

# SOUTHERN AFRICAN BIOCHEMISTRY AND INFORMATICS FOR NATURAL PRODUCT NETWORK PROJECT- HOSTED BY UNIVERSITY OF MALAWI

A PRESENTATION TO THE FORUM ON REGIONAL NETWORKS IN  
AFRICA AND RISE STUDENT SCIENTIFIC CONFERENCE, 3-9  
OCTOBER 2010

BY

PROFESSOR LEONARD A. KAMWANJA

Pro-Vice Chancellor

5 October 2010

KOPANONG HOTEL AND CONFERENCE CENTRE, BENONI,  
SOUTH AFRICA

# UNIMA VISION STATEMENT

TO BE A CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE IN HIGHER  
EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE  
DEVELOPMENT OF MALAWI AND THE  
WORLD.

# MISSION STATEMENT



- ▣ *To advance knowledge, promote wisdom and understanding and provide services by engaging in teaching and research and by facilitating the dissemination, promotion, and preservation of learning responsive to the needs of Malawi and the world*

**MALAWI GOVERNMENT STRATEGY**



**UNIVERSITY OF MALAWI STRATEGY**

**UNIMA PILLARS**

**Teaching & Learning**

**Research, Consultancy & Outreach**

**Capacity Building**

**Funding & Finance**

**Governance**

**Cross Cutting Issues**

# Malawi Growth and Development Strategy

- The overall objective of Malawi Growth and Development Strategy is to reduce poverty through sustained economic growth and infrastructure development
- The University of Malawi thus developed a Strategic Plan with Research, Consultancy and Outreach as one of the Pillars which will contribute to addressing national strategies
- The Research Consultancy and Outreach Pillar has the following Goals:
  - Build capacity in research, consultancy and outreach
  - Enhance the quality, relevance and perspective of research, consultancy and outreach services
  - Improve Dissemination and utilization of research results
  - Establish mechanisms and operational procedures for coordination and facilitation of research, consultancy and outreach services

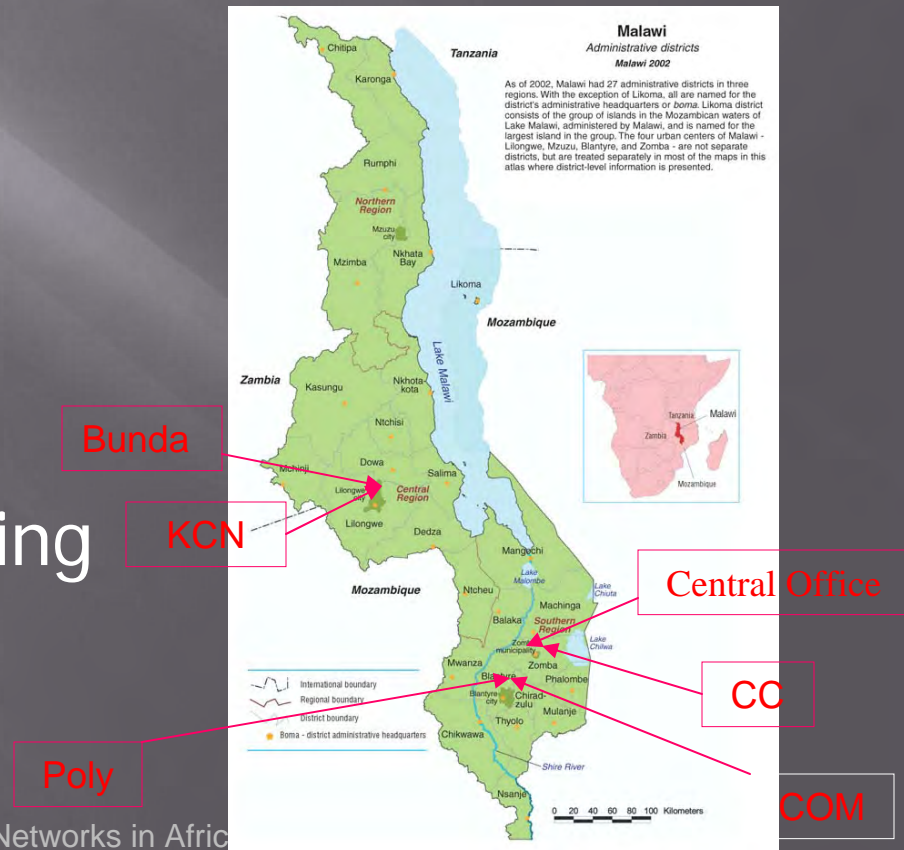
# Purpose of the Research Policy

*“A stimulus for the coordination, promotion, generation, creation of databases, strengthening and dissemination of knowledge, information and technology, through research for economic growth and development and the promotion of social cultural values”*

