

# **GOVERNANCE OF FEDERAL UNIVERSITIES IN NIGERIA - GENERAL RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE GOVERNING COUNCIL**

**BY  
DR. JAMILA SHU'ARA**

Being text of a Paper delivered at the Retreat for the  
Governing Council of the Federal University of Agriculture  
Abeokuta at the Lagos State Resource Centre , Akodo – Lekki,  
Epe Road on the 13<sup>th</sup> of May 2010.

# 2007 Nigeria's HDI - Facts & figures

Between 1990 and 2007 Nigeria's Human Development Index (HDI) rose by 0.91% annually from 0.438 to 0.511 today. HDI, highlights the very large gaps in well-being and life chances among the countries of the world. The 2007 HDI for Nigeria is 0.511, a rank of 158<sup>th</sup> out of 182 countries. Nigeria is the last of the pack in the group of medium human development countries behind Sudan, Ghana, Lesotho, Congo DR)



# Table 1: Nigeria's human development index 2007

HDI value	Life expectancy at birth (years)	Adult literacy rate (% ages 15 and above)	Combined gross enrolment ratio (%)	GDP per capita (PPP US\$)
1. Norway (0.971)	1. Japan (82.7)	1. Georgia (100.0)	1. Australia (114.2)	1. Liechtenstein (85,382)
156. Lesotho (0.514)	165. Mali (48.1)	110. Lao People's Democratic Republic (72.7)	148. Bhutan (54.1)	139. Djibouti (2,061)
157. Uganda (0.514)	166. Mozambique (47.8)	111. Tanzania (United Republic of) (72.3)	149. Togo (53.9)	140. Kyrgyzstan (2,006)
158. Nigeria (0.511)	167. Nigeria (47.7)	112. Nigeria (72.0)	150. Nigeria (53.0)	141. Nigeria (1,969)
159. Togo (0.499)	168. Congo (Democratic Republic of the) (47.6)	113. Malawi (71.8)	151. Benin (52.4)	142. Mauritania (1,927)
160. Malawi (0.493)	169. Guinea-Bissau (47.5)	114. Madagascar (70.7)	152. Cameroon (52.3)	143. Cambodia (1,802)
182. Niger (0.340)	176. Afghanistan (43.6)	151. Mali (26.2)	177. Djibouti (25.5)	181. Congo (Democratic Republic of the)

# Literacy & Governance

## **Sociologists & Policy makers note that :**

- literacy increases quality of life, job opportunities and access to higher education.

## **Governments and Policy makers:**

- place a high premium on literacy and a lot of public funds go into providing basic, secondary & higher education in most countries.

**Literacy rate** is a crucial measure to enhance a nation's human capital because literate people are less expensive to govern, generally have a higher socio-economic status and enjoy better health and employment prospects. Countries with high literacy rates rank higher on the Human Development Indices.

# Education – Why Bother Try?

- If you think Education is expensive try the cost of ignorance!



# Education – Why Bother Try?

- Ignorance is absolute Bliss!



# Higher education in Nigeria

Education - 3 major levels; Basic, Secondary & Higher

- Higher Education is strategic in the national development of a country as it is the platform that produces Graduates in quality and quantity to drive the various sectors of the economy.
- Higher Education is the bedrock of human capital development in economic, agriculture, infrastructure, energy, oil and gas, etc sectors.
- Subsectors that produce Higher Education graduates –
  - Universities – National Universities Commission
  - Polytechnics – National Board for Technical Education
  - Colleges of Education – National Commission for Colleges of Education

# University Education

- ✓ Universities produce highly skilled manpower for the nation.
- ✓ Universities are a segment of the Public Service and their management is guided by various policies.
- ✓ A training at the many Universities in Nigeria terminates with the award of a Bachelors, Masters or Ph.D Degree in a specialized Discipline.



