

PALABANA UNIVERSITY

NEWSLETTER

PU0001

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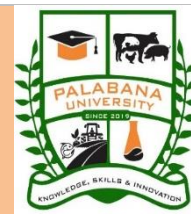
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Message from the A/Vice Chancellor

I am greatly honoured and privileged to have been appointed by the Minister of Education honourable Douglas M. Syakalima to be the first Vice Chancellor of Palabana University (PU) along with my colleague the first Deputy Vice Chancellor Research and Innovation, Professor Musso Munyeme. We look forward to working with the Minister, the University Council, Staff, students and other stakeholders in executing the mandate of PU. The University was originally established as a youth skills training centre, before its transformation into a centre of excellence for dairy training in Zambia. To this effect, it has contributed immensely over the years to the development of human capital for the dairy sub-sector. It is in recognition of this achievement that the Zambian Government found it fitting to grant it University status through Statutory Instrument (SI) No. 68 of 2019 which dissolved the College and Statutory Instrument No. 69 of 2019 which established the University.

Higher education in Zambia has witnessed a significant growth in both private and

public universities. The growth in itself has created multiple challenges especially with regards maintaining the required educational standards demanded at a University level anchored in research, interactive learning with technology integration as well as community engagement. Palabana University focuses on creating an optimized and vibrant platform for quality in knowledge acquisition and bridging the gap between academia, the community and industry. The University's thrust is to build up core competencies in students integrating knowledge with skills on the foundation of ethics and values.

I am cognizant of the many challenges and teething problems that lie ahead of PU, however these are not insurmountable. Among the immediate and most pressing challenges include extremely low staffing levels for key academic positions and infrastructure challenges (there is urgent need for infrastructure to

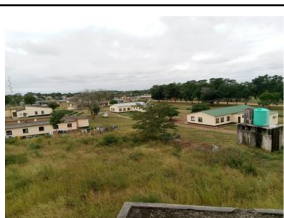
accommodate students as well as lecture rooms).

We want PU to be centre of excellence as well as University that provides higher education of global standards. This will require highly experienced and qualified faculty members, continuously engaging in the enhancement of student-centric learning environment through innovative pedagogy. Additionally, we plan to establish centres for excellencies in all broad agricultural sectors and develop a model that has a strong industry and community presence.

The provision of higher quality education will require qualified faculty members as well as continuously engaging in staff development through innovative pedagogy.

As Acting Vice Chancellor, I call upon my team to cultivate the spirit of collective wisdom to unlock the challenges before us.

I welcome you all to the first issue of the PU newsletter. ■



Aerial view of current student accommodation.

HISTORY OF PALABANA UNIVERSITY

Before the declaration of Palabana Dairy Training Institute in Zambia as a University, the institute underwent a series of changes. It was first established in 1965 as a skills training center for young people who were trained mainly in carpentry as well as vegetable production. It was however, until after independence in 1969 to 1970 when the Zambian government started the "Rural Milk Production Scheme" that the Zambian government considered the establishment of dairy training facility. At that time, there was no institute that was training local farmers in Dairy. To encourage Dairy production among the locals, the Zambian government identified 141 small scale farmers, mainly in high cattle population areas of Zambia. These farmers were provided with 500 Friesian cows that were crossed with indigenous breeds mostly the Angoni cattle. However, in less than one year, over 60% of the dairy animals died mostly due to poor nutrition and tickborne diseases. The milk yields from the surviving animals were also very low.

It was against this background that the government thought of strengthening the Dairy Training Institute to specifically help in the

settlement schemes that were established. Initially, the institute was training farmers that were resettled on Government resettlement schemes. The government provided support to these farmers in terms of animals, fencing, boreholes, houses and free

extension services. This went on from 1970 up to 1981, by which time about 300 farmers were trained and over 100 were resettled. After 1981, the institution started training school leavers and extension workers in Dairy husbandry as well as in artificial insemination targeting not only the "Dairy Resettlement Schemes" in areas such as Negaga in Mazubuka, Mpima Dairy Scheme in Kabwe for the rest of the country. Other Dairy resettlement Schemes established were in Mpika and Lusaka. By 1992 the college then, introduced a two-year certificate course in dairy production for both school leavers and non-school leavers.

The Palabana Dairy Training Institute by that time curved itself a good name and became critical in training the required manpower that ensured the sustainability of these schemes and other livestock husbandry

facilities, both public and private. Due to the performance of the graduates from the Palabana Dairy Training Institute, their services were much sought after, not only in Zambia, but even in the neighbouring countries.

