



BOTHO UNIVERSITY

VIBRANCE • INNOVATION • IMPACT



GROUP STRATEGY PLAN 2023-2027



VIBRANCE



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FOREWORD
FROM
**THE VICE-
CHANCELLOR**



Dr. Sheela Raja Ram

Vice-Chancellor, Botho University

The year 2022 marked our 25th anniversary as a higher education provider. We see this as a time to introspect on our identity and our role as educators to nurture graduates for the future of Africa. The future is certainly uncertain and changing rapidly too; content and skills learnt today may only have a lifespan of about 10 years at best, even less in certain disciplines. As we developed this strategy plan covering the period 2023-27, we asked ourselves, 'how do we make the education we provide more impactful?'; and we talked to our many stakeholders, all our staff at all our campuses, students, independent advisors, regulators, employers, and industry partners to seek their thoughts and aspirations. All these inputs were then synthesised, keeping in mind our context, institutional priorities and what we believe is achievable in terms of our strengths.

The 2018-2022 strategic plan gave us direction and purpose during a period when the whole world was enveloped in uncertainty. The way we use technology, and our singular focus on graduate employability have allowed us to build on our strengths to navigate the storms of disruptive changes impacting education such as technology-driven learning, remote or hybrid work, depleting national funds for higher education, and the increased need to support students to succeed in a rapidly changing world of work.

Looking back, to our past three major strategy plans over the 15-year period 2007-2022, one can see how the institution has made steady progress. Our strategy plan for the period 2007-2012 could be labelled as a journey in finding our identity as we grew rapidly to become a relevant, quality-driven higher education provider in Botswana. The next plan for the period 2012-2017 saw us building our identity as we became a multidisciplinary University with not only the Botswana campus but also new steps in Lesotho. The COVID-19 pandemic-dominated volatile period of 2018-2022 saw us expanding our identity as a regional University in Southern Africa. In this respect, this fourth strategy plan for the period 2023-2027 may be seen as an effort to strengthen our identity as a sustainable Pan-African University based on the core principles of Vibrance, Innovation and Impact.

This strategy plan focuses on a vibrant and dynamic Botho University community of talented and successful students, alumni and staff capable of innovating to create positive social impact. This strategy demonstrates our confidence that our resilient people and our time-tested processes and approach to teaching and learning can build a stronger and more impactful Botho University for the future of Africa.

CONTEXT AND RATIONALE

Review of Sustainable Growth Strategy 2018-2022

The Sustainable Growth Strategy 2018-2022 was developed at a time of economic upheaval, especially in Botswana, caused by the tail winds of the Great Recession, immense policy uncertainty and electricity and water shortages. These factors coupled with the push for better quality of and access to education as well as the need for sustainable development both in the region and globally shaped the Sustainable Growth Strategy 2018-2022. The strategy, which was developed in an inclusive manner with extensive input from staff, students, and other stakeholders, focused on growing into new markets and sustaining that growth through a focus on quality, stakeholder development, sustainability, and research.

Over the course of the last five years, the University community can be proud of its achievements with major planned strategies being implemented successfully. Despite the COVID-19 pandemic which shook the global economy and impacted operations, the University persevered with implementing plans and grew from a Botswana University with a small campus in Lesotho and a small distance learning presence primarily focused on undergraduate education, to a more regional university with a sizeable presence in Botswana and Lesotho, new campuses in Namibia, Eswatini and Ghana, and a more active distance learning campus offering a growing number of programmes including more Masters and potentially soon Doctoral programmes. Student numbers outside Botswana and the Blended and Distance Learning Campus based out of Botswana have grown from 13% to 45% of total students. The University has maintained its ISO certification, remains compliant with regulatory requirements, and with the support of the IFC has conducted studies that have validated student and alumni belief in the university and has shown the university to be a leader in the use of technology in all areas of teaching, learning and administration. The number of staff with doctoral degrees has increased substantially through staff sponsorship for further studies and recruitment, and the university's research output has continued to grow especially in relation to publications in leading peer reviewed journals. Research output measured as the number of indexed journals publications, books and chapters has increased from 6 in 2017 to 48 in 2021. The University continued to build on previous success in connecting with industry and engaging with the community for long-term sustainable impact. This strategy period also saw a focused effort to reduce the environmental impact of the University by reducing water and power usage and investing into solar power generation. The University also released its first Sustainability and Social Impact Report in 2022.

