

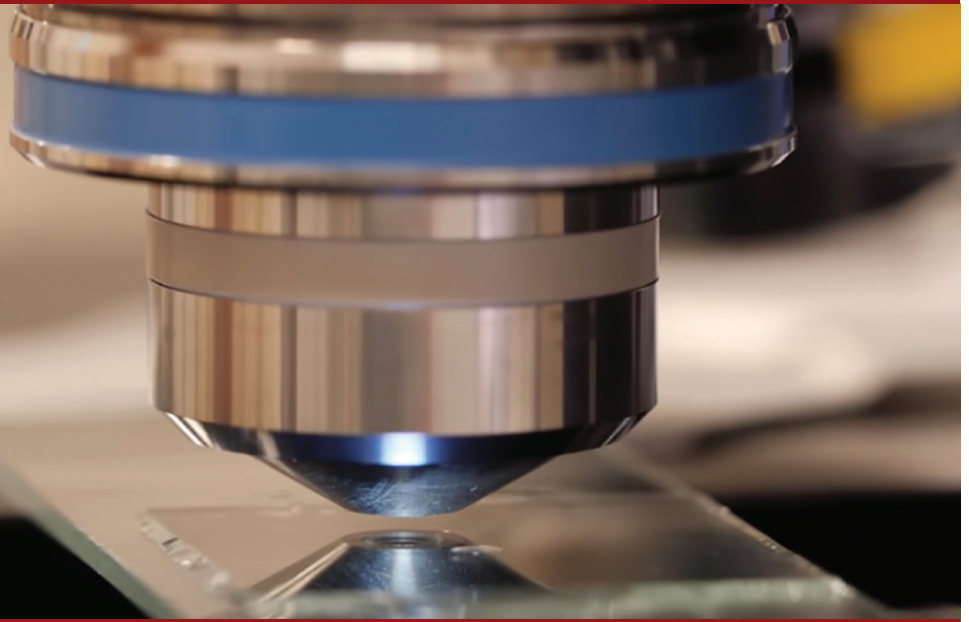
UB NEWS

Official University of Botswana Newsletter



in pursuit of academic excellence

UB Collaborates with UPENN on Antimicrobial Study for Southern Africa



University of Botswana through the Faculty of Medicine has joined hands with University of Pennsylvania to embark on a study titled Investigating Antimicrobial Stewardship Practices in Southern Africa (MOSAIC) covering Botswana, Zimbabwe and South Africa. Other participating institutions in the MOSAIC study are Ministry of Health and Wellness, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, Zimbabwe and University of Cape Town, South Africa.

The study is part of a global project to combat antimicrobial resistance (AR) and other

healthcare threats through the establishment of two new networks—the Global Action in Healthcare Network (GAIHN) and the Global AR Laboratory and Response Network (Global AR Lab and Response Network). The United States of America Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is sponsoring the study to the tune of P260 million (US\$22 million) spread across nearly 30 organisations around the world.

The two new networks, paired with additional short-term research projects, will span more than 50 countries worldwide and

build programmes that focus on preventing infections in health care through proven infection control; build laboratory capacity to detect antimicrobial-resistant organisms in healthcare, the community, and environment; and develop new and innovative ways to more rapidly detect and respond to threats such as AR and COVID-19.

CDC supports innovations and collaborations with investigators to identify and implement new ways of preventing antibiotic-resistant (AR) infections and their spread through

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celebrating 40 years of academic excellence

CUT COURTS UB IN SEARCH FOR NEW OPPORTUNITIES

A delegation from Central University of Technology (CUT), South Africa on January 24, 2022 paid a visit to the University of Botswana with the aim of expanding collaboration and engagement in research, teaching and learning. Part of the mission also sought to cultivate sustainable stakeholder engagement particularly on envisaged regional innovation projects. The delegation was led by Vice Chancellor for Research, Innovation and Engagement, Professor Alfred Ngowi accompanied by CUT Council member, Mr Mathew Rantso. From Botswana the meeting was attended by UB Vice Chancellor, Professor David Norris together with Botswana Institution for Technology Research and Innovation (BITRI) Chief Executive Officer, Professor Shedden Masupu as well as Dean of the Faculty of Engineering and Technology, Professor Edward Dintwa.

Speaking at the meeting, Professor Ngowi decried the negative impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on traditional methods of education and the global economy. However, he said notwithstanding the impact, there was a silver lining which both CUT and UB should take advantage of to reconfigure the education system and introduce innovations that could bring about sustainable transformation and



Research is one of the areas that are a key driver in search for new opportunities.

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innovative research. Over the years 2016 to 2021, more than P613 million (US\$52 million) was awarded to fight antibiotic resistance. The funding is determined through a competitive selection process based on scientific needs and funds available.

It is in that regard that the University of Botswana and other partners are working with the University of Pennsylvania to identify gaps in antibiotic stewardship programmes and determine context-specific factors associated with successful implementation of such programmes as part of improving antibiotic use globally.

To that end, MOSAIC specifically aims to develop survey instruments that measure national-level and hospital-level

Antimicrobial Stewardship (AS) practices, resources, and needs for use in a global context besides conducting a comprehensive survey of AS practices, resources and needs at the national-level and hospital-level across three countries in southern Africa (Botswana, Zimbabwe and South Africa). Thus, it will supplement hospital-level survey data with facility-level antibiotic use data across a sample of hospitals in Botswana.

