

*Pedagogy on the Move: Our Journeys*

**Concept Note on Annual Convening of PedaL and  
Collaborative Master of Research and Public Policy - MRPP Week  
Sarova White Sands Hotel, Mombasa, Kenya  
June 24-28, 2019**

## **1. Background**

The Partnership for Pedagogical Leadership in Africa (PedaL) is a formal partnership of eight institutions that aims to embed and catalyse systemic change in teaching and learning practices and to maximize learning outcomes through strategic interventions in graduate social science programmes.

PedaL is one of nine partnerships supported by the Strategic Partnerships for Higher Education Innovation and Reform (SPHEIR) grant scheme to catalyse systemic change in teaching and learning in African universities. SPHEIR partnerships seek to transform the quality, relevance, access and affordability of higher education to achieve sustainable, systemic change. SPHEIR has been established by the UK Department for International Development (DFID) to deliver systemic and sustainable change within higher education systems, enabling them to meet labour market needs and generate the job-ready, entrepreneurial graduates needed to accelerate development, build inclusive societies and promote strong economic growth.

The Partnership for African Social and Governance Research (PASGR) is leading 7 partners to develop and roll out PedaL in graduate social science programmes: Alliance for Research Universities in Africa (ARUA), Institute of Development Studies (IDS) of the University of Sussex - UK as well as five implementing partner universities: Ibadan in Nigeria; Egerton in Kenya; Ghana in Ghana; Dar es Salaam in Tanzania; and, Uganda Martyrs in Uganda.

PedaL's roots can be traced to the collaborative Master of Research and Public Policy (MRPP) programme with its signature pedagogical innovations. Through PedaL, these innovations were contextualized, deepened, up-scaled and formalised into a distinctive training programme. PedaL has therefore been seamlessly embraced by all MRPP universities<sup>1</sup>. It is envisaged that PedaL will be replicated across other universities on the continent that express interest in pedagogical transformation. The PedaL initiative is organized around a series of interlinked activities with the following specific objectives:

- Design and implement features and processes that drive PedaL pedagogy in selected social science graduate programmes;
- Develop the capacity of lead course instructors to catalyse systemic change in teaching and learning methods/pedagogy;
- Create and sustain an active community of practice around PedaL pedagogy;
- Support delivery of graduate social science programmes using PedaL pedagogy and share lessons across the partnership;
- Facilitate the institutionalisation of PedaL in partner universities.

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<sup>1</sup> University of Ibadan, University of Lagos, University of Jos in Nigeria; University of Ghana in Ghana; University of Sierra Leone in Sierra Leone; University of Nairobi, Egerton University and Maseno University in Kenya; University of Dar es Salaam and Mzumbe University in Tanzania; Uganda Martyrs University and Uganda Christian University in Uganda; and, University of Botswana in Botswana.

## **2. Partnership for African Social and Governance Research (PASGR) and MRPP Week**

The Partnership for African Social and Governance Research (PASGR) is an independent, non-partisan pan-African not-for-profit organisation established in 2011 and located in Nairobi, Kenya. Currently engaged in more than 12 African countries, PASGR works to enhance research excellence in governance and public policy that contributes to the overall wellbeing of citizens. Its work is organized around three programmes: Higher Education, Research and Professional Development and Training.

In higher Education, PASGR is working with 13 MRPP universities in 7 African countries to produce the next generation of public policy leaders and researchers. So far, the programme has enrolled 709 students (241 female and 468 male) and graduated 172 students (121 male and 49 female) in four cohorts and at an average rate of 47% which is unparalleled on the continent. The MRPP week provides an opportunity for MRPP stakeholders to share their experiences as well as impact stories, celebrate milestones achieved and reflect on lessons learnt for further programme enhancement. It is worth noting that the MRPP is core in PedaL, providing 5 of the 25 target programmes in the 5 implementing partner universities. The synergy created with MRPP universities has contributed to the exponential growth of PedaL within its first year of implementation and a convening of the PedaL communities of practice during the MRPP Week broadens the scope of engagement in a meaningful and cost effective way.