The COVID-19 pandemic placed a great strain on the university community. In an effort to protect lives while continuing operations, the university moved teaching and learning fully online and later to a more hybrid model. Staff began working from home and events and activities were limited to minimise the spread of the disease. Unfortunately, the University lost members of its community to the pandemic including students, alumni, and two long serving members of staff - their caring personalities and their contributions will always be remembered and cherished. The pandemic increased stress-levels and reduced social interaction and thus, as we slowly enter a post-pandemic era, this strategy focuses first and foremost on rebuilding the vibrance of the University staff, student and alumni community. This strategy also continues to build on the successes of the previous strategy by continuing to focus on growth through innovation in all areas of operations and impact through research, community engagement and environmental sustainability.

LOCAL, REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL CONTEXT

In an effort to ensure that this Strategy Plan is aligned with the strategies of the countries and regions that the University operates in, the following relevant strategy plans have helped to guide this document:

1. United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development
2. African Union Agenda 2063 - The Africa We Want
3. African Union Continental Education Strategy For Africa 2016-2025
4. Namibia Vision 2030
5. Lesotho National Strategic Development Plan II 2018/19-2022/23
6. Long-Term National Development Plan of Ghana 2018-2057
7. Eswatini National Development Strategy
8. Botswana Vision 2036

Prosperity driven by education, employment, entrepreneurship, innovation and sustainable development is a common theme that runs through all these documents. The United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development has catalysed a global movement towards sustainable development and contains goals focused on “quality education and ... lifelong learning opportunities”; “economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all, and “foster[ing] innovation”. The African Union Agenda 2063’s first aspiration is to build “a prosperous Africa based on inclusive growth and sustainable development”, and gives importance to “sustained investments in higher education, science, technology, research and innovation”, elimination of youth unemployment, and improving “the skills profile, employability and entrepreneurship” of its people. The African Union Continental Education Strategy for Africa 2016-2025 mentions the African Development Bank strategy stating that “Africa’s prosperity can be achieved only if the continent invests in the education and training of its youth” and notes that “virtually all development players now concur that for any meaningful and sustainable economic growth to be realized and sustained, tertiary education must be centrally placed in the development agenda of nations.”

All the countries where Botho University has a presence share this view. Namibia’s Vision 2030 gives importance to “providing quality education for all” that “address[es] the demands in the labour market”. Namibia seeks to develop “a knowledge-based society” and gives importance to Information and Communication Technologies and its “integration into all levels of education”. Namibia also gives importance to “realising its maximum growth potential on a sustainable basis” and being an “eco-friendly nation”. Lesotho’s National Strategic Development Plan II’s second key performance indicator is about “strengthening human capital” with “education and skills development to support the productive sectors with the aim of job creation and inclusive economic growth” being important. Lesotho also recognises “technology and innovation as employment creating and inclusive growth driving sectors.” One way the country seeks to “enhance skills for employment and sustainable inclusive growth” is by “mainstream[ing] entrepreneurship, managerial, and business skills at all educational levels.” The Long-Term National Development Plan of Ghana 2018-2057 identifies the key role of education and employment in creating a prosperous society. The plan also has a strategy “to support research by both private and public tertiary institutions”. The Eswatini National Development Strategy wants the country to be founded on “sustainable economic development”. The Strategy looks at education as a means “to meet the demands of the private sector” and to “provide the individual with the necessary skills to join industry or engage in productive self-employment”. “Re-orienting the educational system towards self-employment” is also seen as a way to “reduce unemployment”. Botswana’s Vision 2036 names “Sustainability” and “Innovation” as two of its “Vision Imperatives”. On education, Vision 2036 seeks to achieve “quality education that is outcome based”. Vision 2036 also defines the word Botho as “a well-rounded character, well-mannered, courteous and disciplined, who realises his or her full potential both as an individual and as part of the community to

LOCAL, REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL CONTEXT (CONTINUED)

which he or she belongs” - it is perhaps thus fitting that the core mission of Botho University is enshrined within the Botho Graduate Profile that encompasses some of these key elements.

