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SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH CONSULTANCY AND ETHICS POLICY

Uptaded and Approved by the Academic Senate meeting of 14th October 2024

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Reports on scientific research highlight the existence of a direct link between the scientific potential of a country and its capacity to take control of its development. Scientific research appears then to be an important component of the construction mechanisms of that capacity. To produce results, the research activity needs a set of orderly processes.

Be it theoretical or practical, that knowledge constitutes the foundation of success in any enterprise. On the one hand, they assure the mastery of choices to be made; on the other hand, they encourage the production of good quality decisions.

In relation to the situation of Rwanda, more decisive and strategic measures are necessary. In this regard, CUR should be able to contribute to the development of our country. This implies that the measures to be taken should rest on the definition of a scientific research policy. In that perspective, the term research policy means a line of action around which revolves a certain number of objectives and strategies to increase knowledge and to address the multiple challenges that the country is facing.

Conducting research also creates spin-off opportunities, for the researchers themselves, for the university and the community at large. Those spin-offs, such as consultancy activities, can attract additional financial resources that help in itself advance research activities.

Government of Rwanda, Vision 2020, Kigali 2001; Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy, Kigali 2007; Education Sector Strategy Plan, Kigali 2010; Law Governing the Organization and Functioning of Higher Education, Kigali 2014.

CHAPTER 2: SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH AND CONSULTANCY OBJECTIVES

2.1 General objectives

By general objectives, we mean the finalities or outcome of scientific research and consultancy, whatever the domain is. Regarding research activities, CUR aims to reach the following general objectives:

- Increasing the level of lecturers and students' knowledge and competences. Conducting research will enhance the capacity of the CUR staff to become as well more qualified and motivated lecturers;
- Scaling up research efforts. Conducting research will enable the CUR staff to build research teams around themselves which in turn attracts new research activities;
- Integrating modern science and technology in Rwandan culture, social and economic activities;
- Making science and technology the levers of economic, social and cultural development of the region;
- To link the know-how available in the CUR, with the political, academic and professional world, and with the Rwandan society in general.

Increasing revenue generating-activities for the institution as a whole through consultancy services

2.2 Specific objectives

By specific objectives, we mean the principles which have to serve as the beacons to scientific research and consultancy to achieve the general objectives. To that end, CUR recommends to:

- Encourage and facilitate scientific research and consultancy activity;
- Seek and propose endogenous solutions which are appropriate and integrated to the problems and the challenges to the socioeconomic development of the country;
- Promote the dissemination and use of research results

CHAPTER 3: SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH CONSULTANCY AND ETHICS STRATEGIES

The realization of those objectives requires that the academic staff, the research units and the students work together in a relevant and orderly way. To that end, CUR intends to articulate its research policy around four strategies:

- A planning system which takes into account the National and Regional policies and priorities on the one hand and the intentions and the reflections from scientific, political and socioeconomic spheres on the other hand;
- A well-organized system that aims to create supervisory conditions facilitating the development of research and consultancy activities;
- A fund mobilizing policy which incites researchers to face the competition for obtaining funds put at the disposal of research by governments, large foundations and international organisms;
- A permanent assessment whose goal is to verify the progress of the research initiated, to assess if the research and consultancy activity is in conformity with the objectives aimed at, the rational and efficient use of the means used and the relevance of the intermediate results attained so as to be able to propose some correctives should this happen.

3.1 Research and Consultancy planning

The strategy adopted by the CUR concerning scientific research and consultancy consists of programming that should include, whatever the sector, the following aspects:

- Determine axes of research development and suggesting research priorities;
- Take into account the adequacy between the scientific orientation of programs, the societal needs and the available resources (human, industrial and financial);
- Propose particular approaches in research sectors already covered in order to make scientific and technological knowledge accessible to the professional circles and the general public in Rwanda;
- Follow a programming system inspired by the principles of management by objectives;
- Initiate dialogues with partners at national and international level in order to make some actions operational, such as establishing partnership with industries, the creation of an

office of research valorization and consultancy for an in-plant training program (Grant unit), other short-course training activities, etc.

