



Transforming Stellenbosch University into a national asset and African partner

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PROJECT

Along with the rest of the country, Stellenbosch University (SU) has undergone significant change since the birth of the new South Africa in 1994. Through an institutional commitment and a purposeful positioning of the institution as a home for all, and a builder of HOPE in Africa, the University has achieved significant milestones in transformation at various levels. However, much still needs to be done to create a higher education institution even more representative of and more responsive to the needs of society.

In 2009, Council approved a set of objectives and priorities for transformation over the next few years. These relate to multilingualism, the size and shape of the University, building a strong research team, the further improvement of the success rates of our students, and improving the diversity profile of our students and staff.

Through our African partnerships we would like to contribute towards a flourishing system of higher education, which is key to delivering on the development goals for our continent.



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TRANSFORMATION

Diversity of students

In 1990, the year former President Nelson Mandela was released from prison, SU had 762 black¹ students. In 2011, a total of 9 278 black students enrolled: 32,9% of the student population at both undergraduate and postgraduate level. The increase of this cohort of students in Economic and Management Sciences, Health Sciences, Arts and Social Sciences, as well as Natural Sciences has surpassed average growth.

In November 2009, Council approved the management objective that 34% of the total undergraduate student population should be black by 2015. This will be achieved via purposeful enrolment management and targeted recruitment programmes.

One of the most significant barriers to transformation and equal access in higher education is funding. Stellenbosch University has bursary initiatives for talented black students, facilitating their tertiary study which in turn brings a much needed freshness of ideas, perspective and community to its campuses.

Over and above state-funded loan schemes and bursaries, Stellenbosch University has allocated R40,4 million in 2012 for recruitment bursaries for black students specifically. A further R19 million was allocated for the same period to assist poor

¹ When referring to black students it includes African, Coloured and Indian students.

students. This is one of the primary areas in which financial support from external partners is required to aid the University's accelerated diversity.

Ensuring student success

Stellenbosch University has instituted innovative solutions to counter the lack of academic preparedness among first-year students as a result of complex factors impairing the quality of secondary education in South Africa.

A good example of the support provided to help students make the transition from school to university is our First-year Academy (FYA). It is a 'virtual' initiative in the sense that it is not based in a physical location. Instead, it consists of a range of campus-wide measures – from early assessment, teaching and learning coordination points, and tutor and mentor programmes to ResEd programmes and counselling services.

When it was launched in 2006/7, the FYA was the first initiative of its kind in the country. It has since contributed significantly to Stellenbosch consistently maintaining a first-year retention rate of over 85%.

Recruitment initiatives

The Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences (including the internationally accredited University of Stellenbosch Business School, or USB) produces top-notch graduates in commerce, accountancy and business management. It has a good participation level from black students. The BComm programme gives preference to students from disadvantaged

schools where they may not have had access to good teachers and facilities.

Rachel's Angels

Rachel's Angels, a special recruiting initiative which is at the same time a community outreach project, is headed by Professor Rachel Jafta, Chairperson of the Department of Economics. It is a mentorship programme, which is presented in partnership with Media 24. The objective is to prepare Grade 11 and Grade 12 learners from previously disadvantaged schools for tertiary study at any tertiary institution. The mentors are all from SU, and about 15 learners – Afrikaans-speaking black students who need tuition in their mother tongue – end up enrolling at SU each year.

Institute for Mathematics and Science Teaching at Stellenbosch University (IMSTUS)

IMSTUS is part of the Faculty of Education, but is a registered non-profit initiative primarily funded by the private sector. Its core purpose is to enrich and transform Mathematics and Science education by empowering educators and learners from disadvantaged communities through partnerships, amongst others with the Western Cape Department of Education. One of its initiatives is the Science and Mathematics bridging programme (SciMathUS) at the University. This year-long bridging programme provides a second chance to talented and motivated matriculants who failed to gain access to sought-after fields of tertiary study requiring high marks in mathematics, science or

accounting. Having substantially improved their performance, many a SciMathUS alumnus have gone on to mainstream studies at Stellenbosch University: 124 have graduated; 33 have obtained post-graduate qualifications; seven have become doctors and 11 have become engineers.