Later, in 2003 the Government set up the Livestock Development Trust (LDT) in and Palabana was transferred to LDT together with all its assets, including the animals. However, under LDT the institute faced serious challenges and in 2008 the Ministry of Fisheries and Livestock claimed back the training component of the Institute.

In 2019, the Government granted the institute University status through Statutory Instrument (SI) No. 68 of 2019 which dissolved the College and Statutory Instrument No. 69 of 2019 which established the University.

However, the actual laying of the foundation stone that saw the beginning of construction works at Palabana University was done on 17th May 2013, by the fourth Republican President His Excellence Mr. Michael Chilufya Sata ■

PALABANA UNIVERSITY COUNCIL MEMBERS



Mrs. Mary Lesa Zulu [Council Chairperson]



Prof. Bizeck Jube Phiri
[Council Vice Chairperson]



Prof. Vernon R.N. Chinene
[A/Vice Chancellor, Ex-Officio]



Mr. Paul Chisunka Councilor



Mrs. Monica C. Mwansa Councilor



Mrs. Malalu M. Mulundika Councilor



Mr. Brian Singogo [Senate Representative]



Mr. Jestone Mhango Councilor



Plan of an "Ornamental Game ranch on the University facilities have been



The University plans to have wildlife around its campus



CURRENT PROGRAMMES OFFERED

Degree programmes

- i. Bachelor of Science in Animal Science
- ii. Bachelor of Agriculture with Education
- iii. Bachelor of Aquaculture and Capture Fisheries

Diploma programmes

- i. Diploma in Animal Production (Animal Production)

Certificate Courses

- i. Certificate in Poultry Production (Poultry Production)
- ii. Certificate in Goat Production (Goat Production)
- iii. Certificate in Dairy Production (Dairy Production)
- iv. Certificate in Pig Production (Pig Production)
- v. Certificate in Village Chicken Production
- vi. Certificate in Livestock Production (General Livestock production)
- vii. Certificate in Animal Draft Power
- viii. Certificate in Practical Feed Formulation
- ix. Certificate in Dairy processing
- x. Certificate in Pasture and Fodder Crop Production
- xi. Certificate in Leather Processing ■

PROPOSED ACADEMIC UNITS

The proposed organisational structure of the University comprises twelve Units:

three (3) non-academic and

nine (9) academic Units.

The academic units are:

- i. School of Agricultural Sciences
- iii. School of Natural Resources and Wildlife Management

iv. School of Climate Change and Disaster Studies

v. School of Agricultural Engineering and Technology

vi. School of Food Science and Nutrition

vii. Directorate of Open, Distance and e-Learning

viii. Directorate of Postgraduate Studies

ix. Centre for Youth & Farmer Skills Training and Mentoring

All programmes at Palabana University are being accredited by the Higher Education Authority (HEA). So far three programmes under the School of Agriculture Sciences have been accredited. ■

FORMULATION OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN WITH NIPA

Palabana University is in the process of developing its first strategic plan with the help of National Institute of Public Administration (NIPA). This process is as the result of

an MoU that has been developed between PU and NIPA. Management at PU recognized the significant role that NIPA has been playing in providing both professional development programs and academic courses to both the

civil service and the private sector. NIPA's initial mandate was to offer staff training programs exclusively for government employees, but it has since expanded its scope.

INFRASTRUCTURE – SCALE OF THE PROBLEM

Infrastructure helps with the overall quality of education and skills obtained. There is urgent need at PU to complete all the buildings that are supposed to accommodate the students as well as their teaching facilities. The aspect of conducive infrastructure ensures students have the opportunity to acquire knowledge and skills in an inclusive and aesthetic environment.

One of the major challenges currently at PU is the issue of infrastructure, both for student housing as well as for teaching. The PU Council Chairperson, Mrs. Mary Lesa Zulu and the A/Vice Chancellor Professor Vernon R.N. Chinene with the management team undertook a baseline assessment tour on the 2nd April 2024 to determine the extent and scale of the problem. The Council Chairperson described the situation as "urgent", as it requires immediate remediation.

It was noted during the tour that the plans for stalled works within the campus had also taken into consideration the requirements for students with disabilities by providing adequate accessible building entrances such as ramps. However, these buildings need to be urgently completed so that all students can have access to such modern infrastructure. Additionally, there will be need for adequate signage to be incorporated.