Furthermore, MOSAIC aims to identify national-level and hospital-level contextual barriers and facilitators to the implementation of AS in Botswana and then examine the impact of a stakeholder-engaged capacity building process on knowledge and attitudes towards AS in Botswana.

societal impact.

Professor Ngowi explained that such could be achieved through digitization of the education system. He underscored the importance of UB and CUT collaborating on research and engagement with internationally acclaimed universities to achieve academic

excellence.

He added that digitization could also enhance UB and CUT's internationalization drive in addition to fostering staff and student exchange programmes. Professor Ngowi observed that introduction of new and relevant courses could also catapult not only the students academic performance but Botswana's economy as well.

Echoing Professor Ngowi's sentiments, Professor Norris emphasised the need for collaboration, saying it helped to solve societal problems from a multipronged approach.

He expressed his excitement that UB together with BITRI and CUT continued to break new ground in research, citing Dr Shathani



Professor Alfred Ngowi with Professor Norris and Mr Mathew Rantso on a tour of UB facilities.

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DR ODIRILE RECEIVES OHIO UNIVERSITY ROBERT AND RENE GLIDDEN AWARD



Dr Lucky Wakantse Odirile

Dr Lucky Wakantse Odirile, (University of Botswana Careers and Counselling Director) will spend the 2021/2022 academic year at Ohio University as the Robert and Rene Glidden Visiting Professor. This is a world competitive recognition given to an outstanding scholar who has attained wide recognition based upon their outstanding achievement and contribution in their fields. Glidden professorships are awarded by the executive vice president and provost office acting on the recommendation of a selection committee.

It is competed by different departments at Ohio University every year. Dr Odirile was first given this award in 2015 followed by this second one in 2020. Other outstanding awards that she has include Professional Mentor, George E. Hill Counselling award, The Trend

Setter and many more.

Ohio University will benefit from Dr Odirile's area of expertise in Counsellor Education where she will interact with students through both Masters' and Doctoral courses such as EDCE 6450(Counselling Over the Life Span) and EDCE 6860 (Multicultural Counselling). Counsellor Education (EDCE 8600) and Theories of Counselling (EDCE8550) She will engage in wide campus talks and trainings to different departments and organizations including the Chi Sigma Iota Counselling Honor Society. The International office will utilize her COIL experience.

Due to her rich experience and exposure in residence life, Ohio University has appointed Dr Odirile as Faculty in Residence (FIR) to their broadening of diversity and inclusion in residence life.

DR KGOLO-LOTSHWAO PUBLISHES BOOK ON LEARNING SETSWANA

Dr Naledi N. Kgolo-Lotshwao, a linguist and senior lecturer in the Department of English, Faculty of Humanities, has published a book on learning Setswana. The book addresses the need for Setswana language learning materials for non-native and second language speakers of Setswana. It is a contribution to solving the lack of learning materials for local languages.

ABOUT THE BOOK

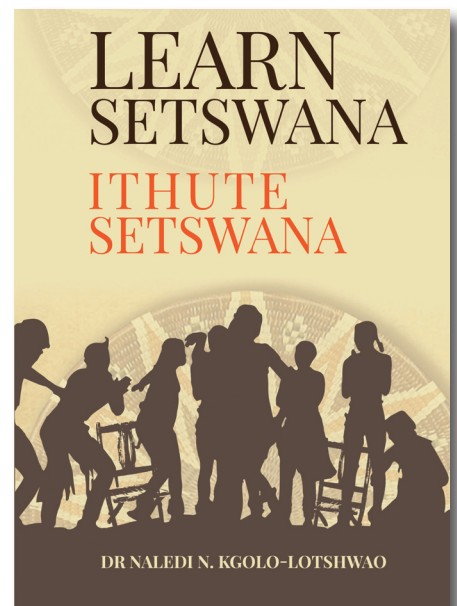
Learn Setswana (Ithute Setswana) is a simplified guide to learning the Setswana language. The book provides expert instruction to help readers master Setswana basics and beyond. It is intended for first-time learners as well as a reference for advanced learners. By using this book, readers will learn different skills in the Setswana language, such as how



Dr Naledi Kgolo-Lotshwao

to greet and introduce oneself, have basic conversations, the meanings of common words, among others.

The book offers practical examples and exercises that give readers greater confidence



in communicating in Setswana, whether traveling or in official business. Grammatical rules and concepts are clearly explained in a non-overwhelming manner.

Ohio University's Patton College honours Professor Lathi Jotia



Professor Lathi Jotia receiving a Teaching Excellence Award from Vice Chancellor Professor David Norris

University of Botswana's School of Graduate Studies Acting Dean, Professor Agreement Lathi Jotia, was recently honoured as December Ohio University's Patton College Alumni of the Month. The honour came on the heels of a Teaching Excellence Award Professor Jotia received from the University of Botswana last year for his innovative ways of teaching and impacting student learning. Professor Jotia is a graduate of The Patton College having earned his PhD in Educational Studies (Cultural Studies in Education) in 2006. He also earned a Bachelor's Degree in Education (Adolescent-to-Young Adult Education) and a Master's Degree in International Affairs (African Studies/Politics) from Ohio University in 2002 and 2003 respectively.