## **3. PedaL Progress To Date**

From planning to design, pilot and roll out; PedaL has realized unprecedented success in its first year of implementation. The eight PedaL partners designed a PedaL training programme collaboratively in June 2018. Teaching staff from 13 African universities were assisted by higher education stakeholders and a rich mix of experienced resource persons from within and outside the continent to design the programme. The rationale for the programme is provided in Appendix 1 while programme details are elaborated in Appendix 2. The programme was successfully piloted with a similar audience in July 2018 and the results confirmed that PedaL is demand driven, of high quality and relevant.

In August 2018, effort was directed towards developing the capacity of lead course instructors to drive innovation in teaching and learning practices across university programmes. A total of 149 teaching staff (47 female and 102 male) were trained in a centrally organized PedaL training workshop in Nairobi, Kenya on August, 7 -13, 2018. During the training, work commenced on redesigning 76 courses spread across the social sciences, as well as arts and humanities. Feedback from the participants confirmed that PedaL training is demand driven, novel, robust and exciting.

It is noteworthy that plans to launch university specific PedaL workshops in 2020 had to be frontloaded as the demand for PedaL training soared. In January 2019, a total of 23 MRPP teaching staff (8 female and 15 male) of the University of Nairobi were trained in PedaL. This was closely followed in March by the Entebbe hub training of 110 teaching staff (54 female and 56 male) from seven universities in Uganda: Uganda Martyrs, Uganda Christian, Makerere, Kisubi, Kyambogo, Gulu and African Rural University. Building on this momentum, 71 managers (27 female and 44 male) of postgraduate programmes of the University of Ibadan were trained in curriculum design in April 2019. For PedaL, outstanding success was marked by the training of 211 teaching staff (89 female and 122 male) of the University of Ibadan at the International Conference Centre, Ibadan on May 20 to 28, 2019. That this training was cost shared with the university signalled decisive uptake and commencement of institutionalization of PedaL at the university. Ibadan has undoubtedly shown its leadership in this respect.

#### **4. PedaL Annual Convening and MRPP Week**

Themed '*Pedagogy on the Move: Our Journeys*'; the joint event will be hosted by PASGR and its partners in the Pedagogical Leadership in Africa project as well as the collaborative Master of Research and Public Policy (MRPP) programme. It will be held at the Sarova Whitesands Hotel, Mombasa, Kenya on June 24 - 28, 2019 and marked by a series of activities: from a one day conference with a watershed keynote address; to two days of documenting and sharing pedagogical journeys; and, a standalone Trainer of Trainers' programme for resource persons.

It will be an opportunity for an estimated 170 participants to interact and exchange perspectives on emerging outcomes of pedagogical innovations. These will include: government officials, education policy actors drawn from various national and regional organizations; university leaders and managers; research organizations; university teaching staff and students; the media; resource persons; and, PASGR staff.

Pivotal in the event are teaching staff who have been trained in PedaL pedagogy and translated the newly acquired skills into practice over a period of one year. The teachers will share their experiences as well as lessons learnt. The objective is to inspire exchanges; promote opportunities for leveraging, adapting, testing, and sharing available resources, knowledge and technology to enhance and broaden best practices in teaching and learning in African universities. It is also anticipated that the event will facilitate buy in and support from education policy actors at university and national levels that is critical for diffusion of innovations, scaling up and replication of PedaL pedagogy.

##### **4.1 Documenting Pedagogical Journeys**

Teaching staff who have undergone PedaL training make certain commitments to mark their pedagogical journeys. These include articulation and submission of: personal teaching philosophy, pedagogical goals, old course outline and redesigned course outline, model session plan from learning design, reflective log and e-portfolio. The annual convening will provide an opportunity to revisit these commitments through intensive working sessions. Specifically, time will be dedicated to refreshing skills in difficult and novel areas such as preparation of e-portfolios. The teachers will be assisted to build or enhance their e-portfolios using artefacts collected such as: samples of students' work/assignment; photographs and videos of class sessions; various teaching and learning materials; student feedback and peer assessment reports. The expected output will be complete e-portfolios capturing individual pedagogical journeys.