Schools Partnership Project

SU's Schools Partnership Project represents an integrated approach to school interaction. We have taken existing outreach activities and packaged them into a substantive initiative that serves the needs of schools and learners and helps us facilitate better partnerships with communities that need support. The project identifies academically talented learners in disadvantaged schools, prepares them for higher education through special interventions, and provides them with the opportunity to study at Stellenbosch University if they so wish.

Imbewu at the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences

Over the past 11 years the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences has been organising the annual Imbewu (previously Gesog!) for senior high school learners. It is part of the faculty's recruitment and outreach programmes to disadvantaged schools. Learners visit the campus during the June school holidays and receive information on career choices, study skills and student support, bursaries, campus life and residences, student health and diversity. They have panel discussions with senior students, visit the Morphology Museum and dissection halls, and attend a research presentation. Half the Grade

12 learners who attended the Imbewu in 2009 subsequently went on to enrol in the Faculty.

Language no longer a barrier

At Stellenbosch University (SU) we approach language management from a people-oriented perspective. We consider language an instrument of empowerment in the context of South Africa's diversity. We are driven by the need to maintain a fair balance between access, student success and the needs of Afrikaans speakers.

The perception that SU remains largely 'an Afrikaans university where Afrikaners go' is no longer accurate. The University has embraced multilingualism. Walking around campus you are as likely to hear isiXhosa and English as Afrikaans.

A single medium of instruction could serve as an obstacle to prospective students who may not be proficient in that particular language. We promote greater access by using both English and Afrikaans, the two principal languages of teaching at school level, as our teaching languages. As needs may differ from faculty to faculty, we have chosen a three-pronged approach:

- parallel-medium teaching with separate Afrikaans and English streams;
- double-medium teaching where both languages are spoken in the same classroom; and
- single-medium teaching, but with a trial project using interpreters.

Language support

Every year the Language Centre offers:

- credit-bearing courses in academic literacy, language acquisition and professional communication for 2 800 students;
- writing skills assistance for more than 4 000 students;
- short courses for 1 600 postgraduate students;
- short courses in Afrikaans, English and isiXhosa for staff and students
- assistance to hundreds of international students with courses in Afrikaans, English and isiXhosa
- language services to staff, students and external clients: translation, editing and interpreting;
- the academic literacy tests that all prospective students take; and
- training and developing terminology in isiXhosa: so far nine terminology booklets published, including one with soccer terminology to coincide with the 2010 World Cup.

Language management in a multilingual context is a complex matter that demands nuanced, well-thought-out solutions. Based on research the University is being positioned as a leader in the field of language planning and language management. The large number of publications that have appeared attests to this, as do our participation in national and international language and education conferences.

Staff diversity

The Human Resources division is driving various initiatives to grow the University's cohort of black staff, and simultaneously increase female representation. SU's researchers are an aging, white male population, and efforts are strongly focused on developing talented black academics. In terms of staff diversity the University's objective is to raise the percentage of black personnel from 38,4% in 2009 to 53% by 2015.

The Legacy Project is an initiative to increase the financing available for senior appointments in the human and social sciences. Funding from the Andrew W Mellon Foundation, together with a significant amount made available by the University Council, is being used to increase staff diversity. It allows for the strategic recruitment, development, remuneration and mentoring of black staff members in areas of the University in which they are underrepresented.

Each environment has to **compile compulsory workforce plans** aimed at increasing diversity, with a clear indication of actions and resources required to achieve set targets. Each environment is performance managed according to agreed Strategic Business Indicators, which include diversity targets. Other strategies include using specialised external recruitment agencies, and advertising in appropriate media.

The University also offers the **PLUS programme**, which entails a professional learnership of one year for administrative and support staff. Staff members have the opportunity to obtain a formal qualification,

which in turn helps them to progress to the next post level. The programme is aligned with national skills development objectives and most participants in this programme are from the designated groups.

Read more on transformation at Stellenbosch University: www.sun.ac.za/transformation

AFRICAN PARTNERSHIPS

Pioneering partnerships with other African universities

Africa has been growing steadily since the turn of the millennium. This growth was virtually undeterred by the global financial crisis, and there is widespread agreement that Africa's economies will continue performing well in the coming decade and beyond.

The challenge for Africa is to translate economic growth into broad-based human development, and here universities have a vital role to play. Higher education generates, transfers and applies the knowledge required for development to take place. However, a university is not just there for itself and its immediate community. A university is a national, regional, continental and world asset. And to realise the full potential of higher education on our continent, we need critical knowledge partnerships for human development.