Professor Jotia says he chose Ohio University's Patton College for his studies because of the interdisciplinary nature of the programme on Educational Studies, which allowed him to tailor his PhD research to embrace multicultural diversity while at the same time remaining solid on his theoretical orientation on Democracy and Education in developing areas. Above all, he says his choice was influenced by the fact that The Patton College had the best qualified professors who were solidly rooted on critical theory and critical pedagogy. The College was also well resourced, be it in books or technology.

Regarding how Ohio prepared him for his path in education, Professor Jotia says

the various teaching, GA, and consultant opportunities at The Patton College allowed him to interact with people from various frontiers of life and diverse backgrounds. Above all, he states that it gave him the opportunity to embark on pragmatic scholarship where his consciousness was challenged to not only learn but to also find ways of fitting-in into the robust and complex diverse culture of the USA.

"My best opportunity was when I was accorded the opportunity to become a Graduate Teaching Assistant where I facilitated a course on Education and Cultural Diversity," reckons Professor Jotia. The course, he adds compelled him to grow fast mentally and in scholarship since they discussed controversial issues on education and marginalisation, gender disparity, Global-North vs. Global-South and the attached stereotypes, racism as cancer in society, what it meant to be Black or White in the USA; amongst many others. In addition, he was also taught by professors of repute who were so passionate about democracy and multicultural diversity in the USA.

Professor Jotia also notes that his most exciting moment was when he appeared on radio and television as a Cultural and Political Consultant under Ohio Valley International Council Programme in liaison with The Patton College to educate people about the African continent and my country Botswana. "What I found very funny and perplexing during

the interviews and even during the call-ins is when people displayed a wrong and legitimate thought process that Africa is a country and not a continent," he adds. He says he laughed his lungs out when he thought of this level of ignorance. Nonetheless, he observes that he also felt happy that he was on the course of education to liberate the masses from stereotypical assumptions and conclusions about Botswana and Africa in general.

Regarding his most memorable time at Patton College, Professor Jotia says he was impressed by the level of scholarship of his professors. "When they taught us Critical Theory versus Democratic Education and Multicultural Diversity—you would just wish that you become them overnight. Those folks meant business in scholarship!" says Professor Jotia.

He also explains that the classroom was his best space since it accorded him the opportunity to advance his mental faculties while at the same time robustly challenging those ideas which he thought were suppressive and unjust in terms of advocating and justifying the socio-economic and political inequality in the USA and beyond. The classroom at that level, he notes, made him understand the beauty of appreciating intellectual diversity and also having to learn to live with those ideas and

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Nkhwa's 3D printing of medical devices project as part of the innovations that local researchers were engaged on.

CUT Council Member, Mr Rantso said he was delighted and inspired by the progress UB had achieved in terms of infrastructure development. He also spoke about the problem of student accommodation, saying it could be resolved through collaborative efforts between universities, government and private sector.

UKRAINE AMBASSADOR ON A MISSION TO FOSTER COLLABORATIONS



Professor Norris with Ukraine Ambassador Her Excellency Ms Liubov Abravitova.

Vice Chancellor, Professor David Norris, on January 27, 2022 hosted Ukraine Ambassador to Botswana, South Africa and Mozambique Her Excellency, Ms Liubov Abravitova, for a courtesy call at the University of Botswana.

This was Ms Abravitova's second visit to the University of Botswana. The first was in October last year during which she expressed her desire to help the University of Botswana establish partnerships and collaborations with some universities in Ukraine, particularly in the

areas of medicine, science and technology.

Ms Abravitova indicated that Ukraine would soon be sending a delegation to Botswana to establish contact with institutions of higher learning in Botswana among them the University of Botswana. The Minister of Higher Education will lead the delegation, comprising representatives from different universities in Ukraine, said the Ambassador. Ms Abravitova explained that part of her diplomatic tour of duty was to establish linkages between institutions of higher learning in Botswana

and Ukraine in sectors such as renewable energy, medicine, information technology and agriculture.

In response, Professor Norris briefed the ambassador on the new University of Botswana strategic direction. He said the goal was for the University of Botswana to, among others, become a catalyst for national transformation through cutting edge research and knowledge generation.

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values contrary to one's space and comfort zone.

"I also liked the African Student Association events because they made me 'To see Africa at OU' and quenched the home-sickness. But I still remember the then Carriage Hill Apartments where I started my family with my wife Winnie some 21 years back. We have seen the greatness of God in Athens, Ohio!" says Professor Jotia.

On tips to study at Ohio, Professor Jotia begins by highlighting his upbringing by his 99-year old grandmother, Ngwene Mma Khani Jotia, whom he says does not even have a primary school certificate. Notwithstanding, his grandmother inculcated in him social and moral values that he will take to his grave.

He says she taught him to believe in himself besides being a hard worker despite the challenges.

"She taught me to be a fighter who is sober yet brutal intellectually. I was taught by my grandmother that you do not need to have a history of success or a good family background in order for you to become successful—all you need is to be a focused hard worker who has a sense of purpose," he explains. Further, he says his grandmother taught him to fear and trust God, principles which have sustained him from Zero to a University Professor and currently to being an Acting Dean of Post Graduate Studies. Professor Jotia highlights that he knows God has something special for him beyond this

position. He credits his grandmother who has been the fountain of his strength and focus.

