

# HEET Project Pledges Brighter Future for OUT



20 Billion Earmarked for OUT's Teaching & Learning Facilities

# EDITORIAL

## PRESERVING THE POTENTIAL OF YOUNG GIRLS: A CALL TO ACTION

In the ongoing struggle to emancipate girls and women from the shackles of inequality, numerous inspiring quotes have echoed through the corridors of history. One particularly resonant adage proclaims, "If you educate a man, you educate an individual. But if you educate a woman, you educate a nation." Decades have passed since these words first stirred the collective conscience, yet their relevance endures, albeit in a new context.

Today, we find ourselves in an era where the imperative is to propel women into the forefront of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) fields. This epoch demands a workforce that embraces diversity, harnessing a multitude of perspectives to drive innovation and creative exploration. Gender inclusivity lies at the heart of this imperative, for it is the insights and contributions of women that hold the power to transform our world for the better.

Despite comprising half of the global population, women remain vastly underrepresented in STEM disciplines, with many countries, including Tanzania, witnessing a glaring gender gap in these traditionally male-dominated domains. The untapped potential of women in STEM is a lamentable reality, impeding not only individual progress but also hindering the advancement of society at large.

It is an irrefutable truth that a nation cannot thrive if it stifles the aspirations of its women, depriving itself of the talents and perspectives of half its populace. The time has come for society to awaken to this reality and unite in ensuring that young girls are afforded equal opportunities to pursue STEM education and careers.

We commend the Government and the World Bank for their foresight and commitment to gender equality through initiatives like the Higher Education Economic Transformation (HEET) project. By sponsoring young girls from underprivileged backgrounds to undertake STEM Foundation Programs at institutions like the Open University of Tanzania, they are igniting the flames of opportunity where ambition had previously dimmed.

This investment in the education and empowerment of young girls is not merely an act of benevolence; it is an investment in the future prosperity and well-being of our nation. As more women enter STEM fields, our workforce will become more diverse and resilient, better equipped to tackle the complex challenges facing our society.

Let us seize this moment to break down the barriers that have long hindered the progress of young girls. Together, let us pave the way for a future where every individual, regardless of gender, can fulfil their potential and contribute meaningfully to the advancement of humankind.

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# MESSAGE FROM THE VICE CHANCELLOR



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**Prof. Elifas Bisanda**

*The Vice Chancellor  
The Open University of Tanzania*

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*Dear stakeholders of the Open University of Tanzania community,*

I am thrilled to extend a warm welcome to you as we unveil the inaugural edition of the Higher Education Economic Transformation (HEET) Project Newsletter. It brings me great joy to share some exciting developments that will shape the future of our esteemed institution.

Thanks to the HEET project, the Open University of Tanzania has successfully secured a transformative deal amounting to \$9 million. This substantial fund will play a pivotal role in elevating various facets of our university, marking a significant leap forward. Notably, a key initiative under the project involves the construction of seven cutting-edge zonal science laboratories. In addition to the infrastructural advancements, the HEET project places a strong emphasis on enhancing the quality of teaching. A portion of the funds has been allocated to sponsor advanced studies for our academic staff, both at home and abroad. Recognizing the importance of technology in education, investments will also be made to enhance our ICT-driven teaching and learning infrastructure.

Addressing gender disparity is a crucial aspect of our commitment to inclusivity. The project aims to narrow the gender gap in the academic fields of Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathemat-

ics and Tourism and Hospitality (STEM), traditionally perceived as male-dominated domains. To this end, a scholarship for science female students to the foundation program has been designed to support young women and girls in gaining admission merits to STEM degree programs.

I extend our sincere gratitude to the Government of the United Republic of Tanzania and the World Bank for their invaluable support in making this project a reality. The World Bank, in particular, has been a steadfast partner, playing a crucial role in facilitating various projects, including the construction of the impressive nine-story ODL Tower at our university's headquarters in Dar es Salaam.

As you peruse this inaugural edition of the HEET project newsletter, you'll gain insights into the scope of the project and the myriad benefits it brings to the Open University of Tanzania and its wider community. I hope you find this reading experience both enlightening and enjoyable.

Warm regards,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Elifas', written over a dotted line.