Collaboration has played a crucial role in the history of knowledge because it enhances the quality of research and improves its effectiveness. That is why Stellenbosch University (SU) is developing sustainable and long-term academic networks that will contribute relevant knowledge for Africa's immense developmental potential in the decades to come.

Stellenbosch University has strong links with the Association of African Universities (AAU) through its Vice-Chancellor, Prof Russel Botman, who is one of the AAU's Vice-Presidents. In May 2011 Stellenbosch

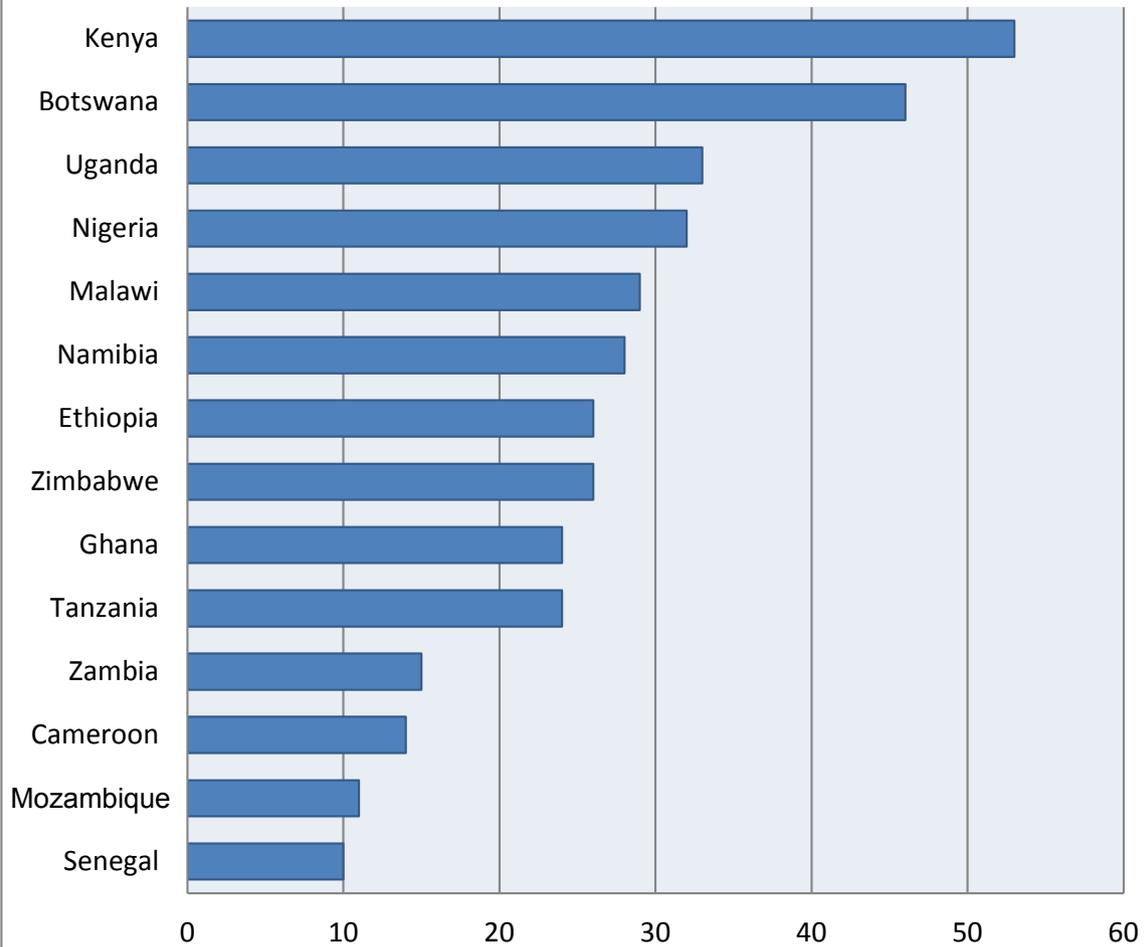
University hosted COREVIP, the conference for the Rector's, Vice-Chancellors, Presidents and senior management of African Universities. In September 2011 Stellenbosch University also hosted its first Advancement Academy workshop for development staff of African universities at its Business School in Bellville. The Advancement Academy at Stellenbosch will be presenting its first signature programme, *Leadership Programme for University Development*, aimed at vice-chancellors, rectors and university principals and presidents in 2012.