Professor Jotia's Career Opportunities:

1. Acting Dean, School of Graduate Studies & Professor of Education, University of Botswana, Gaborone, Botswana (June 2019-present)
 2. Visiting Assistant Professor, Department of Educational Studies, University of Central Florida, Orlando, Florida (2007-2008)
 3. Adjunct Assistant Professor, Department of Educational Studies, Ohio University, Athens, Ohio (Summer 2007)
- Article - Courtesy: Ohio University (The Gladys W. and David H. Patton College of Education)

TRANSFORMATION TO OPEN OPPORTUNITIES FOR HIGH CALIBRE STUDENTS AND PROFESSIONALS

Vice Chancellor, Professor David Norris, says the transformation of the University of Botswana to a High Performing Organisation (HPO) will open opportunities that will eventually help the university cement its position as a centre of academic excellence.

Professor Norris was addressing members of staff on progress so far achieved towards transforming UB into a high-performance

university. The Vice Chancellor also addressed the Botswana Editors Forum on the same subject.

He observed that given the global competitiveness of higher education post COVID-19, high performing university models now focused more on strengthening their core functions and co-creation with industry to create value.

Such functions, added Professor Norris, enabled these universities to outperform their peers and attract high calibre students and professionals internationally.

To that end, he said funding for the university was also made easier because of value generated for all stakeholders in addition to improving socio-economic development.

"All we need to do is to have a positive attitude towards change so that we realise our potential," said Professor Norris. Consequently, he explained that the University of Botswana was conducting a change readiness assessment the results of which would pave way for the development of change management strategy

programmes besides change management training.

In addition, the University is in the process of reviewing its staff Performance Management System, remuneration strategy, development of a competence framework, job profiling and evaluation with transition to a new structure expected to take two to three years.

Professor Norris said the review would inform the development of an optimal organisational structure and job profiles that would be guided by a job evaluation policy and guidelines, remunerations guided by a remuneration strategy and revised performance management system.

He further spoke about a situational analysis whose purpose was to document critical aspects emanating from a detailed review of current UB operations. He said recommendations of the analysis would serve as a key input and guide for developing a new organisational structure, performance management system and related instruments. That, he added, would also ensure that the University delivered on its strategy.

Professor Norris highlighted the fact that for UB to become a modern and high performing university, it ought to become financially sustainable, contribute meaningfully to Botswana's socio-economic development and focus more on research and development. In addition, the University must optimise service delivery and heighten student experience.

Other attributes of a high performing university, he noted, were good leadership and governance, high performing employees, state of the art technology and customer focused processes, among others.



University of Botswana Administration Block

UKRAINE AMBASSADOR...

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However, Professor Norris observed that for the University of Botswana to embark on such an ambitious journey, it was imperative to create linkages not only with other institutions of higher learning but industry in countries such as Ukraine.

He noted the huge potential such as the technological advancement in countries of the eastern bloc that the University of Botswana could tap into to come up with futuristic academic and research programmes.

Another area of interest that the University of Botswana could benefit from in Ukraine is digitization, which could help transition Botswana from a resource to a knowledge-

based economy.

Professor Norris further spoke about the importance of economic clusters in fostering economic prosperity. He therefore expressed the desire for the University of Botswana to learn from institutions of higher learning in Ukraine through collaboration, partnerships and industry linkages.

DRIVING CHANGE THROUGH CULTIVATION OF ACADEMIA-INDUSTRY PARTNERSHIPS

The University of Botswana has come up with a number of initiatives with the aim of moving towards becoming a high-performance organisation. One such initiative is the Industry Masterclass series that aims at fostering change through cultivation of academia-industry partnerships to ensure cross-fertilization ideas.

The Ministry of Tertiary Education, Research, Science and Technology has also welcomed the initiative.

"As the ministry and government, we want to see initiatives that bring change in how we do business," said Deputy Permanent Secretary, Dr Kekgonne Baipoledi, at the second Industry Masterclass series themed: The Cost not to Change: Driving Transformation Through Leadership in 2022.

Dr Baipoledi spoke highly of the new University of Botswana strategy, noting that together with Botswana, government envisaged to see a university with a strong overreach that made impactful contribution towards the country's economic transformation process.

Vice Chancellor, Professor David Norris, buttressed this, saying the University of Botswana had taken in strides the challenge to define its role in the country's economic transformation process. He explained that such a role would also guide the University's transformation process. In addition, the Vice Chancellor said underpinning Botswana's transition into a knowledge economy was the ability of the University of Botswana to take a leading role in finding solutions to the myriad of challenges precipitated by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Professor Norris observed that time had come for the University of Botswana to find sustainable ways of impacting society. "Research is there but what is critically lacking is technology transfer, engagement with society and engagement with industry," he added. As a way forward, he underscored the importance of creating innovation eco-systems through collaboration with industry, local government, parastatals and national government.

"It is only through innovation eco-systems

that we can add value and have impactful relationships with our communities. The Industry Masterclass series is one such avenue through which we can create close partnerships and collaborations with industry," he added.

Regarding the need for change, guest speaker and SAP Africa Head of Industry and Value Advisory, Mr Mpho Matsitse, said the cost of not changing was too high a prize to pay. Mr Matsitse said studies had shown that by 2025, higher education institutions would transform to deliver educational skills underpinned by real time job experiences.

"It is no longer about just teaching but imparting necessary skills to adapt to this rapidly changing environment," he reckoned. He observed that as experience based economies transform, global online and open course work were becoming the new normal that placed a demand on universities to respond swiftly to these mega changes.

