

# Maintaining International Links

In 2012, the University of Nairobi took up a fundamental part of its business, which is to maintain and forge programmes and links with universities and other institutions worldwide. This year, the university entered over 15 new international collaborative arrangements.

Education with an international component is necessary to equip students with knowledge and skills to survive and grow in a competitive labour market. Most links and collaboration activities included institutional capacity building (staff training and development, infrastructure, equipment and donations of consumable) collaborative research, book donations, joint publications, journals, international and local conferences, workshops, seminars, symposium, contribution to the world of science, colloquia etc.

Again through such links, academic members of staff and students have avenues through which to further their research activities and at the same time jointly source for funds in order to promote research activities, institutional capacity building and exchange of publications and journals. Some of the areas identified include agriculture, food

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**The outcome of such links was sharing expertise, professionalism and common experiences and solutions to problems**

security, engineering, architecture, economics, and the arts. For instance, Lanzhou University, China, is working with teams in the areas of dry land agriculture and new agricultural technologies.

An example of a major and very international collaboration is the link project with University of Witwatersrand in South Africa, which is centred on components of teaching, research and community engagement in public health, engineering, social sciences and palaeontology.

Another example of a major ongoing collaboration project is that between the School of Business and the Switzerland Management Centre, which aims at strengthening training and applied research at PhD level, with online programmes in Entrepreneurship and Human Resource Capital.

A third exciting and major collaboration link is that with the Chinese Earthquake Administration, and the department of geology. Under the MoU, there will be, the establishment of a Centre for Seismological Training and Research in East Africa. The Centre will be the base for expanding the four seismic stations running in Kenya and will also serve to train international and local postgraduate students in order to increase the human resource base in earthquake mitigation technology and research.

It is not in doubt that promoting collaborations and links has strengthened the institutional and human capacity in African universities. We are delighted that the University Science, Humanities and Engineering Partnerships in Africa



(USHEPIA) Advisory Committee Meeting, held in October 2012, at our University and with partners drawn from :Universities of Botswana, Cape Town, Dar es Salaam, Nairobi, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Makerere University and Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology, noted that since its inception, 52 persons had been awarded degrees. A further eight fellows are on the completion list, indicating that higher education in Africa is being impacted on. The Programme sponsors, The Rockefeller Foundation, the Carnegie Corporation and the Andrew W Mellon Foundation have indeed done a wonderful job with funding of fellowships in the humanities and social sciences.