UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI

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**I   ICT IN NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN KENYA : 2001 – 2008
        THE ROLE OF UNIVERSITIES**

The future success of Universities will depend on their capability and willingness to adapt to the dictates of the new information society, and to meet the needs of an ever more demanding clientele.

Universities, therefore, need to be aware of the threats and opportunities linked to advances in the development of ICTs. ICTs promise to enrich the academic (and even the social) life of both students and lecturers in ways unimaginable barely five years ago.

In the past, the enormous amount of knowledge created by Universities has hitherto been available to only a few students and their lecturers. The potential for diffusing this wealth of information is now made possible by use of the internet, at a very low cost.

Indeed, knowledge (and information) generated by government departments and research bodies is available the same way. The internet brings additional benefits such as the reduction of communication and administrative costs through networks linking educational establishments, research organizations and government bodies.

There is therefore a strong case for Universities to leapfrog into the information age and participate as equal partners in the global society. This will require capacity and skills building, as well as heavy commitment of financial resources.

In the National Development Plan for 2001-2008, universities have been assigned specific tasks in the area of the development of information and communication technologies. These tasks include:

- To develop capacity for ICT expansion, absorption, and utilization.
- To mainstream ICT education and training programs.
- To review accreditation of ICT training institutions.

- **To encourage private sector participation in ICT development.**
- **To strengthen and expand linkages between tertiary and other educational and institution libraries.**
- **To review syllabi in ICT and related fields.**
- **To encourage and facilitate e-learning**

Other tasks include research and development to enhance the application of technology and development of a dynamic and innovative human resource base.

II   BENEFITS OF USING ICT IN THE UNIVERSITY

Some of the benefits of using IT are:

a) Efficiency

b) Linking to the Global Economy

c) Bridging the information and knowledge gap

d) Empowerment

e) Transparency and Accountability

f) Extending the reach of the service

g) Decreased costs of access, speedier retrieval and more flexibility.

III   MIS SERVICES AT UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI

The MIS section of the ICT Centre offers the following Services:

- **SMIS (Students Management Information System)**
- **UHS (University Health Services)**
- **HRMIS (Human Resource Management Information System)**
- **HMIS (Hostel Management Information System)**
- **Website Services**
- **Database Administration Services**

IV   WHY ICT AT THE UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI?

- **It is a strategic resource in global higher education, especially e-learning.**
- **Increased effectiveness of teaching and learning e.g. networked labs.**
- **Increased quality of research.**
- **Increased efficiency in administration, e.g;**
    - **Integrated MIS application, reducing red tape;**
    - **Management Information for decision making support etc;**
    - **Office automation e.g. preparation and distribution of documents; and,**
    - **Serving the learning needs of adult and working students(module II & III).**

V   UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI ICT OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGY

The strategic objective of the University of Nairobi for ICT, as envisioned in the 2005-2010 Strategic Plan, is as follows:

To maximize student and staff productivity, enhance teaching and learning and improve quality of research through ICT

The strategies to be adopted in realizing the above objectives are:

- To develop and implement an evolutionary ICT policy and strategy that is sensitive to emerging technologies and that responds to changing needs and practices.
- Guarantee the security of ICT resources and the safety of people working in ICT environments
- Enhance skills to develop, implement, support and exploit ICT resources more effectively and efficiently.
- Provide quality network infrastructure and improve student and staff access to ICT in line with University priorities
- Ensure that business systems accommodate and facilitate changes in business practice that reflect changing institutional staff and student needs.
- Ensure adequate and sustainable funding for ICT

VI PARAMETERS TO MEASURE ICT PERFORMANCE

Some of the parameters that have been used to measure ICT performance in the above include:

- The extent to which ICT policies and standards have been put in place. (This workshop is meant to set up such policy and standards).
- The proportion of ICT expenditure on core business as a percentage of total University of Nairobi expenditure.
- Number of campuses where there is power back up.
- Proportion of users trained in MIS.
- Annual growth of staff and students using internet and e-mail.
- Level of adequacy of internet bandwidth.
- Average PC: Student ratio.
- Average PC: staff ratio.
- Proportion of University of Nairobi departments with up-to-date and interactive websites.
- Number of support functions fully computerized.
- Quality of service of all MIS systems.

Most of these measurement parameters have been taken up as performance targets for ICT Centre in the University's 2005/2006 and 2006/2007 Performance Contracts with the government and our general performance has been good.

(VII) WAY FORWARD

- **ICT policy to become the engine in context of University of Nairobi becoming a technologically driven University.**
- **University to accomplish tasks assigned by Government of Kenya in National Development Plan 2001-2010.**
- **Provision of modern state of the art ICT facilities**
- **Have properly trained, loyal, committed and informed staff.**
- **ICT policy providing a clear integration between the ICT Centre and other units**
- **Clear job description for <u>all</u> ICT staff**
- **Proper supervision**
- **Strong general administration**
- **ICT Policy and Standards document must ensure quality control and facilitate departments to meet their performance targets.**

Thank you.