

Knowledge Innovation Excellence

Internal Audit Department

Strictly Private and Confidential

Internal Audit Report

For

Africa Centre of Excellence in Aquaculture and Fisheries Science (AquaFish, ACE II Project)

November 2019- June 2020

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Objectives

The examination was carried out in accordance with the annual Programme of internal audits scheduled by the Internal Audit Department of the University.

The audit was conducted in terms of the Institute of Internal Auditors (IIA) 'Standards for professional Practice of Internal Auditing'. It was directed towards evaluating and improving the adequacy and effectiveness of the risk management, control and governance process to ensure that the objectives /goals of the Project are met.

Audit procedures involved discussions with staff and Management involved in the implementation of the project, enquiry and review of documentation.

Scope

The audit effort was focused on the significant risks as determined during the preliminary survey phase. The exercise began with system documentation after which control risk assessment and the testing of internal controls was performed.

The audit covered a period of 8 months from 1st November 2019 to 30th June 2020 and focused on the following areas of risk:

- Corporate governance
- Project implementation.
- Financial management
- Compliance with donor requirements and University policies.
- Human resources management.
- Property management.
- Procurement of goods and services.

Project and Management Details

The AquaFish ACE project agreement with LUANAR was being implemented through the department of Aquaculture and Fisheries Sciences in the Faculty of Natural Resources; the project was being funded by a grant from the Government of Malawi's Ministry of Finance, Economic Planning and Development obtained from the World Bank.

The project had the following overall objectives:

- 1. To enhance capacity to produce graduates that are relevant to industrial needs in aquaculture and fisheries sector in the region.
- 2. To produce fit for purpose proactive graduates to support aquaculture and natural resource management and nutrition.
- 3. To strengthen partnerships with industry, research and academia in the production of quality graduate students in the aquaculture and fisheries value chain, relevant for economic development.

ACE planned to achieve its goal through four (4) key Disbursement Linked Indicators (DLIs) detailed below:

DLI	Description and Action Completed
DLI 1	LUANAR meets all conditions for effectiveness outlined in the legal agreements and timely develops implementation plan.
DLI 2	LUANAR achieves its planned activities in time and increases students' enrolment both local and at regional level.
DLI 3	 Timely, transparent and institutionally reviewed Financial Management: LUANAR timely Withdrawals Application supported by financial reporting on the ACE account for the period LUANAR has a Functioning Audit Committee under the University Council LUANAR has a Functioning internal audit unit for the University, LUANAR achieves transparency of financial management (audit reports, interim financial reports, budgets and annual work plans are all web accessible)
DLI 4	LUANAR provides timely procurement audit report and a satisfactory procurement progress report.

ACE received its funding in phases as illustrated below:

Date	Description	Amount(US\$)	Total	
	Total project funding		6,000,000.00	
10/31/2017	First-year funding	1,089,476.00	,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,	
03/31/2019	Second year funding	2,106,770.00		
11/08/2019	Third year funding	293,732.00	3,489,978.00	
	Balance at the bank		1,440,410.00	
Amount used for	or implementation of activities		2,049,568.00	

The Centre had signed eleven partnership agreements with Universities, research institutions and private sector across the globe as follows:

Category of Partnership	Name of Partner	Type of Partnership	
Private Sector National	MALDECO	Key Partner	
Peer Universities National	Mzuzu University	Partner	
	University of Malawi (COM)	Partner	
	Malawi University of Science and Technology	Partner	
Peer Universities Regional	University of ELDORET	Key Partner	
	Catholic University of Mozambique	Partner	
Peer Universities International	The University of ILLINOIS	Partner	
Research Institutions National	The Innovative Fish Farmers Network Trust (IFFNT)	Associate Partner	
Research Institutions International	Fresh Fisheries Research Centre, Chinese Academy of Fisheries Science (FFRC)	Associate Partner	
Public Researchers	World Fish Centre (WFC)	Partner	
Public Researchers and Partner	Addis Ababa University- ACEWM	Partner	

Other achievements of the project for the period under review were as follows:

a. The project had generated income from other projects amounting to US\$1,155,701 as at 30th June 2020 as follows:

