University Reform in PNG: the UNITECH experience

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Introduction

Reform of the PNG higher education systems has failed, due to strong resistance of the university councils to:

- Political interference (appointments and selection of students)
- Risk end of their Council's autonomy, and
- Threats to academic freedom.
1. Rationale for HE Reform

- Need to increase capacity - Low Gross Enrollment Ratio (GER <2%).

- Lack of competences in graduates.

- Lack of Universities' financial accountability and bloated payrolls.

- No development on campus, lack of maintenance and repairs.
1. Challenges


- Governance reform: representative or expertise based Council?

- Academic Quality: curriculum review and development or hiring of fully qualified academics.
1. Challenges


Only consequential amendment in University Acts from Art. 109:

- Government's Direct Appointment of the Chancellor and Pro Chancellor
- Government's Approval of Appointment of Vice Chancellor.
2. Transforming UNITECH

- ICT: O3B fast internet through satellite and all 1\textsuperscript{st} years with laptops.
- International accreditation
  - Industrial Advisory Board
  - Curriculum review with external assessors for subject files.
- Increase number of higher degree students from 2 to 10 per year.
2. Transforming UNITECH

- Scholarships and Grant applications through Association of Commonwealth Universities, Erasmus Mundus, Horizon 2020, and bilateral arrangements India, Japan, Korea, New Zealand, and Australia.

- “Top Talent” program for excellent students.

- Dual degree programs for Masters degrees.
2. Transforming UNITECH

For UNITECH agenda around Council reform is less urgent than:

- efficient and effective management,
- teaching quality and international accreditation,
- research intensification and infrastructure (IT and internet),
- innovation and entrepreneurship,
- Internationalisation.
3. Opportunities for Partnership

- Postgraduate Certificate in Student-Centred Teaching
- Postgraduate Certificate in Research Practice

Teaching and Research Areas:
- Development Studies
- Accounting
- Economics
- Mining Engineering
- Applied Physics
- Creation of Biomedical Engineering

Support in operations: IT introduction, reorganization, and financial accounting and reporting.
Final Remarks

● After decades of lack of progress, and a prolonged governance crisis 2007-2014, UNITECH has been transforming itself in a very positive manner.

● UNITECH is ready for increased engagement in operations, teaching, research and outreach.

● UNITECH is looking for investment partners for its master plan for the 220 Ha campus in Lae http://www.unitechpng.com (video)
Questions & Answers

Feel free to drop me a line:

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