

# The Role of Universities in Promoting Achievement of the Millennium Development Goals

#### A African Universities Need to First Put their Houses in Order

- a) Lack of vision/policy direction as emphasis tends to be basic education
- b) Lack of political will/mistrust between governments and universities

- c) Limited financial resources (from government and student fees)
- d) Poor management capacity
- e) Brain drain (universities abroad, international organisations)
- f) A substantial number of African universities are collapsing



### B What African Universities can Do Under the Circumstances

#### **B1:** Cross-Cutting Themes

- a) Universities to tailor their programmes to national development
- b) Universities should evaluate/include realistic MDG targets in their strategic plans
- c) Policy development/exploiting university expertise



- e) Bridging the gap between knowledge producers and practitioners/policy makers
- f) Outreach/civic education
- g) Curriculum design for all levels of the system
- h) Spear heading good governance / enlightened leadership
- i) Strengthen ties with professional bodies



- a) Promotion of social mobility through:
  - . Support for lower levels of education to enlarge training opportunities
  - . Affirmative action to facilitate entry of disadvantaged groups into the more competitive areas of study
  - . Affirmative action to support retention of disadvantaged groups in higher education institutions



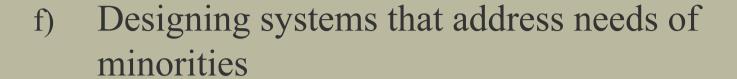
. Continuing education/alternative delivery programmes for working persons (distance education, weekend study, short-courses, etc)

- b) Promoting economic growth through:
  - . Increased labour productivity
  - . Expanding choices of study (ICT, etc)
  - . Improving relevance of skills' taught

c) Improved governance/Accountability



- a) Challenging conventional delivery systems and beliefs
- b) Curriculum design/modification
- c) Development of reading materials
- d) Review of inspection and advisory services
- e) Designing systems that promote improved use of available resources/sustainability



- g) Improving testing systems
- h) Pre and in-service teacher training
- i) Training of school management teams
- j) Advocacy/dissemination of good ideas and practices



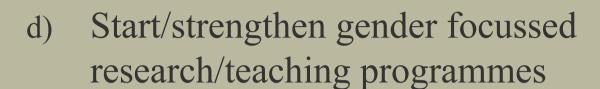
k) Using university students for teaching, research, health support, outreach, etc.

1) Strengthening programmes which promote teaching of local languages, cultures and local expert knowledge



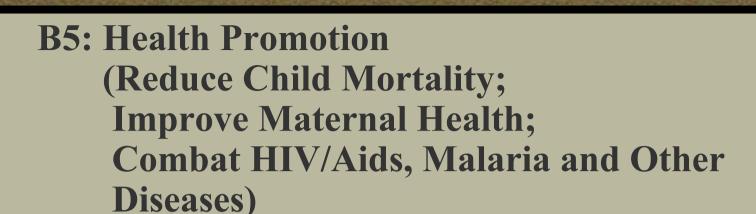
## **B4:** Promoting Gender Equity/Women Empowerment

- Affirmative action related to entry/retention (bonus points, bursaries, maternity programmes)
- b) Promoting women's involvement in institutional governance (administration)
- c) Support female quality improvement programmes at the primary and secondary levels



e) Introduce flexible modes of instruction (part-time, short courses, credit transfers)

f) Recruit and promote female faculty



- a) Mounting/strengthening outreach/public health campaigns
- b) Investing in research programmes targeting specific epidemics (HIV/Aids, malaria, etc)
- c) Start/strengthen Aids Control Units in university/activities to trickle down



- d) Exploring the potential of local medical solutions/collaboration with indigenous practitioners
- e) Identifying through research appropriate / affordable curative and preventive health care



#### **B6:** Enhancing Environmental Sustainability

- a) Involving academics/researchers on all commissions and authorities dealing with environmental issues as consultants for expert opinion
- b) Involving academics in awareness creation especially at the community level given the high calling placed on them at those levels as opinion leaders, mentors and role models



d) Strategic training and upgrading of knowledge for all categories of environmental officers



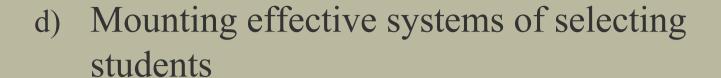
- a) Inter-university (teaching and research) between the North and South
- b) The virtual university/promotion of IT based on institutional strengths
- c) Supporting regional level graduate programmes
- d) Coordinating overseas training to reflect major human resource needs



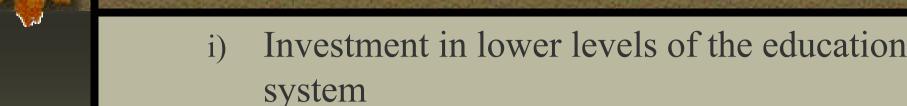
- e) Support academics to participate in international and regional meetings to benefit from emerging knowledge
- f) Promoting/exporting students to e-trade
- g) Promoting student/youth exchange/tours for international exposure
- h) Spearheading research on innovations that could be exploited for commercially
- i) Equip students with skills that enhance selfreliance/entrepreneurial skills



- Dialogues involving all stakeholders on what universities can do/how they should do it in partnership with relevant groups/organisations
- b) Expand the financial base for improved infrastructure and other learning inputs
- c) Curriculum design/monitoring of programmes to reflect changing needs



- e) Recruitment, promotion, retention of the best academics
- f) Strengthening post-graduate training
- g) Staff development (academic and administrative)
- h) Investment in research (by governments, the private sector, external partners)



- j) Coordinating higher education development to address national goals
- k) Exploring mechanisms for involving relevant non-academics in teaching and research programmes