



VARSITY CHRONICLES SPECIAL EDITION



2ND GRADUATION CEREMONY

THEME: LEARNING REIMAGINED, FUTURE REDEFINED

FRIDAY, 28TH NOVEMBER 2025

THE NATIONAL ANTHEM

Oh God of all creation
Bless this our land and nation
Justice be our shield and defender
May we dwell in unity peace and
liberty
Plenty be found within our borders

Let one and all arise
With hearts both strong and true
Service be our earnest endeavor
And our homeland of Kenya
The heritage of splendor
Firm may we stand to defend

Let all with one accord
In common bond united
Build this our nation together
And the glory of Kenya
The fruits of our labor
Fill every heart with thanksgiving

EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY ANTHEM

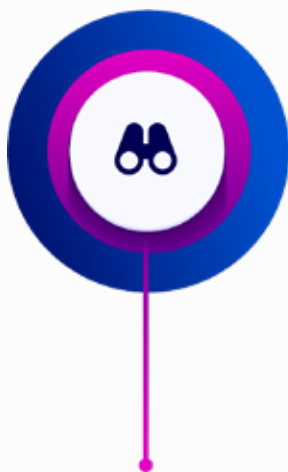
Ee Mungu twaomba ulinde
Jumuiya Afrika Mashariki
Tuwezeshe kuishi kwa amani
Tutimize na malengo yetu

Chorus
Jumuiya Yetu sote tuilinde
Tuwajibike tuimarike
Umoja wetu ni nguzo yetu
Idumu Jumuiya yetu

Uzalendo pia mshikamano
Viwe msingi wa Umoja wetu
Natulinde Uhuru na Amani
Mila zetu na desturi zetu

Viwandani na hata mashambani
Tufanye kazi sote kwa makini
Tujitoe kwa hali na mali
Tuijenge Jumuiya bora

PHILOSOPHICAL FRAMEWORK



OUR VISION

The Innovative University
for Inclusive Prosperity



OUR VALUES

To provide affordable, flexible and equitable quality learning experiences that empower learners with knowledge, skills and values to become innovative researchers, leaders, entrepreneurs and global citizens.



OUR MISSION

Excellence; Inclusivity;
Innovation & Integrity

Tagline: Imagine, Innovate, Transform

EDITOR'S NOTE

This special 2nd Graduation edition of Varsity Chronicles celebrates a powerful story of vision, resilience and transformation. It marks yet another milestone in the bold journey of the Open University of Kenya (OUK): a University born of innovation and driven by a national dream to make education truly open, flexible and accessible to all.

In just two years, OUK has redefined the higher education landscape while harnessing technology, partnerships and creativity to deliver a learning experience without borders. From classrooms that span continents to programmes designed for working professionals and lifelong learners, the University continues to demonstrate that quality education is not limited by place or pace, but guided by purpose.

As we celebrate the Class of 2025, we honour academic excellence and the human spirit behind it, the students who persevered through digital challenges, the faculty who inspired curiosity and innovation and the staff whose dedication sustains this institution. Every success story in these pages is a reflection of the transformative power of open learning.

This issue also captures the University's expanding footprint from county collaborations and industry linkages to international partnerships that strengthen our role as a global university for the future. Each partnership, innovation and milestone is a reminder that learning, when reimagined, redefines the future.

To the graduating class, congratulations! You are the embodiment of what is possible when knowledge meets courage. As you step into new chapters, remember that your story continues, and it begins here, with the Open University of Kenya.

Nashilluh Brendah Kabindio
Head of Corporate Communications and Marketing
Chief Editor.

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CONGRATULATORY MESSAGES FROM THE UNIVERSITY GOVERNING COUNCIL AND MANAGEMENT

Celebrating the Class of 2025: Learning Reimagined, Future Redefined



Dr James Mwangi, CBS
Chancellor

It gives me great pleasure to join the entire Open University of Kenya fraternity in celebrating our graduands on this historic occasion. Today's ceremony marks more than an academic milestone as it symbolizes the realization of a national dream to make education accessible, inclusive and transformative for all.

The Theme "Learning Reimagined, Future Redefined" perfectly captures the spirit of innovation that drives OUK. We stand at the intersection of technology, creativity and opportunity reimagining how education is delivered and redefining what is possible for the learner of today and tomorrow. Through this model, we are empowering citizens to build solutions, create enterprises and lead with integrity in an increasingly dynamic world.

I commend the University Council, Management, faculty and staff for their steadfast dedication to academic excellence and for ensuring that OUK remains at the forefront of educational transformation in Kenya and beyond.

Congratulations to the Class of 2025. You are the torchbearers of a future redefined through knowledge, courage and purpose. As you move forward, let the values of excellence, service and innovation guide you. May you continue to embody the transformative promise of education that uplifts not only individuals but entire communities.

Marking a Milestone of Resilience and Innovation



Prof. Ezra Maritim

Chairman of Council

On behalf of the University Council, I join the Open University of Kenya community in celebrating the 2nd Graduation Ceremony of this dynamic University. This day marks a significant milestone in Kenya's higher education landscape as we celebrate men and women who have pursued their dreams through resilience, flexibility and innovation.

The Council takes great pride in the progress made by the University. Through collective efforts, the University has established a strong foundation as a leader in open learning, leveraging digital platforms to reach learners across Kenya and beyond. We also recognize our valued partners whose collaboration continues to strengthen OUK's role in shaping accessible, flexible and transformative education.

As the Council, we remain steadfast in our commitment to the sustainable growth of OUK, upholding transparency, accountability and strategic foresight. We will continue investing in technology, infrastructure and partnerships that make higher education more inclusive and responsive to national and global priorities.

To the graduating class, I congratulate you most sincerely. You are the embodiment of learning reimagined, a vision that opens access, embraces technology and redefines the future of education. As you step into the world, let the knowledge and skills you have acquired guide you in transforming communities and driving Kenya's progress. Be ambassadors of excellence, integrity and service.

Redefining the Future through Open and Transformative Education



Prof. Elijah Omwenga
Vice Chancellor

I extend my warmest congratulations to all our graduands on this remarkable achievement. Today marks a celebration of perseverance, innovation and the limitless potential of learning.

As pioneers of this new frontier in higher education, you-the graduands- represent the future of a knowledge-driven society. You have demonstrated that learning knows no boundaries and that excellence can be achieved through dedication, creativity and adaptability.

At OUK, we are redefining the landscape of higher education through open, flexible and technology-enabled learning. Our goal is to ensure that every Kenyan, regardless of location or circumstance, has access to quality higher education that transforms lives and communities.

I commend our faculty, staff and partners whose unwavering commitment has made this success possible. Together, we are building a model university that reflects Kenya's aspirations for inclusive growth, innovation and sustainable development.

As you go forth, be ambassadors of the Open University of Kenya. Continue to learn, to lead and to serve with integrity and purpose. The future is yours to redefine.

Congratulations to the Class of 2025!

Salute to the Class of 2025!



Prof. Carolyn Omulando

Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic Affairs)

It is with immense pride that I extend my heartfelt congratulations to all our graduands on this momentous occasion. Today, we celebrate not only your academic achievement but also your resilience, adaptability and commitment to life-long learning.

As you step into the next chapter of your journey, remember that the true power of education lies in how you use it to make a difference. Let your skills, values and vision inspire change in your communities and workplaces. Continue to learn, to innovate and to lead with integrity.

On behalf of the Division of Academic Affairs, I salute our dedicated faculty, staff and partners who have worked tirelessly to nurture excellence and uphold the highest academic standards. Together, we reaffirm our commitment to a reimagined learning experience that defines a brighter, more inclusive future for all.

Congratulations once again to the Class of 2025. You are the embodiment of a future redefined through learning, innovation and courage.

Well done and God bless you all.

Transcending Boundaries with Inclusive and Technology-enabled Learning



Prof. Christopher Chepken

Deputy Vice Chancellor (Planning and Infrastructure)

I take this opportunity to congratulate the graduating class of 2025 on reaching this remarkable milestone. Today's celebration is not only a testament to your hard work and determination but also to the power of innovation and resilience that define the Open University of Kenya.

This occasion captures the essence of what OUK stands for; a bold vision of education that transcends boundaries of time, space and circumstance. Through technology-enabled, flexible and inclusive learning, we have made it possible for individuals from every corner of the nation and beyond to access world-class education tailored to their unique aspirations.

I extend my deepest appreciation to our faculty, staff and partners whose commitment to academic excellence has made this day possible. Together, we continue to advance OUK's mission of democratizing education and shaping a future defined by opportunity, innovation and hope.

Congratulations, once again, to the Class of 2025!

Honoring Digital Trailblazers of a Reimagined Future



Dr Jared Ongaro

Director, ICT

I join the entire Open University of Kenya fraternity in celebrating the Class of 2025. This graduation is a testament to how technology can transform education, expand access and empower learners to shape their destinies.

As Kenya's first fully technology-driven University, we have reimagined the learning experience through innovative platforms that emphasize flexibility, interactivity and inclusivity. Our digital ecosystem ensures that every learner, wherever they are can access quality education aligned with global standards.

At the core of this transformation lies the University's unwavering commitment to continuous innovation. From our dynamic Learning Management System (LMS) and integrated digital assessments to expansive e-libraries and open educational resources, OUK continues to pioneer new frontiers in open learning. This milestone reflects Kenya's vision of building a digitally empowered, knowledge-based society.

To our graduands, your success symbolizes adaptability, resilience and innovation. You have embraced technology not merely as a

tool but as a gateway to growth, leadership and social transformation. As you step into new chapters of your lives, carry forward the spirit of lifelong learning and the courage to redefine the future.