**Prof. Elifas Bisanda**

*The Vice Chancellor  
The Open University of Tanzania*



# A CALL FROM THE OUT'S HEET PROJECT COORDNIATOR



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**Prof. Deus Ngaruko**

*HEET Project Co-Coordinator and Deputy  
Vice Chancellor for Academic, Research, and  
Consultancy Services*

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*Dear Open University of Tanzania community staff and Stakeholders!*

I trust this message finds you in good health. I am reaching out to extend a warm invitation to all members of the Open University of Tanzania community and our esteemed stakeholders to actively engage and collaborate in the successful implementation of the Higher Education for Economic Transformation (HEET) project. Your active participation is crucial to the success of this initiative, and we eagerly welcome any constructive input and feedback that will contribute to the realization of our shared objectives.

The HEET project, a transformative initiative generously funded by the World Bank and overseen by the Ministry of Education, Science, and Technology, is aimed at empowering public universities to serve as catalysts for economic transformation. Our primary goal is to not only produce graduates but to nurture job creators and innovators who can significantly contribute to our nation's GDP.

In addition to achieving the project's goals, we are committed to exceeding expectations and making a lasting impact. Your support and dedication to the Higher Education for Economic Transformation project will be deeply appreciated. Together, we can shape the future of our students and positively influence the economic landscape of our nation.

Thank you for your willingness and readiness to offer your support.

Best Regards,



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**Prof. Deus Ngaruko**

*OUT's HEET Project Co-Coordinator and  
Deputy Vice Chancellor for Academic, Research, and Consultancy Services*

## A WORD FROM THE OUT'S HEET PROJECT ASSISTANT COORDNIATOR

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**Dr. Timothy Lyanga**

*Assistant HEET Project Coordinator of  
the Open University of Tanzania*

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*Dear staff, students and stakeholders of the Open University of Tanzania community!*

I am thrilled to share some exciting updates on the Higher Education for Economic Transformation (HEET) project, which stands as a testament to our collective efforts in enhancing the teaching for active participation in the economic transformation of our nation.

One of the significant facets of the HEET project is the establishment of a cutting-edge studio dedicated to recording online teaching study materials. This modern studio will not only elevate the quality of our online materials but also enhance their comprehensibility, fostering a more engaging learning experience for all.

Furthermore, the HEET project will result in a range of valuable investments for our university, including state-of-the-art science laboratories, a dynamic research and innovation hub, and upgraded ICT infrastructure. These investments are pivotal for academic transformation and are expected to contribute to the overall growth of both the university and the nation.

The collaborative efforts of all stakeholders, including our dedicated staff and students, will be instrumental in bringing this project to fruition. Working together will be key to ensuring that the benefits which will be derived from the HEET project are mutually advantageous.

I extend my appeal for your commitment and support. Let us work together towards a brighter future for our university and the broader community.

Warm regards,

**Dr. Timothy Lyanga**

*Assistant HEET Project Coordinator of the Open University of Tanzania*







# HEET PROJECT

Higher Education for Economic Transformation Project



*The Former Permanent Secretary in the ministry of Education, Science and Technology, Dr. Francis Michael (seated left) signs a Memorandum of Understanding with the Vice Chancellor of the Open University of Tanzania, Prof. Elifas Bisanda, for the implementation of the World Bank funded Higher Education for Economic Transformation (HEET) project as Ministry and OUT lawyers look on. The event held on June 20, 2022 at NACTVET campus in Dar es Salaam*

## HEET Project Pledges Brighter Future for OUT

The Open University of Tanzania (OUT) anticipates improvements in personnel and revenue growth owing to the implementation of the 21 Billion/- Higher Education for Economic Transformation (HEET) Project.

The OUT's Vice Chancellor - Planning, Finance and Administration, Prof. George Oreku, speaking to the newsletter recently, said the project will positively impact various aspects of the university. He underscored that it will enhance both human resources and revenue growth, open up new job opportunities including that of Lab Technicians, and strength-

en project management capacity among the university staff.

"I want to express my gratitude to the Ministry of Education, Science, and Technology for including us in the project which will allow our institution to stand up and manage itself. In so doing, we will invest in several areas," said the professor.

He went on to note that the project has unveiled academic scholarships for staff members to study within the country and overseas. After the end of the project, the university anticipates having an increased number of staff members with Master's degrees and PhDs.

