

# Rethinking Funding of universities in Africa: Crises and opportunities

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# Outline

- What is the problem?
- What does it lead to?
- What do we conclude
- ... and and Afterthoughts on solutions



# Introduction

- Challenges facing development of higher education in Africa
  - Declining state funding
    - Unreliable; and unsustainable
    - Belief that higher education has low economic development returns
    - Decline is the only “predictable” factor
  - Rising social demand for access and equity
  - Under-investment in higher education;
    - declining support by development partners
  - Rising demand for technology relevant education
  - Reduced political commitment to university education
    - Governments are prioritising basic education



## ...consequences

- High level unemployment of higher education graduates
    - But quality of the graduates and their “degree discipline” is wanting
  - Unrests/strikes by students and staff unions
  - Disconnect between industry and “disciplines”
    - Natural sciences and industry relationship is still weak
    - A disconnect between the private and the public
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# But...

- There are other hidden challenges; rarely discussed in public
- Performance of universities in Africa in knowledge development is very low
- South Africa ranks high but not among the top 100 universities
- Very few universities are among the top 500
- Many are within the 1000 category

# Top 10 Universities in Africa – 2022 (Worldwide ranking)

World University Rank 2022	Africa Rank 2022	University	Country
=183	1	<a href="#">University of Cape Town</a>	South Africa
251-300	=2	<a href="#">Stellenbosch University</a>	South Africa
251-300	=2	<a href="#">University of the Witwatersrand</a>	South Africa
301-350	4	<a href="#">University of Cape Coast</a>	Ghana
351-400	5	<a href="#">University of KwaZulu-Natal</a>	South Africa
401-500	=6	<a href="#">Addis Ababa University</a>	Ethiopia
401-500	=6	<a href="#">Aswan University</a>	Egypt
401-500	=6	<a href="#">Durban University of Technology</a>	South Africa
401-500	=6	<a href="#">University of Ibadan</a>	Nigeria
501-600	=10	<a href="#">Ferhat Abbas Sétif University 1</a>	Algeria
501-600	=10	<a href="#">Kafrelsheikh University</a>	Egypt
501-600	=10	<a href="#">University of Lagos</a>	Nigeria
501-600	=10	<a href="#">Mansoura University</a>	Egypt
501-600	=10	<a href="#">University of Nairobi</a>	Kenya
501-600	=10	<a href="#">North-West University</a>	South Africa

# Africa University Ranking (2022)

Rank	University
1	<a href="#">University of Cape Town</a>
2	<a href="#">University of the Witwatersrand</a>
3	<a href="#">University of Pretoria</a>
4	<a href="#">Universiteit Stellenbosch</a>
5	<a href="#">University of KwaZulu-Natal</a>
6	<a href="#">The American University in Cairo</a>
7	<a href="#">North-West University</a>
8	<a href="#">University of Johannesburg</a>
9	<a href="#">University of Nairobi</a>
10	<a href="#">Rhodes University</a>
11	<a href="#">Cairo University</a>
12	<a href="#">University of the Western Cape</a>
13	<a href="#">University of Ghana</a>
14	<a href="#">Makerere University</a>
15	<a href="#">University of Namibia</a>
16	<a href="#">Université de la Reunion</a>
17	<a href="#">Mansoura University</a>
18	<a href="#">University of the Free State</a>
19	<a href="#">Cape Peninsula University of Technology</a>
20	<a href="#">Nelson Mandela University</a>

# Presence in research/publications

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Poor visibility

Poor presence in high impact journals

Non competitive presence

	Country/territory	Count	Share
1. 1	United States of America (USA)	25831	18094.2199
1. 2	China	21766	17496.82713
1. 3	Germany	8821	4497.288368
1. 4	United Kingdom (UK)	7583	3446.686543
1. 5	Japan	4706	2878.367756
1. 6	France	4562	1969.753938
1. 7	South Korea	2496	1534.116481
1. 8	Canada	3234	1462.124708
1. 9	Switzerland	3135	1345.437102
1. 10	India	1862	1183.298242
1. 11	Australia	2755	1132.751225
1. 12	Italy	2808	1089.939656
1. 13	Spain	2661	1051.407966
1. 14	Netherlands	2262	845.4305702
1. 15	Sweden	1929	653.2135311
1. 16	Israel	1286	642.6384815
1. 17	Singapore	1191	527.9240768
1. 18	Russia	1399	503.4790879
1. 19	Denmark	1197	406.3770566
1. 20	Belgium	1131	385.5441384
1. 21	Taiwan	926	382.6557804
1. 22	Austria	1177	355.6925389
1. 23	Poland	906	296.2637857
1. 24	Brazil	890	293.1745676
1. 25	Finland	750	213.3790095
1. 26	Czech Republic	721	193.9989269