Congratulations to you all!

Streamlined Academics and Stronger Student Support for a Seamless Experience



Dr Catherine Kagucia

Ag Registrar (Academic Affairs)

It gives me great pleasure to congratulate the graduating class of 2025 on this significant academic milestone. Your success is a testament to your determination, resilience and adaptability in navigating the rigours of virtual learning. You have demonstrated that with focus and discipline, it is possible to achieve excellence through flexible learning pathways that reflect the vision and spirit of the Open University of Kenya.

The Office of the Registrar (Academic Affairs) plays a central role in upholding academic integrity and quality by overseeing admissions, registration, examinations, certification, coordinating academic activities as well as the development, implementation and compliance of academic oriented policies. Through these functions, the office ensures that all academic activities align with national standards and the University's commitment to accessible, technology-driven education. Over the past year, we have enhanced academic processes and strengthened the student support structures to foster a seamless learning and administrative experience.

To our graduands, your achievement today is not only personal but also symbolic of the transformative power of open education. As you step into the world, may you continue to apply the knowledge, skills and values gained here to innovate, lead with integrity and make meaningful contributions to society. Congratulations on your well-deserved success, and best wishes for a future filled with purpose and accomplishment.

Commitment to People, Progress and Possibility



Mr Joseph Musinga

Ag Deputy Registrar, Administration and Human Resource

I wish to join the Open University of Kenya community in celebrating our 2nd Graduation Ceremony. This is truly a proud milestone in our pursuit of accessible, flexible and transformative education. I extend heartfelt congratulations to our graduands for their dedication and confidence in our unique model of learning throughout their academic journey. Your success today embodies resilience, innovation and the limitless potential of open learning.

As we mark this occasion, we reaffirm our trust in our human resource team and the entirety of the support function that encompass the driving force behind the University's progress. We remain committed to investing in talent development, continuous capacity building and strategic recruitment to strengthen the workforce and sustain excellence in service delivery.

Congratulations, once again, to the Class of 2025.

Expanding Access and Advancing Learning Through Innovation



Mr Isaac Okiyai
Head of Library Services

The digital Library plays a pivotal role in supporting teaching, learning and research by providing seamless access to high-quality academic resources. Through innovative platforms such as OpenAthens and an integrated federated search system, the Library has empowered users to discover and access knowledge anytime, anywhere.

Among our key milestones is the successful migration to OpenAthens authentication platform, the integration of major databases such as Ovid and Health Library, as well as the addition of new collections including Perlego, Business Source Ultimate and IEEE eBooks focusing on Data Science, Cyber Security and Artificial Intelligence. We have also grown our digital resources to more than 20 million items, reinforcing our commitment to providing diverse, inclusive and up-to-date materials that meet the evolving needs of our learners and researchers.

To the graduating class, congratulations on reaching this remarkable milestone! As you step into the next phase of your journey, may the spirit of curiosity, innovation and continuous learning guide your path. Remember, knowledge remains your most valuable tool for shaping a better world.

CONGRATULATORY MESSAGES FROM ACADEMIC SCHOOLS AND DIRECTORATES

From learning to leadership: The transformative power of open learning



CPA Dr Jane Chepngeno Sang
Dean, School of Business and Economics

It is with immense joy that I extend my warmest congratulations to all our graduands on this memorable occasion; the 2nd Graduation Ceremony of the Open University of Kenya, held under the inspiring theme "Learning Reimagined, Future Redefined."

This year's ceremony holds special significance for the School of Business and Economics (SBE) as we celebrate two distinguished groups of achievers. First, we applaud the graduands earning the Postgraduate Diploma in Leadership and Accountability, whose dedication and intellectual rigor reflect the highest standards of professional excellence. Second, we proudly recognise our undergraduate students receiving Progressive Certifications, marking a significant milestone on their academic journey - the first cohort at OUK to do so.

Your achievements symbolise the transformative power of open and digital learning. You have balanced work, study and life with resilience and grace, embodying the spirit of innovation and adaptability that defines the Open University of Kenya. Indeed, you have shown that reimagined learning is not confined to classrooms but thrives in flexibility, creativity and lifelong curiosity.

As you move forward, may you continue to apply your knowledge to serve with integrity, lead with vision and contribute meaningfully to our nation and the global community. Let your success remind others that when learning is reimagined, the future is truly redefined.

On behalf of the entire School of Business and Economics, I celebrate your accomplishments and wish you continued growth, impact and fulfillment.

Congratulations, Class of 2025!

Advancing Research, Innovation and Excellence



Dr Beth Kiratu
Ag Dean, School of Science and Technology

I extend heartfelt congratulations to all our graduands and continuing students featured in this November 2025 Graduation Magazine. The School of Science and Technology (SST) continues to uphold its mandate of advancing innovation, research and excellence in science, technology and digital education, true to the vision of the University as a leader in open, flexible and inclusive learning.

This year marks a significant milestone for the School. Over forty (40) of our students have been found eligible for the award of Progressive Certifications after successfully completing at least one-third of their courses and demonstrating exceptional performance in their capstone projects. These projects are not only academic exercises but serve as tangible solutions to real-world challenges. Upon submission, they are integrated into the OUK Student Innovations Support Programme, where they are nurtured and transformed into viable market products and enterprises.

Through this initiative, our students are empowered to bridge theory and practice turning ideas into innovations that address pressing societal needs across diverse fields such as data science, cybersecurity, digital services, agri-technology and interactive media technologies. This Progressive Certification pathway underscores the University's unique commitment to lifelong learning, employability and entrepreneurial empowerment.

The School also continues to strengthen partnerships with industry, government and academia to ensure that our programmes remain market-relevant and globally competitive. Faculty members have been at the forefront of digital content development, applied research and mentorship, equipping learners with the competencies required to thrive in a rapidly evolving technological landscape.

As we celebrate this year's achievements, we reaffirm our commitment to nurturing innovators, technologists and researchers who will drive Kenya's digital transformation agenda and contribute to the realisation of Vision 2030.

To our students, congratulations on your hard work, resilience and creativity. Your success is our pride and your innovations are the foundation of a brighter, smarter and more inclusive future. Congratulations once again to all our achievers!

Celebrating A Year of Growth and Innovation



Prof. Benjamin Kyalo Wambua

Ag Dean, School of Education

As the University proudly celebrates its 2nd Graduation Ceremony, the School of Education takes this moment to celebrate the outstanding milestones achieved this year. Our commitment to advancing education is embodied in the launch of several programmes, including the Postgraduate Diploma in Education; Master of Education degrees in Learning Design and Technology and Educational Leadership and Policy; Master of Technology Education as well as our esteemed Doctor of Philosophy in Educational Leadership and Policy. The School's flagship programmes; Bachelor of Technology Education and Postgraduate Diploma in Learning Design and Technology have continued to attract students nationally, regionally and globally.

In response to the evolving educational landscape, we have also developed cutting-edge professional courses such as Online Assessment, Online Facilitation Pedagogy and Research Management and Policy, equipping our learners with skills vital for modern education delivery.

Our collaborative partnerships with Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) institutions, Kenya National Union of Teachers (KNUT) and the Teachers Service Commission (TSC) have significantly expanded our reach and quality of service. This synergy has resulted in a remarkable enrolment growth from 202 students in January 2025 to 600 by September 2025; a testament to our growing influence and commitment to accessible, quality education.

To the graduating class, your journey is a beacon of dedication and innovation. As you advance in your careers, carry forward the knowledge and skills you have acquired here to inspire transformation in education and impact generations to come. Congratulations on your achievement and best wishes for a future filled with success and meaningful contributions.

Commitment to Quality and Excellence in Every Learner's Journey



Prof. Raphael Nyonje

Director, Quality Assurance

I take this singular opportunity to celebrate the Class of 2025 on this milestone. Your success reflects the transformative journey that defines the Open University of Kenya; a journey of perseverance, innovation and commitment to excellence.

The Directorate of Quality Assurance believes that reimagining learning begins with setting and upholding the highest standards of academic integrity, relevance and impact. It recognizes that quality assurance is not a single act but a continuous process of improvement that ensures every learner's experience meets global benchmarks while responding to Kenya's dynamic social and economic needs.

The open and flexible learning model demonstrates that quality and accessibility can coexist. Through rigorous mon-

itoring, evaluation and feedback mechanisms, we continue to enhance curricula, digital systems and learner support to guarantee that OUK graduates are globally competitive and locally impactful.

I commend the University Council, Management, faculty and staff for their shared commitment to continuous improvement and learner success. Together, we are redefining the future through quality-driven innovation.

Congratulations to the Class of 2025!

From Learners to Changemakers: Students Redefining Education Through Innovation and Mentorship



Ms Betsy W Wanjala
Assistant Dean of Students

The Office of the Dean of Students plays a pivotal role in promoting the holistic growth and well-being of learners; fostering an environment where academic pursuit is complemented by personal development, mentorship and community engagement. The Office exists to ensure that every student, regardless of background, experiences a sense of belonging and has access to support services necessary to thrive academically, socially and emotionally.

As an open University, we have a community of diverse learners, dispersed across regions and disciplines, only connected by technology and united by shared aspirations. This context presents both unique opportunities and complex challenges. Recognising this diversity, the Office of the Dean of Students has developed a series of strategic initiatives designed to create a strong social and academic support system.

The initiatives include School-specific wellness, guidance and group counselling programs and structured mentorship programs for psychosocial support. These programs have been instrumental in helping students navigate their learning

journeys with confidence, ensuring no one feels isolated by distance or circumstance. They have enhanced retention, improved academic performance and fostered a sense of belonging that transcends physical boundaries.