##### **4.2 Sharing Experiences**

During its first year of implementation, has received positive feedback from participants. The training is perceived as an "*eye opener*"; "*a project for the future*"; and, a preparation "for the next moment in our academic life which is centred on improving teaching methodologies to help students become useful graduates"<sup>2</sup>. The annual convening will provide a space for face to face interaction and in-depth conversations on emerging outcomes of PedaL within and across disciplines.

Further, the keynote address on *Innovations in Higher Education* as well as various presentations and panel discussions will provide a prism for self-reflection and stimulate discussions. It is anticipated that important ideas will be generated on the roles of individual teaching staff, universities as well as relevant national authorities in determining the nature and

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<sup>2</sup>"New partnership puts university teaching in the spotlight"; In *University World News*, July 27, 2018. <https://www.universityworldnews.com/post.php?story=20180724113030357>

pace of innovations in general and pedagogical innovations in particular; among others. The discussions will also identify challenges as well as opportunities for maximizing the benefits of pedagogical innovations for students, teaching staff, university leaders and national level policy actors. Aside from these, the convening is also expected to strengthen the PedaL network effects and linkages to relevant stakeholders.

#### **4.3 Trainer of Trainers**

Since the inception of PedaL, a primary goal has been to identify and build capacity of teaching staff to deliver the PedaL training programme across universities on the continent. Such individuals are also referred to as anchor persons and are expected to support and mentor peers. The need to respond to a growing demand for PedaL is more pressing now than was conceived at the inception of the PedaL training programme. It is therefore imperative that PedaL creates a number of prospective trainers at a broadly similar level of knowledge and skill competency to deliver cascade workshops in various universities to the highest standards of quality. That it is this resource pool that can be drawn upon for sustainable and cost effective delivery of PedaL at university level and therefore key to institutionalization of PedaL within the university system cannot be overemphasized. The Training of Trainers programme will therefore aim to:

- Deepen knowledge of resource persons and potential resource persons on the content of the PedaL training programme;
- Enhance confidence of resource persons and potential resource persons in delivering PedaL using a variety of innovative teaching strategies;
- Expand the multi-media resources for supporting delivery of PedaL;
- Increase the number of resource persons able to deliver high quality PedaL sessions.

During the annual convening, the Trainer of Trainers' programme will be piloted with an estimated 80 teaching staff and the feedback used to enhance the quality, relevance and delivery of the TOT programme.

#### **5. Conclusion**

The PedaL training programme embraces teaching and learning as an art to be orchestrated in classrooms through thoughtful preparation of university teaching staff. This is consistent with the perspective expressed in *The Chronicle of Higher Education* that:

*'...teaching is a craft, learned not just in a single class, practicum, or workshop. Rather, it's a recursive process, developed through trial and error — and yes, by "fire" — but also through conversation with others: a mentor, a cohort, your peers<sup>3</sup>.'*

It is envisaged that the opportunity for teaching staff to share experiences with peers will enhance their confidence, stimulate and sustain their innovative capacities, and provide impetus for protecting the integrity of PedaL and its outcomes; challenges notwithstanding.

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<sup>3</sup> Elizabeth Alsop, 2018: Who's Teaching the Teachers? In *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, February 11, 2018

<https://www.chronicle.com/article/Who-s-Teaching-the-Teachers-/242488>

## **Appendix 1: Rationale for PedaL**

Several actors on the African higher education landscape lament the quality, relevance and sustainability of the education system. The Association of African Universities notes that the greatest conundrum confronting African universities is how to become relevant to local needs and social realities while simultaneously responding adequately to the opportunities and risks of globalization. As globalization continues to challenge the content and delivery of education programmes, blur boundaries and complicate education spaces, most institutions in the West are adapting while African universities are left struggling behind.