Project Name	2016/2017		2017/2018		2018/2019		2019/2020 Up to June 2020	
	US\$	MK	US\$	MK	US\$	MK	US\$	MK
Ich Liebe fish	177,613	127,88 1,360	52,383	37,134,532	77,652	60,612,113	103,634	75,834,333
BIOFISA	-	-	182,996	131,570,63 3	57,798	41,912,649	4,061	2,963
DAAD	-	-	64,469	46,750,892	122,377	88,743,466	124,345	92,052,934
PFAP II		-	-	-	62,726	46,126,047	53,646	39,157,664
RFU	-	2-	-	-	19,374	14,428,341	38,360	28,068,558
Spait/Icla rm	-	-	-	-	2,619	2,133,083	11,648	84495541
Totals	177,613	127,88 1,360	299,848	215,456,05 7	342,546	253,955,699	335,694	246,272,881

- b. The project contributed US\$1,290,224.32 as income for the University through tuition fees from students studying at the Centre.
- c. The Centre paid a total of USD\$316,019.63 to the University in respect grants on tuition fees for students which were provided grants by the project.
- d. The project had published a total of 49 research papers.
- e. The project had enrolled a total number of 202 MSc and 30 PhD students.

The following are project personnel:

Staff	Role			
Prof. E. Kaunda	Director			
Prof. D. Kassam	Deputy Director/Principal Investigator			
Dr. J. Dzanja	Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist			
Mr. B. Kondowe	Project Accountant			
Mr. A. Tambala	Acting Procurement Manager			
Dr. W. Jere	Scholarships and Research Specialist			
Prof. J. Kang'ombe				
Dr. H. Phiri	Quality Assurance Specialist			
Mr. Y. Ngongonda	Project Officer			
Mr. K. Kapaula Marketing Officer				
Mrs. M. Chamanza	Administrative Secretary			

Summary of Significant Findings

The prior audit report highlighted a number of internal control weaknesses on which recommendations were made. Management started implementing the audit recommendations. During the current review, implementation was confirmed against action on the ground.

The following weaknesses in internal controls were observed in the prior year audits but still outstanding during the current audit:

- 1. Institutionalization of the Centre: The Centre was yet to be formalized as a LUANAR Centre in line with LUANAR Act.
- 2. Delays in implementation of Project activities: Implementation of activities remained at low level at 34% after four out of five years' project life. (prior year level: 20% on 3 years).
- 3. Over expenditure on budget lines: Some budget lines were exceeded.
- 4. Over- drawings in subsidiary projects within ACE II.
- 5. Delays in review of bank reconciliations

The following weaknesses in internal control were observed from the current audit:

1. Financial Management

a. Reconciliations did not indicate when they were prepared and reviewed.

2. Procurement Management

a. Cash imprest was used to procure goods and services that do not qualify for cash imprest effectively contravening requirements of the Public Procurement and Disposal of Assets Act.

Details of these findings are contained in the "Detailed Findings" section.

Conclusion

ACE II project has been accorded an overall rating of "1" which reflects "Excellent" results of key performance indicators (prior audit rating: 2)

Based on the results of our audit work undertaken in the key performance areas listed under 'Scope' above, we can provide reasonable assurance regarding the adequacy and effectiveness of the risk management, control and governance processes. The control environment appears "excellent" however, some control issues were identified during the course of the audit. Management has been urged to prepare and prioritize an action plan in order to address the shortcomings. The University Internal Auditor will monitor the implementation.

Issued and authorized by:

G. F. Andrew, FCCA, CA (Mw), BAcc

UNIVERSITY INTERNAL AUDITOR

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Implementation Status for Prior Year Audit Recommendations

S/N	Observation and Recommendation from prior Audit	Internal Audit Update from Prior Audit	Management Update from Prior Audit
1.	Observation Payments being made without authorization of payment vouchers by senior finance personnel.		N/A
	Recommendation Management should ensure that all payment vouchers are authorized by the Director of Finance before effecting payment.		
2.	Observation Procurement of goods or services for public institution must comply with the Public Procurement and Disposal of Assets Authority (PPDA) regulations.	Resolved	N/A
	Audit observed that some goods and services were being procured using one quotation contrary to PPDA requirements of a minimum of three quotations when procuring goods using quotations.		
	Recommendation Management to ensure that procurement of goods and services is done in line with PPDA regulations.		
3.	Observation The University had not yet started the process of institutionalizing the Africa Centre of Excellence in Aquaculture and Fisheries Science (AquaFish ACE) in line with requirements of LUANAR Act.	Not Resolved	The process started and a report is available. It was discussed at Departmental level and is now at Faculty level.
	Recommendation Management should expedite the process of institutionalizing the Centre to ensure its going concern.		
4.	Observation The Project had delayed implementation of certain key activities.	Not resolved. See Appendix 2.	Action plan 5.2: On this action plan, one of the activities which was budgeted highly was students' research funding,

