

**Scoping study of graduate teaching provision
in the social sciences, governance and public
policy**

**Undertaken on behalf of the Partnership for African Social and
Governance Research**

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Final Report

Part A: Scale and disciplinary trends

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Executive Summary

Scope of study

- This is Part A of a study that set out to provide an assessment of the current scale of capacity building support for graduate research and training in the social sciences in Africa generally.
- This report is based on a **survey of postgraduate activity in the social sciences in six countries:** Ghana, Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, Mozambique and Zambia. Its purpose is to provide a first broad assessment of the scale of graduate degree provision, and to offer a more detailed review of a select number of programmes that suggested sufficient quality or scope to be of interest to the project. Core disciplines (political science, sociology etc) and 'themed' or interdisciplinary programmes (e.g. peace and conflict studies) are all covered.
- In addition to programmes currently offered, **the study also captures details of programmes which are due to be launched** in the next academic year, or which are currently in the planning phases. It was felt that this would give a more useful picture of the likely or emerging landscape when PASGR commences its own programmes, while also signalling the interests and existing plans of universities and their management. Figures for total provision include current and planned programmes, while country profiles indicate, by department, which are already running and which are yet to be launched.
- In Ghana the study identified six relevant institutions, in Kenya eight, in Tanzania four, in Uganda 11, and one in each of Mozambique and Zambia.

The scale of activity in the social sciences

- **It is evident that quantity is not the problem.** The study identified and captured basic details of some 291 graduate social science programmes across 31 institutions in the six countries.
- Uganda has not only witnessed significant growth in higher education, but **relatively more of Uganda's universities appear to be offering substantive graduate social science training.**
- **There is a relative lack of postgraduate social science graduate training in Zambia and Mozambique** where only one institution in each case delivers relevant postgraduate training.
- **It is difficult to gauge doctoral activity accurately.** The greatest level of doctoral training is currently in Kenya, with 26 programmes. While Uganda has significant Master's level activity, it has much less at doctoral level.
- **Postgraduate diplomas are principally offered in Uganda,** with few offered elsewhere. Many of these are in public administration, seemingly linked to the decentralisation programme.

Disciplinary and subject trends

- **Development studies, economics and public administration dominate the landscape.** Programmes in development studies (59) account for around 20% of overall graduate social science provision, with almost 70% at Master's level. The apparent scale of graduate level provision (in terms of distinct programmes offered) in these areas is also in part the result of multiple 'themed' programmes being offered in the same department.
- Development studies activity is particularly significant in Ghana and Uganda. Economics activity is considerably greater in Kenya than elsewhere, with 18 Master's programmes. Public administration activity is greatest in Uganda, but also relatively high in Tanzania.
- **There is relatively little activity in what might be considered core social science disciplines.**
- **Only 10 programmes are offered in political science across the six countries,** compared to 43 in public administration and governance. In Kenya, activity within politics appears to be directed towards international relations, where there are 11 programmes compared to just two or three in straight political science. In Uganda there are also more programmes in international relations than in politics.

Mozambique has no political science programme and there are only one or two in each of the other five countries.

- **There are just 10 anthropology and 16 sociology programmes across the six countries.** Neither Mozambique, Tanzania nor Zambia has an anthropology programme, while Uganda and Ghana have just one Master's and one PhD.
- A degree of **expertise and capacity within core social sciences** (anthropology, sociology and politics) **is likely to be directed at present towards interdisciplinary programmes** (developments studies, peace and conflict etc).

Teaching staff

- **The majority of teaching staff in the established public universities have PhDs**, often gained from universities abroad. Newer universities on the whole have less well-qualified faculty, some with only MA/MSc qualifications or with less diversity in the locations of doctoral training.