This in turn, with the addition of new employees, will decrease the shortage of personnel and ultimately boost performance.

Prof. Oreku stated that a portion of the project's funding would be used to buy various items to help with implementation, which after the project is finished would belong to the institution. He listed some of the things that will be of tremendous assistance to the university both before and after the project, such as automobiles, assets, and office supplies.

Speaking to the newsletter, Dr. Timothy Lyanga, the



*Prof. George Oreku,*

► Co-Project Coordinator at the OUT, explained that the university Staff Development Unit hopes to acquaint staff with research skills as part of the HEET project to increase their ability and enhance their performance.

"In this project, 1.8 billion shillings have been set aside for various trainings. Given this fund, it is obvious that our institution is prospering, and with such intellectual training of our staff, the university will have many experts who can advance their individual and society's overall development". Said Dr. Lyanga.

The HEET project is carried out under the auspices of the World Bank through the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology. ■

## 20 Billion Earmarked for OUT's Teaching & Learning Facilities

The Open University of Tanzania (OUT) is gearing up to improve its teaching and learning facilities through the Higher Education Economic Transformation (HEET) project funds to make the entire learning and teaching process smoother and more effective.

This was said by the Deputy Vice Chancellor of the Open University of Tanzania (OUT), Prof. Alex Makulilo, who oversees Regional Services and Learning Technologies, recently when inspecting the implementation progress of the HEET project sub-components in departments under his office.

"This project will assist in overcoming some of the difficulties associated with learning technology and facilities. It will specifically enhance the existing facilities and make some new purchases, which will ultimately boost the services we provide," remarked Prof. Makulilo.

Prof. Makulilo further said the ongoing project will build seven (7) zonal laboratory facilities in seven different regions hence bring the lab services closer to students and stakeholders. This will relief them from the

current burden of traveling to Dar es Salaam whenever they want to carryout science experiments.

The improvement of learning facilities, according to Dr. Lawi Yohana, the OUT's Coordinator of the Teaching and Learning Services Unit, intends to reach more students using Information and Communication Learning Technologies.

Dr. Yohana noted that the HEET initiative will provide OUT with about 20 billion for the improvement of its infrastructure, technology, and learning facilities. This is a smart step because open and online learning is the easiest and most affordable way to give education. He emphasized the fact that educating 200,000 students in conventional institutions costs the government more than six hundred billion shillings.

Dr. Yohana urged the government and other stakeholders to increase their investments in open and online learning given the World Bank's prediction that the number of university students will increase to more than 5,000,000 shortly as a result of free primary and secondary education.

## 14 Regions to Benefit from the Heet Project

The government is implementing significant reforms in Higher Education institutions under the Higher Education Economic Transformation (HEET) project, The Minister of Education, Science and Technology, Prof. Adolf Mkenda, said.

Prof. Mkenda was speaking at the project agreement signing event between the Ministry and

Vice Chancellors and Directors of project beneficiary Higher Education Institutions at the National Council for Technical and Vocational Education and Training (NACTVET) Hall.

"This endeavour will significantly alter the higher education landscape; Academic staff will have some of the project money used to sponsor their Master's and Doctoral degrees. Additionally, the ►





► funding will be utilized to build science laboratories and improve infrastructure,” the Minister said.

Prof. Deus Ngaruko, the HEET Co-Project Coordinator and Deputy Vice Chancellor for Academic, Research, and Consultancy Services at the Open University of Tanzania, noted earlier that the project will bring the university about 23 billion shillings, which will be used to enhance various aspects of the university.

“We expect to build seven (7) zonal laboratory facilities in the country. Each facility will house seven equipped labs in the fields of science, tourism/hospitality and IT. These labs will house both domestic and foreign researchers, taking into account the educational and financial

benefits of their investigations”. Said Prof. Ngaruko.

The Ministry of Education, Science, and Technology is in charge of the 972 billion shillings, five-year HEET project. The World Bank has released funds to implement economic change through higher education. Approximately 14 Facilities will be built by Higher Education Institutions benefiting from the initiative in 14 different regions.