To help create global citizens, our Societies and Clubs are aligned to SDG principles and Vision 2030 objectives and have become vibrant incubators of creativity, leadership and social responsibility. Notably, the Innovation Club has emerged as a powerhouse of student ingenuity, translating ideas into impactful enterprises. Through this platform, more than 20 students in the School of Business and Economics have launched four student-run private companies showcasing the transformative power of innovation-driven learning. Among these is a social enterprise which is currently transforming rural livelihoods in ULU Makueni, by empowering local rabbit farmers with market access insights through sustainable models.

The section has mentored three capstone-delivered innovations: Voters Wall innovation, (an electronic voting system developed by a Cyber security student), which has been deployed in ten (10) TVET institutions to support student elections; Fahari (Shujaa), a ride-hailing app designed by data science students, which now supports over 1,500 taxi drivers in Nairobi, enabling them to access customers more affordably and sustainably; Tutorbot AI, a Learning Management System enhanced with an artificial intelligence tutor, designed by a student from School of Education. Tutorbot has been adopted by 25 private schools in the country.

Collectively, these student-led innovations have made a measurable socioeconomic impact; employing more than 50 direct employees and creating over 200 indirect opportunities across various sectors. This dynamic, student-centered culture continues to define our University's identity as a leader in open and transformative education.

To our graduands, congratulations on reaching this significant milestone. You have demonstrated resilience, adaptability and a passion for excellence. Today, you join a distinguished community of alumni who continue to shape industries, influence policy and transform communities. As you step into the world, I urge you to use your knowledge and skills not only for personal advancement but as instruments of change. Use the innovative spirit of OUK, empathy and leadership to generate solutions that create a better, more sustainable future for all.

The future does not belong to those who wait for change — it belongs to those who create it. Go forth and create that change.

CONGRATULATORY MESSAGES FROM THE STUDENT COMMUNITY



Apiyo Terry Jenny

Students' Representative

Continuing student, Bachelor of Technology Education

As we gather to celebrate the 2nd Graduation Ceremony of the Open University of Kenya, we reflect on a remarkable journey of growth, resilience and transformation. This moment signifies not only academic success but the triumph of perseverance over every obstacle faced along the way.

The path of open and digital learning has tested our endurance in unique ways. From unstable internet connections, erratic power supply and limited devices to balancing demanding work and family responsibilities, our journey has been one of courage and adaptability. Yet, amid these challenges, we discovered our true strength. We learned to innovate, to manage time wisely and to stay connected through screens while building a sense of community across distance.

Each student's story is a testament to what dedication and faith can achieve in the face of adversity. Through discipline and determination, we have turned challenges into stepping stones and digital classrooms into gateways of opportunity.

To the graduating class: you have earned every bit of this success. Carry forward the same resilience, curiosity and spirit of lifelong learning that define the Open University of Kenya. May your achievements inspire others to dream boldly, learn openly and lead with integrity.

Congratulations, Class of 2025, your perseverance has paved the way for countless others to follow.



Arnold C. Ndukuyu

Overall Best Performing Student, Postgraduate Diploma
in Leadership and Accountability

I serve as Manager, Systems Technology and Innovation at KETRACO, where my mandate is to keep the backbone of Kenya's power grid connected, secure and reliable across substations, control rooms and headquarters technology services. The role demands relentless coordination of enterprise systems, field infrastructure deployment, cybersecurity, vendor management and stakeholder expectations. I undertook my studies at the Open University of Kenya because I needed a career programme that derives real-world responsibility and translates the learning into immediate impact.

Despite a demanding schedule, balancing late-night learning activities, emergency incident response, family life and course-work assignments, I have consistently maintained all at once. Through disciplined time slots and reflective practice, I converted my classroom theory into operational gains, strengthening service levels. My capstone work on emerging technologies (AR/Digital Twin) reframed how we can govern complex grid assets; turning

academic research into a roadmap for practical oversight, safety and accountability.

The journey has not been easy but the flexibility of the programme has enabled me to remain present as a parent and spouse, while the academic rigor has challenged me to grow as an ethical leader. I learned to say 'no' to the urgent but unimportant, to prioritize high-impact outcomes and to mentor those around me so that success is shared, not limited. The learning insights have helped me to convert constraints into creativity and pressure into performance that safeguards good governance. To those considering OUK, if you bring your commitment, OUK will meet you with access, rigor and relevance. You do not have to choose between learning and living; you can do both and make a better life with a desirable impact in the society.



Carren Cherotich

Graduand, Postgraduate Diploma in Leadership and Accountability
Director, Coordination and Operations
Executive Office of the President-State House

As I prepare to graduate with a Diploma in Leadership and Accountability, I wish to express my profound gratitude to the institution and the faculty for making this milestone possible.

Balancing my studies with the demands of my work at the Executive Office of the President has been both humbling and transformative. My role often involves long hours, late-night schedules and frequent local and international travel. There have been weeks when I have been in three counties and two countries within days representing the Office, circumstances that constantly tested my discipline and resolve. Yet, in the midst of all this, I made a promise to myself: to never stop learning.

At the same time, I had to remain fully present for my family and continue with my Masters studies at Strathmore University. It has not been an easy journey, but it has been deeply rewarding. I take pride in the fact that, despite these competing demands, I successfully completed the programme without missing a single class. This experience has reinforced my belief that commitment, time, discipline and passion for personal growth can triumph over even the most demanding circumstances.

I am deeply thankful to the Open University of Kenya for creating a flexible and supportive learning environment that allows working professionals like myself to thrive. Moreover, this achievement is a testament not only to personal effort but also to the institution's innovative approach to lifelong learning and leadership development.

I am a grateful student.



Prof. Peter Muriungi

Vice Chancellor, Tharaka University

Prof. Muriungi is graduating today with a Postgraduate Diploma in Leadership and Accountability. Despite his busy schedule as the Vice-Chancellor Tharaka University, he has managed to graduate within a year. Prof. Muriungi attests to the power of continuous learning, learning to learn and asynchronous learning facilitated by online platforms.

We congratulate him for resilience and focus.



Mthunzi Dlamini

Graduand, Postgraduate Diploma in Learning Design and Technology
International student from Eswatini

Pursuing a Postgraduate Diploma at the Open University of Kenya has been an incredible and fulfilling journey. As an international student from Eswatini, I was both excited and a little anxious about studying online in a new environment. However, OUK provided a smooth transition through its well-structured learning platform and responsive academic support. The lecturers were knowledgeable, approachable and always ready to provide guidance whenever I needed assistance. Their constructive feedback and encouragement helped me grow both academically and professionally.

The programme was flexible, interactive and well-designed, allowing me to balance my studies with work and personal commitments. Even though we studied virtually, the sense of connection and collaboration among students was truly inspiring.

This experience has strengthened my confidence, self-discipline and passion for technology in education. It has also shown me how powerful online learning can be in bringing people together across borders.

I am deeply grateful to OUK for the knowledge, support and opportunities I have gained. This journey has not only shaped my career but also inspired me to continue learning and to share what I've gained with others in the field of education.



Ms Kailynn Chiuatre

Undergraduate International student from South Africa

My name is Kailynn Chiuatre; a proud student of the Bachelor of Data Science under the School of Science and Technology. I am representing the female international students of the Open University of Kenya. Today, we gather not only to celebrate academic success of the graduands but to mark a journey that has tested their endurance, shaped their character and strengthened the belief in what is possible. I congratulate all of them on reaching this milestone that represents courage, resilience and hope.

As a student from South Africa, my journey at this University has been transformative. I joined this institution seeking flexibility but what I found was much greater; a vibrant, supportive and inclusive community that welcomes students from every corner of the world. Here, learning has no borders. Whether studying from Nairobi, Johannesburg or Mombasa, we are united by one dream: to create a better future for ourselves and our societies.

What sets this University apart from the rest is its commitment to accessible, technology-driven and industry-oriented learning.

The flexibility of our online platform has allowed me to learn at my own pace while still feeling connected to lecturers and peers. The dedication of our faculty, who go above and beyond to guide and encourage us, has made the learning journey not just educational but deeply personal. The friendships I have built here with students from Kenya, Uganda, Nigeria, Lesotho, Namibia and beyond reminds me that this institution is more than a University. It is a global family of dreamers, innovators and changemakers. Together, we have lifted each other, encouraged one another during challenging times and celebrated every success.

Today, as we celebrate the graduands, let us remember that we are ambassadors of open learning, equipped to use our knowledge to uplift communities and transform industries. And as we embrace the future, let us be guided by the belief that each of us has the potential to create a future filled with purpose, hope and opportunity.

Congratulations once again!



Nii Amah Dagadu

Doctorate International student from Ghana

Good morning! Or rather, Jambo!

My name is Nii Amah Dagadu, a PhD student in Business Management from Accra, Ghana.

It is my distinct pleasure to congratulate this class on behalf of the male international student body. And when I say pleasure, I mean the genuine, heartfelt relief that you all finally made it.

Let's be real: As international students, we did not just study; we performed a complex, multi-year juggling act involving time zones, work pressure and translating academic jargon into three different languages.

The OUK experience is special as the various teams go the extra mile to ensure our study period is thorough, hassle-free and inclusive. This graduating class can attest to this asser-

tion. OUK to the world!

To the graduand's, you have not only earned a Postgraduate Diploma and progressive certifications from the Open University of Kenya but also a black belt in resilience, discipline and mastery at the global stage.

So, take a moment, enjoy the applause and remember this: You have survived the trials of higher education and international logistics. You are officially unstoppable. Let this achievement remind you that no dream is too big when pursued with courage, consistency and community.