# Publications

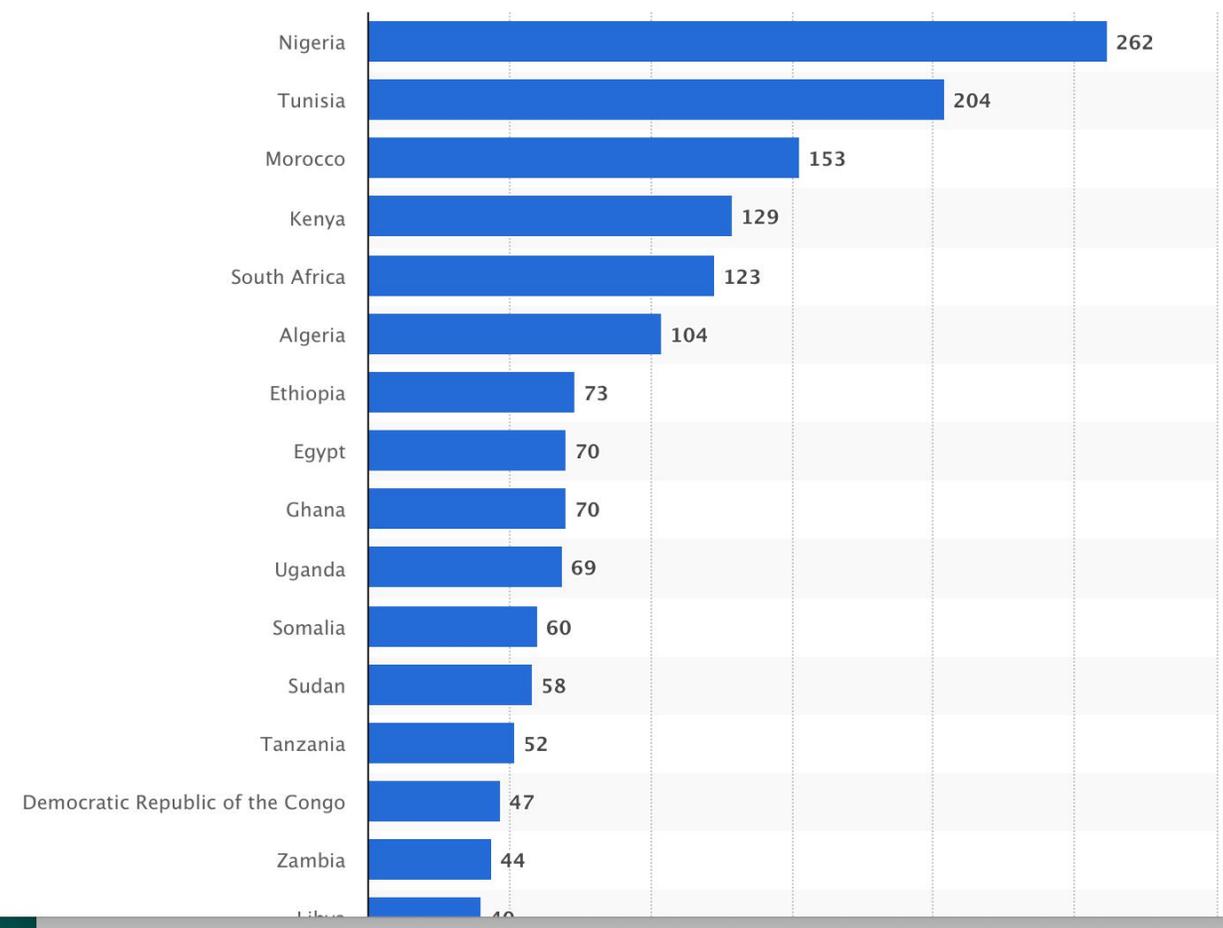
Position/rank	country	Count	share
1. 28	Portugal	500	140.0008981
1. 29	Saudi Arabia	417	122.2980695
1. 30	Iran	260	115.8885122
1. 31	Chile	439	114.1321303
1. 32	New Zealand	357	99.50161906
1. 33	Ireland	419	99.48488351
1. 34	Hungary	418	94.67940544
1. 35	Argentina	321	92.75101754
1. 36	South Africa	431	87.72872251
1. 37	Mexico	367	86.38517186
1. 38	Greece	401	85.75441303
1. 39	Turkey	375	83.71592744