However, only seven regions will directly benefit from the cutting-edge scientific lab facilities that the OUT will construct. The regions earmarked for the labs are the Coast Region, Morogoro, Arusha, Mbeya, Mwanza, Mtwara, and Njombe. ■



*The Deputy Vice Chancellor - Academics, Research and Consultancy, and the Coordinator of the HEET project at the Open University of Tanzania, Prof. Deus Ngaruko, led the meeting to introduce and familiarize the HEET project to Directors, Deans and Head of Departments, held on July 12, 2023 at the OUT Headquarters in Kinondoni, Dar es Salaam.*

## A PhD Program by Coursework Coming Soon

The Open University of Tanzania (OUT) will soon start offering the Doctor of Philosophy degree program by Coursework, says the University Coordinator for Teaching and Learning Services.

The Coordinator, Dr. Lawi Yohana, was complimenting comments earlier made by Prof. Deus Ngaruko, the Deputy Vice Chancellor of Aca-

demic, Research, and Consultancy that the institution has begun revising 52 curricula as a result of the Higher Education Economic Transformation (HEET) project funding.

“As part of the initiative, we are developing a PhD program by coursework and dissertation. Similarly, masters and undergraduate programs will be developed after incorporating all the ►



► views from our graduates, employers, peers and stakeholders from the industry which were collected in recent tracer studies”.

According to Prof. Ngaruko, who is also the University’s HEET Project Coordinator, the OUT was only required to review 22 curricula and develop four new ones. However, due to internal efforts, the money will be used to revamp 52 curricula.

“We can leverage ourselves to do far more than the project’s goals, thanks to the support we received from the HEET Project. We are reviewing 52 curricula instead of the targeted ones, adding four new ones—two in the faculty of science and two in the faculty of arts and social sciences,” remarked Prof. Ngaruko.

According to Prof. Ngaruko, the World Bank’s

investment through the HEET initiative will replace the outdated curricula that do not prepare graduates for self-employment. The focus of the new curricula will be on preparing graduates with self-employment-ready skills and altering their mindset to embrace self-employment.

Dr. Lawi commented later on the change by saying that tracer studies for curricula review, which were carried out by heads of departments, had taken into consideration the opinions of the OUT graduates and employers and highlighted the need for more soft skills by our students.

Dr. Lawi continued by saying that the plans to evaluate curricula with a focus on self-employment are consistent with the national development strategy, which calls for graduates to be knowledgeable in their fields of study and prepared for self-employment. ■

## Construction of Research and Innovation Centre to Start Soon

The Open University of Tanzania (OUT) is finalizing arrangements for the construction of a Center for Research, Innovation, and Entrepreneurship at Bungo, Kibaha in the Coast region with the help of the Higher Education Economic Transformation (HEET) project financing.

The Deputy Vice Chancellor of the OUT responsible for Academics, Research, and Consultancy, Prof. Deus Ngaruko, revealed this during the inaugural meeting of the Research, Innovation and Entrepreneurship Committee at Mapinga in

Bagamoyo from March, 3 to 5, 2023.

“We evaluated the viability of our numerous cities, and Bungo-Kibaha, which is the largest with 105 hectares, turned out to be the best. This is enough to build a sizable facility of that kind to turn people’s project ideas into significant discoveries through research.” said Prof. Ngaruko.

The centre, he continued, “will not only house science laboratories for various disciplines, but it will also serve as a base for the development ►



*One of the security officers takes care of the Bungo site, giving instructions to the special task team formulated in order to discuss and plan the establishment of the research and innovation centre of the Open University of Tanzania, expected to be built at Bungo, Kibaha. The team visited the site on March 2, 2023 and held a meeting before visiting an area estimated at 105 acres.*

► of various innovations in the nation, as well as entrepreneurial activities that will help students learn more practically, enabling them to graduate with the knowledge and skills that will make them more productive.”