This situation is compounded by: a) Resource deficiencies and infrastructural challenges that constrain the teaching and learning environment; b) Massification of higher education which has led to phenomenal increase in student enrolment at undergraduate and poor preparation of students for post graduate studies; c) Heavy teaching loads which translate into an emphasis on content and surface learning rather than deep learning; d) The old adage of 'publish or perish' which has shifted attention from classroom content and teaching and learning dynamics to research. Systemic weaknesses have therefore conspired to entrench a transmission model of teaching and learning that legitimizes some form of content tyranny across programmes.

PedaL is premised on the need to catalyse systemic change in teaching and learning in African universities. African university lecturers are highly qualified in their disciplines, yet may lack appropriate pedagogical skills. This affects their ability to deliver effectively in the teaching and learning process, and to sustain holistic development of student competencies; the mismatch between skills and labour market needs cannot be underrated. While this situation can be attributed to the many known underlying factors, it is also true that pedagogical competency is not a requirement for teaching at African universities.

There has been hue and cry over eroding standards of higher education and failure to effectively equip graduates with the skills needed in a rapidly changing and complex knowledge-driven society. By developing and sharing PedaL pedagogies, the PedaL partnership aims to enhance the teaching capacity of university teaching staff to improve student learning outcomes, thereby to produce high quality social science graduates who are employable; and creatively able to use their education to sustain opportunities that stimulate economic growth and social transformation. It has been argued that even gains from the best designed curriculum are often lost without competent teachers to interpret the objectives, organize the content and determine the stimulus that meets the prescribed objectives. Academics must constantly resolve the tension between 'what should be learned' and 'how it should be organized' to achieve exceptional learning moments for optimization of learning outcomes. The problem is that teachers' dispositions, needs and motivation that could help them stimulate active learning among students have not received the right attention. This brings into sharp focus an urgent need not only to reform the curriculum but also to address conditions that facilitate desirable shifts in pedagogical practices.

Taking cognisance of the neglect and under investment in social sciences as African countries and development partners put STEM at the heart of their development strategies; PedaL deliberately privileged the social sciences. The goal is to gradually replicate PedaL across other university programmes so as to catalyse systemic change.

## **Appendix 2: PedaL Training Programme**

### **PedaL Pedagogy**

It is a suite of intentional and integrated interventions in design, context, processes and content of teaching and learning through strategies such as use of case studies, flipped classroom, role plays, and a range of problem based learning activities aimed at maximizing learning outcomes among students. PedaL pedagogy places the responsibility on teaching staff as facilitators to create the appropriate environment for a holistic teaching and learning experience that integrates the student, content and a variety of learning materials to make learning interesting and effective both inside and outside the classroom.

### **PedaL Training**

PedaL training immerses participants in a process of self-reflection and discovery. The training empowers teaching staff to question their assumptions about teaching and learning and to draw on their new knowledge, skills and experiences to construct, reconstruct or reinforce their set of coherent rational beliefs that guide their practice. The training helps to influence the teachers' ability to articulate or interpret course objectives, organize content and determine the stimuli that moves students towards attainment of expected learning outcomes.

### **Expected Learning Outcomes**

PedaL training is interactive and hands-on delivered using a range of innovative pedagogical strategies. By the end of the cascade training, the teaching staff should be able to:

- Articulate and implement a personal teaching philosophy and employ reflective processes to improve practice;
- Analyse and employ effective teaching and learning strategies using applied, authentic and learner-centred practices informed by relevant theories, models and empirical evidence;
- Design and deliver inclusive teaching and learning experiences that address the diverse needs of learners and are responsive to emerging trends locally, nationally and internationally;
- Select and use appropriate teaching and learning materials, and monitor and adapt technology to facilitate learning;
- Construct and implement effective assessment practices for assessing learner progress and achievement in a range of learning experiences;
- Demonstrate pedagogical leadership in distinct contexts by identifying and sharing good practices across their universities and beyond.