Mr Matsitse said likewise, students were becoming more eager to consume education where they wanted it and in the manner they experienced everything else in their private lives. In addition, he said demographic changes were forcing mismatches in the availability of skilled workers in that people wanted to live, play and work where they wanted.

"Universities must be able to access real time

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SAP Africa Head of Industry and Value Advisory, Mr Mpho Matsitse (red tie) and Ministry of Tertiary Education, Research, Science and Technology Deputy Permanent Secretary, Dr Kekgonne Baipoledi (left) with University of Botswana Management.

UB Industry Masterclass Series Tapping into Industry Expertise to Create Synergies

University of Botswana held its first Industry Masterclass Series on January 14, 2022 under the theme: Infrastructure Development Fuelling Socio-Economic Development and Growth: Lessons Learnt From the COVID-19 Pandemic.

The purpose of the Masterclass Series which was held at the Faculty of Engineering and Technology was to draw insights from one of Africa's largest infrastructural development firms, Bigen Group Chief Executive Officer, Mr Luthando Vutula.

The Industry Masterclass Series is one of the University of Botswana flagship engagement initiatives with the overall goal of cultivating Academia - Industry partnership for socio-economic development and growth.

It aims to ensure cross-fertilization of existing and new knowledge within the strategic pillars of Teaching and Learning as well as Research and Innovation as enshrined in the University of Botswana 2020-2029 Strategy of Creating a Future For the knowledge



*Bigen Group Chief Executive Officer,
Mr Luthando Vutula.*

Generation. Given the University's rich history as the source and foundation of the country's formative labour force and human capital development, the UB Industry Masterclass Series further aims to impact the University Community with industry-specific expertise and experiences on topical socio-economic issues.

Further, it seeks to establish a network of shared stakeholder value through academic community and industry interactions besides providing UB students, members of staff and other key stakeholders with an opportunity to learn, engage and share knowledge with captains of industry.

Speaking at the event, Mr Vutula underscored the importance of universities creating synergies with industry to give students an early exposure to the realities of the workplace. He said it was rather counterproductive to give students exposure

at the end of their studies because academic excellence does not translate into immediate tangible results let alone the ability to adapt to a sophisticated work environment. Consequently, students need industry exposure throughout the duration of their studies so that they learn while concurrently gaining practical knowledge and industry expertise, he added. To that end, Mr Vutula observed that at the end of their studies the students would not find it difficult blending in, more so that it was important for them to understand group dynamics and how to interact with colleagues in the workplace.

Mr Vutula who is a University of Botswana alumnus also recalled that during their study years they were given industry exposure which allowed them to gain practical knowledge and relevance in the industry. With infrastructure serving critical sectors such as health, financial, energy, agriculture, it remains an integral part of the country's ability to develop and grow socially and economically. However, owing to the advent of the Covid-19 pandemic, there has been a significant shift in global economic trends such as technology driven globalisation.

In that respect, Mr Vutula also spoke about finding new and innovative ways of financing infrastructure development through public and private partnerships. He noted that government alone could not manage to develop critical infrastructure hence the need for the private sector as well to infuse its expertise and financial wherewithal.

CULTIVATION OF ACADEMIA...

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mobile support that is being experienced in every single virtual platform that one can think of and harness the analytic sweep coming from them to make decisions," noted Mr Matsitse. He said this was more so important in that of the 2.4 million Botswana population, 70 percent were youth from which 35 percent were aged between 10 and 24 years old, a demographic that engaged differently.

He said the University of Botswana had a strong comparative advantage as a leading

institution of higher learning in Botswana which it must expand beyond borders. "We need to build beyond foundational learning through public, private and people centred partnerships," explained Mr Matsitse.

He said Industry Masterclass series was an important platform on which the University of Botswana was able to engage on topics that had a huge potential to have fundamental impact on how society progressed. Accordingly, he added that creating a student lifetime value

and unbundling of the education value chain as well as the need to actively create new funding streams, could also help the University of Botswana become a leader.

Acting Deputy Vice Chancellor for Students Affairs, Mrs Motsei Rapelana, also underscored the need for all stakeholders to work together in implementing the strategy that would transform the University of Botswana into high performance organisation. Mrs Rapelana said the transformation that the University of Botswana envisaged must be student centred.

PROFESSORS NGWENYA, KGATHI RETIRE AFTER YEARS OF SERVICE



Professor Barbara Ntombi Ngwenya



Professor Donald Letsholo Kgathi

Two Okavango Research Institute (ORI) staff members, Professor Donald Letsholo Kgathi and Professor Barbara Ntombi Ngwenya, have retired after serving the University of Botswana for a number of years.

Professor Kgathi left after serving the University for 43 years having joined in 1978. He served 22 of the 43 years at ORI. He was a Professor of Development Economics.

On the other hand, Professor Ngwenya who was a Professor of Cultural Anthropology joined the University in 1991 and left after serving 30 years of which 20 were at ORI.

Meanwhile, another staff member, Ms Chanana Khupe who was a laboratory Chief Technician, retired end of 2021 after serving

UB and ORI for 20 years.

Consequently, on February 25, 2022, ORI staff had the opportunity to organise a small farewell session to bid these three colleagues away. Speaking at the session, ORI Director, Professor Joseph Mbaiwa, wished the three colleagues a happy retirement.