Tertiary education plays an important role in driving employment, entrepreneurship, innovation and sustainable development, and thus the overall prosperity of any country. Botho University recognises the impact it can have on people and economies and thus has defined its mission around producing a graduate that will help countries achieve the sustainable economic development and prosperity that is highlighted in so many of the above national and international plans. Innovation and impact and a continued focus on Africa also remain central to the university’s vision.

Vision, Mission and Quality Policy

This strategy plan is heavily influenced by the dreams and aspirations of Botho University staff and students at all its campuses, as well as feedback from other key stakeholders. National, regional and international strategies have continued to emphasise the importance of tertiary education, research and engagement. Environmental sustainability has also clearly shown to be an essential driving force for all organisations, let alone one like Botho University which plays a key role in shaping future generations of leaders and change makers. The Vision, Mission and Quality Policy of Botho University have thus been shaped by these forces.

It is clear that recent global upheavals from the pandemic and its continued strain on society and economies has reduced social connections and energy, thus the identified need for a focus on rebuilding vibrancy. The pandemic-induced economic downturn, now followed by high inflation and the threat of possible recession have highlighted the need to continue focusing on graduate employability through future-oriented programmes delivered using student-centred learning, and for internal operational efficiency and continued growth. This strategy looks to grow the university through aggressive marketing while strengthening operations through innovative use of technology and cost effective, fit-for-purpose infrastructure. The global challenges around the economy and environment also highlight the need for the university to continue investing in the impact it makes on society through research, community engagement and environmentally sustainable investments. The University’s vision is thus:

- **Botho University Vision Statement:** Botho University aspires to be a university of choice offering an innovative and digitally-enabled education journey with a vibrant and dynamic staff, student, and alumni community that drives sustainable development and impact in Africa.

Building on the driving forces noted earlier, the Mission of the University is focused on producing employable and entrepreneurial graduates who will drive sustainable economic growth. The importance of a vibrant educational experience is reemphasised here as well as the significance of ensuring that graduates succeed in the future world of work. The University also remains committed to stakeholder satisfaction, continuous improvement, and environmental sustainability in all its activities. The Mission and Quality Policy of the University is thus:

- **Mission and Quality Policy:** Botho University will provide a vibrant educational experience that produces industry-ready graduates who will excel in the future world of work driving sustainable development through value-creation and productivity. The University is committed to long-term stakeholder satisfaction, continuous quality improvement, and environmental sustainability in all its activities including leadership, curriculum development, teaching, research, and community engagement.



BOTHO

• GRADUATE •
P R O F I L E

Since the 2008-2012 Strategic and Long Term Plan, Botho University has provided a detailed description of the key attributes that define the Botho graduate highlighted in the Mission and Quality Policy - a graduate that is industry-ready, employable and entrepreneurial. The Botho Graduate Profile emphasises the importance of graduates having a broad range of attributes. Indeed the Botho graduate must have the fundamental disciplinary knowledge and work ethic to deliver quality work through their career, but the graduate also needs a range of other fundamental attributes that will help them create value and work effectively with other people, while continuing to take accountability for the role they play in shaping their society and the environment. The graduate noted in the University's Mission and Quality Policy will have the following attributes:



ARTICULATE

able to communicate information eloquently, effectively and appropriately to a given audience



COLLABORATIVE

considerate of and able to work and communicate effectively with teams of people from different social and cultural backgrounds



CRITICAL-THINKING

having the curiosity and open-mindedness to acquire new knowledge by analysing, reflecting on and evaluating information



DIGITALLY LITERATE

able to identify trustworthy information and use technology creatively and appropriately to solve problems, make decisions, and improve quality of life



ENVIRONMENTALLY RESPONSIBLE

committed to conserving resources and protecting the environment



INNOVATIVE & ENTREPRENEURIAL

able to identify opportunities and take measured risk to develop new and improved ideas, processes and products that create value



KNOWLEDGEABLE & HARDWORKING

understanding a field of study with the expertise, professionalism, motivation and commitment to apply the knowledge gained to solve problems and deliver quality work