### **Programme Architecture**

The programme architecture assumes a blended approach with face-to-face sessions interspersed with online engagement and practical application of skills in the classroom. The programme is offered over a period of one year in a flexible mode.

### **Face to Face Sessions**

Sessions are delivered in a centralized location or in individual universities depending on the context. The training is facilitated by a core team of female and male trainers from across the continent and beyond notably, the Open University, UK; IDS, University of Sussex and University of Minnesota, US. As aforementioned; the PedaL training programme is organized around six building blocks: Pedagogical models and strategies; Educational foundations; Technology Enhanced Learning; Transformative curriculum and learning design; Leadership in pedagogical practice; and, Innovative assessment.

The programme imparts pedagogical knowledge and skills through practical application of tools and technologies that facilitate exceptional learning moments that contribute to holistic development of competencies. The training is interactive, draws on the teachers' experience to extend and modify the teachers' pedagogical strategies by applying pedagogical tools such as case studies, flipped classroom, simulations, role plays and threshold concept tools. Particular attention is paid to gender dynamics in the content of modules, selection of teaching and learning materials as well as classroom interactions.

Best practices on inclusivity such as equitable class participation and seeking the voices of the marginalized groups to bring issues that affect them at the centre of learning are also a critical feature of PedaL training. By the end of the face-to-face training session, the teaching staff should attain the six learning outcomes described in the fore attesting to their readiness to create and implement innovations in their teaching practices.

### **Online Engagement**

The face-to-face teaching and learning experiences are reinforced by synchronous and asynchronous learning experiences on a virtual platform. Online engagement facilitates intra and inter staff interactions within their institutions and in the wider community of practice around PedaL. The PedaL virtual platform actively supports reflective practice, knowledge transfer and mentorship.

### **Reflective Practice**

As part of the training, teaching staff formulate a personal teaching philosophy as well as pedagogical goals that shape their teaching and learning strategies. The goals are pursued over the academic year through application of the knowledge, skills and experiences in selected graduate social science courses. Teaching staff are expected to capture and share a summary of reflections on their pedagogical experiences periodically.

### **Annual convening**

Teaching staff are provided an opportunity to share their experiences and lessons learnt with peers implementing PedaL pedagogy in graduate social science courses in a 3-day annual convening at the end of the year. The convening is held either centrally or hosted in participating universities. During the convening, teachers share the feedback from students, peers, resource persons, university administration as well as their personal reflections on teaching and learning experiences in their classrooms. Important learning points are fed forward into a continuous process of improvement of the PedaL training programme. The annual convening also serves to strengthen PedaL network effects as well as linkage to relevant stakeholders.

### **Certification and Recognition**

There are three levels of certification for completion of distinct training activities:

