Vice-Chancellor's Reforms Agenda: University of Nairobi
August 28, 2020

To

The University Community,
Stakeholders and Partners
Ladies and Gentlemen,

During my address last week on Friday, I indicated that I will be sharing my reform agenda with the University community in a week's time.

You recall that when I assumed the office of the Vice Chancellor, I promised to provide leadership and initiate reforms that will make our University great through relevance and impact. My short experience in the office has accorded me the insights into the areas that need urgent reforms to unlock more potential for growth and sustainability.

We are at a critical stage where change in the way we conduct our business is inevitable.

I therefore wish to outline my five 5 point reform agenda aimed at transforming the University into
"A vibrant and Sustainable University"

A university Benefiting society: Providing highest quality learning and teaching for students: Leading in research and innovation: Attracting, growing, supporting and recognizing talent among students and staff.

To inspire and achieve these aspirations, there is need to Institute reforms at University of Nairobi that advance the University onto the **trajectory to excellence** and to foster an **entrepreneurial culture**.

However, as we carry out these reforms, we shall not loose sight that the University of Nairobi is a strategic public entity. Consequently, we shall institute measures to engage the Government as the sponsor of public education in Kenya, to deliberately channel more resources into our university to ensure we continue carrying out those mandates that are of common good to the Kenyan people.

My reform agenda will be guided by the following five principals and philosophy of the University of Nairobi.

The Principles
- Alignment to the core mandate of the University
- Efficiency and accountability
- Impact
- Sustainability
- Value for money

The Philosophy
The University is guided by the Philosophy for the need to inspire and connect with the Kenyan community, to provide leadership and stewardship and to give hope and faith to the Kenyan society that it can excel in whatever it chooses to do with passion, moral responsibility and a strong sense of patriotism.

The Outcomes
The expected outcome of these reforms is to make the University of Nairobi:
- The destination of choice for outstanding local and international students, scholars, innovators and industry,
- The preferred knowledge partner for governments on ideas, solutions, critique and policy directions,
- The trusted resource in thought leadership, public engagement with research and teaching, and impact on the society culturally, socially and economically.

Focus of the Reforms
My five point reform agenda have been selected on the basis of fulfilling the five guiding principles:

Agenda Number 1: **Data-driven management**
In 2016, our Chancellor recommended a visitation of the university. The Visitation Panel observed that one of the constraints impeding institutional planning and efficient management of the University was the absence of a coordinated university-wide data management and access system.

We therefore shall invest our energies and resources towards setting up a comprehensive and integrated data management system. This will entail reengineering our business processes and embedding the use of technology in:

- Curriculum content delivery
- Human resource management
- Financial and research grants management
- Student management including the administration of exams and timetabling.

The use of data will revolutionize how decisions are made, optimize deployment of resources and improve overall systemic output. Use of data in decision for better decisions: leveraging on verifiable data to lower decision turnaround time, to seize time-sensitive opportunities, to make better predictions and to improve planning and implementation of projects and programs

Agenda number 2- Governance

University has over the years grown in size and complexity. To stay in step with the needs of the university, I believe that there is compelling need to refresh our management, administrative, oversight and governance structures. This will entail:

- Identification and elimination of redundant and overlapping systems, processes, structures and reporting centers
- Creating an In-build effective flow of power, resources, responsibility and accountability to the lowest levels
- Institutionalization of efficient decision, policy making and implementation at every level

Agenda number 3- Curricula

Embark on the path of *fit-for-purpose* training.

To do this, we will:
- Review of the courses offered at the University
- Assess the overall cost of implementation of each program and the level to which they respond to market, industry, societal and government needs
- Weed out redundant and overlapping courses and programs
- Review fee structure to ensure sustainability of those that remain

Additionally, we will:
- Interrogate the depth of substance coverage in the delivery of curricula, and inculcation of appropriate practical skills
- Integrate industry in the teaching and research at the University
- Review our research exploits to encourage vertical progression in pursuit of new knowledge, standardize and laterally integrate our curricula and integrate entrepreneurial spirit and culture throughout our programs.
- Recalibrate our metrics of world class-talent and to make deliberate efforts in growing the internationalization of the University.

Agenda number 4- The financial reforms.

- Currently, the University is operating under a huge financial deficit. This impedes its path to world-class status. Consequently, these reforms are geared towards institutionalizing prudent financial management and controls to put the University back on to a positive financial health and path to sustainability.
Specifically, this reform agenda will address:

- Efficient and participatory budget formulation mechanisms, fiscal and budgetary discipline

- Efficient payment and banking services

- Systems to stop revenue leakage, wastage, and optimize utilization of Resources

- Review of the financial viability of income generating units

- Re-engineer grants management to effectively support research

- Reform of procurement functions to maximize efficiency, increase transparency and accountability and deliver value for money.

An efficient and optimal internal financial ecosystem will allow the university to move with confidence towards scaling external resource mobilization with a high level of confidence that any cent received will render 100% value for money and eliminate the financial deficit.

Agenda number 5- People

The University students, faculty and staff are the foundation of the success of the University in benefiting the society, ensuring highest quality of learning, teaching and research. The university will proactively take deliberate steps to brand itself and to add value to its staff and students. This reform agenda aims to:

- Identify and celebrate talents and achievements,

- Exploit intangible assets through commercialization and to promote research and technology transfer ecosystem

- Ensure the University attracts, recruits, supports and retains outstanding staff and students

- Provide a diverse, inclusive, fair and open work environment where people give their best to their work and feel valued.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I want to acknowledge that the reform path is not always smooth. We will have to overcome many obstacles but I am confident that with your support, commitment and endurance, we shall reach there.

Thank you and God bless you.

PROF.STEPHEN KIAMA GITAHI, PhD
VICE CHANCELLOR