National Universities Commission - Mandates  
**Quality Assurance** in Tertiary Institutions is under the direct preserve of the Federal Government. By law, the National Universities Commission (NUC) has been given the mandate of:

- ✓ Accreditation of all Universities
- ✓ Approval of courses and programmes
- ✓ Maintenance of Minimum Academic Standards
- ✓ Monitoring of Universities
- ✓ Provide guidelines and Process applications for the establishment of private universities
- ✓ Monitoring of private universities
- ✓ Closure of illegal campuses,
- ✓ etc

# Nigerian University System

NUS - 104 Universities & 3 Inter-University Centres (IUCs):

- ❖ Federal Universities = 27
- ❖ State Universities = 36
- ❖ Private Universities = 41
- ❑ National Mathematical Centre, Abuja
- ❑ Nigeria-French Language Village, Badagry
- ❑ Nigeria-Arabic Language Village, Ngala

The 27 Federal Universities are also categorized as:

- Conventional Universities 17
- Universities of Technology 4
- Universities of Agriculture 3
- Military University – 1
- Other Specialized Univ. 2 (NOUN & FUPRE)

## TOTAL STUDENT ENROLMENT AS AT 2008/2009 SESSION

The total student enrolment in the 2008/2009 Academic session in the NUS was 940,736 comprising:

- ✓ Federal Universities – 609,681 (65%)
- ✓ State Universities – 289,171 (31%)
- ✓ Private Universities – 41,884 (4%)

# Federal Universities - Generic Types

**Federal Universities** - encourage the advancement of learning and offer opportunity for higher education, in line with their generic classification.

Conventional Universities - higher & liberal education

Universities of Agriculture - higher education in Agriculture

Universities of Technology - higher education in Technology

**Federal Universities** are guided by all Federal Laws and extant regulations.

## 1999 - 2009 FUNDING OF FEDERAL UNIVERSITIES

YEAR	CAPITAL ( N)	RECURRENT (N)	TOTAL (N)
1999	1,469,500,000.00	10,362,430,271.98	11,831,930,271.98
2000	1,936,785,632.00	28,206,218,865.91	30,143,004,497.91
2001	4,226,691,359.00	28,419,719,502.84	32,646,410,861.84
2002	0.00*	30,351,483,193.00	30,351,483,193.00
2003	0.00*	34,203,050,936.33	34,203,050,936.33
2004	11,973,338,699.00	41,492,948,787.01	53,466,287,486.01
2005	8,822,869,440.00	49,453,098,168.72	58,275,967,608.72
2006	6,976,416,815.00	75,400,267,475.00	82,376,684,290.00
2007	9,430,127,234.00	75,535,305,299.00	84,965,432,533.90
2008	15,402,382,798.00	93,558,110,771.00	108,960,493,579.00
2009	11,110,830,980.00	101,134,142,285.00	112,244,972,810.00
<b>G/ TOTAL</b>			<b>N639,465,718,068.69</b>

# Organs of University Governance

- **The Visitor** – the Proprietor & Mr. President
- **Chancellor** - Ceremonial but admits to Degrees
- **Council** – body established by law, can sue or be sued. Controls establishment matters of staff below VC, controls the deployment of funds, etc
- **Senate** – organizes and controls teaching; admission, graduation and discipline of students; determines priority areas in Research
- **Management** – a body of Principal Officers that ensures day- to - day administration of the University

# Organs of University Governance

- **Congregation** - Body of persons who themselves hold a bachelors Degree or equivalent recognized by the VC and congregate periodically for the advancement of the University, proffering solutions to various academic and administrative problems that affects its members.
- **Convocation** – Body of persons who hold bachelors Degree or equivalent recognized by the VC and/or teach in the University. Chancellor chairs all meetings of Convocation with an ad hoc function to award Degrees & Diplomas or admit to honorary degrees.
- **Faculty/ College Board** – Heads of Dept in a Faculty or College

# COMPOSITION & FUNCTIONS OF THE COUNCIL

## Composition of the Council.

Chairman – Pro/Chancellor

External Members - Visitor's Appointees from various interest groups

Internal Members - representing the Academic community.

## Functions of Council

The Council is the governing authority of each University and has the custody, control and disposition of all property and finances of the University.