However, he noted that while ORI wished them well and acknowledged that they had played their part in research and academic development of ORI, it was unfortunate that they were leaving at a time when the University of Botswana was undergoing transformation that would turn the institution into High Performance Organisation.

He said if ORI were to become a HPO, it

would require the services of experienced and reputable professors such as Professors Kgathi and Ngwenya. The professors, he added, had experience in grant research proposals, student supervision and academic leadership.

Professor Mbaiwa further noted that their departure would surely open a big gap at ORI. He nonetheless encouraged the two professors to apply and become adjunct scholars at ORI.

For their part, Professors Kgathi and Ngwenya expressed gratitude for having served UB and ORI with distinction. Professor Kgathi advised the Director to engage UB on research incentives to improve research at the University.

ORI RESEARCHERS SUBMIT OKAVANGO DELTA MANAGEMENT PLAN REPORT TO GOVERNMENT



A team of researchers at the Okavango Research Institute (ORI) led by Professor Olekae Thakadu recently completed the evaluation of the Okavango Delta Management Plan (ODMP) 2021-2028.

Professor Thakadu submitted the Revised ODMP Report to the Department of National Museum and Monuments in the Ministry of Environment, Natural Resources Conservation and Tourism.

The project was undertaken at a cost of P1.5 million. It provides direction on how the Botswana Government should use natural resources in the Okavango Delta while at the same time adhering to the principles of sustainable development.

Submission of the ODMP Report (2021-2028) is just but one of the many projects the Okavango Research Institute has completed for the Botswana Government in recent years.

Why Makwala presented his book to UB Management



Isaac Makwala presenting his book to Professor Siphambe and other members of University of Botswana Staff.

Botswana's 400m-race specialist, Isaac Makwala, is not only an internationally acclaimed athlete. Part of his roots can be traced to the University of Botswana. For numerous reasons, his story to international stardom cannot be told without mention of the University of Botswana.

Firstly, he uses the University of Botswana as his training base and this is what partly catapulted him to international acclaim. Secondly, his coach, Justice Dipeba and his biographer, Dr Tshepang Tshube, are UB staff members.

Thirdly, Makwala is one of the elite national athletes that have benefited from the University of Botswana High Performance Centre especially in preparation for the 2020 Tokyo Olympic Games where Botswana's 4x4m men's relay team, which he was part of, won a bronze medal. He therefore had more than one reasons to present University of Botswana management with his book - *The Solo Runner*.

Then Acting Deputy Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, Professor Happy Siphambe, received the book and cover on behalf of the University management. It was an exciting moment for both Makwala and UB Management. Speaking on behalf of Management, Professor Siphambe highlighted the fact that the University of Botswana was

not only a teaching and research institution but also a player in the development of sport and creative industry in the country.

As such, he said the University of Botswana was privileged to be associated with a sports person of Makwala's stature who was not only a national icon but an internationally acclaimed athlete. Professor Siphambe advised Makwala to utilize opportunities coming his way to reinvest in his life so that he continued to grow into a responsible citizen. Dean of the Faculty of Education, Professor Lily Mafela, applauded Makwala for exemplary personality, noting that his down to earth demeanour would forever make him a role model for many generations to come.

Professor Mafela encouraged Makwala, Dipeba and Dr Tshube to embark on a national tour to motivate young aspiring athletes and to promote sport as part of a school programme of multiple career pathways. She also underscored the need for the University of Botswana to produce more sports science graduates who could assist athletes on issues underpinning sports development such as sports psychology and nutrition.

About the book and how it came about: The book gives readers a unique insight into Makwala's childhood and athletic career. Dr Tshube says Makwala gave him unprecedented

access to his family, coach, and friends. He hired one of his graduate students as a research assistant and also a photographer upon which they took a long road trip tracing Makwala's life. He mentions that he was inspired to tell Makwala's story because he saw this amazing story unfold. "I first met him in 2006 when he joined the national team. I was already in the national team. I have a clear memory of him walking into Lolwapa Lodge for his first day in the training camp. I observed and travelled with him to major games including the 2007 African Games," reckons Dr Tshube.

He says they then travelled together to the 2016 Olympic Games and the 2018 Commonwealth Games. Dr Tshube himself was now an official in the team. Elite athletes deal with a lot of adversities including injuries, fear of failure, and maintaining consistent athletic performance. For Makwala, the major adversity in his athletic career has nothing to do with these challenges. He was barred from competing at the 2017 London World Championships. Consequently, the book includes an entire section on the solo run. Overall, The MAKWALA story is about vulnerability, courage, and hard work.

Okavango Research Institute Staff Promise Double Efforts After Receiving P1.5m Office Space



The new administration block which was constructed at a cost of P1.5 million

Okavango Research Institute (ORI) Director, Professor Joseph Mbaiwa says his staff is eager to double efforts to increase their research output besides expanding third stream income for the University of Botswana.

Professor Mbaiwa was speaking after Vice Chancellor, Professor David Norris, handed over portacabins for use as office space and conference services at ORI in Maun recently.

Constructed at a tune of about P1.5 million, the portacabins comprise 10 offices, a boardroom, conference hall and a kitchen. The portacabins are currently used as the Administration Block housing the ORI

Directorate.

Professor Mbaiwa, expressed gratitude to the Vice Chancellor for the delivery of the portacabins, which he said, would help alleviate shortage of office space and storage at ORI. He also thanked the Vice Chancellor for supporting ORI which he demonstrated by, among others, the many visits he had made to the institute ever since he became Vice Chancellor a few years back.