Go celebrate. You have earned the right to ignore your inbox for at least 48 hours. Now go forth and be ambassadors of the Open University of Kenya; inspire others, lead with integrity and keep the flame of lifelong learning alive wherever you go.

Congratulations Class of 2025! You did it!

STATEMENT ON CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

As the highest policy-making organ of the University, the Council continues to provide strategic leadership, prudent resource oversight and sound governance. The Council became fully operational with the establishment of its three key committees namely; the Finance, Infrastructure, Human Resource and Planning (FIHR&P), the Academic, Research and Linkages, (AR&L), and the Audit, Risk and Compliance (ARC). This has strengthened financial stewardship, guided infrastructure development, enhanced academic and research governance, promoted external partnerships and reinforced risk management and accountability systems.



Council Members pose for a photo with the Cabinet Secretary for Education, Hon. Julius Migos Ogamba, during a Workshop in Naivasha

The Council ensured improved governance and accountability through the development and adoption of key policy frameworks and instruments that support the University's unique mandate. Notably, a Risk Management Policy was introduced to provide a structured framework for identifying, assessing and mitigating risks while the Students' Governing Council (SGC) Policy has paved the way for the establishment of the University's first student leadership council in the 2025/2026 Financial Year. These measures have laid a strong foundation for transparent decision-making, improved institutional management and enhanced alignment of operations with statutory and policy requirements, thereby ensuring that governance practices are both sustainable and accountable.

The establishment of an independent Quality Assurance Directorate strengthened academic governance, while reinforcing academic integrity, relevance and excellence across all programmes. Quality assurance was embedded across teaching and learning processes, with full adherence to the Commission for University Education (CUE) and other regulatory requirements.

The Council also entered into its first Performance Contract (PC) with the Government, under the 21st PC Cycle Guidelines. The PC was successfully negotiated, vetted and implemented with all the relevant agency reports being submitted in time, ensuring compliance. This milestone underscores the University's commitment to accountability, performance management and continuous improvement in service delivery.

In the coming year, the Council will focus on strategic priorities aimed at strengthening academic excellence, digital transformation, student success, institutional capacity and sustainability which will be instrumental in positioning the University as a leader in technology-enabled higher education.

NEWS AND EVENTS

VICE-CHANCELLOR REPRESENTS KENYA AT DETA 2025 CONFERENCE IN MAURITIUS



The Vice Chancellor, Prof. Elijah Omwenga, (fourth from left) joins other members for a group photo at the DETA Conference

The Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Elijah Omwenga, represented Kenya at the 2025 Distance Education and Teachers' Training in Africa (DETA) Conference held at the Mauritius Institute of Education. He was accompanied by Prof. Christopher Chepken, Deputy Vice-Chancellor for Planning and Infrastructure.

Established in 2000, DETA is a biennial Conference aimed at advancing the frontiers of distance education and teacher training across the African continent. The 2025 edition was co-hosted by the University of Pretoria, Saide and the Mauritius Institute of Education.

Prof. Omwenga delivered a keynote presentation titled "From Concept to Reality: Building Kenya's First Fully Virtual Public University," in which he shared the inspiring journey, challenges and achievements in establishing the Open University of Kenya.

Additionally, Prof. Omwenga chaired a high-level panel discussion on "Education for Empowering the Global South: Technologies and Pedagogies for Distance Teacher Education." The panel featured distinguished experts including Dr. Brinda Oogarah-Pratap (Mauritius Institute of Education), Prof. Geesje van den Berg (University of South Africa), Dr Logan Govender (University of Johannesburg) and Prof. Laban Ayiro (Daystar University, Kenya).

Key takeaways from the Conference included the critical need for continuous digital literacy training for both educators and learners, the urgency of rethinking assessment and examination models in light of emerging technologies, especially Artificial Intelligence. Another important insight was the need to build a robust community of advocates to champion Open, Distance, and E-Learning (ODEL) across the continent.

The Open University of Kenya (OUK) made significant strides

OUK HOSTS POLICY DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOP UNDER THE COMMONWEALTH OF LEARNING LEADERSHIP

in the development of key policies to enhance Open and Distance Learning (ODL). Early this year, the University hosted a Policy Development Workshop aimed at finalising five critical ODL policies. The Workshop is part of the Commonwealth of Learning (COL) – OUK contract implementation and was facilitated by Prof. Paul Prinsloo, the University's COL Consultant.



The Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Elijah Omwenga (seated 4th from left) and facilitator Prof. Paul Prinsloo (seated 3rd from left) pose for a group photo with OUK staff and other participants during the Policy Development Workshop at SEO Hotel, Machakos
PHOTO: Courtesy

The Vice Chancellor, Prof. Elijah Omwenga, led the OUK team in this crucial exercise, which sought to strengthen the institution's governance framework in line with international best practices for open and distance e-learning. The five policies that were developed include:

1. ICT Policy – Establishing guidelines on the use of digital technologies to enhance learning and administrative processes.
2. Artificial Intelligence Policy – Providing a framework for the responsible integration of Artificial Intelligence in teaching, learning and research.
3. Recognition of Prior Learning Policy – Setting out procedures for assessing and accrediting learners' previous knowledge and experience.
4. Student Support Policy – Enhancing mechanisms to provide academic, technical and psychosocial support to students.
5. Facilitation of Learning and Assessment Policy – Defining best practices in content delivery, assessment and feedback within the ODL framework.

Speaking during the Workshop, the Vice Chancellor emphasized the importance of these policies in ensuring that the University remained at the forefront of flexible, tech-

nology-driven and offers student-centred education. "These policies are key in shaping the future of open learning in Kenya. They will provide a strong foundation for quality assurance, inclusivity and innovation in our programmes," he stated.

Prof. Prinsloo commended the University on its commitment to policy formulation, noting that well-defined policies are essential for the success of any ODL institution. "Having clear policies ensures consistency, accountability and efficiency in delivering education to diverse learners," he remarked.

The Workshop brought together key stakeholders from various departments who contributed insights and ensured the policies aligned with both national and international education standards.

OUK remains committed to fostering a robust policy framework that supports its vision of expanding access to quality education through Open and Distance Learning. The institution will continue to collaborate with international partners like COL to enhance its governance structures and academic offerings.

OUK SUSTAINS HIGH RETENTION RATES AGAINST WORLDWIDE TRENDS



Prof. Asha Kanwar, the World Bank Consultant (Seated third from left) with members of staff

The number of students dropping out of online courses is alarming worldwide. Speaking at the Open University of Kenya, Prof. Asha Kanwar, a consultant with the World Bank, highlighted that up to 50% of students in Africa fail to complete their online courses due to various challenges, including lack of motivation, financial constraints and limited learner support services.

Global Dropout Trends

Globally, the trend is no different. In the United States, online course attrition rates range between 20% and 50%, while in the United Kingdom, the rate stands between 20% and 44%. Australia records an even higher dropout rate ranging from 35% to 55%.

Challenges Facing Online Learners

Prof. Kanwar, an expert in Open and Distance Learning (ODEL), emphasised that while digital education offers flexibility, it also presents significant hurdles that lead to high attrition rates. "Many students struggle with time management, digital literacy and a sense of isolation which negatively impacts their academic performance," she said.

Higher Dropout Rates in Online Education

Research indicates that dropout rates in online education are significantly higher than in traditional face-to-face learning. Studies show that fully online courses have a 10-15% higher dropout rate compared to hybrid learning models. Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) suffer even more with completion rates as low as 5%.



Prof. Asha Kanwar, the World Bank Consultant (Seated third from left) with members of staff

During her address to staff of the University, Prof. Kanwar proposed a multi-faceted approach to curb student attrition. "We must integrate robust learner support systems including academic tutoring, emotional counseling and peer support groups to enhance student engagement and success," she stated. Institutions that have adopted AI-powered personal tutors, such as Khanmigo, have reported improved student retention due to real-time feedback and personalized learning pathways.

Investment in Digital Infrastructure

She also called for increased investment in digital infrastructure and staff training to equip educators with the necessary skills to support learners effectively. "Equitable access to technology is crucial. Without proper ICT infrastructure, many students, especially in resource-poor regions, are at a disadvantage," she added.

Creating a Culture of Care in Learning Institutions

A major recommendation from the Workshop was the need to create a 'culture of care' within institutions. This means

fostering an environment where students feel supported academically and emotionally. Research has shown that social and emotional learning strategies can improve academic performance by up to 13 percentile points



An interactive session with Prof. Kanwar Call to Action for African Institutions

As Africa continues to expand its ODeL programmes, stakeholders must take decisive action to implement policies that ensure student success. Prof. Kanwar's message was clear: without proper support mechanisms, online education will continue to face high dropout rates, limiting its potential to transform education across the continent.

University Leadership Weighs In

On his part, the Vice Chancellor, Prof. Elijah Omwenga, emphasized the significance of Prof. Kanwar's presentation, noting that it distinguished the Open University of Kenya from other institutions. He urged academic staff to publish high-quality research that could attract donor funding. "Without academic research, there will be no promotion of the University," he said, highlighting the critical role of scholarly work in elevating the institution's global standing.

FORMATION OF ALUMNI ASSOCIATION TO STRENGTHEN VARSITY LEGACY

Speaking during an event attended by representatives of former students who graduated in November, 2024 at Konza Technopolis, the Vice Chancellor, Prof. Elijah Omwenga, urged the alumni to be brand ambassadors of the institution and uphold its good name wherever they go. He emphasized that the alumni have a unique platform to further the cause of students and support the University's growth.

"As the first graduates of the University, you carry the vision of this academic family. You have a heavy responsibility to set the foundation for the future generations of OUK," said Prof. Omwenga. "We are making history and you are part of it."