Further observations on postgraduate delivery

- **Postgraduate programmes are designed in quite standard ways.** Master's programmes are typically built around the coursework and dissertation model, with exams in some instances; doctoral programmes are typically built around an extended research thesis.
- Without investigating actual programme curricula and modules, identifying notable practice is difficult. In **a few instances interesting programmes appear to be found outside of social science faculties**, in business schools for example.
- **Course approval and review processes appear to follow fairly standardised committee and referral systems.** It is unclear from this how well the approval process actually works, and whether it takes into account the facilities available for teaching, or ensures that department staff are sufficiently qualified to mount a new programme.
- **Unsurprisingly funding for graduate study is very limited.** The overwhelming majority of students are self-sponsored, while opportunities for scholarships are relatively sparse.
- Universities have a variety of collaborating partners from across North America and Europe, and some national or regional links. However **there did not appear to be considerable evidence of collaborative teaching or programme delivery**

Interesting practice in South Africa

- In parallel a brief assessment of significant activity and potentially interesting practice in South Africa is provided, focused on the universities of Cape Town, Stellenbosch and the Witwatersrand. It was difficult to get a good sense of teaching in 'core' departments in the time available, and much greater investigation of these is needed in order to make more conclusive statements here.
- **Interesting examples of graduate training are found in some of the research centres or specialist units** which have been set up alongside traditional academic faculties and departments, and which also provide space and support for graduate study and research as part of their broader research agendas.
- **At Stellenbosch the newly established African Doctoral Academy, with short courses, workshops and summer/winter schools, is notable.** There are also plans to expand this at the regional level through the Partnership for Africa's Next Generation of Academics initiative. A research methods focus is also evidence in other departments. **Some have clear links to research users and policy makers** through explicit collaboration and short course programmes. Both politics and public management have activity worth noting here.
- **Wits' population and health, law and development and forced migration programmes are particularly notable**, with their emphasis on training embedded within a wider research programme, their inter-disciplinarity, and their links to a range of external research centres within and outside of

Africa. Also **worth noting is Wits' joint leadership (with the APHRC) of the Consortium for Advanced Research Training in Africa.**

- **The Centre for Social Science Research and the Centre for Cities at UCT are notable.** Both have a well-structured programme of 'cutting edge' social research, strong policy links, and an interdisciplinary approach, and whilst principally research rather than teaching units, both provide particularly interesting platforms on which graduate training has been or is being built. Also notable at UCT, within the departments of politics, anthropology and sociology are **a number of programmes that build in core methods and practical components**, such as the internship in UCT's Practical Anthropology MA.

1. Scope of study

The purpose of the study was to provide a first broad assessment of the scale of graduate degree provision, and to offer a more detailed review of a select number of programmes that suggested sufficient quality or scope to be of interest to the project. The study has compiled a valuable body of comparative data on graduate programmes currently running in the six initial focus countries. Core disciplines (political science, sociology etc) and 'themed' or interdisciplinary programmes (e.g. peace and conflict studies) were all covered.¹ Education and public health were not identified as areas of specific interest within the terms of reference, however it is evident that there is considerable activity concentrated in these areas, particularly in terms of programmes with a social policy link. Information on some of these programmes was gathered in the course of the study, but is omitted from this report.²

In addition to programmes currently offered, the study also captured details of programmes which are due to be launched in the next academic year, or which are currently in the planning phases. It was felt that this would give a more useful picture of the likely or emerging landscape when PASGR commences its own programmes, while also signalling the interests and existing plans of universities and their management. Additionally a brief summary of significant graduate social science training at three South African universities is offered.

The study deliberately did not seek to compile detail on programme content (component courses) or curricula as this was judged to be too extensive an exercise within the timeframe available, and of little value. Instead it is anticipated that a more detailed exploration of content will be undertaken at a subsequent stage, focusing on those institutions with which the project decides to work more closely.