It was noted during the tour that the constructor indeed did implement universal design principles although leaving the buildings unused may lead to further deterioration and vandalism which may result in higher completion costs. ■



One of the uncompleted Student Hostel, observed from a Distance



Aerial view of Buildings housing Lecture Rooms [One almost complete-roofed and another yet to be roofed], with dug out foundation plans of office building in foreground.

INFRASTRUCTURE CHALLENGES



A building housing Lecture rooms that needs urgent attention for completion.

Assessment of Infrastructure Status by Management:

Council Chairperson, Mrs. Mary Lesa Zulu undertook an assessment of the state of infrastructure at PU on the 2nd of April 2024.

The team recognized the urgent need to work on the student hostels, lecture rooms and other support infrastructure. It recognized that these challenges are not unique to Palabana University and addressing them requires concerted effort from university leadership, government agencies, and the private partnerships.

Despite being a new University, PU has faced its share of infrastructure challenges from physical to cyber-physical infrastructure.

With regards to physical infrastructure, management

noted with concern that both the student's housing as well as lecture facilities were grossly inadequate. Other support facilities which are a necessity at a university such as laboratories, libraries, and administrative offices are also not adequate and there is urgent need to have all these in place.

It was also noted with concern that PU urgently requires to put into place ICT Infrastructure. For the University to be a research institution, there is need for a reliable internet connectivity. Reliable internet access is not only essential for research, but it will come even more important when Open and Distance e-Learning (ODEL) programmes will be rolled out. online learning, and administrative tasks. Are mostly done through the utilization of internet services. Thus the inadequate connectivity can greatly hinder productivity.

Management also highlighted the need to have a dedicated computer Laboratory and up-to-date soft and hardware for students and staff members.

At one of the weekly management meetings, it was also noted that the issue of power supply is a big problem. The ongoing scheduled load shedding programs have been affecting electricity supply at the campus. These power outages have been disrupting both classes, and administrative work. However, in the interim, management had to rely on backup power sources (mostly generators).

Management also took keen interest in assessing the Campus Security especially in ensuring that the safety of both students and staff is a priority. ■

IDENTIFYING POSSIBLE SOURCE FOR CLEAN ENERGY



Aerial view of the two uncompleted student hostels (The roof tops are being targeted for placement of solar panels).

The ariel view of the student hostels indicate Management's long term plan that aims at using the existing infrastructure to generate clean energy through placing solar panels on rooftops. This way the University will have renewable energy and contribute to a more sustainable future with regards to solar derived energy from the student's two near completed hostels where works have since stalled.

During the VC's interaction with the students, the issue of electricity access principally for study purposes was highlighted. The VC and team thought it wise to find a lasting solution in line with targeting solar-powered systems that can be beneficial for students.

It was observed that good solar lighting can be cost-effective and can be used both indoors and outdoors lighting of the campus.

The University is seriously looking into application of technological advancements with regards to utilization of renewable and sustainable energy sources. Solar energy derived from the sun, which is an inexhaustible resource has been identified as one such source for energy. Unlike fossil fuels, solar power doesn't deplete natural resources, or depend on rainfall patterns like hydropower stations.

Being in a university set up, solar panels will produce electricity without emitting greenhouse gases or pollutants. This in turn contributes to the reduction of carbon footprint ultimately combating climate change. ■

PARTNERSHIP MEETING WITH NIPA



Palabana University's management is actively engaging with the National Institute of Public Administration (NIPA) team to strategize partnerships. Prof. Vernon R.N. Chinene outlined at the recent meeting between PU and NIPA that collaborations between educational institutions and organizations like NIPA can lead to valuable outcomes. He outlined urgent areas that needed the cooperation between NIPA and PU, which included among others the development of a Strategic plan for the University, website and joint knowledge exchange. During the meeting, both parties agreed that by working together, Palabana University and NIPA will share expertise, research findings, and best practices. Another important area that the two parties agreed in was in the area of capacity building. It was agreed that the partnerships should allow for capacity-building initiatives by recognizing strengths between partners and sharing of training opportunities. It was also agreed during the meeting that students from both Palabana University and NIPA can benefit from exchange programs, internships, and joint degree programs. Exposure to different perspectives and learning environments can broaden their horizons. It was also noted that the need for joint collaboration can lead to informed policy decisions with regards agriculture policies linked to governance, public administration, and social issues based on practical policy recommendations. The two teams also agreed to strengthen joint initiatives that can positively impact

the immediate local community around Palabana. Overall it was agreed that successful partnerships will require clear communication, shared goals, and mutual respect and as a result, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was generated between PU and NIPA. ■



Prof. Vernon R.N. Chinene chairing the Joint NIPA and PU meeting at the Palabana which resulted in the drafting of an MoU.

