Integrating ICT into teaching and learning at the University of Dar es Salaam

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Abstract

Since 1985, Tanzania has been undergoing significant political and economic changes from a centralized to a more market-oriented and globally connected economy. The University of Dar es Salaam1 (UDSM) has responded to these changes by reviewing its legal status, vision, and functions, particularly those related to research, teaching, and public service. UDSM's Five-year rolling strategic plan, 2006/07–2010/11 (2006) spells out its transformative strategy and programme. The aims are to increase access to higher education, improve the quality and output of research and publications, improve the quality of teaching and learning, including curriculum design and delivery strategies, improve the number and quality of consultancy and services, and increase the number and productivity of UDSM's linkages with other institutions focusing on civic engagement and social responsibility. This report focuses on the use of technology to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of educational processes and outcomes at UDSM and highlights one of the key lessons learned: innovations in the sphere of teaching and learning need to take cognizance of and address factors in the broader national and institutional contexts, as well as those relating to the readiness of individual staff to accept change. In other words, both first-order barriers (including access to hardware and software, technical and administrative support) and second-order barriers (i.e., those intrinsic to individuals, such as their readiness to accept change and their belief systems about teaching and technology) (Ertmer, 1999) provide challenges to access and uptake of e-learning.