Potential sensitivities

It should be noted that some sensitivities concerning the sharing of information have emerged in the course of the study. In a number of cases it was not possible to collect information from an 'official' source (e.g. a dean or head), and senior management were not directly consulted in most cases, given the delay this would have been likely to cause. Data quoted here should therefore be taken as indicative of the broader picture rather than as an absolute and comprehensive inventory of graduate level teaching. Some of the sensitivities that have arisen when seeking information for the study may also have implications for successive phases of the project, particularly if institutions are to be identified on the evidence compiled here, or if any public conclusions are drawn 'leading players' are. At this stage we would therefore request that the contents be kept confidential to the project team and DFID.

¹ The terms of reference listed Political Science, Public Administration, Government, Anthropology, Sociology, Geography, Development Studies, Economics, Social Policy, Conflict Studies, Humanitarian Studies, and Refugee Studies as the fields of core interest

² If education or public health were felt to be of greater interest, the scope of the study would need to be expanded slightly to take account of programmes in these fields offered in other institutions, or within schools of medicine. In Tanzania, for example, the Muhimbili university of Health and Allied Sciences, formerly a college of the University of Dar es Salaam, offers public health programmes.

2. The scale of graduate training in the social sciences

In each country institutions were selected according to their current social science activity and graduate level provision, or, as in the case of one Kenyan institution, where there were plans for substantial new activity relevant to the project. In Ghana the study identified six relevant institutions, in Kenya eight, in Tanzania four, in Uganda 11, and one in each of Mozambique and Zambia. Uganda has not only witnessed significant growth in higher education, but relatively more of its universities appear to be offering substantive graduate social science training (as many as 27 universities were initially listed for investigation). Conversely, in Tanzania there appears to be less social science activity at graduate level, relative to the size of the higher education sector as a whole, and relative to the size of the country (by population), which is the largest of the six. While an initial 20 universities were identified in Tanzania, only four of these appear to be engaged in any significant graduate activity.

The study identified and captured basic details of some 291³ graduate social science programmes across 31 institutions in the six countries.⁴ This includes both currently running and planned programmes (typically due to commence in 2010 or 2011). The trend in some institutions to introduce themed strands of what may in practice be very similar programmes, or a set of core courses plus options, results in a degree of inflation of actual activity when measured by individual MA or MSc programmes. Specialist institutes such as Nairobi's for diplomacy and international studies also distort the figures slightly, with several programmes in one area. Numbers should therefore be taken with some caution, and as a guide rather than as an absolute measure. Nevertheless, these figures are useful in so far as they indicate the fields, which are perceived to be most important within the university system. This may be according to student demand, or perceived income generation potential (the number of programmes in public administration and development studies may be reflective of this). It is evident that quantity is not the problem.

There is a distinct lack of social science graduate training in Zambia and Mozambique. Only one institution in each country currently offers graduate provision in the social sciences (the universities of Zambia and Eduardo Mondlane respectively). Moreover, information gathered to date suggests that activity in each is also relatively low. At Eduardo Mondlane graduate social science programmes (Master's and PhD) amounts to just 10, with 13 in Zambia. It is therefore difficult to say much authoritatively about activity in these countries from this data alone.

The number of students enrolled in each department would give a better picture of the actual scale and potential impact of advanced social science training. Such figures were, however, difficult to obtain from all institutions and departments. Some have as few as two or three students enrolling in a programme each year, others as many as 40 or 50 across a department. For those where figures could be obtained, the mean population by department is around 26 students; however this is based on a very small sample of key institutions and should not be treated as too conclusive.

Master's and doctoral training

Unsurprisingly there are substantial numbers of Master's programmes. 199 were identified in total. 175 of these are at MA/MSc level, with 24 MPHils (likely to involve more substantial research training). Uganda and Kenya both have considerably more Master's programmes than Ghana and Tanzania, with 64 in Uganda and 53 in Kenya, compared to 41 in Ghana and 29 in Tanzania.