3.2 Research and Consultancy organization

To create the conditions favorable to the development of scientific research and to ensure the orderly execution and dissemination of research activities, CUR puts into place an organization chart set up as follows:

3.2.1 The CUR Scientific Research and Consultancy Commission

The CUR Scientific Research and Consultancy Commission is the governing body within the CUR that sets the general direction of the research and consultancy activities within the CUR and governs its implementation. It is chaired by the Academic Vice-Rector of the CUR and meets at least every three months. Members of the Commission are the Deans of each CUR Faculty that has ongoing research activities, the Director of Scientific Research and Consultancy (see 3.2.2.), and all appointed heads of approved research units within the CUR.

This Commission is in charge of:

- Ensuring that the Scientific Research & Consultancy Policy is enforced;
- Supervising and coordinating the overall research activity and the overall activity concerning the dissemination of research results and consultancy;
- Maintaining a CUR Research Foundation and determining the modes of distribution, use and control of it;
- Determining the methods appropriate to the collection of grants, legacies and incomes from expertise and consultancy services, and to the involvement of the private sector in the financing of CUR scientific research;
- Determining overhead costs in connection with research contracts with external sources of financing and with the consultancy activity;
- Making annual research budget forecasts;
- Approving research units based on recommendations by Faculty Bureaus

- Monitoring the quality assurance process and ethical conduct of ongoing research activities, of the dissemination of the research results, and the consultancy activity;
- Evaluating research project proposals developed by research units within the CUR, and recommend the most valid for financing;
- Nominating principal investigators of research projects
- Coordinating interfaculty/interdisciplinary research activities;
- Monitoring and evaluating the overall progress of research projects;
- Examining and approving scientific and financial reports and decide on the opportunity to continue projects;
- Launching a CUR research newsletter, and periodically evaluate it
- Promoting the organization of symposia and conferences of scientific and societal interest;
- Encouraging and facilitating researchers' involvement in symposia and conferences of scientific and societal interest;
- Ensuring the follow-up of training in research methodology;
- Developing relations with other institutions of the country in order to encourage collaboration and complementarities, in matters related to research and consultancy, between CUR, the professional world, and other research institutions, universities in particular;
- Collaborating with international research institutions in order to boost and foster projects of cooperation in matter of scientific research.

3.2.2 The Directorate of Scientific Research Consultancy and ethics

This directorate of Scientific Research and Consultancy is the main executive body of the scientific research and consultancy organization within the CUR. It is headed by a Director appointed by the CUR board of directors, after advice formulated by the CUR Scientific Research & Consultancy Commission. The Directorate has two departments: the Research Department and the Consultancy Department, both headed by the Director for Research and Consultancy

The Research Department has the following duties:

- Prepare the meetings of the CUR Scientific Research and Consultancy Commission
- Prepare the Annual CUR Budget for Scientific Research
- Execute the decisions made by the CUR Scientific Research and Consultancy Commission related to scientific Research
- Support the Faculty Bureaus, the Heads of the Research Units and the Principal Investigators in identifying and mobilizing sources of research funds, in meeting the conditions required for benefiting from them, and in developing sound research proposals (including budgets) to be submitted to these external sources of research funding
- Support the Faculty Bureaus, the Heads of the Research Units and the Principal Investigators in preparing the necessary documents for Ethical Commissions, in managing the approved research grants, in submitting articles to scientific journals, in making contracts of collaboration with other research institutions, etc...
- Support the Faculty Bureaus, the Heads of the Research Units and the Principal Investigators in preparing and organizing scientific meetings in relation with the approved and funded research projects conducted in the CUR
- Support the Faculty Bureaus, the Heads of the Research Units and the Principal Investigators in finding fellowships and other academic opportunities for junior academic staff to advance their academic career within the CUR

The Consultancy Department has the following duties:

- To search for consultancy opportunities based on the results of CUR-research, and the specific competencies of the CUR-staff, in order to increase the generation of income for the university.
- To support different units while they are identifying consultancy areas and in developing proposals for consultancy projects.
- To help faculties to organize different short courses to different people according to their needs and CUR facilities and capacities.
- To monitor consultancy projects initiated in different faculties.
- To participate in the preparation and execution of all activities related to consultancy within CUR.