though the expenditure for

stationary and office supplies

Recommendation which also happens to be Management should review the project posted for action plan 5.1 since activities and assess their relevance to it's the one which deals with the overall achievement of project goals. students' recruitment. Having All-important activities should realized this challenge, we prioritized and implemented revised the 2020-21 Annual accordingly. Work Plan and budget, after MTR, where this action plan is budgeted for under 5.1 just to avoid this confusion. Having said that, however, it should also be noted that all budgets to do with students' recruitment and associated research, get a relief by achieving the DLIs using other projects such as DAAD, PFA and RFU. Only caution is that we can't reduce the budget since we may still need these funds if these other projects can't recruit anymore, we have to use same budget line for own recruitment. Action plan 5.4: On this action plan, implementation of the gender sensitization workshops was affected by Covid-19 since these workshops were meant to be face to face. In addition, another budget line is meant for "supporting students special needs", which is something you don't have all the time. So, it's just a budget meant for such eventuality but we cannot remove it because we never know when such need arise. hence observation that it's not being utilized. 5. Observation 5.9.6 Stationery Budgets are a key element in financial Not resolved. Consumables: This is noted management. ACE II operates using an See Appendix

approved financial budget which is

	reviewed on an annual basis. We observed that the project mostly operated within the budget except for a few items. Recommendation approved Management should ensure expenditure is within budget lines		are split between two votes of 5.9.6 and 5.9.16 hence the combined overall balance for the two budget lines is \$689 (\$1382 - \$693). For future postings the two budgets will be combined to avoid the current scenario.
6.	Observation One of the objectives of ACE is to mobilize resources. In this regard, ACE II collaborated with other projects to achieve this goal. Financial resources from these projects were put together in ACE II accounts and expenditure for each was being drawn from the ACE II account which acted like a pool account. Best accounting standards require regular reconciliation of the account to	Not resolved. See Appendix 4	5.11.1 Monthly monitoring and evaluation: On this activity, we realized that we had done a budget without considering the environmental safeguards (ESMP) activities, which of late WB requires us to report on. As such, this ESMP is being charged under this budget line hence the over expenditure as there are many activities done with local communities and chiefs, and also City Council. After MTR, we have ensured that ESMP features clearly in the budget and AWPs. The observation is correct though during the period under review projects holders were notified of this anomaly and the overdrawn projects have since been rectified by bringing in more funds to clear the overdrawn positions. With this development all projects' PIs and Accountants
	determine funds available for each project from time to time. We observed instances of over-drawings in subsidiary projects.		have been advised to spend within their available funds regardless of possibility of getting further funding.
	Recommendation Management should ensure that overdrawn projects balances are settled accordingly and ensure a robust		

	subsidiary project expenditure		
7.	monitoring. Observation Bank reconciliations are very important because fraud, errors and mistakes can easily be detected in a timely manner. However, it was observed that there were delays in the review of the reconciliations by an independent senior officer. Recommendation Management should ensure that bank reconciliations are reviewed on time.	Not Resolved, see Appendix 5	This is noted though the bank reconciliations were reviewed on the date they were printed which is the date that they were presented to independent senior reviewer for review. We will improve on this by printing and reviewing within stipulated time.
8.	Observation Pension Act 2011, Section 9 (1) states that "every employer shall make provision for every person under his employment to be a member of National Pension Scheme". Audit observed that some staff members working for the project were not on pension scheme despite their employment contracts stating the same.	Resolved	N/A
	Recommendation Management to ensure compliance with pension Act. 2011.		
9.	Observation Employment contracts are a key element in the recruitment process as they ensure removal of ambiguities and also create a point of reference in case of disputes.	Resolved	N/A
	During the audit we observed that some staff members for the project were working without contracts as their initial contracts had expired.		
	Recommendation Management should ensure employment of the staff members is regularized.		