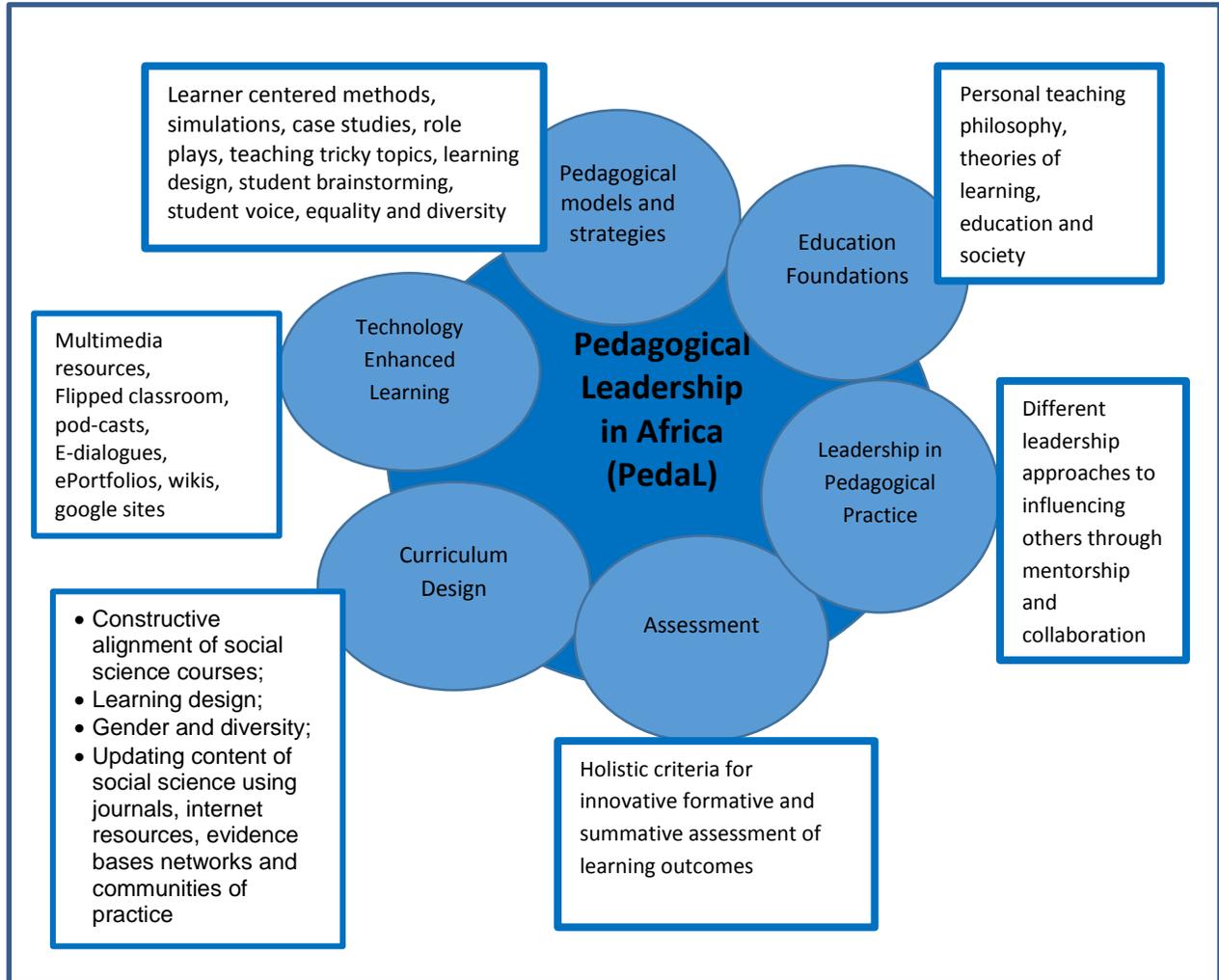
- Upon successful completion of the face-to-face session and online engagement activities, participants are awarded a certificate of accomplishment;
- Upon completion of all training, reflective practice and pedagogical leadership activities participants attain a PedaL fellow status attesting outstanding competence;
- Once the full PedaL programme is accredited by participating universities<sup>4</sup>; participants who pursue various training programmes at the universities will obtain respective degrees: post graduate certificate; post graduate diploma; or master's degree in pedagogical practice and leadership.

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<sup>4</sup> Egerton University has launched the accreditation process for a post graduate diploma while Uganda Martyrs University is developing a master's programme in PedaL

### **Schematic Representation of PedaL Pedagogy**

PedaL pedagogy comprises the six building blocks/modules illustrated in the Table below: pedagogical models and strategies; educational foundations; Technology Enhanced Learning; curriculum and learning design; leadership in pedagogical practice; and, assessment.



### Structure and Duration of PedaL Training Programme

PedaL training is offered in a flexible and blended mode that combines face-to-face with online engagement as illustrated in the diagram below:

	May-July 2019	Aug-Oct 2019	Nov-Jan 2020	Feb-April 2019	Duration
Face to Face sessions					42 hours
Online engagement					36 hours
Reflective practice					Continuous
Pedagogical leadership					Continuous
Annual convening					24 hours

### Schematic Representation of PedaL Programme Implementation