University leadership led by the Vice Chancellor, Prof. Elijah Omwenga, (Centre) pose for a photo with Alumni

Challenges and Opportunities in Forming an Alumni Association

Prof. Omwenga, who successfully initiated the formation of the Kabianga Alumni Association in 2021, acknowledged the challenges that come with establishing such a group. He noted that the process involves legal procedures, organizational structuring and commitment from members. However, he encouraged the alumni to utilize the Association to mobilize resources that could benefit both the members and the University.

Recognition of the First Cohort

The Deputy Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, Prof. Carolyne Omulando, commended the inaugural cohort for their resilience and commitment to academic excellence. "We recognize and thank our first cohort for the resilience that was seen in their pursuit of additional knowledge from our programmes. You walked with us in the journey from the onset, setting a good culture for the subsequent cohorts," stated Prof. Omulando.

On his part, the Deputy Vice Chancellor for Planning and Infrastructure, Prof. Christopher Chepken, reiterated the University's commitment to providing quality education. He urged the alumni to consider furthering their education to enhance their career prospects and employability.

"The Open University of Kenya is a premier institution and we encourage you to continue advancing your knowledge and skills. Lifelong learning is key to career progression and staying competitive in the job market," he said.

Building a Strong Alumni Network

The launch of the OUK Alumni Association is expected to create a strong network of former students, facilitating professional growth, mentorship and opportunities for collaboration. It also signifies the University's dedication to building an engaged and supportive alumni community that contributes to the institution's long-term success.

PARTNERSHIPS AND COLLABORATIONS

OUK AND DAAD FORGE PARTNERSHIP TO LAUNCH GERMAN LANGUAGE PROGRAMME



From left: Prof. Carolyne Omulando, the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic Affairs) and on the extreme right, the Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Elijah Omwenga, with DAAD representatives

The Open University of Kenya (OUK) held a high-level meeting with representatives from the Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst (DAAD) marking a major milestone towards the introduction of a German language programme to be offered by the University. This collaboration is a significant step in fostering international partnerships and promoting foreign language education in Kenya.

As part of the partnership, OUK will roll out a basic-level German language course as an initial pilot, enrolling thirty-five (35) students. The programme will adhere to internationally recognized language instruction standards and serve as a foundation for more advanced levels in the future.

"We are excited about this partnership as it opens doors for students to access high-quality German language education and potential academic collaborations with institutions in Germany", said DAAD Representative, Dr Dorothee Weyler (DAAD Regional Director Africa).

The Vice Chancellor, Prof. Elijah Omwenga, noted the importance of the partnership, stating that it will equip students with valuable linguistic and cultural skills.

To ensure a robust curriculum, the University will engage Dr Paragiotatou as a consultant and will also recruit a qualified German language education expert to collaborate on designing a comprehensive curriculum tailored to beginner learners. The programme will incorporate innovative teaching methodologies, including blended and online learning components.

The partnership is expected to boost cultural exchange and academic mobility between Kenya and Germany, further cementing the University's role as a trailblazer in innovative learning solutions in the region.

PARTNERSHIP WITH MAKUENI COUNTY TO ENHANCE NURSING EDUCATION AND HEALTH-CARE TRAINING



Accompanying the Vice-Chancellor were: Prof. Carolyn Omulando (DVC, Academic Affairs), Dr Catherine Kagucia (Registrar, Academic Affairs), Ms Elizabeth Kalekye (Programs Manager) and Mr. Amos Musili (Senior Administration Officer). Representing Makueni County were Dr Paul Musila (CECM, Health Services), Dr Geoffrey Ngivi (Chief Officer, Health Services), Dr Stephen Mwatha (Director, Health Services - Partnerships), Ms Everline Mutanu (Communications Officer), Ms. Rose Ndanu (County HIV Programme Coordinator) and Dr Caroline Kaeni (Research Focal Person).

The Open University of Kenya (OUK) successfully signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Government of Makueni County to support the Bachelor of Science in Nursing RN-BScN) programme, enabling OUK nursing students to access all the health facilities in the County for their clinical experience.

This partnership marks a significant milestone in strengthening healthcare education and leadership development in the region.

HUAWEI ICT ACADEMY LAUNCHED TO EMPOWER LEARNERS

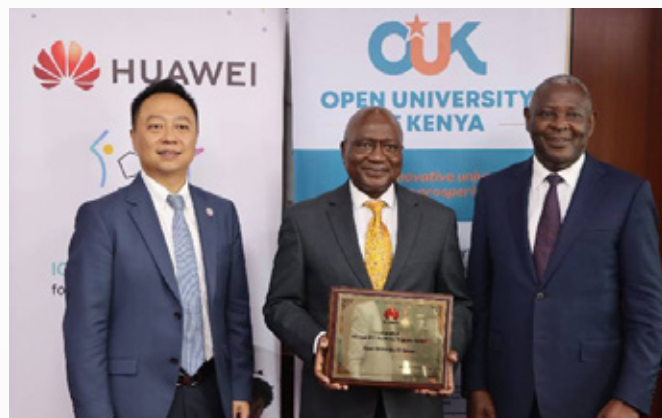
Huawei Kenya, in partnership with the Equity Group Foundation, launched the Huawei ICT Academy at the Open University of Kenya (OUK), marking a major stride towards empowering thousands of learners through flexible, self-paced digital skills training. The initiative seeks to enroll and train 10,000 students, equipping them with industry-relevant ICT skills and Huawei professional certifications in Artificial Intelligence, Cloud Computing, Cybersecurity and Coding.



From left: The Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Elijah Omwenga and Makueni County Governor Mutula Kilonzo Jnr exchange the MoU

The OUK delegation, led by Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Elijah Omwenga, received a warm welcome from Governor Mutula Kilonzo Jnr and other County officials. During the event, OUK presented an overview of its academic programmes, with the Vice-Chancellor highlighting the Undergraduate, Postgraduate Diploma, Masters, PhD programmes and Professional Development (PD) courses offered by the University. Among these, two PD courses i.e. Mental Health Awareness and Business Modelling for Entrepreneurs are offered free of charge.

This collaboration has opened doors for additional partnerships in various areas, including research, capacity building for County staff through the Postgraduate Diploma in Leadership and Accountability as well as Induction, Supervisory Skills, Senior Management and Strategic Leadership Development programmes. The Governor agreed to have the community health practitioners in the County enrol in the two free courses as a first step. The team also discussed about establishing innovation hubs to support innovation.



From left to right: Mr. Gavin Gao, CEO of Huawei Kenya, Prof. Elijah Omwenga, Vice Chancellor OUK and Dr. James Mwangi CEO of Equity Group

The Academy focuses on innovation-driven learning, offering dual certification — both academic and Huawei-recognized — while supporting the establishment of a Virtual Innovation Hub to foster student-led solutions to real-world challenges.

Mr. Gavin Gao, CEO of Huawei Kenya, officially handed over the Huawei ICT Academy plaque to Prof. Elijah Omwenga, Vice Chancellor of the Open University of Kenya, during a ceremony held at Equity Centre. The event was attended by Dr. James Mwangi, Chancellor of the Open University and Executive Chairman Equity Group Foundation, who applauded the partnership as a powerful model for digital transformation.

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"This partnership exemplifies our shared commitment to nurturing digital talent in Kenya," said Mr. Gao.

Dr. Mwangi noted that Equity Group Foundation's involvement underscores its longstanding commitment to inclusive growth through education. "Through this collaboration with Huawei and the Open University of Kenya, we are scaling access to global tech skills, particularly for young people who might otherwise be left out of the digital revolution. We're building the workforce of tomorrow — one that is inclusive, innovative and equipped to transform Kenya and Africa."

Prof. Omwenga hailed the partnership as a model for modern higher education. "This initiative positions the Open University of Kenya as a hub for digital innovation. By integrating Huawei's global expertise and Equity Group Foundation's support, we are unlocking new possibilities for learners to thrive in a tech-driven world."

In addition, the partnership with the Equity Group Foundation under the health initiative also contributes to the development of various digital health innovations, including Telemedicine services, within the Foundation's social impact model.

Through the collective strengths of industry, academia, and social development partners, the collaboration promises to unlock new pathways to prosperity for thousands of Kenyan youths.

COLLABORATION WITH THE KENYA SCHOOL OF GOVERNMENT TO STRENGTHEN PUBLIC SERVICE DELIVERY

The Open University of Kenya (OUK) and the Kenya School of Government (KSG) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to collaborate in offering leadership, management and other professional courses to public officers, in line with the Government of Kenya's directive to strengthen capacity across the public service.

The OUK delegation was led by Prof. Carolyn Omulando, Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic Affairs), while KSG was represented by its Director General, Prof. Nura Mohammed. The two leaders reaffirmed their commitment to advancing the public sector through accessible, high-quality training opportunities.

Under the partnership, the two institutions will roll out tailored courses designed to equip public servants with



The Vice Chancellor, Prof. Elijah Omwenga, display the plaque for the Academy

Speaking during the launch, Mr. Gavin Gao, CEO of Huawei Kenya, said that the partnership reflects Huawei's long-term commitment to building Kenya's digital talent ecosystem.