DETAILED FINDINGS – CURRENT YEAR AUDIT

1. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT – DATE OF REVIEW FOR BANK RECONCILIATIONS NOT INDICATED

Observation	Bank reconciliations are very important because fraud, errors and mistakes can be detected in timely manner. The review of the bank reconciliations by an independent senior officer has to be done timely and bear evidence of the same. However, Audit observed that all the reconciliations did not indicate the date on which the review was done, see Appendix 5.				
Effect Difficult to note when the reconciliations were reviewed and likelihood errors and mistakes not being detected in time.					
Agreed Action	Management to ensure that bank reconciliations have evidence of date on which they were reviewed.				
Implementation Date	Immediate and ongoing				
Responsibility	Head of Finance – Bunda College				
Management Response	This is noted and dates of review will be indicated. However, it should be noted that reconciliations were reviewed and signed for by the Senior Officer, the Head of Finance, on the dates that they were printed, and we will endeavor to print and review within stipulated time lines.				

2. PROCUREMENT MANAGEMENT- CASH IMPREST USED TO PROCURE GOODS WHICH REQUIRE PROCUREMENT PROCEDURES.

Observation	stipulates	Section 3(1) of the Public Procurement and Disposal of Public Assets Act stipulates that the 'Act' "applies to all procurement involving public funds and disposal of public assets".					
	The Act defines "public funds" as "any monetary resources appropriate procuring and disposing entities through budgetary processes, grant credits, put at the disposal of procuring and disposing entities by organizations or revenues of procuring and disposal entities"						
	It was obs	erved that cas procurement p	sh imprest was used procedures.	to procur	e some good	ls without	
	Date	Payee	Description	CHQ#	Amount	Account	
	5-Nov-19	Chimwemwe K. Lemani	Imprest to Purchase office cleaning materials	151	223,000.00	NBM Local	

	5-Nov-19	Benson Lusangasi	Imprest to Purchase Laboratory equipment	152	910,260.00	NBM Local
Effect	Non-comp	liance with P	ublic Procurement and	l Disposa	l of Public A	Assets Act
Agreed Action	Manageme	ent should ens	sure that procurement i	egulation	ns are compli	ed with at
Implementation Date	Immediate	and on-going	g			
Responsibility	College Di	rector – Bun	da			
Management Response	be noted he the activiti	owever that t es involved.	and procurement regula the cash procurement The Centre has since procurement procedur	was done advised	e due to the u tits member	rgency of s and the
			cy of the activity at har			2 271 7101

Appendix 1 – Score Sheet

		Maximum Possible Score	Total	Actual Score	Total
1	Finance Management and Control		40		31
a)	Budgeting and Budgetary Control	8		5	
b)	Financial Reporting	7		7	
c)	Record keeping	8		6	
d)	Cash Management	7		5	
e)	Payments processing	10		8	
2	Procurement process		15		11
a)	Compliance with public procurement Act.	8		5	
b)	Procuring in line with revenue and capital expenditure budget.	7		6	
3	Property Management		10		10
a)	Ownership & Security of assets	5		5	
b)	Assets record keeping	5		5	
5	Statutory, Regulatory and Internal Compliance		10		8
	General compliance	10		8	
6	Human Resources Management		10		9
a)	Recruitment process	6		6	
b)	Performance Management	4		3	
7	Governance and Management		15		11
a)	Segregation of duties	5		5	
b)	Monitoring and Control of operations	10		6	
			100		80
		Rating:		"1" "Excellent"	

Notes on Ratings

80% and above -Excellent (1) 50%-59% - Satisfactory (4)

70%-79% - Very Good (2)

60%-69% - Good (3) 40%-49% - Unsatisfactory (5) Below 40% - Unsatisfactory (6)

