

LESSONS LEARNT FROM THE DRUSSA PROGRAMME IN ZAMBIA

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INTRODUCTION

- University of Zambia has three major mandates: Teaching, Research and Community Service.
- Teaching: UNZA has more than 25,000 students who are on full-time (Both postgraduates and undergraduates)
- Research?
- Community Service?
- What has been the missing link?



Introduction Cont...

- ❑ Prior to the DRUSSA Programme little was known about Research Uptake and research utilisation at the University of Zambia (UNZA), hence not a priority.
- ❑ Equally Research Communication for the public good was not priority among Researchers. They only communicated among themselves through scholarly journals.



Challenges resulting from lack of prioritising Research Uptake and Science Communication

- ❑ As a result, dissemination of research results was not mandatory (to both Researchers and Postgraduate students).
- ❑ Publications have been driven mostly by the desire for academicians to meet the promotion criteria and not for uptake and utilisation.



Challenges resulting from lack of prioritising Research Uptake and Science Communication Cont...

- There has been limited deliberate engagement between researchers and the communities where research is conducted (Social Sciences).
- The linkage between the university and industry has been minimum.

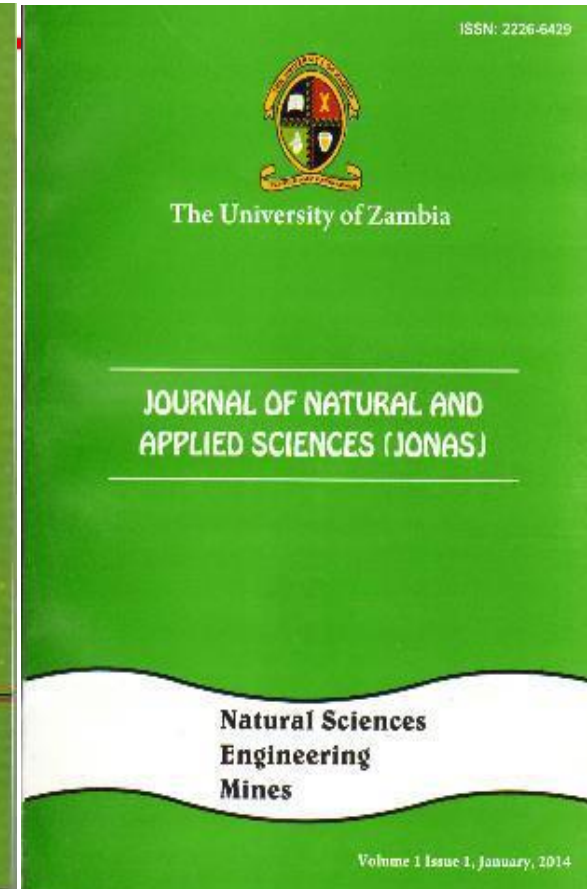
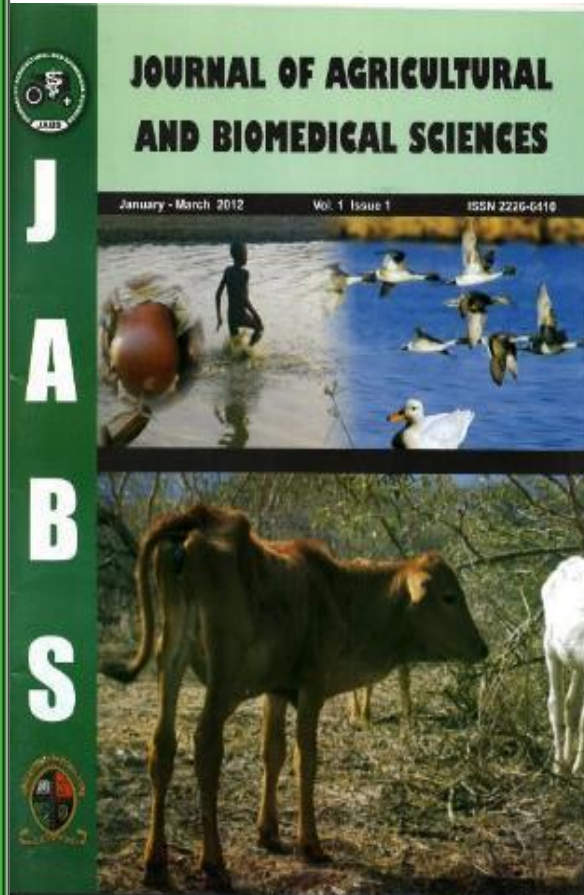


Efforts towards Research Uptake and Utilisation since the DRUSSA Programme

- ❑ The Directorate of Research and Graduate Studies (DRGS) introduced and funded three interdisciplinary research journals namely:
 - ✓ Journal of Natural and Applied Sciences (JONAS).
 - ✓ Journal of Agricultural and Biomedical Sciences (JABS).
 - ✓ Journal of Law and Social Sciences (JLSS).



Journals under the Directorate of Research and Graduate Studies



Guidelines on how to Prepare Manuscripts to submit to the DRGS Journals are also available



Efforts towards Research Uptake and Utilisation since the DRUSSA Programme Cont...

- ✓ DRGS has introduced seminar presentations for postgraduate students.
- ✓ Postgraduate students are required to submit an abstract that could be given to interested stakeholders during seminar presentations.
- Postgraduate students are now required to publish a paper before they graduate.



Efforts towards Science Communication by the UNZA DRUSSA Team

- ❑ Held two media briefings where researchers presented their research findings (2013 and 2015)
- ❑ Conducted Interviews with Researchers on the University of Zambia (UNZA Radio) Station.
- ❑ 13 series of Interviews on research were conducted on national television (ZNBC).



Cross-cutting issues for Research Uptake and Utilisation & Science Communication

- ❑ Most Journalists in media houses are not trained in reporting science issues. As a result they lack interest in reporting on science.
- ❑ Public Relations office is the main link between the university and media houses. However, it has not fully engaged with media houses.



Cross-cutting issues for Research Uptake and Utilisation & Science Communication

- Generally, there is lack of funding for research in the University.
- Currently there is no research uptake office that can drive research uptake.
- Researchers do not seem to have the motivation to have their research publicised.



Moving Forward

- ❑ Establish a Research Uptake Manager's Office within the Research office.
- ❑ Conduct workshops for researchers in order for them to appreciate the importance of Research Uptake and Science Communication.



Moving Forward Cont...

- ❑ Conduct Research Uptake and Science Communication workshops with researchers and postgraduate students.
- ❑ The workshops are intended to encourage Researchers to engage with industry, Policy makers and communities where research is conducted.



Moving Forward Cont...

- Introduce Research Uptake and Science Communication as a component of the Research Methods courses at Postgraduate levels.
- Advertise the webpage for Research Uptake in order to make it known to all the stakeholders (Researchers, policy makers and end users).



Moving Forward Cont...

- Make Research Uptake and Science Communication a mandatory requirement for funding of research
- Possibly include Research uptake as one of the promotion requirements particularly to professorial ranks.



Moving Forward Cont...

- ❑ Train the Public Relations Manager and other Journalists in Science Communication (MoUs with media houses).
- ❑ Train researchers on the importance of stakeholder engagement in order to avoid respondent fatigue and to encourage ownership.



Moving Forward Cont...

- To hold more media briefings where journalists will engage with researchers prior to the event (To avoid misrepresentation of facts).
- This would lead to “3Es” – Engagement, Education and Encouragement of Science Communication.



conclusion

“ Cross the river in a crowd and the crocodile won’t eat you” (African Proverb)

Let us all work towards the success of
DRUSSA

THANK YOU FOR LISTENING!