The Head of the Department of Innovations in the Directorate of Research, Publications and Innovation (DRPI) of the Open University of Tanzania's, Dr. Khamis Kalegere, asserted that the project will turn many researchers and entrepreneurs into a pool of inventors and manufacturers because at the center they will conduct in-depth research to ensure the creation of parti-

ent products that meet international standards. “We will turn tiny ideas into large projects that will improve citizens' lives and boost the economy of our nation after doing feasibility analysis on the ideas that will be submitted at the centre,” remarked Dr. Kalegere

The centre for Research, Innovation, and Entrepreneurship will be constructed at Bungo, in Kibaha Town. Kibaha town is the capital of Cost region and one of the fastest growing towns in Tanzania. It is located in Eastern Tanzania, 40 km west of Dar Es Salaam city, along the Dar Es Salaam - Morogoro Highway. ■



*Director of Higher Education in the Ministry of Education Science and Technology, Dr. Kennedy Hosea (centre), in a group photo with the top management of the Open University of Tanzania and Heads of various departments, delegates from the World Bank, the Ministry of Education Science and Technology and part of 141 students during the inauguration of the first intake of the special Foundation programme receive subsidy from the HEET project's sponsorship. The event was held on October 13, 2023, at the Open University of Tanzania offices in Kinondoni, Dar es Salaam.*

## HEET Project Rekindles Hope for More Women in Sciences

The Vice Chancellor of the Open University of Tanzania (OUT), Prof. Elifas Bisanda, said Higher Education Economic Transformation (HEET) project will contribute to promoting gender equality by encouraging high participation of female students in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) fields.

“The trend of women entering universities is modest in comparison to the number of females who complete secondary school. Women admitted to STEM disciplines are at even lower rates. HEET Project will rekindle the dreams of girls and women to pursue careers in the disciplines of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics.” Prof. Bisanda said. ►



► Prof. Deus Ngaruko, the university's Deputy Vice Chancellor for Academic, Research, and Consultancy, said that the Open University of Tanzania is currently working on several curricula, including science and basic education that will enable women to pursue science programs.

"The Open University of Tanzania in collaboration with the Ministry of Education Science and Technology is doing a review to improve the Foundation Program to make it effective at attracting girls to the field of science. Girls from low-income families will get grants after finishing the program successfully and earning good grades so they can enroll in science degree programs. Prof. Ngaruko said.

The HEET project will fund 200 female students per year to enroll in an undergraduate science program at the Open University of Tanzania after completing a foundation course. For girls and women this is a once-in-a-lifetime golden opportunity.

## New Curriculum to Address Skills Discrepancy in Tourism

Deputy Vice Chancellor of Academics, Research, and Consultancy at the Open University of Tanzania (OUT), Prof. Deus Ngaruko, argues that many Tanzanians working in the tourism and hospitality industries in Tanzania lack competitive advantage because of existing discrepancy between the skills trainees acquire and the skills needed by the sector.

As a result, the majority of employees in the industry are unable to keep up with the demands of the increasingly competitive global marketplace and the need for high-quality goods and services.

For tourism staff to adapt to new trends and shifting paradigms, training is a crucial prerequisite. With funding from the HEET project, the OUT is creating a curriculum in response to

Dr. Janeth Isanzu, the project's gender focal person, praised the study for highlighting the value of encouraging girls and women to pursue careers in the traditionally male-dominated sectors of science, technology, and mathematics. The project seeks to ensure that the untapped potential of women and girls is realized and utilized in the workforce.

"In order to draw more women into the fields of science, technology, and mathematics, the university has also developed a gender policy. Even the proposed labs will be built with women's needs in mind, providing a range of amenities that will encourage them to use the labs." Dr. Isanzu said.

The HEET project, which supports gender equality in science fields in higher education nationwide, will provide funding for around 1,000 female students at the open University of Tanzania over the course of its five-year lifespan. ■

this need to provide trainees with extra knowledge and abilities that close the industry's skills shortages.

"The project's goal is to empower universities to be instrumental in advancing the national economy. Therefore, it intends to enable them to directly boost the GDP by producing income or a capable labor force for different sectors." Prof. Ngaruko said.

Dr. Halima Kilungu, head of the Department of Tourism and Hospitality, said that the department needs facilities for practical training to operationalize the intended curriculum and guarantee that the learner is well prepared.

"We hope to train our graduates in such a way that when they start working, they will have the necessary skill and competence required in the industry and be able to work at all levels of tourism as needed and more effectively." Dr. Kilungu said.

The tourism sector is one of the key sectors that contribute to the economy at the national and global levels. It contributes almost 10% of global GDP. In Tanzania, its contribution stands at 17.6% of GDP, 25% of foreign exchange, 10% of total investments, and 1.5m jobs.







