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**Abstract**

The paper has a twofold structure and focus. The first part is an examination of the funding challenges facing African universities resulting mainly from public finance difficulties, and the second part is a case study of how some Kenyan and South African public universities have attempted to mitigate resource dependence difficulties through multiple exchange relationships. The study identifies economic and policy contexts, and institutional capacity, both scientific and management capacity, as key determinants of the success of public universities' attempts at economic self-determination. The study concludes that although revenue diversification presents an opportunity for universities to mitigate resource dependence difficulties, a combination of factors, especially small domestic markets and capacity related challenges, constrain possibilities for meaningful revenue diversification for many African universities. (HRK / Abstract übernommen)