3.2.3 The Faculty Scientific Research and Consultancy Commissions

The Bureau of each Faculty that wants to become involved in scientific research and consultancy, sets up a Scientific Research and Consultancy Commission of his Faculty. This Commission is an advisory body that supports the Bureau with all research-related issues that are relevant for that Faculty.

The Commission is chaired by the Dean of the Faculty. All appointed heads of research units linked to that Faculty are member of the Commission. Additional members can be appointed by the Bureau of the Faculty. The Commission meets at least once every two months between October and July.

Each Faculty Scientific Research and Consultancy Commission gives advice to the Bureau of its Faculty about the following research matters:

- Major research axes to be explored within the Faculty, in conformity with the general Scientific Research Policy of the CUR;
- Opportunities of specific projects with identification of those which might be important;
- Possible funding sources;
- Possible collaborations with other researchers, institutions and NGOs involved in research activities within the same domains;

- How to encourage junior academic staff to address research fields which could lead to a doctorate thesis;

Each Faculty Scientific Research and Consultancy Commission supervises and coordinates the following activities:

- Writing of an Annual Report about the ongoing scientific research conducted in the research units linked to its Faculty
- Writing of a progress report, every six months, of the ongoing different research activities within the Faculty
- Preparing annually a list of priorities for research areas in their domain
- Preparing and organizing scientific meetings in relation with the approved and funded research projects conducted in the Faculty
- Assure links between the Academic Research activities and the Community Services applied to domains relevant to the Faculty

Before the beginning of each academic year, the Bureau of each Faculty sends the list of research priorities to the Directorate of Scientific Research and Consultancy and the chairperson of the CUR Scientific Research and Consultancy Commission.

Before or during the academic year, the Bureau of each Faculty informs the Consultancy Department about possibilities of new initiatives related to the domains where the Faculty and its academic staff (lecturers and research staff) could make a contribution in terms of consultancy, such as short-course trainings, projects of policy making, - implementation and/or – evaluation, etc...

3.3 Means to conduct Scientific Research within the CUR

Although the outcome of scientific research efforts depends in the first place on the quality and perseverance of the academic research leadership and staff, a supportive research environment contributes significantly to reaching the general and specific objectives put forward. This research-minded environment is partly determined by the available facilities, equipment, and human resources.

3.3.1 Facilities and equipment

The CUR provides the necessary facilities and basic equipment to conduct research appropriately.

3.3.2 Human Resources

The CUR appoints research staff based on their skills and motivation to conduct decent research activities, including the dissemination of the research results. The research staff should spend sufficient time conducting research as well as teaching and community services, to assure a thorough interaction between teaching and research, to assure student and lecturers involvement in the research activities, and to assure that the research activities are in line with the societal needs within the research domains selected.

3.3.3 Financing modalities

The CUR ensures that the funds allocated to research are made available on a regular basis and are rigorously managed.

3.4 Scientific research monitoring and evaluation

3.4.1 General Objectives

It is not enough for the Commission to approve and grant a fund to a research project. It should also monitor it at different stages of its execution. That fact should allow evaluating its progress situation and making necessary adjustments.

3.4.2 Specific Objectives

- To examine the relevance and the validity of the strategies implemented from the first stage to ensure the scientific and material conditions indispensable for the pursuit of the project.
- To organize at the intermediate stages a workshop composed of specialists in the project field domain so as to debate the adopted methodology and to suggest new variables and techniques.

- To examine scientific and financial reports and to propose readjustments if needs arises.
- To organize a workshop to present preliminary results and make the most of the recommendations likely to intervene subsequently.
- To disseminate the results in the form of an article, a book or a seminar.

CHAPTER 4: ETHICAL ISSUES

As mentioned above (see 3.2.1) the Scientific Research and Consultancy Commission is in charge of monitoring the ethical conduct of ongoing research activities as well as the dissemination of the research results. The research activities relate to the research by Full Time as well as Part Time academic staff conducted under the auspices of the CUR, as well as to the final projects of students conducted as part of the educational programs organized by the CUR. For this monitoring, the RSCC relies on six principles upon which research ethics are based.