Other functions are:

- a. to participate in the making, amendment or revocation of Statutes;
- b. to govern, manage and regulate the finances, accounts, investments, property, business, etc of the university and for that purpose appoint bankers, solicitors to audit the accounts of the university;



# FUNCTIONS OF COUNCIL

- c. to borrow money on behalf of the university and to invest any money belonging to the university;
- d. to sell, buy, exchange, lease or accept lease or dispose of real or personal property on behalf of the university;
- e. to enter into, vary, perform and cancel contracts;
- f. to determine in consultation with the Senate all university fees;
- g. to establish after considering the recommendations of Senate Faculties, Institutes, Departments and prescribe their organizations, constitution and functions;
- h. to authorize after considering the recommendation of Senate the establishments for both academic and administrative staff and with the approval of Senate suspend, or abolish any academic post;

# FUNCTIONS OF COUNCIL

- i. to regulate the salaries and to determine the conditions of service of staff;
- j. to exercise powers of removal from office and other disciplinary control on staff;
- k. to institute in consultation with Senate, fellowship, scholarship, prizes and other endowments;
- l. to promote and to make provision for research;
- m. to award Honorary Degrees and other distinctions in consultation with Senate;
- n. to supervise and control the residence and discipline of students and to make arrangements for their health and general welfare;
- o. to provide for the welfare of all staff and their spouses, children and dependants including payment of pensions and other retirement benefits.

# **Composition & Functions of Senate.**

## **Composition of Senate.**

Vice Chancellor as Chairman, all Professors, Dean of Faculties, Provosts of colleges, Heads of department & other senior members of the academic staff representing various interest.

## **Functions of Senate.**

1. Organizes controls and directs the academic work of the University.
2. Takes measures and acts in such a manner as it thinks proper for the advancement of the university as a place of education, learning and research;
3. Formulate and establish academic policy and advice Council on provision of facilities to carry out the policy;
4. Regulate all University's examinations;
5. Appoint Deans and provosts;

# Functions of Senate.

6. Regulate admissions and award, degrees and other awards offered by the University;
7. To determine what examinations and courses of other Universities are, equivalent to that of the university after considerations of the views of Boards of Faculties;
8. To formulate, modify or revise such for the organization of society, faculties, institutions and departments;
9. Recommend to the council, the constitution of the fellowships, scholarships, Bursary prizes and other awards.

# Functions of Senate

10. Promote research within the university and to require reports from time to time on such research.
11. To prepare and submit to Council for approval estimate of expenditure required to carry out the academic work of the University.
12. To make recommendation to the council on the establishment of academic staff in the university and on the suspension or abolition of any post in such establishments.
13. To review from time to time the duties of all members of the academic staff and to make recommendation to the council on their terms and conditions of service.
14. To be generally responsible for the administration of the University Library.

# Functions of Senate

16. To promote and administer the extra-moral work of the University.
17. To make recommendations to the council concerning all University fees.
18. To require a student on academic grounds to withdraw from the University.
19. In conjunction with the council (Joint committee of the council and the senate) to appoint the Registrar and also make recommendation through the council to the visitor for the appointment of the vice-chancellor.
20. In conjunction with the council (Joint committee of the council and senate) to make recommendation on conferment of Honorary Degrees to deserving persons.

# Major Instruments that guide Governance of Federal Universities

- The Constitution
- Existing Statutory Provisions – National Minimum Standards, Universities Misc Provisions, FCC, ICPC, EFCC, BPP, Code of Conduct
- State Laws & Edicts
- Public Service Rules
- Financial Regulations
- Circulars – Administrative, Policy & Treasury, etc
- National Policy on Education
- Schemes of Service
- Statutes of Senate
- Guidelines to Administrative Procedures
- Guidelines in Career Management

# Challenges

- ❖ Faculty – Ageing, brain drain, limited succession plan, more than 50% don't have Ph.Ds, high ratio of Administrative Staff
- ❖ Facilities – Inadequate infrastructural facilities and instructional materials
- ❖ Funding – inadequacy, wrong deployments/priorities
- ❖ Weak governance mechanisms – poor accountability & low transparency;
- ❖ Weak Monitoring & evaluation