Table 1: Doctoral degrees as a proportion of the total

Ghana	Kenya	Moz.	Tanzania	Uganda	Zambia	TOTAL
18%	28%	30%	25%	7%	23%	18.5%

³ These figures were calculated before an additional submission from the University of Zambia's Department of Social Development Studies, listing a further three current or planned MA programmes, and two PhD programmes. Details of these are included in the country profiles section, but are not reflected in the figures quoted here

⁴ These figures include both current and planned programmes, since it was felt that this would offer a better picture of likely provision at the point that PASGR programmes become operational

Doctoral training appears to be relatively low. Only 56 PhD programmes were reported across the six countries. The greatest level of doctoral training is currently in Kenya, with 26 PhD programmes, compared to 10 in Tanzania, nine in Ghana, and as few as seven in Uganda. While Uganda has significant Master's level activity, it has much less at doctoral level; PhDs represent just 7% of Uganda's graduate provision. The increase in graduate social science provision in Uganda is thus predominantly concentrated at taught programmes level. Conversely PhDs represent between 18% and 28% of activity in Ghana, Kenya and Tanzania. It is nevertheless difficult to gauge doctoral activity accurately and it is not clear whether all programmes have been captured. Many appear to be offered flexibly where there is a Master's programme (and thus potential students), or according to the availability of supervisors. PhD programmes may be formally listed but have few (if any) students currently enrolled, there may be little access to funding, or supervisory capacity (or interest) within a department may be lacking. One university's response noted that PhDs were offered in all areas subject to demand, but without any obvious or structured programme. In a number of cases doctoral programme enrolments may in practice be drawn predominantly from departmental staff.

Ghana appears to have relatively few PhD programmes (11), although a reasonable number of research Master's degrees in the form of the MPhil (19). Kenya has the greatest number of PhD programmes at 28, though fewer MPhil programmes (10). Tanzania has 19 PhD programmes, but no MPhil programmes. Uganda, surprisingly, has only 6 PhD programmes reported here. This may, as noted above, be due to a problem in reporting, but certainly needs to be investigated further. Mozambique reports only two so far, and Zambia three. It seems likely that more are offered, but that these are subject to interested students and supervisory capacity and are not very explicitly advertised.

The delivery of graduate programmes and particular PhD supervision is impacted substantially by consultancy activity within universities. We have been able to access a copy of a recent (2008) report commissioned by the Social and Public Health Sciences Unit of the UK MRC on consultancy research and its impact on social sciences in Uganda, which confirms this trend at three universities in the country and by implication highlights the challenges of developing strong graduate programmes.

Postgraduate diplomas

Postgraduate diplomas are principally offered in Uganda, with few offered elsewhere. Of 39 PgDips identified, 31 are being delivered in Uganda, and only one in Ghana, five in Kenya, and one each in Tanzania and Zambia. The proliferation of diplomas in Uganda appears to be in part linked to its decentralisation programme, and a particular drive, particularly in the country's newer institutions, to offer more professionally or practically relevant courses. A number of universities, for example, noted diplomas in areas related to local governance and administration, and often with contracts to train ministry staff and civil servants. In a number of cases these were reported to have been developed in direct response to a 'call' from the ministry in question.

3. Disciplinary and subject trends

A series of tables and figures are presented below which set out the disciplinary coverage by country. It should be noted that Mozambique covers only Eduardo Mondlane (UEM) and Zambia only University of Zambia (UNZA). Figures presented here are for both currently active programmes, and those due to be launched in the next or subsequent academic year. While this over-represents coverage to some extent, it suggests what level of activity is likely to exist, given current plans, as PASGR's own programming begins.