These principles revolve around the following domains:

1. Rights of human beings used in research activities
2. Regulations on conflicts of interest;
3. Publication rights;
4. Diffusion of research activities and results;
5. Intellectual integrity; and
6. Intellectual property

4.1. Rights of human beings used in research activities

In order to protect the rights of all human subjects involved in research activities, the academic staff and the students have to request ethical approval by submitting their proposals to the SRCC under the following circumstances.

- 4.1.1. Any research and final projects carried out with human subjects by way of intervention (ex.: of medical type) or of interaction (ex.: an interview) or the collection of confidential and personal data on individuals;
- 4.1.2. Any use of secondary data, which contain information that can identify a living human being;

4.1.3. Any research carried out with dead bodies and human remains, with tissues, organic liquids or fetuses.

In this context, the SRCC functions as the Institutional Review Board with the permission of the Rwanda National Ethics Committee.

The application of ethical approval to the SRCC does not exempt the academic staff and the students from the obligation to conform to the rules of professional deontology or to any other rule which is adopted by the CUR.

4.2. Regulations on conflicts of interest

4.2.1. Any staff member of the CUR involved in research should avoid being placed in a situation where he/she has to choose between his/her personal interests, of pecuniary or other nature, and the interest of the university;

4.2.2. Any academic staff member, Full Time or Part Time, involved in research has the obligation to disclose to the SRCC, any real, potential or obvious situation of conflict of interest, so that appropriate measures could be taken to protect the interest of the CUR.

4.3. Publication rights

The CUR guarantees freedom of development and diffusion of knowledge and freedom of delivering services to society through publication, taking into account the following rights and responsibilities:

4.3.1. CUR greatly encourages its academic staff and students to publish the results of their work. However, the authors are the only ones to be held responsible for the opinions they express;

4.3.2. CUR recognizes that its academic staff and students have the right to decide freely on the appropriate time and form to publish the results of their work. However, CUR expects that right to be recognized by any other third party associated with that work in one way or another;

4.3.3. CUR affirms its right to be informed of any publication coming under the academic activities of its members and grants promotion to its members only on the basis of the importance of these publications among other things;

4.3.4. CUR recognizes that within the framework of a research contract, it can be justified to recognize the right of property of a third party on the report that has been produced;

4.3.5. CUR affirms its right to require its members that they testify of their institutional affiliation or of any direct contribution made to the financing of research in their publications.

4.4. Diffusion of research activities and results

4.4.1. CUR endows itself with an organ in charge of disseminating the ongoing research activities and their results carried out within the institution;

4.4.2. Faculties and units of the CUR should make known the research that is taking place within their departments and units. They should remind the academic staff that it is in their interest and that of the CUR that research results are being disseminated for the academic world and the public at large;

4.4.3. The SRCC is in charge of periodically and systematically assessing the diffusion of the research results. It also encourages the publication of completed works in renowned journals.

4.5. Intellectual integrity

The CUR expects from its members who are conducting research in its institution the following aspects of intellectual integrity:

4.5.1. Honesty in the collection and analysis of research results;

4.5.2. Stating, as precisely as possible, the origin of the results referred to and of the concepts which have been used.

4.5.3. The data and tangible products required to conduct the research should be kept for a reasonable period, in order to allow verification of the validity of the results;

4.5.4. Honesty in relation to the use of research funds, the supervision of research staff, intellectual property and the use of any subjects and objects in the research.

4.6. Intellectual property

Two forms of intellectual property are considered here: patents and royalties.

4.6.1. Patents

Given the nature of the research activities that are expected to be conducted in the CUR in the foreseeable future, it is unlikely that the CUR academic staff will be involved in the process of applying for a patent of his/her invention. When this unlikely event does occur, the inventor is encouraged to take the necessary steps for acquiring such a patent. He/she should inform the SRCC about his/her intention to start the procedure for such a patent. The SRCC may then set up an Ad Hoc Committee to decide on the means and conditions to support the academic staff member in his/her efforts.

4.6.2. Royalties

Royalties originally belong to the author or authors who created the work. The transfer of royalties to the CUR is done through contractual stipulations. Nevertheless, the royalties of a work created for CUR within the framework of an employment contract of the author with the CUR or a work ordered by CUR belongs to this institution.

Updated and Adopted by the Academic Senate on 14th October 2014

Signed by the Chairperson

Dr. Laurent NTAGANDA