



Higher Education CORPORATE SCENE

High enrolment belies lack of funding in higher education

► Hands on skills are giving TVETs a boost and an allure that universities are losing. Kenya has over 3,000 public and private TVETs including 11 public national polytechnics.

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In 2022-23 Universities and Colleges students placement results showed that overall, of those who had qualified for various degree programmes, 5,278 applied and were successfully placed in TVET institutions of their choice.

Total 124,258 students were enrolled in TVETs, while 1,538 joined primary education Teacher Training Colleges (TTCS) and another 293 secondary education TTCS. More female candidates (68,705) joined TVETs compared to male candidates (54,000), indicated the July to December edition of The TVET Eye, a magazine for TVETs.

The increasing levels of employability for graduates of TVETs, provision of equipment through dedicated lenders and a widening pool of courses from which to choose has made these institutions increasingly desirable. Kenya has over 3,000 public and private TVETs including 11 public

national polytechnics.

However, the TVET Authority (TVETA) had accredited 2,257 institutions by the end of April last year. The TVET Eye says. A good number of these are churning graduates with a high level of expertise in fields only conventional universities were known to offer, and with high technical expertise.

Recently, the Technical and Vocational Education and Training Authority (TVETA) Director General Kipkironi Langat discussed the implementation of the Kenya Blue Economy Skills Training Program (KBEST) with a delegation from Colleges and Institutes Canada (CICan). The KBEST is a seven-year \$25 million project funded by Global Affairs Canada to support the Government of Kenya in achieving its goals for an enhanced blue economy.

Out of this, 5,472 youth (40 per cent of them female) will be direct beneficiaries of blue economy TVET programs while an additional 1,250 youth (70 per cent of them female) will receive financial support.

KBEST will enhance the capacity of TVET institutions and agencies to deliver skills training programs that meet international standards and respond to the needs of the industry.

within the context of Kenya's TVET reforms," said TVET Eye.

It is these hands on skills that have given TVETs a boost and an allure that universities are losing.

TVETs have hit individual milestones as well. Aida Technical Training Institute (ATTI) in Kenenoi, Rift Valley, has opened a soil testing laboratory, which is helping to train agronomists and providing the farming community with technical expertise to improve farm yields."

The TTI has also constructed an ICT complex, which has enabled it to double enrolment in ICT courses from 85 students to 186.

Upgrading the institution has enhanced the business environment in the area. Hostels and houses have been developed to provide accommodation to students and workers, as per the TVET offroad magazine.

In Kwale County, students have benefited from training on The Blue Economy. Kwale County government recently saw 136 students graduate in The Gobline Technical Training Program funded by the European Union and Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) through Jumuia ya Ya Kaunti za Pwani.

The project is a joint initiative to



Kenya's University Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Administration and Finance) Prof Geoffrey Mwa (center) receives a dummy cheque for Ksh200,000 from Mr. Jonathan Nyamul, Relations Manager - Cooperative Bank of Kenya. The money is in support of the KU fund raising for students affected by the Mwanja road Accident. Also present were (from left-right) Bernila Ogalla, Product Partner - Cooperative Bank, Dr. Paul Cachingo, Registrar (Administration and Finance) and Mr. Samuel Mwalu, Chief Finance Office.

advance the Blue-Economy agenda across all six coastal counties of Mombasa, Kwale, Kilifi, Lamu, TaitaTaveta and Tana River, and aims to harness important coastal and marine resources to achieve a sustainable blue economy while providing employment to over 3,000 youth, TVET magazine indicated.

Mago Vocational Training Centre (VTC) in Kapsabet installed a solar farm at the institution which helped reduce the high electricity bills from over Sh200,000 per month to below Sh120,000 a month.

The Hotel School training in Catering and Hospitality works with the Agriculture Department and has its own source of fish from the fish pond, eggs and chicken from the poultry farm, and fresh vegetables are grown organically at the Polytechnic's greenhouse," the TVET magazine notes.

Varsity sends students to work in Germany hospitals

Mount Kenya University's first cohort of five students flew out to Germany today where they will offer healthcare services in the European country.

The graduates were presented with their work permits, visas, and air tickets on Saturday, all funded by Caritas Hospital (many), one of the projects partner institutions in Germany. They will be deployed in different German hospitals. MKU entered into an agreement with Hochschule Koblenz University of Applied Sciences in Germany to provide German language and preparatory courses to Kenyans, preparing them for employment in Germany as apprentices.

Prof Deogratius Jaganyi, MKU Vice-chancellor said the project aligns with the governments quest to increase opportunities for Kenyans abroad. The government has signed bilateral labour agreements with different countries to allow the country to export their skills.

On May 25, last year, President William Ruto announced that Germany had opened doors for 250,000 Kenyans to work there.

"As a training institution, it is upon us to support the President's initiative by actualising this

endeavour. In this regard, MKU in partnership with the German university aims to establish structures and processes that will prepare 5,000 Kenyans to work in Germany in various sectors," Prof Jaganyi said.

The first pilot cohort has successfully gone through the German language B2 Level of proficiency and completed preparatory courses."

The partnership between MKU and Hochschule Koblenz University of Applied Sciences of Germany offers paid apprenticeships and jobs to young Kenyans. Gelonge Mogambi, Aisha Wacuka, Helina Okwaro, Bondana Chepkorir and Tereish Muthoni are the first apprentices of about the 5,000 young Kenyans that are expected to benefit from the partnership.

Students interested in the opportunities are required to have German Language proficiency and pursue a preparatory programme in Nursing apprenticeship for German hospitals.

AG-CareerHub founded by Kenya Professionals based in Germany will support the beneficiaries of this project to integrate with their new environment and culture as they commence their paid apprenticeships in Germany to support the labour market. Expanding the job horizon for



Mount Kenya University Dr Christopher Mutembei, Director of MKU Centre for Professional Development and Kenya-Germany Project Coordinator (left), presents travel documents to the graduates bound for Germany to undertake nursing apprenticeships. They are: Gelonge Mogambi, Aisha Wacuka, Helina Okwaro, Bondana Chepkorir, and Tereish Muthoni. (John Muchicha, Standard)

our people aliens very well with our motto of unlocking infinite possibilities," said Prof Jaganyi.

MKU has a similar partnership with Leobensteiner Tirof of Austria that also enables nursing graduates from the Kenyan university to work in Austria. MKU expects to initially have 60 nursing graduates to travel to Austria. Graduates are required to

have German language B1 Level. MKU curricula is continuously reviewed to meet national, regional and market needs of the industry and commercial sectors.

Due to its ageing population, Germany is facing a significant shortfall of healthcare in the coming years. Various studies estimate a deficit of between 500,000 and

600,000 vacancies by 2030," said the partners in a concept note before they kicked off implementation of the project.

"One option to alleviate this shortage in Germany could be the preparation of young Kenyans for an apprenticeship in nursing in Germany. *(John Muchicha)*