# Challenges

- ❖ Out dated curricula - Gap between Universities, Industries & labour
- ❖ Limited space and access – an alarming 1:8
- ❖ Shut downs & lock outs – unending strike actions by Unions;
- ❖ Absence of a unified university academic calendar;
- ❖ Poor appreciation and deployment of ICT; and
- ❖ Poor legal framework for effective regulation of activities- illegal universities, unaccredited courses,
- ❖ etc

# Responsibilities of Council

- Leadership by example - Good people, Great Nation!  
Team work – sink or sail together!
- Conduct Council Business/meetings in decorum –  
charity begins at home;
- Conduct as Part time members of the Public Service;
- Respect the Visitor and his directives in the Visitation  
Report, Order of Protocol, etc
- Protect the rights of all in the academic community -  
irrespective of ethnic, religious or political affiliations

# Responsibilities of Council

- general oversight on expenditure – use good judgment in funds deployment. Use the money like it were yours!;
- Ensure fairness, balance in recruitment of new establishment or the discipline of staff, etc - “Our Turn Has Come Syndrome”!
- Quality Assurance – uphold quality in students’ admission;
- Engage Unions effectively in dialogue and respect Agreements

## Responsibilities of Council

- Respect the rule of law, due process & due diligence –
  - ✓ BPP, FCC, ICPC, etc are all organs of the same government which you also represent
- Entrench university culture & protect academic traditions – Selection of Chief Executives & Management Officers, Crowds at Convocations! Award of Honourary Degrees! Merit in Promotions! Quality Journals! University Ranking! etc

# Responsibilities of Council

- Ensure separation of powers - do not micro manage. Council is not Management. Delineate governance.
- Remain a neutral Appellate in cases of disputes between Management and Staff – respect is earned!
- Ensure budgetary control & monitoring, strong internal auditing and safe custody of College finances and properties - avoid profligacy as the Custodian of the Treasury;
- use alternative dispute resolution mechanisms to ensure crises free environment – Peace should start with **YOU!**

# Responsibilities of Council

- Ensure compliance to Government extant Policies:
  - ✓ procurements - respect expenditure thresholds
  - ✓ Tuition free for Nigerian students – don't rock the Boat
  - ✓ use of funds – respect Treasury & other circulars
  - ✓ emoluments & allowances – respect the law
  - ✓ Privileges - don't overstretch the hand of goodwill
- ensure that the University adheres to its mandate and carrying capacities. Don't wear a garb of core Technology while you are core Agriculture;
- Act as Front line Ambassadors to link Gown and Town - build Bridges
- garner financial or political support from Public & Private Sector, Legislature etc

# Once Upon a Time!

- A blind boy sat on the steps of a building with a hat by his feet. He held up a sign which said: "I am blind, please help me". There were only a few coins in the Hat.
- A man was walking by. He took a few coins from his pocket and dropped them into the Hat. He then took the sign, turned it around and wrote some words. He then put the sign back so that everyone who walked by would see the new words. Soon the Hat began to fill up. A lot more people were giving money to the Blind boy.

# Once Upon a Time!

- That afternoon the man who had changed the sign came to see how things were. The boy recognized the footsteps and asked, “were you the one who changed my sign in the morning? What did you write?” The man said, “I only wrote the truth. I said what you said but in a different way. I wrote, “Today is a beautiful day but I cannot see it”.



# Moral of the Story

- Both signs told people that the boy was blind. But the first sign simply said the boy was blind. The second sign told people they were so lucky they were not blind. Should we be surprised that the second sign was effective?

# **Moral of the Story:**

Be thankful for what you have, Be innovative, be creative. Think differently and positively. When life gives you 1000 reasons to sigh, show life you have 1000 reasons to smile. Face the past without regrets; face the present with confidence and future with faith. One of the most beautiful things in life is to see a person smiling and even more beautiful is to know that You are the reason behind it!!!!!!!

# Limits

- Your limit - ! It is limitless with caution, tact, diplomacy & discretion, & respect for the law and rights of others!
- When this curtain of your service at UNAAAB comes down, may History be kind to you.

*Thank You*