SU has agreements in place with around 200 foreign universities. In Africa, we have 149 active projects in 37 African countries, involving 434 African collaborators.

Meeting the challenges of higher education in Africa requires innovative approaches to collaboration in and with Africa. Traditional bilateral and multilateral agreements need to continue, but there is also a trend towards multiple-partner networks, often organised around joint programmes and themes with societal relevance.

Our strategy aims to enhance intra-African collaboration by incorporating our north-south into our south-south partnerships. Pooling human resources in the south raises the critical mass of the south when engaging the traditional power bases of science in the north. This creates a stronger position from where to ensure that the needs and expectations of the south is articulated and represented by the south.

African Partners (top 14 of 37 countries)



These networks or knowledge coalitions also create opportunities for cross-network fertilisation, also with our traditional partners from the global north. New networks are often modelled upon existing linkages.

SU is engaged in numerous such networks, engaging tens of university partners throughout the continent and beyond. Some examples of these knowledge coalitions follow below:

- **Partnership for Africa's Next Generation of Academics (PANGeA)**: the African Doctoral Academy in the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences has partnered with four universities to develop an African PhD programme with joint supervision and eventually joint degrees. The first intake of 14 fully funded African PhD students was in 2010. The network's main aim is to promote Africa's next generation of academics and professionals by building and sustaining world class doctoral programmes and scholarly communities through academic partnerships and joint research supervision on the African continent. In December this year 31 PhD students are expected to graduate. (www.pangeaonline.org)
- The **TRECCAfrica** (Transdisciplinary Training for Resource Efficiency and Climate Change Adaptation in Africa) consortium is a network of six African Universities – Dar es Salaam (Tanzania), Ghana, Mekelle (Ethiopia), Nairobi (Kenya), Nigeria-Nsukka and Stellenbosch (South Africa). The scheme is focused on assisting the continent's sustainable development in addressing the twin challenges of climate change adaptation and natural resource depletion. It consist of mobility scholarships for 72 students and 8 staff members to cross national boundaries in Africa for trans-disciplinary postgraduate research aimed at empowering the continent worst affected by global warming. (www.treccafrica.com)
- **Periperi U** (University network of Partners Enhancing Resilience for People Exposed to Risks) is a consortium of higher education institutions in Algeria, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Madagascar, Mozambique, Senegal, South Africa, Tanzania and Uganda. It is the only one of its kind focused on providing an African response to disaster risk management. Founded in 2006, it seeks to challenge the notion of victimhood by investing in human capital through training and education. Periperi U now actively engages 71 academic professionals in ten countries working together as colleagues. This collective effort is practically reflected in the introduction of nine applied undergraduate and postgraduate programmes within Africa that are generating new applied disaster risk reduction professionals. (www.riskreductionafrica.org)
- The highly acclaimed **African Institute for Mathematical Sciences (AIMS)** was established in 2003 by, amongst others, the then Dean of SU's Faculty of Science. It has since become a model of regional and continental collaboration with three Western Cape universities providing administrative support and expertise, and countless African universities across the continent advising their top graduates

to apply to AIMS. The network is now growing with mathematical institutes being established in Senegal, Ghana and Ethiopia and more in what will become the African Mathematical Institutes Network (AMI-Net). AIMS develops talented young mathematicians from Africa.

- Two emerging African partnerships supported by NEPAD and hosted at Stellenbosch University aim to build capacity and conduct high-level research on two related and critical matters for Africa's sustainability, namely water and energy. The first **NEPAD Centre of Excellence in Water Sciences and Technology** was awarded to Stellenbosch during 2009 and started with postgraduate teaching and research activities in partnership with seven other Southern African universities in 2010. **The NEPAD Bioenergy Initiative** is another new partnership that will aim to enlarge the range of renewable energy technologies in Africa. Both these networks will position African science at the forefront of knowledge on Africa's water and energy challenges, rather than relying on foreign expertise.
- The Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences is applying its wealth of expertise on tuberculosis and HIV/AIDS to community-based research in various African communities. One example is the **ZAMSTAR project** (Zambia South Africa TB and HIV Reduction Study) in collaboration with the University of Zambia and the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine. This is a trial where researchers test two interventions in 24 different communities in Zambia and South Africa

to reduce TB and HIV prevalence by improving diagnostics and family-centred interventions.