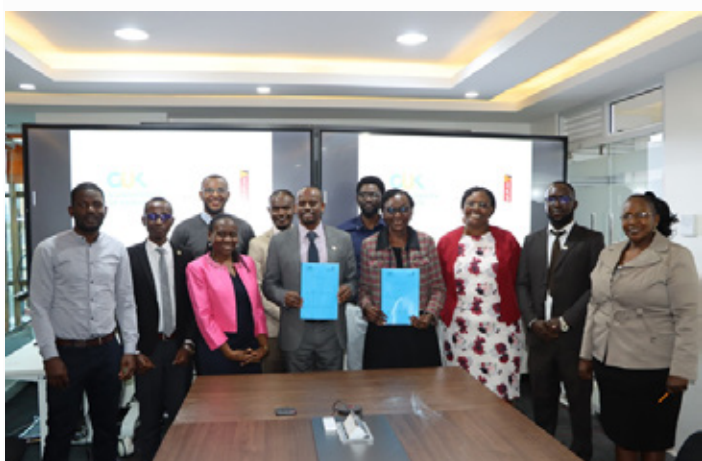


Fourth from left to right: Prof. Carolyn Omulando, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic Affairs) and KSG Director-General Prof. Nura Mohammed pose for a photo with members from OUK and KSG

practical skills in leadership, governance and service delivery. OUK will leverage its fully online mode of delivery to ensure that the courses are accessible to officers across the country without disrupting their work schedules.

The joint courses are set to commence soon and will target various levels of public service, supporting the national agenda for effective and accountable governance. This partnership underscores OUK's commitment to driving impact through inclusive and innovative education for national development.

OUK SIGNS MOU WITH THE INSTITUTE OF CERTIFIED SECRETARIES TO STRENGTHEN AREAS OF MUTUAL BENEFIT



Prof. Carolyn Omulando, the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic Affairs) and the ICS CEO, FCS Jeremiah N. Karanja display the signed MoU. They are flanked by staff from both institutions

The Open University of Kenya (OUK) has entered into a strategic partnership with the Institute of Certified Secretaries (ICS) through the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU).

The agreement, signed under the leadership of the Deputy Vice Chancellor in charge of Academic Affairs, Prof. Carolyn

Omulando, paves the way for collaboration on a wide range of initiatives of mutual benefit to the two institutions. The delegation from ICS was led by its Chief Executive Officer, FCS Jeremiah N. Karanja, MBS.

Under the MoU, OUK and ICS will jointly engage in training on research and corporate governance, undertake joint marketing, collaborate in capacity-building programs among others. The partnership holds significant promise for OUK students, who stand to benefit in several key ways. Students will gain access to enhanced learning opportunities in corporate governance and related professional practices, positioning them to excel in both academic and career pursuits.

Additionally, the collaboration will expose students to practical case studies and joint research initiatives, deepening their understanding of governance and leadership. The partnership also opens up valuable networking and career development opportunities through ICS's extensive professional membership and corporate linkages.

This milestone reaffirms OUK's commitment to forging partnerships that not only advance academic excellence but also create real-world opportunities for its students.

OUK SET TO JOIN AFRICAN COUNCIL FOR DISTANCE EDUCATION

The Open University of Kenya (OUK) is set to join the African Council for Distance Education (ACDE), a continental body that brings together leading institutions in open and distance learning. The move is seen as recognition of OUK's potential to shape the future of technology-driven and flexible education in Africa.



OUK Staff pose for a photo with ACDE Council members

During a courtesy visit to the University, Kenyatta University Vice Chancellor and ACDE Secretary General, Prof. Paul Wainaina, underscored the value of joining the Council. He noted that membership would not only raise the University's visibility and profile but also connect it to a vibrant network of institutions advancing open and distance learning across the continent. He emphasized that the future of education lies in flexible, technology-driven approaches and OUK is strategically placed to lead this transformation.

OUK Commits to Driving Digital Learning

The Deputy Vice Chancellor in charge of Academic Affairs, Prof. Carolyne Omulando, described the proposal as a great honour, affirming the University's readiness to champion digital education. She explained that the University's mandate is not merely to narrate the story of online learning but to demonstrate it in practice. By collaborating with ACDE, the institution aims to strengthen open and distance learning in Kenya, the wider region and the international space.

A Continental Network of Open Universities

ACDE brings together universities and higher education institutions that specialize in distance education. Founding members include the University of South Africa (UNISA), the National Open University of Nigeria, the Open University of Tanzania, the Open University of Mauritius, Zimbabwe Open University, the Open University of Sudan and UNICED in Mozambique. Since its launch in 2004 at Egerton University, the Council has grown into a continental body recognized for its commitment to promoting quality distance education.

Leadership and Specialized Programmes

The Council's leadership is drawn from across Africa. Its current President is Prof. Solomon Shibairo, Vice Chancellor of Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology, supported by Prof. Olufemi Peters, Vice Chancellor of the National Open University of Nigeria and Prof. Alex Makulilo, Vice Chancellor of the Open University of Tanzania. The East Africa representative is Prof. Isaiah Wakindiki, Vice Chancellor of KCA University. In addition, ACDE runs specialized programmes hosted by member institutions, including quality assurance in Nigeria, collaboration in Tanzania, ICT in Mozambique and knowledge dissemination at UNISA in South Africa.

Membership Benefits and Opportunities

ACDE Executive Director, Dr. Teresa Mwoma, urged OUK to take its rightful place in leading continental efforts, noting that the Secretariat is already based in Kenya. She highlighted the three categories of membership—institutional, associate and affiliate—each offering opportunities to serve on the governing Council, benefit from training, participate in collabora-

tive projects and host the triennial General Assembly and Conference. She further encouraged OUK to adopt ACDE's quality assurance toolkit to enhance peer review and international accreditation.

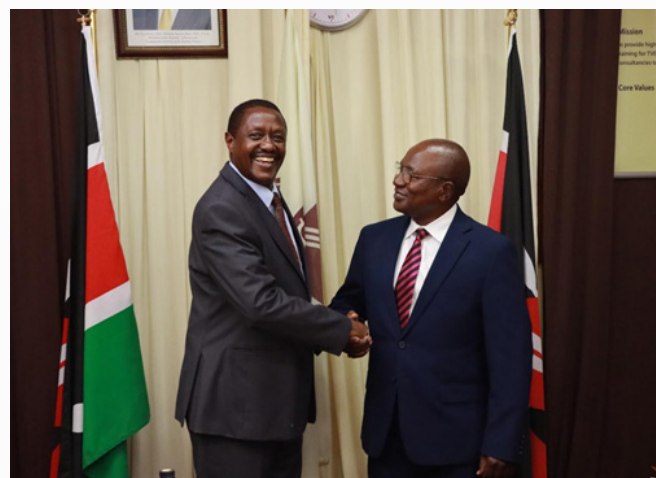
Positioned as Africa's Next Distance Learning Hub

With ACDE's invitation, OUK is now set to play a central role in advancing open education. The move positions the University not only as a national flagship for digital learning but also as a continental hub, working to expand access, enhance quality and drive innovation in higher education across Africa.

OUK PARTNERSHIP WITH KSTVET TO ENSURE SEAMLESS TRANSITION OF STUDENTS

The Open University of Kenya (OUK) is seeking a strategic partnership with the Kenya School of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (KSTVET) to ensure a seamless transition for Diploma students into degree programmes. Speaking during a courtesy call at KSTVET, the Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Elijah Omwenga, said the collaboration would focus on co-creation of content, sharing of infrastructure, laboratories and workshops, development of technology-oriented programmes, Continuous Professional Development courses, pedagogy training as well as joint research and innovation.

"We are very motivated to work together because this partnership makes it easy for us to strengthen capacity and provide more opportunities for learners. While OUK delivers programmes fully online, we recognize that technical courses require significant practical work. That is why collaboration with institutions like KSTVET is key in enhancing the practical aspects of our programmes," said Prof. Omwenga.



Standing Left: KSTVET Chief Executive Officer, Dr. Edwin Tarno and OUK Vice-Chancellor Prof. Elijah Omwenga

He noted that OUK has invested in cutting-edge infrastructure including virtual laboratories, AI tutors and a Learning Management System that can support 20,000 concurrent users. "Our Vision is "The Innovative University for Inclusive Prosperity." We provide flexible and affordable access to education by breaking barriers of time, space, access, availability, affordability and quality," he added.

The Vice-Chancellor further highlighted the University's ongoing partnerships with leading global institutions such as Indira Gandhi National Open University, Open University of China, Huawei Kenya, the World Bank and local institutions including the Kenya School of Government and Kenya Agricultural and Livestock Research Organization (KALRO). He revealed that the University is set to launch new programmes such as the Bachelor of Nursing tailored for Diploma and Certificate holders already working in health institutions.

KSTVET Chief Executive Officer, Dr. Edwin Tarno, welcomed the proposed collaboration, noting that logistics, space and cost have often limited training opportunities for many learners. "Partnering with OUK will give us a chance to expand practical training while also leveraging online delivery to reach more students efficiently," Dr. Tarno said.

On her part, OUK Deputy Vice-Chancellor Academic Affairs, Prof. Carolyn Omulando, emphasized the importance of Continuous Professional Development, especially in online pedagogy. She said the University had already developed Professional Development Courses in E-learning Essentials, Online Assessment and Online Facilitation Pedagogy to build capacity among lecturers and tutors.

"This collaboration will not only strengthen our own programmes but also provide a wider pool of professional development opportunities for teachers, lecturers and trainers across the TVET sector," Prof. Omulando noted.

Both institutions expressed optimism that the partnership will create a stronger pathway for Diploma students to progress to degree studies while also contributing to the national goal of expanding access to quality, affordable and flexible higher education and training.

OUK PARTNERS WITH KISII COUNTY TO STRENGTHEN HEALTHCARE CAPACITY

The Open University of Kenya (OUK) has entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Kisii County Government, Department of Health, to foster cooperation in healthcare training, research and service delivery.

The MoU was formally signed at the County Executive Committee (CEC) Office, Department of Health, marking a significant step towards enhancing healthcare capacity and building clinical competencies within the region.



