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Egerton Annual Research Conference Goes Virtual



(/profile/18169)

Prof. Nancy W. Mungai

The Division of Research and Extension's core functions include coordination and development of relevant policy documents in the following core areas: research, extension services, consultancy services, short courses, technical courses, information dissemination, documentation, and publication. To ensure the Division delivers on its core functions, various committees, headed by the DVC (R&E), Director (R&E), the Deputy Director (R&E), and other experts from within Egerton University, oversee the implementation of these functions.

Research Overview

Currently the Division is overseeing the administration of 108 research projects and consultancies which are both internally and externally funded, with a cumulative value of KShs 2.1 billion. Over 350 researchers and their students are involved in these projects. Fifty percent of the researchers are Egerton University staff and students. Female researchers are principal investigators in 28% of these projects.

Achievements for the Period 2020-2021

Through online platforms, training, meetings, and service delivery in the Division have progressed with minimal disruption despite the challenges caused by the Covid-19 pandemic. Researchers have been encouraged to use online facilities to communicate with the Division to minimise the spread of Covid-19.

The achievements of the Division since our last Graduation Ceremony are as outlined below.



International Conference

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The Egerton University Virtual International Conference was held on 24 – 26 November 2020. This was the 13th International Conference that the University has organised hosted by the Division of Research & Extension. During the conference, 137 papers were presented either orally or as posters. The conference attracted over 750 attendees drawn from local and international universities, research institutions, county and national governments, local and international NGOs, and private sector organisations. Participants from 32 countries interacted with the conference website (<https://euconference.egerton.ac.ke/>). The top 11 countries represented at the conference were Canada, China, Ghana, France, Kenya, Netherlands, Nigeria, Rwanda, USA, UK and Uganda, among others. The theme of the conference was “ Innovation, Research and Transformation for Sustainable Development, Research and Transformation for Sustainable Development”. Underlying this theme is the acknowledgment that Science, Technology, and Innovation are major drivers and enablers of social and economic transformation. The application of Knowledge and innovation is necessary for attaining sustainable economic growth and competitiveness. Presentations were made under six sub-themes, namely; Natural Resources and Climate Change; Food Security; Geopolitics & Governance; Health, Science and Technology; History, Literature and Culture; and Education and Change.



Training

Various training activities were conducted by the Division in the last one year. To begin with, 20 members staff and postgraduate students participated in the Statistical Analysis System (SAS) Training in December 2020.



To increase the number of research projects, early career researchers and postgraduate students receive virtual training on scientific communication and publishing, which included proposal writing. The most recent training was conducted on 23 –25 February 2021 in collaboration with the Training Centre in Communication and TAGDev Programme. Seventy- seven staff and students participated in this trainin



A one-day training on Kenya Research Information Management Systems (KRIS) was held on 17 February 2021. Nineteen researchers from Egerton University were trained. Egerton researchers also participated in the National Research Fund (NRF) capacity building workshop held at Maasai Mara University on 23 – 25 March 2021. The training covered wide topics in research management, including innovations and commercialisation, resource mobilisation, and scientific writing and publishing.

Other activities

The Directorate conducts regular monitoring and evaluation (M&E) of research projects in the University. This year's M&E session was held virtually on 8 April and 19 April 2021. The purpose of conducting M&E is to assess adherence to donor expectations, achievement of research objectives, and documentation of key outputs and outcomes. It also provides an opportunity to address any implementation challenges encountered during research.

The Division also supports innovations from students and staff through training and facilitates extension services to communities. Community extension outreach is a core function under the Deputy Director, Outreach and Extension. There are various ongoing outreach programmes where the communities involved have benefited from the technical knowledge of the experts involved from Egerton University.

During the 2020/2021 Financial Year, staff from Egerton University successfully bade for five consultancies. In order to enhance the chances of success of the various bids for consultancy from Egerton University, the Division offers support to the bidders by forming teams of experts to respond to the calls, issuing letters of support for the bidders and offering financial support where necessary. Members of staff and postgraduate students are trained on consultancy services every year in an effort to enrich their consultancy skills. The support offered has proven to be very helpful to Egerton University experts.

Among our upcoming activities is an interactive workshop with researchers which will be held in June 2021. The workshop will address service delivery, procurement and finance, and general research management. The 14th Egerton University International Conference is proposed to take place on 23 – 25 March 2022. Finally, partnership discussions with various institutions and stakeholders are ongoing and will be unveiled soon.

Prof. Nancy W. Mungai,

Ag. Director (R&E)



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