POSITIVE & CONFIDENT

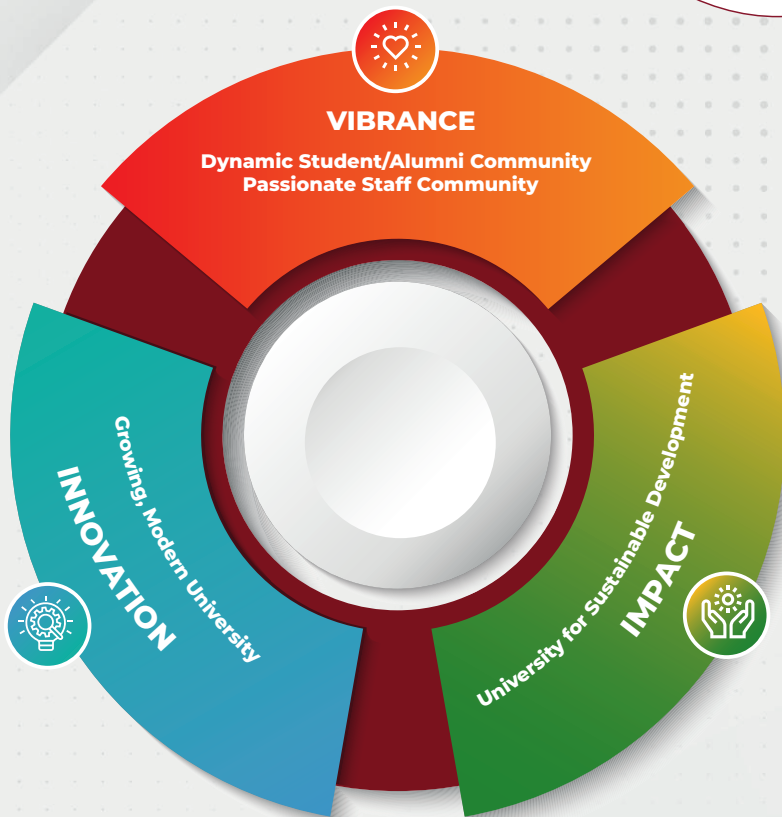
being friendly, optimistic, adaptable, and resilient, and able to display healthy self-esteem, especially when interacting with others and making decisions



SOCIALLY RESPONSIBLE

makes decisions and takes actions ethically, with integrity, and with the best interest of society as a whole

BOTHO UNIVERSITY STRATEGY 2023-2027



Strategy Summary

VIBRANCE

Dynamic Student/Alumni Community

- » Learning for the Future
- » Learning by Doing
- » Connecting through Experiences

Passionate Staff Community

- » A Motivated Staff Community
- » A Talented Staff Community
- » A United Staff Community

INNOVATION

Growing, Modern University

- » A Digital University
- » Fit-for-Purpose Infrastructure
- » A University of Choice

IMPACT

University for Sustainable Development

- » Impact-Driven Research
- » Community Development
- » Environmental Sustainability

Digitally Transforming
Higher Education



Vibrance · Innovation · Impact

STRATEGIC PRINCIPLES

The following Strategic Principles highlighted in the University's Vision will guide and inform any strategic decision over the course of this strategy period in an effort to build a competitive advantage for Botho University that will allow it to grow substantially and sustainably.

Vibrance: Growth will be driven by a vibrant and dynamic community of talented and successful students, alumni and staff. Students will be attracted to the university by a desire to be part of this community where their employability and entrepreneurial spirit is nurtured by professional and motivated staff through future-oriented, industry-linked programmes of study.

Innovation: Growth of the university will be driven by innovative development, deployment and use of technology, infrastructure and marketing. These investments will allow the university to attract students while providing them with efficient, effective, and financially prudent services.

Impact: The University will be a driver for positive social change through the integrity with which it deals with all stakeholders, community engagement, research, and environmental sustainability. The newly established foundation, named Botho University Community Initiative (BUCI), will be the primary vehicle for guiding investments into research, scholarships and community service.



VIBRANCE

Goal 1: Dynamic Student/Alumni Community

Provide an academically rigorous and vibrant university experience that produces graduates who will create value and succeed in an ever-changing economic environment.

Objectives and Strategies

Those campuses with only one star may only implement the given strategy as that campus gets larger and more self-sufficient, or may only implement the strategy to a lesser extent when smaller.