Prof. Christopher Chepken (seated right), Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Planning and Infrastructure at the Open University of Kenya, and Ms. Susan Kalinda (seated left), Chief Officer of Health, Kisii County Government, pose for a photo after signing the Memorandum of Understanding. Standing behind them are other distinguished officials from the Open University of Kenya, Dr. Nickcy Mbutia at the extreme right and the Kisii County Department of Health.

The agreement outlines a collaborative framework in clinical education, health research and the application of scientific knowledge to improve patient care outcomes. It also opens opportunities for joint initiatives that align with Kenya's Universal Health Coverage (UHC) and national education goals.

Commitment to Transformative Collaboration

Speaking during the signing ceremony, Prof. Christopher Chepken, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Planning and Infrastructure, reaffirmed the University's commitment to supporting counties in developing skilled healthcare professionals through flexible, technology-driven learning models.

He noted that the University's fully online programmes allow healthcare workers to pursue further education without leaving their duty stations—bridging the skills gap and enhancing service delivery in the health sector.

Shared Vision for Improved Health Outcomes

Kisii County's Chief Officer for Health, Ms. Susan Kalinda, welcomed the collaboration, describing it as timely and transformative. She emphasized that the partnership will empower healthcare workers through continuous professional development, ensuring better patient outcomes and stronger health systems.

Also speaking during the event, Dr. Marita Omeke, Chief Executive Officer, Kisii Teaching and Referral Hospital, highlighted the importance of linking academic research with hospital practice to promote innovation and improve healthcare delivery.

PARTNERSHIP WITH DEFENSE FORCES TECHNICAL COLLEGE BUILDS MILITARY CAPACITY IN AI AND CYBERSECURITY

The Open University of Kenya (OUK) hosted a delegation from the National Defence University-Kenya (NDU-K) at Konza Technopolis in a collaborative engagement aimed at strengthening professional development within the defence forces through technology-driven learning. The delegation, drawn from the Defence Forces Technical College (DEFTEC), was led by Colonel (Dr.) John R. Kisilu, the Deputy Commandant and included Major Alexander Tarus, the Head of the School of Science and Technology, alongside student representatives pursuing emerging fields of study in Artificial Intelligence and Cybersecurity.

The collaboration, which is facilitated by Huawei Technologies through its Academy Manager, Michael Kamau, seeks to build the capacity of DEFTEC students and staff in Artificial Intelligence and Cybersecurity. Through this partnership, the participants are undertaking the Huawei Certification in AI and Cybersecurity (HCAI-AI) courses, designed to enhance their digital competence and practical skills. Upon completion of these certifications, the pilot group of learners will progress to the Master of Science in Artificial Intelligence and the Master of Science in Cybersecurity starting in January 2026. The larger objective of this partnership is to progressively build capacity across the entire military in various domains of technology and innovation to meet emerging national and global demands.



Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic Affairs), Prof. Carolyn Omulando, (left) explains a point to members of the DEFTEC team during the collaborative meeting held at Konza Technopolis

In her address, Prof. Omulando commended the officers for embracing digital learning and reaffirmed the University's commitment to supporting their educational journey. She remarked that OUK was honoured by their enrollment, noting that they were following in the footsteps of the Head of State, who has also joined the University. Colonel (Dr.) Kisilu described the collaboration as a timely response to the evolving digital needs of the military, emphasizing that DEFTEC was committed to financing the officers' progression to Masters programmes upon successful completion of their professional courses. Ms. Ogonda reassured the learners of OUK's continuous academic support, while Mr. Mulinge guided them through a practical session on navigating the Learning Management System (LMS), demonstrating how to access lectures, upload assignments and interact with instructors online.



The Vice Chancellor, Prof. Elijah Omwenga, (in red necktie) poses for a photo with representatives of the Defence Forces Technical College (DEFTEC): Col. (Dr.) John R. Kisilu (left), Maj. Alexander K. Tarus, Head of ICT at DEFTEC, Prof. Carolyn Omulando (in yellow), and Mr. Dan Mulinge (right).

The delegation later met the Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Elijah Omwenga, who officially welcomed them to the University and expressed appreciation for their decision to embrace open learning. He observed that the University's flexible and accessible online model aligns well with the needs of modern professionals, particularly those in demanding fields such as the military. The Vice-Chancellor noted that the University looks forward to expanding the collaboration to benefit more officers across the Defence Forces.

The partnership between the Open University of Kenya, the Defence Forces Technical College and Huawei Technologies marks a significant step in advancing digital education and national capacity building. It reflects a shared vision of integrating Artificial Intelligence and Cybersecurity into defence training, ultimately aligning Kenya's military expertise with emerging global technologies and innovations that will shape the future of national security.

STUDENT INNOVATIONS

VOTERSWALL GAINS TRACTION IN CAMPUS ELECTIONS



The Assistant Dean of Students, Ms. Betsy Wanjala (Centre), with student innovators. I have added a comma after (Centre).

The Open University of Kenya (OUK) continues to make strides in digital innovation, with its latest achievement revolutionizing campus elections. Through VotersWall, a cutting-edge digital voting system, OUK has set a new benchmark for secure, transparent and efficient electoral processes in learning institutions across Kenya.

Developed by a student

At the core of this success was cybersecurity, a key component in safeguarding voter data and maintaining election integrity. Developed by Innocent Kiboto, a student of the Bachelor of Science in Cybersecurity and Digital Forensics, the system employs end-to-end encryption, multi-factor authentication and real-time monitoring to prevent tampering and unauthorized access. These robust security measures fostered trust among students, administrators and election stakeholders, positioning VotersWall as a game-changer in digital elections.

Revolutionizing Campus Elections

Following its triumph at Kiambu National Polytechnic, VotersWall is rapidly gaining national recognition. Leading institutions such as Kisii National Polytechnic, Kisumu National Polytechnic, Kabete National Polytechnic, Friends National Polytechnic - Kaimosi, Ramogi Institute of Advanced Technology, and Mawego National Polytechnic have already embraced the platform, with many others exploring its adoption.

Shaping the Future of Digital Democracy

The Open University of Kenya proudly celebrates this milestone, highlighting how homegrown innovations in cybersecurity can reshape democracy in the digital age. With its success in campus elections, VotersWall is poised to revolutionize voting systems beyond Kenya's borders, offering a future of secure, transparent and efficient electoral processes.

NEXT-GEN INNOVATORS INTO KENYA'S TECH ECOSYSTEM UNLEASHED



including the Open University of Kenya, during the KIEP-SKIES program – a World Bank-funded initiative equipping youth with technical and entrepreneurial skills for Kenya's innovation-driven economy



Sixth from left: Principal Secretary, State Department for Industry, Dr. Eusebius Juma Mukhwana, poses for a photo with graduates



From left: Principal Secretary, State Department for Industry, Dr. Eusebius Juma Mukhwana, Prof. Carolyn Omulando, DVC (AA) OUK, award a certificate to graduate

In a vibrant display of innovation, ambition and academic excellence, Open University of Kenya (OUK), in partnership with six other premier institutions, proudly celebrated the graduation of 39 trailblazing students from the Rapid Tech Skills Program in May, 2025.

The joint Graduation Ceremony, held at the Kenyatta University Amphitheatre, was a momentous occasion that signaled not only the end of a rigorous training journey, but the dawn of a new era in Kenya's digital landscape.

The program, a key initiative under the Kenya Industry and Entrepreneurship Project – Strengthening Kenya's Innovation Ecosystem (KIEP-SKIES), was funded by the World Bank and designed to prepare youth for Kenya's dynamic tech-driven economy. By blending cutting-edge technical education with entrepreneurial acumen, the program empowered graduates to become agile contributors in fields critical to national development.

Delivered collaboratively by seven universities—Open University of Kenya, Kenyatta University, JKUAT, Dedan Kimathi University of Technology, Kibabii University, Technical University of Mombasa and Mama Ngina University College—the initiative reflected a united national effort to transform higher education into a launchpad for industry-relevant innovation.

The graduates were trained in globally sought-after domains including:

- Data Science & Artificial Intelligence (AI)
- Cybersecurity
- Software Engineering
- Entrepreneurship & Soft Skills – a unifying module tailored to build business agility and team leadership.

Presiding over the ceremony was the then Principal Secretary, State Department for Industry, Dr. Eusebius Juma Mukhwana who issued certificates to the graduates. From OUK, notable attendees included Prof. Omulando (Deputy Vice Chancellor – Academic Affairs), Prof. Chris Chepken (Deputy Vice Chancellor – Planning and Infrastructure), Dr. Catherine Kagucia (Ag. Deputy Registrar Academic Affairs), Dr. Beth Kiratu (Ag. Dean, School of Science and Technology) and Ms. Lilian Mbonari (Administrative Assistant).

"This is not just a graduation but a launchpad," said Prof. Omulando. "We are not only building tech capacity; we are cultivating Kenya's future innovators, thinkers and industry leaders."

PUBLIC LECTURES

SMART EDUCATION IN A GLOBAL CONTEXT: EXPERTS DISCUSS AI-DRIVEN TRANSFORMATION IN HIGHER LEARNING



Smart Education

In February this year, the Global Smart Education Network brought together leading scholars and education experts to discuss the role of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in transforming higher education. The event, as part of Global Context Webinar Series, featured distinguished professors and researchers who explored how AI-driven solutions are reshaping learning environments, policy development and research methodologies worldwide.

AI as a Transformative Tool in Education

The Vice Chancellor, Prof. Elijah Omwenga, emphasized the transformative power of AI in accessing and disseminating knowledge. He highlighted the numerous opportunities AI presents in academia, including enhanced teaching methods, curriculum development and student engagement. He also articulated that OUK has already drafted a framework to integrate AI and other digital technologies into teaching and learning noting that faculty members are being trained on these innovations.