Addressing ORI staff, Professor Norris noted that the University of Botswana was committed to research given that one of its goals was to become research-intensive

institution as espoused in its Strategic Plan of 2020-2029. Professor Norris explained that ORI was one area where research could intensify income generation for the university. He said ORI was a flagship research institute that had significantly contributed to research at the university and in the country.

In that regard, the Vice Chancellor assured ORI of his support, highlighting the good work the institution was doing with its research in the Okavango Delta. He observed that the portacabins would go a long way in alleviating shortage of office and storage space at ORI.



UB Congratulates Marketing Department Advisory Board Chair for OACPS Appointment

University of Botswana is proud to congratulate Chairperson of the Advisory Board of the UB Department of Marketing, Ms Mmantlha Sankoloba, on her election to the Presidency of the Board of the Organisation of African, Caribbean and Pacific states (OACPS) Business Forum.

Ms Sankoloba is also the Chief Executive Officer of the Botswana Exporters and Manufacturers Association (BEMA).

OACPS is based in Brussels, Belgium and consists of 48 countries from Sub-Saharan Africa, 16 from the Caribbean and 15 from the Pacific. The appointment of Ms Sankoloba marks an important step for Botswana's presence in a global alliance embracing the



Ms Mmantlha Sankoloba

African Diaspora to bring markets, capital cities, cultures and co-operation policies with specifically African interest, into alignment.

In addition to her official duties as BEMA CEO, Ms Sankoloba was in 2018 appointed as the Chairperson of UB's Advisory Board for the Department of Marketing. As the chairperson, she focuses on investment and industry stakeholder relations and gives strategic direction to the Board.

The University of Botswana wishes Ms Sankoloba all success and offers her full support in her mission to make Botswana a powerful facilitator for this globally united African voice.

UB Staff and Students Conquer Kgale Hill in the quest for Fitness and Mental Health



Participants of the Up Kgale Hill Challenge on their way up the hill.

Among those who easily made it to the peak were Vice Chancellor Professor, David Norris, Head of Human Resource Department,

Mr Joseph Tsimako, Communications and Change Management Manager, Ms Tirelo Ramasedi, Dr Pelonomi Mokokwe, UB Sports Officer, Mr Justice Dipeba and SRC Minister of Sports, Mr Tirelo Dean Ntwayagae as well as a few students.

First to reach the peak was Motheo Mkgweetsi followed by Otshepheng Mongwaketsi and then Michael Gaaitse on third, Pheny Mangundu at fourth and Moakofi Matsebe at fifth. Even though it was not a competition, Professor Norris commended the five individuals for taking the Up Kgale Hill Challenge with the gusto it deserved.

He applauded the students for their resilience and determination in their quest to reach the summit. The Vice Chancellor observed that the task was not an easy one but he was happy that the students came in large numbers for the challenge.

He said it was important to keep fit especially after the disruptions occasioned by the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. Professor Norris also urged the students not

to neglect their academic life notwithstanding the many challenges they encounter along the way.

Dr Mokokwe from the UB Clinic was also delighted that the participants showed dedication and reminded them about the importance of keeping the body optimally fit. He said being physically fit also aided the mind to function better. Dr Mokokwe observed that just like the body, the mind needed essential exercise and regular checkups. As such, the University offered its community psychosocial support through the psychology clinic.

Dr Mokokwe further advised the UB Community to utilise the UB Clinic and take COVID-19 jab and to observe all health protocols to avoid contracting and spreading the virus.

Ms Ramasedi applauded the participants for actively taking part in the challenge. She stated that the main aim of the Challenge was to motivate the UB community for the new semester that began on January 31, 2022.

Dr Masizana's CODATA Membership to Boost University of Botswana Global Standing



Dr Audrey Masizana

University of Botswana immediate Head of the Department of Computer Science, Dr Audrey Masizana, is confident that apart from promoting the mandate of the Committee on Data (CODATA), her contribution as an executive member will also boost the University of Botswana's global standing.

"First is to remind myself that the representation goes beyond Botswana," explains Dr Masizana who was elected to serve in the CODATA executive committee beginning November last year up to 2023. CODATA is a structure under the International Science Council (ISC) whose mandate is to help the ISC to realise its vision of advancing science as a global public good. Consequently, Dr Masizana says as a CODATA institutional member the University of Botswana is inherently in the executive committee and that will certainly project it to global visibility.

"The University having led Botswana to be the second country to host the IDW in 2018 which was a CODATA initiative, has also created some legacy that is already noted by many around the world. My executive committee membership will be looking out to create liaisons between CODATA activities with

existing and relevant national projects here in Botswana," explains Dr Masizana.

She adds that she will use her membership to help promote awareness of the general CODATA mandate which is to drive international collaboration in advancing Open Science to improve data availability and usability in all areas of research.

She says it is very humbling to have been nominated to serve in the committee especially that it was peer nomination from fellow researchers from around the world. "It is still difficult to digest. This is also coupled with a nervous anticipation of the big expectation that comes with it," reckons Dr Masizana.

Nonetheless, she says it provides her with a once in a life opportunity to be participatory, at a strategic level, in the global task groups that CODATA implores to develop instruments and standards for the world to adopt. As part of her roadmap, her aim is to align with those whose agenda addresses issues associated with technical and scientific challenges of data in research and practice, in particular those closer to Botswana, SADC region and Africa in general.