Figure 1: Total programmes, major disciplinary areas, all countries

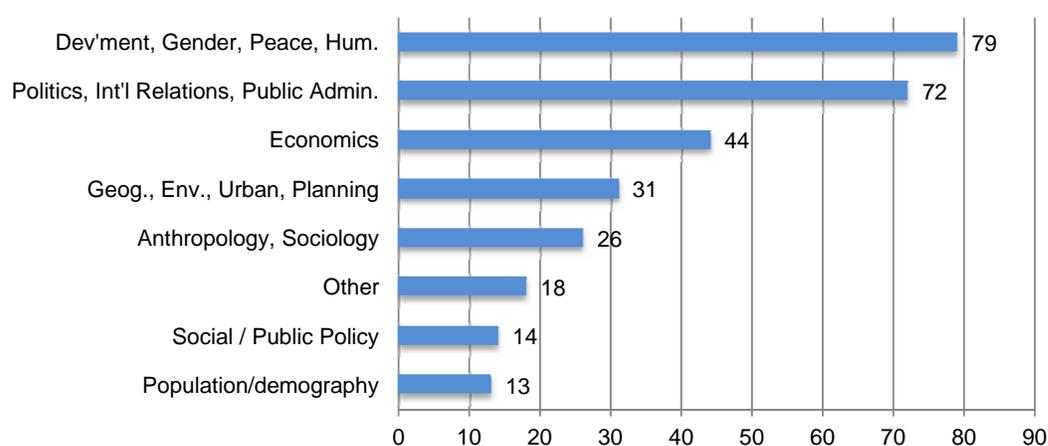


Table 2: Disciplinary coverage, all countries

	Ghana	Kenya	Moz.	Tanzania	Uganda	Zambia
Political Science	2	2.5	0	2.5	2	1
International Relations	0	11	0	2	6	0
Public Administration, Governance	2	2.5	2	9.5	25	2
Anthropology	2	6	0	0	2	0
Sociology	1	5	2	3	3	2
Economics	4	21	2	8	7	2
Development Studies, Gender	14	9	0	8	26	2
Peace & Conflict	3	6	0	0	6	0
Humanitarian Studies, Disaster and Risk	0	3	1	0	1	0
Social Work	4	0	0	1	1	1
Social / Public Policy	1	1	0	0	5	0
Geography, Environment, Urban Studies, Planning	10	10	1	4	6	0
Demography, Population, Migration	4	3	2	2	0	2
Human Rights	2	0	0	0	4	1
Project planning, Human Resources, Management	2	2	0	0	7	0
TOTALS	51	82	10	40	101	13

Table 3: Disciplinary coverage by level, all countries

	PgDip	MA/MSc	MPhil	All Master's	PhD	TOTAL
Political Science	1	6	1	7	2	10
International Relations	4	12	0	12	3	19
Public Administration, Governance	10	28	0	28	5	43
Anthropology	0	4	1	5	5	10
Sociology	1	9	1	10	5	16
Economics	1	30	5	35	8	44
Development Studies, Gender	10	35	6	41	8	59
Peace & Conflict	2	9	1	10	3	15
Humanitarian Studies, Disaster and Risk	0	2	0	2	3	5
Social Work	0	3	2	5	2	7
Social / Public Policy	2	5	0	5	0	7
Geography, Environment, Urban Studies, Planning	1	19	4	23	7	31
Demography, Population, Migration	1	7	2	9	3	13
Human Rights	2	4	1	5	0	7
Project planning, Human Resources, Management	4	6	0	6	1	11
TOTALS	39	179	24	203	55	297

Development studies, economics and public administration dominate the landscape. This is particularly true of the newer universities (in Uganda for example) where graduate programmes tend to be mounted in these areas, but the older public universities have also followed this trend. Programmes in development studies (58) account for around 18% of overall graduate social science provision, with almost 70% at Master's level. This was followed by economics (44 programmes), and public administration and governance (43 programmes). There is significant activity in geography, but given the subject's broad focus, and the titles of some programmes, much of this may not be strongly social science orientated. Webpages and staff research interests suggest a significant degree of activity is focused on physical geography.