STRATEGIC PRINCIPLES - VIBRANCE

Strategy	BD	BW	ES	GH	LE	NA
Learning for the Future: Offer a balanced portfolio of academic and vocational programmes with future-oriented content that meet current and future industry needs; and provide students the opportunity to build additional credentials valued by industry.						
Future-oriented programme content	**	**	**	**	**	**
Balanced programme offering	**	**	**	**	**	**
Extra industry-relevant credentials	*	**	*	*	**	*
Life skills development	**	**	*	*	**	*
Learning by Doing: Make student-centred and work-integrated learning core to the student learning experience. Build strong links with industry through work-integrated learning, placement efforts and corporate training. Support student/alumni career and entrepreneurship success through career support, placement efforts and incubation.						
Student-centred learning	**	**	**	**	**	**
Work-integrated learning		**	*	*	**	*
Synchronous sessions in BDL	**					
Corporate training	**	**	**	**	**	**
Graduate placement and career fairs	**	**	*	*	**	*
Virtual career services workshops and resources	**	**	**	**	**	**
Individualised career service support		**			*	
Integrated entrepreneurship support and incubation		**			**	
Connecting through Experiences: Provide a great student experience beyond the classroom through study abroad opportunities, extracurricular activities, and social and networking interactions; and engage with alumni through learning opportunities, fundraising and social events.						
Study abroad opportunities		**	**	**	**	**
Extracurricular activities		**	*	*	**	*
Celebrate observed days	**	**	**	**	**	**
Provide limited student accommodation		**			*	
Student retention efforts	**	**	**	**	**	**
Alumni engagement events	**	**	*	*	**	*
Alumni scholarships and discounts	**	**	*	*	**	*

STRATEGIC PRINCIPLES - VIBRANCE

Key Performance Indicators

- KPI 1.1: Alumni Employment Rate
- KPI 1.2: E-Lab Residents
- KPI 1.3: Student Willingness to Recommend Botho
- KPI 1.4: Student and Alumni Welfare Expenses

Goal 2: Passionate Staff Community

Build a talented and highly motivated staff community who aggressively drive strategy implementation.

Objectives and Strategies

Strategy	BD	BW	ES	GH	LE	NA
Motivated Staff Community: Motivate staff through competitive conditions of service, a conducive and flexible work environment, caring and family-friendly human resource policies, and inspirational leadership.						
Competitive conditions of service	**	**	**	**	**	**
Consistently implement caring HR policies	**	**	**	**	**	**
Attractive work spaces	**	**	*	*	**	*
Clear promotional pathways	**	**	**	**	**	**
Management development	**	**	**	**	**	**
Talented Staff Community: Develop and retain talented staff through selective recruitment, training, further study, industry exposure, and recognition.						
Staff and family sponsorship to Botho programmes	**	**	**	**	**	**
Teaching qualified academics	**	**	**	**	**	**
Technically certified academics	**	**	**	**	**	**
Limited external doctoral study support	**	**			**	
Research-oriented and industry-linked adjunct faculty	**	**	**	**	**	**
Recognise and showcase staff talent	**	**	**	**	**	**
United Staff Community: Build a positive and fun-loving community spirit that promotes a culture of collegiality, professionalism, and collaboration that cuts across departments, campuses and cultural groups.						
Fun staff events	**	**	**	**	**	**
Intercampus staff in-person interactions	**	**	**	**	**	**
Online new staff induction with semesterly gatherings	**	**	**	**	**	**

STRATEGIC PRINCIPLES - VIBRANCE

Goal 2: Passionate Staff Community (Continued)

Strategy	BD	BW	ES	GH	LE	NA
Internal staff directory and portal	**	**	**	**	**	**
Expand weekly roundup to a newsletter	**	**	**	**	**	**
Branded merchandise for staff	**	**	**	**	**	**

Key Performance Indicators

- KPI 2.1: Staff Willingness to Recommend Botho to New Employees
- KPI 2.2: Internal and External Staff Sponsorship Expenses
- KPI 2.3: Staff Welfare Expenses
- KPI 2.4: Total Staff and Management Cost



INNOVATION

Goal 3: Growing, Modern University

Grow the university through technology-driven operations, data-driven decision making, fit-for-purpose infrastructure, and an attractive and inclusive brand image.