Regarding her future plans once her term ends, she says she will continue as an ordinary member of CODATA besides participating in driving mandates of platforms such as the Africa Open Science (AOSP) and Viz Africa Network as part of her quest to follow her passion as a promoter of the Open Science movement.

Overall, Dr Masizana sees her appointment to the CODATA executive committee as an encouragement to other women in science that serves to advocate an improvement on the status of women participating in strategic international committees. Consequently, this will help in getting rid of the stereotype that these committees should be male driven. "I hope this inspires a few," says Dr Masizana.

Apart from being Head of Department of Computer Science, Dr Masizana has over the years served in various University of Botswana's transformational committees that proposed innovative solutions around eLearning, Digital Scholarship and Technology Adoption. She holds a PhD in Computer Science from UMIST (2004) UK, MSc (Computer Science) (1998), Post Graduate Diploma in Advanced Computing (1997) from Oxford Brookes University UK and BSc (Hon) Mathematics Modelling and Computing (1994) from Kingston University UK. Her professional certifications include Data Science, Design Thinking and ERP Education.

In relation to CODATA, Dr Masizana has served in a committee that formed part of the first structure that established the African Open Science Platform in 2017. The initiative provided her with an opportunity to contribute to the development of the Africa Open Science Framework designed for continental adoption. She is also one of the innovators of the VizAfrica Network that was established as a spinoff project of the VizAfrica Conference in 2019 which was delivered in collaboration with CODATA.

Dr Masizana is passionate on this initiative that has been designed to be a networked body of knowledge and expertise that nurtures continual conversations on issues around Data Visualization theory, policy, technology and practice in Africa. She is also currently instrumental in promotion and maintaining of CODATA collaborative engagements in Botswana and very passionate to continue playing this role for the consortia within the African landscape, thus contributing towards the expansion and strengthening of the organization's engagements beyond.

Showcasing Excellence!



The University of Botswana team that took part at the FNB Kazungula Bridge Marathon.

University of Botswana was on February 26, 2022 part of the historic FNB Kazungula Bridge Marathon as one of its initiatives to showcase sports excellence in nurturing world-class athletes.

The University fielded 13 distance runners comprising staff and students, among them World Under-20 gold medalist, Pheny Majama. The UB team also comprised national athletics team head coach, Justice Dipeba, who is also Sports Officer in the Department of Culture, Sports and Recreation.

Other notable figures were senior lecturer in the Department of Sports Science, Dr Tshepang Tshube, who authored Isaac Makwala's biography - The Solo Runner. Makwala is one of the athletes who use University of Botswana as their training ground as well as the High Performance Centre (HPC) to prepare for major international meets such as the Olympics.

This highlights the fact that apart from track events, the other aim of participating at the FNB Kazungula Bridge Marathon was to showcase the world-class facilities that the

University of Botswana is endowed with such as the HPC.

Consequently, the Kazungula meet further afforded UB a unique opportunity to network with potential corporate clients besides showcasing key HPC services. Housed at the UB Campus Indoor Sports Centre, the HPC is sufficiently equipped with modern facilities to conduct high-level tests for both local and international athletes.

National teams that have so far benefitted from the HPC for high performance testing are volleyball, boxing, rugby and athletics. Elite athletes who went through the mill at the HPC before setting out for the Tokyo 2020 Olympics are Amantle Montsho, Baboloki Thebe, Christine Botlogetswe and Nijel Amos. The men's 4x4m relay team that won the Tokyo 2020 Olympics bronze medal was also drilled at the UB HPC.

The athletes underwent high-performance tests to gauge their fitness levels based on international standards. The aim was to help the country enhance its performance at major international meets. Thus, the HPC accords

athletes the most conducive environment for training and fitness testing. It also provides for coaching, mental skills training and other related resources required for holistic athlete development.

Overall, the HPC is a treasure trove for stakeholder opportunities given the ample opportunities for physiological and general fitness assessments, work related and sports specific fitness tests as well as psychological performance assessment. In addition, stakeholders can benefit from various performance analysis and interpretation, intervention and training programmes besides rehabilitation, recovery, health and wellness sessions.

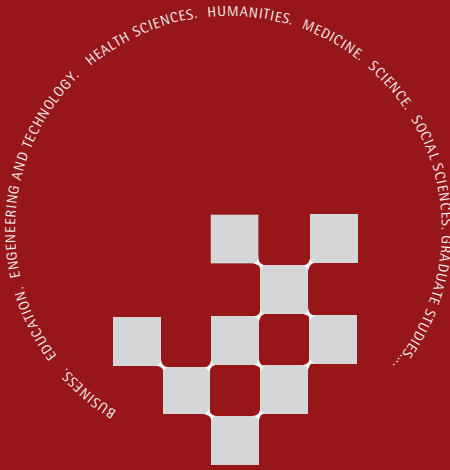
Consequently, during the Kazungula meet, UB provided a recovery bed that offered runners some therapy in addition to a machine for conducting tests such as blood pressure, weight, body fat, metabolic age and Body Mass Index (BMI).



UB@KAZUNGULA Bridge Marathon

2029 the University distinctive centre of excellence in Botswana and global
MIS
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Olefile Kooagile, first year student pursuing Bachelor of Science, finished Top 5 in the 10km race.



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