UNIVERSITY COUNCIL MEETS VC & DVC-RI



On Saturday, 13th April 2024, the Palabana University Council met the Acting Vice Chancellor, Prof. Vernone R.N. Chinene and the Acting Deputy Vice Chancellor Research and Innovative, Prof. Musso Munyeme.

It was at this Council meeting that Prof. Chinene gave his acceptance speech and outlined his vision for the University. He also took cognizance of the work that the previous management undertook during the transitioning phase. He paid tribute to the outgoing Management for their invaluable contribution in the transformation of the College into a University. He requested the management to continue working with the University in their new roles. He emphasized that the effort previous Management made over the years in developing the institution should be recognized and appreciated.

During the Council meeting, the A/Vice Chancellor (VC) requested for the rebranding of the University. He pointed out that Palabana was the sole university in Zambia specifically providing higher education in agriculture. He argued that it was therefore important for the Country's development to take full advantage of this position. To that effect he proposed that the name of the University be changed to Palabana University (PU). It was heard that the name change was going to bring a lot of goodwill which would help in developing the institution. During the same meeting,

the VC emphasized the urgent need for human resource capitalization at the University. He indicated the urgent need for recruitment of qualified manpower across the board■



University Council meeting in session being chaired by the Council Chairperson Mrs. Mary Lesa Zulu.

PALABANA UNIVERSITY CELEBRATES LABOUR DAY



The A/Deputy Vice Chancellor with staff at this year's Labour Day celebrations.

On the first of May 2024, Palabana University celebrated International Labour Day in Chongwe district under the theme: **"Building Resilience: Workers at the Heart of Zambia's Economic Recovery"**. This year's Labour Day was graced by Hon. Sylvia T. Masebo, MP, Chongwe Constituency.

Labour Day is celebrated on the 1st of May each year to honour the contributions of workers and the labour movement. The day is marked by various events and activities that reflect on the achievements and rights of workers around the world. In Zambia, the Ministry of Labour and Social Security, in collaboration with the Labour Unions have been instrumental in ensuring that workers across the nation are accorded this opportunity and recognised for their contribution towards social economic development.

In commemorating this special day, Palabana University (PU) joined other Public University workers in the celebrations and was represented by the A/Deputy Vice Chancellor, Prof. Musso Munyeme, Mr. Vincent Mwaba, Chief Financial Officer and Mr. Abraham Kamalmba, the Registrar. Cultural Performances: Music, dance, and drama performances celebrate workers' culture and heritage.

The celebrations were graced with a "March-Past" by the workers from different organizations and unions within Chongwe District that participated, paraded from Civic Center before proceeding to the actual venue at Chongwe Primary School grounds. In the process the community demonstrated solidarity with the workers by cheering them on.

At the venue, speeches were delivered by all the civic Leaders, starting by by Hon. Sylvia T. Masebo, MP, Chongwe Constituency. Others who gave speeches were union representatives, and dignitaries who all emphasized workers' rights, achievements, and challenges.

The event saw awards and recognitions of deserving workers. Outstanding workers receive awards for their dedication and service. Employers may also recognize long-serving employees.

During this special day, Palabana University recognised its workers contributions, appreciated their hard work and dedication towards by awarding each of the deserving recipients with a microwave■

A/VICE CHANCELLOR MEETS WITH STAFF & STUDENTS



The A/Vice Chancellor posing for a Photo with some of the students and members of staff.

On the 2nd and 3rd of May, 2024, the A/Vice Chancellor and members of the interim management committee met with the members of staff and students. During these gathering, the A/Vice Chancellor discussed matters related to academic programs, campus development, student welfare, and institutional goals. He outlined that such interactions are crucial for fostering a positive learning environment and ensuring effective communication within the university community.

During the meeting with the University Staff, the A/Vice Chancellor (VC) outlined the steps the University was taking to align itself as a higher institution of learning at that level. In the same light, he thanked the previous management on the crucial role they played during the formative stages. During the interaction, the VC outlined the roadmap that he has proposed for Palabana University to actualise itself as a University ■



Students listening to the A/VC's address.

PALABANA UNIVERSITY PICTORIAL ITEMS



Acting Vice Chancellor, Professor Chinene, addressing Staff



Students Dance troupe welcoming the A/VC



Palabana University students during a laboratory session



Milking of animals at the milking Parlour



Strategic planning team during the strategic formulation meetings at Palabana University

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Space for advertising is available