*Heads and Directors of various departments of the Open University of Tanzania (OUT) in a capacity-building workshop to create awareness and familiarise themselves with the HEET project held on November 11, 2023 and November 12, 2023 at the Kimere Hall in Bagamoyo district.*

## 75 of OUT's Curricula Under Significant Review

Deputy Vice Chancellor for Academics, Research, and Consultancy of the Open University of Tanzania, Prof. Deus Ngaruko reported that the university is overhauling most of its degree, master's, and doctoral curricula in response to shifting social needs, national aspirations, labor market forces, and professional needs.

Prof. Ngaruko, announced this significant effort recently during the launching of tracer studies at the university's temporary headquarters in Kinondoni, Dar es Salaam.

"With the financial assistance of the Higher Education Economic Transformation (HEET) project, around 75 curricula in various departments across all faculties are undergoing rigorous change." Prof. Ngaruko said.

Prof. Ngaruko highlighted several advantages that the university will gain from the review process, including the acclimation of the labor market,

entrenching entrepreneurial and other new courses in the curricula. He added that up to 25% of the adjustments to the new curricula are anticipated to come from the tracer studies.

According to Dr. Yohana Lawi, coordinator of the Teaching and Learning Services Division, the Tracer studies are the cornerstone of the activity to assess curriculum since they provide crucial input from alumni. In order to determine whether our graduates satisfy their needs and expectations, he added, opinions from the employers of our graduates will also be obtained.

Head of the Department of Geography, Tourism and Hospitality, Dr. Halima Kilungu, said the aim of the tracer studies is to pinpoint the OUT's graduates whereabouts and the activities they are doing to earn a living. This will help the university to appraise whether the skills they got are helpful in agitating their personal development and that of nation at large.

## 26 OUT Academics Receive HEET Project Scholarships

Twenty-six academic members have received scholarships for their Master's and PhD studies, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor - Research, Academic, and Consultancy of the Open University of Tanzania (OUT), Prof. Deus Ngaruko, has said.

Prof. Ngaruko, revealed the information of the HEET scholarship recipients when giving his general overview of the implementation of the HEET project in his office at the Headquarters of the Open University of Tanzania in Dar es Salaam.

According to Prof. Ngaruko, the number of scholarships was intended to be gender-balanced, but women did not attain that ratio because only ten of the 26 applicants were female.

"The majority of applicants were ICT specialists, while the remaining candidates had backgrounds in mathematics, physics, and the life

sciences. Scholarship recipients are enrolled in universities in South Africa, Malaysia, India, Kenya, the Open University of Tanzania, Mzumbe, and Nelson Mandela University," remarked Prof. Ngaruko.

One of the scholarship recipients, Mr. Godfrey Haonga, who was accepted into the University of Cape Town's PhD program in information systems in South Africa, emphasized that all staff members have an equal chance of receiving a scholarship and should submit applications eagerly.

Another scholarship recipient, Ms. Neema Magambo who is also the Director of OUT Lindi Regional Centre, advise the OUT personnel to make the most of the opportunity. She adds that the scholarship application procedure is straightforward and transparent and that all it takes to be eligible is to meet the requirements.



*Heads and Directors of various departments of the Open University of Tanzania (OUT) in a capacity-building workshop to create awareness and familiarize themselves with the HEET project held on July 12, 2022 at the OUT Headquarters, Kinondoni in Dar es Salaam.*



# Science Labs to Increase Property Values in Mtwara

The idea that the Open University of Tanzania (OUT), will construct Multipurpose Science laboratory in Mtwara for the South Eastern Zone, has thrilled Shangani ward inhabitants in the municipality.

In his remarks on September 25, 2023, during the environmental and social impact assessment (ESIA) session, Hon. Juliana Manyama, the Acting Director of Mtwara Municipality, stated that the project is a blessing to the municipality because it will address certain issues related to practical experiments in physics, chemistry, biology, and ICT.

“The idea is acceptable to the municipality; we think it would improve scientific students’ hands-on experimentation and create job possibilities for locals while the project is being built. To guarantee that there are no negative effects on the surrounding community and environment, the project shall adhere to the principles, procedures, and laws required for construction.” Hon. Manyama said.

