

Don commends government's initiative to support start-ups as MKU taps new linkages

► The Government's plan to establish a Ksh1 billion Start-up Fund is commendable because financial support will enable local innovators to compete globally. This is according to Mount Kenya University's (MKU's) Council Chairman, Dr Vincent Gaitho.

He is convinced that Kenya's 10-Year Innovation Masterplan will position the country as a global innovation hub supporting start-ups and empowering the youth.

Dr Gaitho says the Council has approved several partnerships, collaborations and linkages to promote MKU's internationalisation of higher education. Among them are plans to establish a Chinese Government supported Cloud Computing Lab at MKU's main campus in Thika. China's support towards ICT training programmes is driven by the



Dr. Vincent Gaitho, Chairman, University Council

Xinyada Information Technology Group in collaboration with Chinese universities and colleges. Additionally, the council has approved the university's collaboration with Kenyatta University Teaching, Referral and Research Hospital (KUTRRH).

Cast his eyes on regional developments, Dr Gaitho notes that the African Union (AU) declared 2024 as The Year of Education. On this, he says MKU champions African Union's agenda of expanding access to quality and affordable education across the world.

The African Union's Agenda 2063 envisions education as a cornerstone for Africa's transformation. Agenda 2063's drive for more investments in education aims to eradicate poverty, bridge inequalities, and equip generations to lead with resilience and ingenuity in a rapidly evolving world.

Asserts Dr Gaitho: "Universities contribute to a more equitable society by increasing access to quality education."

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COLLABORATIONS

Our international collaborations have profoundly benefitted learners, says VC

Mount Kenya University's (MKU's) deliberate internationalisation of higher education is paying dividends. This is according to the institution's Vice-Chancellor, Prof Deogratius JAGANYI.

He says MKU students and graduates are benefitting from this drive with a flurry of academic exchanges that are setting them up for opportunities in the global job market. Beyond Africa, Europe has particularly been receptive of the university's graduates.

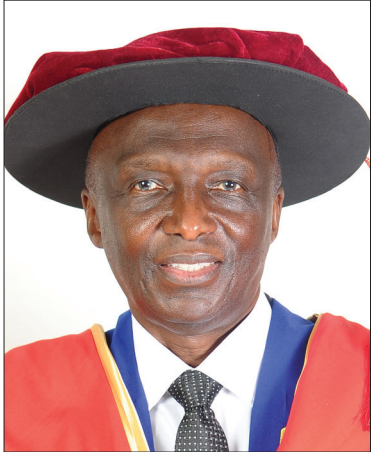
From the outset, MKU signalled its intent to look outwards in undertaking teaching, research and innovation. At inception, the university declared its mission as follows: "To provide world-class education". This would support its set vision: "To be a global hub of excellence in education, research and innovation."

Last Friday, the university hosted a Digital Career Fair on its virtual platform. The fair brought together students, graduates, professionals, and global experts to explore diverse career pathways.

The event provided a unique opportunity for Kenyan students and professionals to connect with international experts and explore global opportunities in education, healthcare, technology, law, and more.

Kenya's Ambassador to Germany, Poland, and the Czech Republic, Her Excellency Stella Mokaya Orina, provided an enlightening session titled, "Gateway to Germany: Opportunities and Requirements." She detailed the pathways for Kenyan professionals to access education and work opportunities in Germany.

Participants benefited from a range of other expert presentations that covered topics such as: Vocational Training in Healthcare



Prof Deogratius JAGANYI, Vice Chancellor, MKU

in Germany; Master's Degree Courses and Career Perspectives; Opportunity Card and Financial Requirements; Working Remotely in IT; Scholarships and Funding Programmes; and the German Statutory Healthcare System.

Prof JAGANYI says the many international collaborations and projects MKU participates in have a profound impact. He gives the example of the Africa Centre for Career Enhancement and Skills Support (ACCESS) Project.

The project has significantly impacted employability and knowledge transfer in Kenya. It has hosted industry-focused breakfast meetings; engaged over 60 industries through partnerships with the Kenya Private Sector Alliance (KEPSA), the Kenya Association of Manufacturers (KAM), and the Federation of Kenya Employers (FKE); and guided the development of a Service-Learning curriculum for MKU's School of Education.

The second phase of this project kicks off next year.

The initiative seeks to enhance employability among graduates by fostering collaboration between universities and industry.



PhD graduands

Alumni return to reassure graduands

Kenyan students who graduate from local universities should remember that they enter a dynamic and borderless world packed with opportunities.

That is a piece of advice from a Mount Kenya University (MKU) graduate who is expected to speak at the university's 26th Graduation ceremony as the alumni association representative.

Ms Irene Nyagah points out that in a globalising world, local graduates have to compete internationally.

She assures MKU graduands that the university's education has equipped them to navigate global landscapes with confidence and to handle jobs with competence.

The MKU alumnus nonetheless urges them to pursue lifelong learning and to "remain curious, adaptable, and committed to continuous learning."

Ms Nyagah holds a Bachelor of Commerce in Marketing and a Master of Business Administration (MBA), both from MKU. She has also acquired several



Irene Nyagah, Alumni Representative

certifications since graduating.

Another MKU alumnus, Mr Kipruto David thanks the university for helping to shape him into the professional he is today. A medical social worker with Narok County, he is also the National Treasurer of the Kenya Medical Social Workers Association.

Mr Kipruto says he appreciates "the profound impact" that MKU has had on his professional growth.

He explains further: "During my time at MKU, I was not only equipped with academic knowl-

edge but also nurtured with values such as compassion, empathy, and dedication to service. The faculty members at MKU went above and beyond their roles as educators. They became mentors who believed in my potential and guided me every step of the way."

Mr Kipruto avers that MKU's commitment to holistic education extended beyond the classroom walls. "The university provided various resources, including a well-equipped library, research facilities, and career counselling services," he says.