50	<a href="#">Croatia</a>	168	20.33
51	<a href="#">Romania</a>	206	20.32
52	<a href="#">Slovakia</a>	129	17.66
53	<a href="#">Cyprus</a>	116	16.34
54	<a href="#">Indonesia</a>	100	16.21
55	<a href="#">Egypt</a>	179	12.34
56	<a href="#">Kenya</a>	61	12.30
57	<a href="#">Ecuador</a>	101	11.71
58	<a href="#">Lithuania</a>	91	

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56	<a href="#">Kenya</a>	61	12.30
57	<a href="#">Ecuador</a>	101	11.71
58	<a href="#">Lithuania</a>	91	

5	<a href="#">Algeria</a>	16	4.46
76	<a href="#">Ghana</a>	29	4.41
77	<a href="#">Uganda</a>	25	4.11
78	<a href="#">Uzbekistan</a>	48	3.82
79	<a href="#">Nigeria</a>	31	3.75
80	<a href="#">Georgia</a>	118	3.68
81	<a href="#">Lebanon</a>	18	3.42
82	<a href="#">Congo</a>	19	3.37
83	<a href="#">Tanzania</a>	23	2.93
84	<a href="#">Malta</a>	11	2.89
85	<a href="#">Venezuela</a>	16	2.74
86	<a href="#">Ethiopia</a>	26	2.72
87	<a href="#">Botswana</a>	15	2.3

# African countries with most universities as of 2020



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- 🔔
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- 🔗
- “
- 🖨️

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### SOURCE

### DETAILS

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#### Source

CSIC

#### Survey by

CSIC

#### Survey name

Countries arranged by Number of Universities in Top Ranks

#### Published by

CSIC

#### Source link

[webometrics.info](http://webometrics.info)

#### Release date

2020

The activation link above does not work? Please copy this link directly to the address bar of your browser:

<https://www.statista.com/register/check/BcPEEtli4dal4CoqNheVe1eYHq3dimv2>

# What then is the problem?

## Historical factors

- 60s and 70s witnessed increased investment and commitment to higher education
- Governments considered education as a “public good”, a “just” and “right”
- 80s and 90s marked by decline of state funding
  - Era of Structural Adjustment Programme across Africa impacting on state capacity to support university education

## 21 Century and new priorities for many governments

- Pressure to deliver development vs pressure to provide higher education
- Economic decline/poor performance reduced ability to delivery

## In the meantime, funding is on decline

- Funding is addressing only the social demand
- Funding not addressing quality, equity and research

# Internal context: “Two-Universities in One”

Across Africa, universities tend to become bureaucracies

Administrative functions out grows the academic functions

- Two Universities in One with limited or incoherent coordination
- Mandates of the universities become blurred

Universities become unattractive to the private sector/industry

- Quality is in question
- Connection to the industry is weak
- but social demand continues to rise

# Conclusions: what is next?

## Financing higher education in Africa is in crisis

- Education a “public good” but governments no longer look at higher education as a public good
- There is a need for debate to express this concern because it has implications for the society

## Neglecting higher education has negative consequences

- Knowledge development is positively correlated to economic development

## Stable and increased financing of higher education is good for the continents development

- Technology led growth is key to development in the future
- BUT only universities that are equipped to impart quality education and conduct applied research will become relevant

The balance between quality education and addressing social demand for equity should guide policies on financing

# Finally: An afterthought on way forward

## 1. Mobilize resources from the private sector

- Collaboration with the industry to finance education in strategic sectors
- Industry can employ students who then will use the income to pay fees

## 2. Link universities with public works ministries

- All ministries tend to sub-contract 'outsider' firms who then employ experts from universities

## 3. Increased focus on research

- Research is under emphasised
- Commercialize research findings, "scientific" patents

## 4. Intensify debates on concerns about funding

- Governments require collective voice
- Collective voice at AU, regional bodies (SADC, EAC, ECOWAS)

## 5. Address the crisis of "Two-Universities in One"

## 6 Tame the middle class

- The middle class is able to pay for their children but are expecting "loans" from the government to support their children

End

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Thanks