Kotze briefed the benchmarking team about the research and innovation culture at SU. He informed the team that researchers are rewarded for their effort through monetary inducements and academic awards. Innovations by staff and students are supported through an innovation fund. Innovations are the property of the University.

- Private sector players with innovative ideas are welcome to partner with SU researchers to develop their innovations into commercial products.

- Stellenbosch University has her own winery and some other companies developed by staff of the University. Prof. Cloete accepted a request to support Makerere University develop her intellectual property management office.

10. Visit to the Telematic Centre

- Dr. Antoinette van de Merwe took the benchmarking team through a demonstration of the operations of the Telematic Centre. The Telematic Centre promotes the use of e-learning at graduate level. Live broadcasts of lectures are transmitted to SU e-learning centres at different locations around South Africa. Students may ask questions or send comments to the lecturer through the internet or sms messaging on their phones.

- The system is satellite based and satellite dishes are installed by SU at all the e-learning centres. The cost of setting up such a system is USD 400,000.

- The benchmarking team pledged to explore the possibility of establishing a centre in Uganda to benefit graduate students.

11. **Meeting of Hope Africa and Hope International**

- The HOPE Project is championed by Stellenbosch University to search for solutions for Africa's development. The participants at the meeting included the vice chancellors of Stellenbosch University, University of Botswana, the University of Malawi, Dalarna University in Sweden, as well as representatives of Malmo, Gotenburg and Makerere universities. Two members of the CMC team from Makerere were invited to attend the meeting: Dr. Barnabas Nawangwe (Deputy Vice Chancellor, Finance and Administration) and Dr. Vincent Sembatya (Director, Quality Assurance).
- The keynote address at the meeting, whose theme was: *Tertiary Education and Social Impact* was given by Prof. Marita Hilliges, Vice Chancellor of Dalarna University. Prof. Russel Botman, the host and initiator of the project, invited participants to join hands and help Africa's impoverished communities come out of poverty.
- The meeting adopted a resolution which affirmed the willingness of Hope Africa and Hope International to work together to find solutions for humanity.

12. **Launch of Hope Africa and Hope International**

- Hope Africa and Hope International were launched at a colourful ceremony broadcast live at Lanzerac Hotel in Stellenbosch. Makerere University is a member of Hope Africa. The other members are Stellenbosch University, University of Botswana, University of Nairobi, Dar es Salaam University and University of Malawi.

4.0 Conclusion and Way Forward

This is a tentative report based on the notes taken during our discussions with various university officials. The CMC team will compile a comprehensive report and also propose recommendations for consideration by the university management. However, the benchmarking visit was an eye opener in many ways, e.g.:

- Stellenbosch University is run as a corporate entity and with a business mind set, hence its success in resource mobilization and management;
- The university has a strict and frugal financial management system which demands discipline and financial planning and management from all units;
- There is need to do more to ensure that financial transactions are electronically processed in order to ensure a timely settlement of payments.
- The university needs to align its annual activities and business plans from Departments and Faculties to the budget; also, involving all units in planning strategy for the year ensures ownership of the strategy.
- Alumni are an important resource, but they must be given a memorable campus experience if they are to support the university in future – hence the need for a functioning and well facilitated alumni office;
- Appropriate incentives must be given to productive researchers in order to promote the research culture;
- Members of staff must be recognized for good performance in order to sustain excellence;
- Centres of excellence and research chairs are important for the promotion of research;

- The research agenda needs to be more linked with industry in order to attract funding from business entities.
- Having a forward-looking workforce plan helps the university to know who will be retiring, when, and who needs to be developed to take over – and this is important for succession planning in recruitment.
- Annual performance contracts are necessary in order to optimise staff performance.
- The communications function of the university works to promote institutional advancement and the corporate identity of the institution – hence all the communication functions should be managed under one unit.
- A policy on naming rights for university buildings is necessary because it is an incentive for donors who would like to give more university projects.
- There is need to adopt a Full Cost Model for maintaining university facilities and vehicles.
- More needs to be done to invest in e-learning technology in our distance education programme in order to set up and equip efficient centres across the country to boost student enrolment, and hence tuition income to the university.

5.0 Acknowledgement

I am grateful to the Principal of the College of Humanities and Social Sciences for nominating me to represent the College on the benchmarking visit; to the Finance Department and IDRC Project at Makerere for providing funding for the trip, and to Stellenbosch University for providing logistical support to the team.

Prepared by:
Dr. Aaron Mushengyezi
Dean, SLLC, CHUSS.
25/3/2014.