"AI provides a window of opportunities for the future," he remarked, adding that it has revolutionized how work is done in academia and beyond.

AI's Impact on Education and Industry

Professor Yang Junfeng of Hangzhou Normal University, China, outlined how AI is transforming the education sector and industries, offering innovative solutions to various challenges. He cited Tsinghua University as a pioneering institution utilizing a 100-billion AI model that supports multiple disciplines, public research and automated learning tools. Some of the advancements he mentioned include: Automatic question generation, AI-powered research and computation, Real-time monitoring and AI-driven evaluation systems, Data-driven governance in education and AI applications in agriculture, such as data sensing and digital farming design.

These innovations, he noted, are reshaping learning and research while enhancing institutional efficiency.

AI and Human Interaction in Education

Dr. Francesc Pedró, Director of the UNESCO International Institute for Higher Education in Latin America and the Caribbean, provided insights into UNESCO's efforts to leverage AI for improving human interaction in education. He noted that AI is addressing key educational challenges, including: Linguistic support for multilingual learning, Cognitive assistance to support diverse learning needs and Time efficiency in education management and content delivery.

Dr. Pedró further highlighted California State University's AI initiatives, which focus on evolving assessment strategies, expanding access to education and fostering immersive learning experiences. He emphasized that AI's future in education is promising particularly in Policy creation, Ethical AI integration in education and Human-centered approaches to AI development.

The Future of AI in Higher Education

As the discussions concluded, it became evident that AI is revolutionizing higher education, offering innovative solutions for teaching, governance and research. Experts agreed on the need for institutions to develop policies that ensure the ethical and effective integration of AI. With AI's potential to enhance learning experiences, improve institutional efficiency and bridge educational gaps, its role in shaping the future of education is undeniable.

The Webinar reinforced the urgency of embracing AI in education while ensuring that its implementation remains inclusive, ethical and human-centered. Institutions worldwide are now challenged to adopt AI-driven solutions to remain competitive and relevant in an increasingly digital world.

YOUTH AS CATALYSTS OF ECONOMIC GROWTH: INSIGHTS FROM AN ENGAGING PUBLIC LECTURE TO STUDENTS

Education, innovation and skill development emerged as the cornerstone of youth empowerment, with the Director of Research at the Central Bank of Kenya (CBK), Prof. Robert Mudida, underscoring the necessity of acquiring relevant skills to enhance employability. He also noted the importance of youth-led innovation in shaping global markets and economies.

With Africa's youth population rapidly expanding, their role in shaping the global economy has never been more critical. Recognizing this, the Open University of Kenya (OUK)



A Poster presentation of the Public Lecture

hosted a thought-provoking Public Lecture on the economic potential of young people, featuring Prof. Mudida, as the keynote speaker. The discussion delved into both the opportunities and challenges that come with a burgeoning youthful workforce and explored pathways to harness their potential for sustainable growth.

Unlocking the Economic Potential of Africa's Youth

Prof. Mudida emphasized the potential of Africa's youthful population, describing it as a key driver of economic transformation if harnessed effectively. He cited the demographic dividend as a significant advantage for African nations, referencing the economic success of the East Asian Tigers as an example of how a young workforce can fuel rapid development.

He highlighted the necessity of education, innovation and skill development in empowering youth and improving employability. Additionally, he stressed the role of youth-led innovations in shaping global markets and fostering economic growth.

Challenges Facing Youth in Kenya

Despite their immense potential, Kenyan youth face significant challenges, including high unemployment rates, underemployment and brain drain. Prof. Mudida urged students to develop a broad reading culture beyond textbooks, seek mentorship and acquire both hard and soft skills to remain competitive in an evolving job market.

He further emphasized the importance of financial literacy, technological adaptability and foreign language proficiency in enhancing global competitiveness. Personal development, work-life balance and community engagement were also highlighted as key elements in shaping well-rounded individuals.

Interactive Q&A Session

The session concluded with an engaging Q&A segment, where Prof. Mudida addressed pressing concerns from attendees. Topics discussed included the impact of diaspora remittances on Kenya's economy, financial lending opportunities for young entrepreneurs and job creation strategies.

Next Steps and Action Points

Several key takeaways emerged from the Lecture, outlining actionable steps for students and stakeholders:

- Open University of Kenya students were encouraged to explore internship opportunities at CBK, as advertised on its official website.
- Students were advised to prioritize skill development, learn foreign languages and adopt a broader reading culture to enhance global competitiveness.

The Public Lecture served as a timely reminder of the vital role young people play in economic development. As Africa navigates a fast-evolving global economy, equipping its youth with the right skills and opportunities will be key to unlocking sustainable growth and prosperity.

YOUTH AS CATALYSTS OF ECONOMIC GROWTH: INSIGHTS FROM AN ENGAGING PUBLIC LECTURE TO STUDENTS

A Conversation on the Future of Learning

The Open University of Kenya (OUK) held a high-profile Public Lecture in May. The Lecture centered on the transformative role of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in education and training, marking a key milestone in the University's mission to position itself at the forefront of digital innovation in higher learning.



A poster presentation of the Public Lecture

Embracing AI in Open Education

Prof. Caroline Omulando, the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic Affairs) in her welcoming remarks, underscored the relevance of AI for open learning institutions.

"As an open learning University, it is imperative that we engage with technologies that can broaden access, personalise learning and foster academic innovation," she said, emphasizing the institution's commitment to digital transformation. AI as a Disruptive but Necessary Shift

The Chairperson of the University Council, Prof. Ezra Maritim, provided a strategic overview, describing AI as a "disruptive force that demands a shift in mindset and methodology." He called for deliberate upskilling across the University to meet the demands of a rapidly evolving digital environment.

AI in Higher Education

The keynote address was delivered by Dr. Bakari Diallo, founder of Subula Consulting Firm in Vienna, Austria and a seasoned expert in digital education and open educational resources. Drawing from his vast experience across Africa and beyond, Dr. Diallo delved into the opportunities and challenges of integrating AI into teaching and learning. His insights sparked enthusiastic engagement from participants, prompting a series of forward-looking commitments from the participants.

Institutional Commitments: Charting the AI Integration Roadmap

Following the Lecture, the University leadership outlined a strategic roadmap to guide the institution's AI integration efforts. Key

initiatives include:

- Developing a strategic plan for integrating AI into operations and curriculum across all faculties.
- Creating policies on responsible use of AI tools like ChatGPT in academic work by both students and faculty.
- Assessing the University's infrastructure and training needs to support effective AI deployment.
- Empowering faculty to use AI in course development and delivery while upholding academic integrity.
- Drafting an AI implementation roadmap with input from external experts.
- Addressing ethical and data privacy concerns tied to AI use in academic and administrative contexts.
- Exploring strategic partnerships with tech institutions and universities to advance AI integration in higher education.
- Fostering a culture of responsible and informed AI use through ongoing learning forums for staff and students.



CLASS OF 2025 YEARBOOK

POSTGRADUATE DIPLOMA IN LEADERSHIP AND ACCOUNTABILITY



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PLA/80028/2024



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Eliud Wekesa
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Njiru Joy C Mwende
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Jehosophat king Oduor
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Kungania Martin Mwenda
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Boniface Kimutai Khavugwi
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PROGRESSIVE CERTIFICATIONS

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Hillary Kipkemoi Kirui
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Mutisya Duncan Kimanzi
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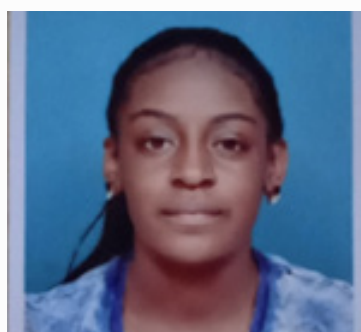
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ST01/0016/2023



Omeri Evans Otواني
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Diana Elizabeth Makokha
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Austin Omondi Apollo
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James Atwoli Otoi
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Innocent Kiboto Masese
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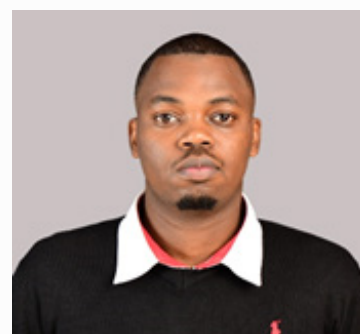
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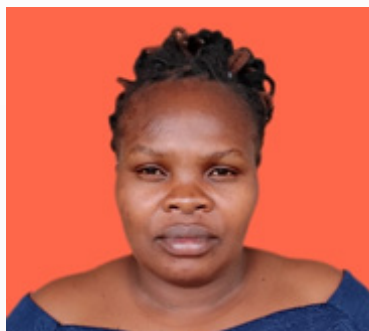
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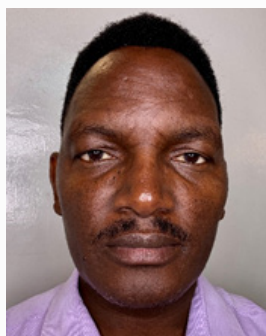
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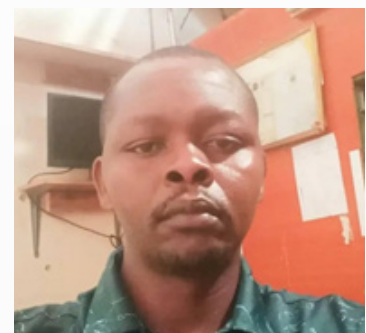
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