

## ACEIDHA & AAU CO-HOST WORKSHOP ON RESEARCH LEADERSHIP & COMMUNICATION



*Participants pose for a group photo on the first day of the training workshop at New Fairmount Hotel in Livingstone, Zambia. Seated front row (left to right): Director, Research and Graduate Studies, Prof. Henry Sichingabula, AAU Facilitator, Ms Sara Anku, Dean, School of Veterinary Medicine, Prof. King Nalubamba, AAU Lead Facilitator, Prof. Samuel Annim and AAU Facilitator, Prof. Kubata Kilunga and standing on the far right is Acting ACEIDHA Centre Leader, Prof. Bernard Hangómbe.*

**By Damaseke Chibale**

The Association of African Universities (AAU) Secretary General, Prof. Etienne Ehouan Ehile, says that universities in Africa are facing many challenges brought about by globalisation, internationalisation of higher education, technological breakthroughs and the advent of internet which have changed the higher education delivery. Prof. Ehile called upon academia in Africa to quickly adopt the new changes and focus on research with impact outputs.

Prof. Ehile was speaking at the high profile workshop co-

hosted by the AAU and the Africa Centre of Excellence for Infectious Diseases of Humans and Animals (ACEIDHA) at the University of Zambia (UNZA) which was focused on Research Leadership, Communication, Commercialisation, Partnerships and Collaboration in Livingstone from 10<sup>th</sup> – 14<sup>th</sup> September 2018.

At the same function, UNZA Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Luke Evuta Mumba, said that universities in Africa had a mandate to train and produce high quality researchers who would be relevant to industry and able to contribute positively to national and regional economic development. *Next page.*



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*By Damaseke Chibale*

“Research, in many organisations and agencies, is critical to policy formulation and source of empirical evidence to support many decisions and activities. It remains a cornerstone upon which development, in whichever field or sphere of life, should be based on,” Prof. Mumba said.

The workshop was anchored by experienced facilitators who are experts in the field of research leadership, communication, commercialisation, partnerships and collaboration. These were Prof. Samuel Annim, Prof. Kubata Kilunga, Ms Sara Anku and Mrs Felicia Kuagbedzi.

The workshop covered very salient topics worthy reviewing and, to a larger extent, adopting vital aspects or concepts. Under research leadership, it was highly indicated that effective leadership was at the core of changing the paradigm shift in determining the quality and purpose of research.

Traditionally, research and research publications have been used for promotion of academic staff. However, effective research leadership would ensure that research topics and outputs would transform positively the livelihood of people, secure the future of the next generation, financial returns and improve ranking of a given university.

The new focus for research in Africa is to have research carried out in impact areas so as to provide solutions to the various challenges facing the continent. The continent is fighting with challenges of water and sanitation, inadequate energy, road and railway infrastructure, poverty, low levels of literacy, inadequate health facilities, poor food security etc. In this regard, the solutions to these challenges could only be found through impact research which could lead to technological innovations.

These innovations could be transformed into products and services which could address the African continent’s problems.

Besides, effective research leadership entails the full understanding of the research cycle.



*Group discussions were used to engage participants during the training workshop presentations on relevant key issues.*



*Dr Andrew Phiri (left), Acting ACEIDHA Centre Leader, Prof. Bernard Hangómbe and Director, Research and Graduate Studies, Prof. Henry Sichingabula discuss the proceedings of the workshop.*

Research cycle including the following stages: Planning cycle, Project cycle, Publication cycle and 21st Century digital Scholarship cycle.

Thus, understanding the research cycle would enable researchers to conduct cost effective research with quality outputs.

Thereafter, these impact research out-

puts should be published in esteemed peer-reviewed journals. This is so because the quality of research is based on the quality of publications in which research outputs are published. Therefore, choosing high impact journals is the first step in effective research communication which could also attract research funding. *Next Page*



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*The Secretariat was on top of things to ensure the proceedings of the workshop went on well. It was marshalled by Nozenji Muzumara, Mavis Chibangu and Felicia Kuagbedzi from AAU.*

**In a nutshell, effective research leadership and communication can lead to commercialisation of research outputs through partnerships and collaborations.**



*Participants of the Research Leadership, Communication, Commercialisation, Partnerships and Collaboration Workshop pose for a group photo on the last day of the training.*

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*By Damaseke Chibale*

Some of these journals are online and can be easily accessed by researchers. In these way, researchers and universities can significantly record their presence online to other researchers worldwide.

On commercialisation front, the participants learnt that high impact research outputs qualify for Intellectual Property Rights protection if researchers have to gain any benefits from their sweat. Moreover, research outputs which are transformed into tangible products could be protected under the Patents Laws prevailing in any given country on the continent.

Additionally, to conduct effective and high impact research, partnerships and collaboration with other universities and researchers are cardinal. These partnerships and collaboration would provide platforms to carry out life-transforming research and source for funds. This situation would enable research outputs to be widely published in highly esteemed, peer-reviewed journals.

In a nutshell, effective research leadership and communication can lead to commercialisation of research outputs through partnerships and collaborations.

The workshop attracted participants from Ghana, Nigeria, Botswana, Uganda, Kenya, Democratic Republic of Congo, and the host country, Zambia.



*Director of Research and Graduate Studies, Prof. Henry Sichingabula, and UNZA Manager, Public Relations & ACEIDHA Communication Officer, Mr Damaseke Chibale, share ideas during the workshop tea break.*