Objectives and Strategies

Strategy	BD	BW	ES	GH	LE	NA
Digital University: Use technology to increase the quality of and access to learning and services, while using the data generated to make informed decisions that drive growth and continuous quality improvement.						
Improve use of technology and analytics	**	**	**	**	**	**
Institutional research	**	**	**	**	**	**
Data security and compliance		**	*	*	*	*
Blended learning for CL students	**	**	**	**	**	**
Improve e-library usage	**	**	**	**	**	**
Investigate accepting mobile money payments	**	**	**	**	**	**
Remote examination proctoring	**					

STRATEGIC PRINCIPLES - INNOVATION

Goal 3: Growing, Modern University (Continued)

Strategy	BD	BW	ES	GH	LE	NA
Invest into BDL content quality	**					
Fit-for-Purpose Infrastructure: Develop and maintain infrastructure in line with student and staff needs, programme requirements, and funding availability.						
Invest in and revitalise campus facilities		**	*	*	**	*
Efficient campus utilisation		**	**	**	**	**
Adequately resourced laboratories and classrooms		**	**	**	**	**
Collaborative classroom seating		**	**	**	**	**
University of Choice: Attract students to the university by building and marketing a dynamic brand image backed by local and international accreditation.						
Market programmes, activities, people and research	**	**	**	**	**	**
Market graduates and alumni to industry		**			**	
Merchandise store		**			**	
Work with schools to support their students		**			**	
Accreditation and compliance	**	**	**	**	**	**

Key Performance Indicators

- KPI 3.1: Student Numbers
- KPI 3.2: ICT Expenses
- KPI 3.3: Property Expenses
- KPI 3.4: Marketing Expenses



IMPACT

Goal 4: University for Sustainable Development

Be a leader in sustainable development through research, long-term community service projects, and reduced environmental impact.

Objectives and Strategies

STRATEGIC PRINCIPLES - IMPACT

Goal 4: University for Sustainable Development (Continued)

Strategy	BD	BW	ES	GH	LE	NA
Impact-Driven Research: Promote research that drives impact in areas aligned to the UN Sustainable Development Goals by sourcing internal and external funding, building partnerships, growing research capacity and sharing knowledge. Fundraising through BUCI can support impact-driven research.						
Grow BUIRC and rotate between large campuses		**	*	*	**	*
Fund SDG-aligned research	**	**			**	
Incentivise SDG-aligned research publication	**	**	**	**	**	**
Encourage SDG-aligned postgraduate research	**					
Encourage undergraduate research	**	**	**	**	**	**
Research collaboration with industry	**	**			**	
Community Development: Regularly fund BUCI to support long-term, high-impact community projects that involve the university community and its academic and industry partners. Scholarships and special needs support will also increase access to those without the means to access higher and further education.						
Botho University Community Initiative (BUCI)	**	**	**	**	**	**
Long-term community projects		**	*	*	**	*
Need-based scholarships	**	**	**	**	**	**
Sports scholarships		**			*	
Special needs provision	*	**	*	*	**	*
Environmental Sustainability: Invest into renewable energy, recycling, and responsible consumption and regularly evaluate and review the impacts of these investments by tracking key performance indicators for continuous improvement. Incorporate environmental and social sustainability concepts into existing modules where relevant.						
Reduce, reuse and recycle		**	**	**	**	**
Continue solar power investments		**			*	
Reduce energy consumption		**	**	**	**	**
Environmental and social sustainability learning	**	**	**	**	**	**
Environmental Management System		**	**	**	**	**

STRATEGIC PRINCIPLES - IMPACT

Key Performance Indicators

- KPI 4.1: Number of publications (journals, books, chapters)
- KPI 4.2: Total Solar Power Generated : Total Power Consumption
- KPI 4.3: Research and Consulting Expenses
- KPI 4.4: Scholarships and BUCI Funding

Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation of the progress of this Strategy will be achieved through annual reporting and Botho University's Quality Management System. The Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Strategy will prepare a regular report to the Vice-Chancellor evaluating progress on achieving the goals and objectives set out in this Strategy. That report will typically come out annually covering a period of 12 to 18 months depending on when the report is released.

Botho University's Quality Management System is based on the ISO9001:2015 standard certified by the Botswana Bureau of Standards. The QMS consists of an integrated set of policies, processes, guidelines, and other controlled documents that guide the operations of the University. Key performance indicators for each department and campus aligned to the new Management Objectives help cascade this Strategy throughout the University. Semesterly evaluation of these KPIs and annual Management Review of the Quality Policy and performance against ISO9001 standards serve as a regular monitoring and evaluation tool for the Botho University Strategic Plan 2023-2027 Vibrance, Innovation and Impact.



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