# University of Malawi Structure

□ University of Malawi is a federal system with a Central Office and 5 Colleges :

- Bunda College
- Chancellor College
- College of Medicine
- Kamuzu College of Nursing
- The Polytechnic



# Research and Development Centres

- University has been established several centres:
  - Centre for Agricultural Research and Development (CARD)
  - Centre for Education Research and Training (CERT)
  - Centre for Language Studies (CLS)
  - Centre for Social Research (CSR)
  - Gender Studies Unit
  - Centre for Water, Sanitation, Health and Appropriate Technology Development (WASHTED)
  - Nursing, Midwifery and Health Sciences Research Centre (NUMHSREC)
  - Centre for Reproductive Health
  - Conflict Management and Resolution Unit
  - Natural Resources and Environment Centre
  - LEAD East and Southern Africa





# SABINA at UNIMA

- Implementing Agency- Chemistry Department, Faculty of Science Chancellor College
- SABINA Secretariat:
  - Prof John Saka , Academic Director
  - Frank Ngonda, Project Manager
- The Secretariat reports to the Principal of Chancellor College and then the VC
- Partners:
  - African Centre of Gene Technologies
  - University of Pretoria
  - Witwatersrand University
  - University of Dar es Salaam, and
  - University of Namibia
  - Tea Research Foundation of Central Africa



# Development of SABINA

- Professors Jane Morris and Zeno Apostolides of the Faculty of Natural and Agriculture Sciences, University of Pretoria approached Prof John Saka to participate in the project development, lead the project and host the SABINA secretariat.
- The University welcomed this innovative network project which is consistent with UNIMA Research Policy and Its Act
- SABINA Purpose: Implementation of proactive postgraduate programmes in chemistry/biochemistry and bioinformatics of natural products. The specific objectives are:
  - Development of networks integrating chemical and biological sciences.
  - Implementation of both PhD and MSc programmes.
  - Strengthening networking among the departments of chemistry and biochemistry in key SADC universities
- Three of the beneficiaries are UNIMA academic staff, 1 from Chancellor College and two from College of Medicine-enhancing human capital needed for greater participation in research, teaching and consultancy/outreach.

# SABINA Students and gender



Years	PhD	MSc	Total	Gender (%)
2008/09	2	4 (2)	6 (2)	33
2009/10	5 (1)	2 (2)	7 (3)	43
Total	7 (1)	6 (4)	13 (5)	38.5



# International Networking

1. USAID- Ecosystem services
2. NUFU (<http://www2.siu.no/vev.nsf/o/NUFU>)
  - Lungwena health, nutrition and Agriculture
  - Capacity Building in Water Sciences (UWC, UB, Oslo and UNIMA)
  - Maternal Health in Sub-saharan Africa (DAR, ZANZIBAR, UNIMA)
3. Scotland –Malawi Partnership
4. VLIR Programme
5. EDULINK-EAP
6. ISP/IPICS funded project to Chemistry Department
  - Chemistry and biology and tropical root crops in Malawi
  - Water chemistry
7. RUFORUM



# Issues for discussion-RISE

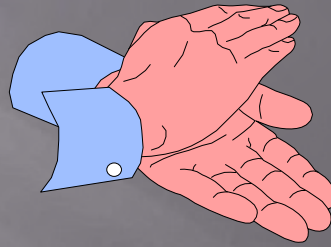
- ❑ Fee variation across the universities- agreement according to the SADC protocol and SARUA would be desirable
- ❑ Overheads- who benefits, focal against other nodes
- ❑ Engage USA universities, extra funding beyond USD800000 needed
  - Equal partnerships between institutions in the North and South
- ❑ Relevance to national development agenda and those of countries in the South.
- ❑ Greater emphasis on basic science and human capital development
- ❑ Commitment at and full support from the senior management level



# Final Remarks

- UNIMA Senior Management team committed to the SABINA Network Initiative and continued IAS/RISE funding





ZIKOMO KWAMBIRI  
THANK YOU