



“Higher Education Partnerships: Catalysts for poverty reduction and sustainable development”

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BACKGROUND

- **Universities in Sub Saharan Africa have the challenges of local and global relevance in the face of dwindling fortunes and continuing lack of commitment of national governments to pragmatic investment in Higher education.**
- **Research partnerships in HE have become acknowledged and recognized as key components of institutional and community/national development strategy.**



Three Major Partnerships/interventions:

- **DFID-British Council funded OAU-Newcastle University HE links and development partnerships since 1990, 4 phases on post harvest agriculture and rural women empowerment (AWARE). <http://www.delphe643.nig.com/>**
- **Carnegie Corporation's university strengthening support, 2003-2012, with added intervention by the Partnership for Higher Education in Africa (PHEA) in the area of ICT enablement.**
- **The US-Africa partnership initiative since 2008 – on iLabs, which OAU has pioneered with MIT**



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FOCAL MDGs:

MDG 1: Reduction of extreme poverty and hunger

MDG 3: Women empowerment and gender equity

MDG 8: International partnership for development

PARTNERSHIP IMPACT:

OAU staff exposed to advances in research methods and developments, impressive teaching methods and elements of community engagement, while Newcastle staff learned, firsthand, the challenges of rural development and how universities were coping with them.

OAU thus more community-impact focused, with enhanced relevance and service delivery. Remains one of Nigeria's leading universities, with good international acclaim. 4 DeLPHE projects in OAU from Rounds 2-5



MORINGA ADOPTION REVOLUTION

Women groups supported to establish moringa farms by providing seedlings and training in farm cultural practices and processing. Hence, moringa seed products adopted as water clearing agent and for other incipient uses – some developed by the women themselves. **Post awareness adoption was like a revolution.**





INNOVATION IN BIODIGESTER AND BIOGAS PRODUCTION

Simple locally fabricated gas burners with clear blue flames. Different versions can be designed to meet specific needs of the women for domestic, commercial and group uses, both at home for their family cooking and on the farm for diverse uses.



THE CARNEGIE INTERVENTION, 2003-2012

4 Focal Project:

- Enhancement of information and communication technology (ICT) potentials for teaching, learning research and services
- Optimizing instrument/equipment use in the central science laboratory and promotion of women in science
- Promoting the entrepreneurial resourcefulness of the graduates of OAU
- Strengthening research management and enhancing partnerships

Learnt Lessons & Impact:

- African universities, including OAU responding better to their civic responsibilities because of better critical infrastructures and human capital development from intervention.
- Interventions have instilled greater confidence in African universities and their proprietors, and hence encouraged governments and others to increase the level of funding for higher education.



CONCLUSION

We have shown how little but sustained liberal intervention in higher education through partnership investment in institutional capacity building, resource optimisation, leadership and focused human capital development can transform African higher education institutions, and restore their confidence, creativity and self/global esteem, and more importantly relevance to their calling and society. We believe that building on the successes enumerated here is a way forward for higher education and realistic national and regional development in Africa, and that the time for this long awaited transformation is now.