The over-representation of development studies, economics and public administration programmes is unsurprising, given the size, and growth, of the development industry (and associated graduate employment opportunities), public sector reform programmes, and the extent to which economics tends to be emphasised in public policy making and planning. However the apparent size of graduate level provision (in terms of distinct programmes offered) in these areas is also in part the result of multiple 'themed' programmes being offered in the same department. At Kenyatta, for example, there are eight MSc programmes in economics, compared to just one each in geography and sociology, and with 'government' rolled into a combined programme that includes history and archaeology. In addition to straight economics programmes, universities also offer specialist health, environmental and agricultural economics and economic policy management programmes.

Development studies activity is particularly significant in Ghana and Uganda. Ghana has 12 Master's and two PhDs, and Uganda 15 Master's and three PhD programmes. Economics activity is considerably greater in Kenya than elsewhere, with 18 Master's programmes. Although this is in part inflated by the Kenyatta programmes, even with these taken into account Kenya's provision is substantial. Public administration activity is greatest in Uganda, but also relatively high in Tanzania too. Uganda has 15 Master's programmes and a PhD, Tanzania seven or eight Master's and two PhD programmes.

The scale of activity in public administration appears to be strongly linked to a trend within Uganda to make degrees more professionally or practically relevant. Over half of the 43 public administration programmes are in Uganda, with a number focused on 'local governance'. Linked to this there are also a number of 'project planning and management' and related programmes captured separately.

Core social sciences

There is relatively little activity in what may be considered core social science disciplines. Political science and public administration are commonly grouped together, but when the public administration component is

removed the politics component is worryingly low. Only 10 programmes are offered in political science across the six countries, compared to 43 in public administration and governance. There are just six MA/MSc and an MPhil programme, and just two doctoral programmes. In Kenya, activity within politics appears to be directed towards international relations, where there are 11 programmes compared to just two or three in straight political science. In Uganda there are also more programmes in international relations than in politics. Mozambique has no political science programme and there are only one or two in each of the other five countries.

Similarly there are just 10 anthropology and 14 sociology programmes across the six countries. Neither Mozambique, Tanzania nor Zambia has an anthropology programme, while Uganda and Ghana have just one Master's and one PhD. In Uganda it should also be noted that this is in medical anthropology. Kenya fares better with three Master's and three PhDs. Notably, the few anthropology departments that do teach at graduate level have also mounted doctoral programmes. In total 14 sociology programmes were identified, nine at Master's level and four at doctoral level. There are very few programmes in social or public policy, just seven over all, and with only three which might be regarded as 'pure' social policy programmes (Legon, Kampala and Makerere), with the remainder being trade and economic policy programmes.

There is quite significant activity in peace, conflict and humanitarian studies. Overall 20 programmes are offered, with notable concentrations in particular universities. Masinde Muliro in Kenya, for example, has five MSc and five PhD programmes. As might be expected there are also a number in Uganda. A degree of expertise and capacity within core social sciences (anthropology, sociology and politics) is likely to be directed at present towards interdisciplinary programmes (developments studies, peace and conflict etc). That political scientists feature in the delivery of such programmes is, for example, evident from staff profiles on university websites.

Education and public health

Clear fields where there is already a strong policy link in graduate provision (beyond economics) include education and public health. This is perhaps unsurprising given these have historically been major social policy concerns within African states. Although education programmes were not deliberately scoped, and those focused on educational training and institutional management were ignored, a significant number of programmes emerged which had a notable policy focus. Even with many non-policy focused programmes disregarded there are still 21 programmes, two thirds of these in Kenya and at Master's level. Similarly, information on public health programmes was not systematically sought but a flavour of these was captured during the surveying. Information on these programmes is not reported here, but the information that has been gathered can be supplied separately. Given the strong social science and policy dimension of these, and in the case of public health a notable capacity strengthening initiative (the APHRC/Wits led Consortium for Advanced Research Training in Africa), it may therefore be worth exploring whether these fields offer any significant experience on which PASGR can draw, particularly where a policy linked programme is concerned.