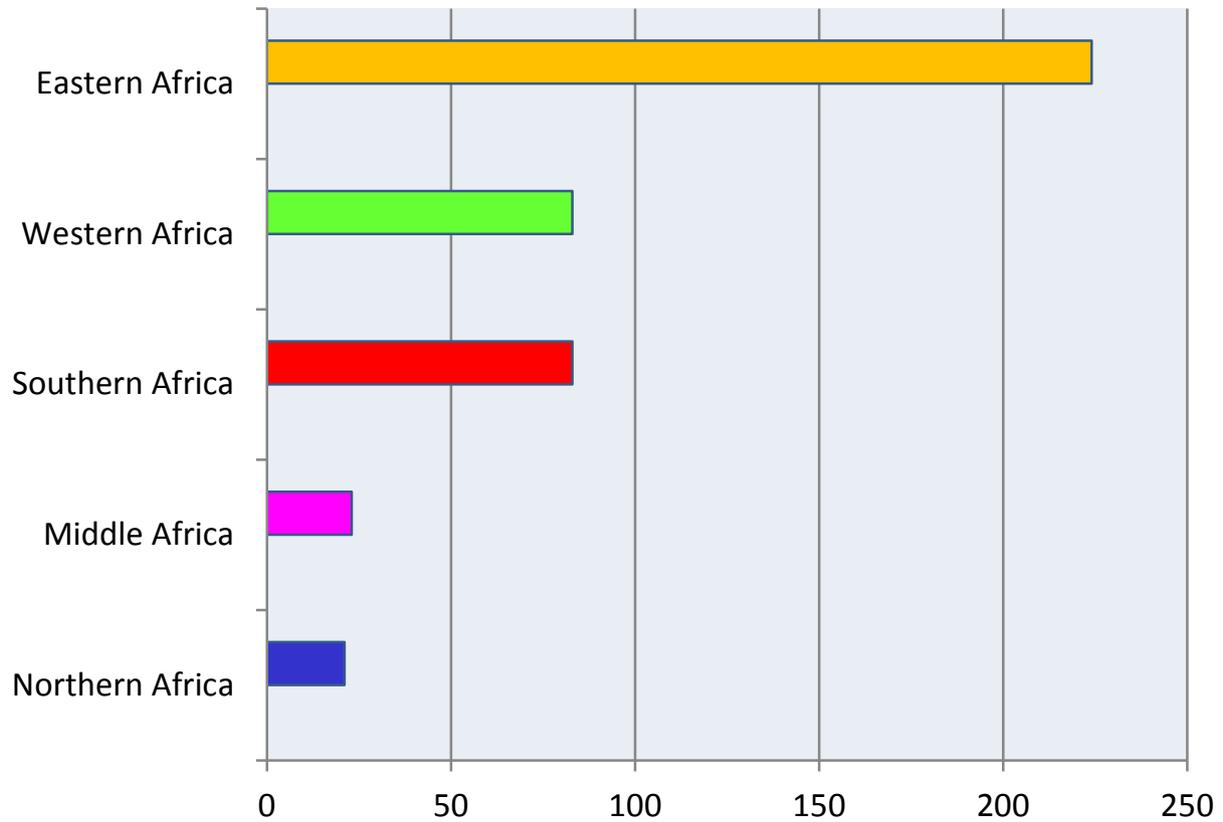
Current African Bilateral University Partners (in chronological order):

- Makerere University (Uganda)
- University of Dar es Salaam (Tanzania)
- University of Botswana
- University of Namibia
- Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (Ghana)
- University of Zimbabwe
- University of Nairobi
- University of Malawi
- Mekelle University (Ethiopia)
- University of Ghana
- Université Eduardo Mondlane
- Université de Yaoundé I (under negotiation)

Membership of continental university associations:

- Association of African Universities (AAU)
- African Network for Agriculture, Agroforestry and Natural Resources Education (ANAFE)
- African Network of Scientific and Technological Institutions (ANSTI)
- Agence Universitaire de la Francophonie (AUF)
- African Network for the Internationalisation of Education (ANIE)
- The Southern African-Nordic Centre (SANORD)

African Partners per Region



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