Appendix 2- Summary of Overall progress of the project

DLI	Total Budget	Cumulative 4 Yrs. Budget	Cumulative 4 Yrs. Expenditure	%age over 4 Yrs.	%age over 5 Years
Action Plan 5.1 ACE action plan to			Zapenditure	115.	5 Tears
achieve learning excellence	2,365,508.00	2,360,508.00	991,572.00	42%	42%
Action Plan 5.2 ACE action plan to			331,672.00	12/0	42/0
achieve Research Excellence	723,000.00	721,000.00	50,338.00	7%	7%
Action Plan5.3 ACE for Quality			20,220.00	170	170
assurance	259,000.00	259,000.00	103,337.00	40%	40%
Action Plan 5.4 ACE action for		,	100,007.00	4070	4070
Equity Dimensions	138,914.00	138,914.00	2,778.00	2%	2%
Action Plan 5.5 ACE action plan for			2,770.00	270	2/0
attracting regional students and staff	44,800.00	44,800.00	15,305.00	34%	34%
Action Plan 5.6 /5.8 ACE Action plan			10,000.00	3170	34/0
for attracting National, Regional, and					
International Academic Partners	495,863.00	495,863.00	63,304.00	13%	13%
Action Plan 5.7 ACE action plan for		, , , , , , ,	02,201.00	1370	13/0
attracting National and regional sector					
partners	396,401.00	364,601.00	71,693.00	20%	18%
Action Plan 5.9 ACE action for		Nin-	,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,	2070	1070
governance and management	1,251,300.00	1,032,330.00	705,317.00	67%	55%
Action Plan 5.10 ACE plan for				0,70	3370
sustainable financing	270,700.00	263,100.00	21,968.00	8%	8%
Action Plan 5.11 ACE action plan for			,	0,0	070
monitoring and evaluation	54,516.00	32,300.00	23,958.00	74%	44%
	6,000,002.00	5,712,416.00	2,049,568.00	36%	34%

Appendix 3- Over Expenditure on Budget Lines

Budget Line	Approved Budget for 2019/2020	Expenditu re 2019/2020	Balance – June 2018	Variance
5.9.6 Stationery & Consumables	3,500	-4,193	-693	-20%
5.9.19 Financial Management System	7,740	-9,129	-1,389	-18%
5.11.1 Monthly monitoring and evaluation	7,000	-19,630	-12,630	-180%

Appendix 4- Overdrawn Subsidiary Projects as at 30th June 2020

Project Name	Income US\$	Expenditure US\$	Variance US\$	
	2019/2020	2019/2020	2019/2020	
RFU	44,810.50	-46,820.21	-2,009.71	
PFAP II	52,709.00	-76.073	-23,364.78	
Total	97,519.5	-122,893.21	-25,374.49	

Appendix 5- No dates of review of Bank Reconciliations

Reconciliation month	Bank name	Date statement Printed	Period delayed(days)	Review Date
Nov-19	NBM FOREX	16/1/2020	45	Not indicated
Dec-19	NBM FOREX	2/4/2020	90	Not indicated
Jan-20	NBM FOREX	2/4/2020	60	Not indicated
Feb-20	NBM FOREX	2/4/2020	30	Not indicated
Apr-20	NBM FOREX	13/7/2020	53	Not indicated
May-20	NBM FOREX	13/7/2020	43	Not indicated
Jun-20	NBM FOREX	14/8/2020	43	Not indicated
Nov-19	FDH FOREX	1/1/2020	50	Not indicated
Dec-19	FDH FOREX	14/2/2020	43	Not indicated
Jan-20	FDH FOREX	2/4/2020	60	Not indicated
Feb-20	FDH FOREX	2/4/2020	30	Not indicated
Apr-20	FDH FOREX	13/7/2020	60	Not indicated
May-20	FDH FOREX	13/7/2020	43	Not indicated
Nov-19	FDH LOCAL	23/1/2020	53	Not indicated
Jan-20	FDH LOCAL	2/4/2020	60	Not indicated
Feb-20	FDH LOCAL	2/4/2020	30	Not indicated
Apr-20	FDH LOCAL	13/7/2020	70	Not indicated
May-20	FDH LOCAL	13/7/2020	40	Not indicated
Nov-19	NBM LOCAL	16/1/2020	45	Not indicated
Jan-20	NBM LOCAL	2/4/2020	60	Not indicated
Feb-20	NBM LOCAL	2/4/2020	30	Not indicated
Apr-20	NBM LOCAL	14/7/2020	60	Not indicated
May-20	NBM LOCAL	14/7/2020	30	Not indicated