Director of Tanzania Rapid Environmental Solution (Tres Consult Ltd.) Mr. Abel Sikaona, gave the Shangani West ward residents of Mtwara Municipal the assurance that the construction of OUT’s laboratory facility will not have an adverse impact on the environment or society. He further stated that throughout the building process suggestions and opinions made by residents will be respected and appropriately addressed.

Speaking to residents of Shangani West ward during a public meeting, Dr. Msafiri Njoroge,

Director of the Mtwara Regional Center of the Open University of Tanzania, stated that while there are many advantages to this project for the residents of Mtwara municipality, the primary one is that of making higher education closer and more accessible.

“The package of this project include four labs: the biology lab, chemistry lab, physics lab, and IT lab. This project will increase property values and open up a range of economic opportunities in our community. We are appreciative of the World Bank for funding it.” declared Dr. Njoroge.

According to Mr. Dharau Amlima, the Shangani West Ward Executive, the project is advantageous to the people of Shangani because, in addition to its other advantages, it will aid in the removal of dune bushes from the designated area, which are currently home to deadly creatures. Additionally, it will be a cure-all for the annoyance of the common pool of stuck rainwater in the plot both during and long after the rainy season.

Mr. Amlima asked locals to seize the chances the project will offer them, including stores, labor services, catering, and stationary services, so that builders and OUT recipients will have access to a range of businesses in the vicinity once the facility is operational.

Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA) has been finalized and construction of the Southern Eastern zone science laboratory in the region of Mtwara is expected to start rolling out soon.

*A team of Open University of Tanzania staff and Tres Consult Ltd leads Shangani ward residents to visit the plot where the southern zone laboratory is expected to be built in Mtwara municipality. The residents paid a visit to the areas and participated in the environmental and social impact assessment (ESIA) held on September 25, 2023 to September 28, 2023 in the respected municipality.*





# Foundation Programme to Boost Women Enrolment Rate in Science Programs

The goal of the Foundation Program is to enable Tanzania produce more female scientists in the near future, the Director of Higher Education in the Ministry of Education Science and Technology, Dr. Kennedy Hosea, told a meeting on October 13, 2023 in Dar es Salaam.

He was speaking at the inauguration of a Scholarship for Science Female Students to the Foundation program (OFP) funded by the Higher Education for Economic Transformation (HEET) project at the Headquarters of the Open University of Tanzania (OUT) at Biafra, Kinondoni.

“Tanzania’s total university enrollment rate is barely 7%; we aim to increase it. The HEET project will assist in admitting female students without secular admission qualifications to science university programs and boost the number of women enrolled in higher education through OFP. We also expect that this initiative will produce more female scientists in the future,” declared Dr. Hosea.

Earlier, Prof. Elifas Bisanda, the Vice Chancellor of the Open University of Tanzania, had expressed gratitude to the World Bank for its important contribution to the growth of the university since its founding. In this academic year, the bank is providing funding to a thousand OFP female students. He gave the Ministry of Education, Science, and Technology as well as the bank his word that the university was well equipped to carry out the training.

“Our university is well-equipped to manage the OFP program, and we anticipate that in the coming years, we will have trained a significant number of women enrolled in STEM programs at colleges around the nation. The goal of this grant is to encourage women with scientific backgrounds to take an active role in our nation’s growth. Says Professor Bisanda.

Gloria Machange, one of the recipients, praised the administration for giving her this chance and pledged that she would not take it to the west. She begged the government to keep awarding scholarships because they will help many girls whose ambitions have been dashed by a variety of obstacles come back to life.

After five years, it is anticipated that the HEET project will award scholarships to 1000 female OFP students. Girls with a background in science who do not meet the requirements for direct admission to universities offering science, technology, engineering, or mathematics programs are awarded the scholarships. Approximately 140 female students have effectively registered in the program’s initial phase, and those who finish it will be able to continue their education at the nation’s universities.

## Curricula for Engendering National Economy

The Vice Chancellor of the Open University of Tanzania (OUT), Prof. Elifas Bisanda, said the institution has started reviewing its curricula to make sure they meet and reflect the needs of contemporary society.

“The approach is preceded by a tracer study to learn more about the relevance of the programs. We want to know our graduates’ current locations and any knowledge gaps they may have. Additionally, discuss how the curriculum might be enhanced in some areas so that the incoming graduates will become professionals and be able to function in our economy.” Said Professor Bisanda.

He continued by saying that education should help citizens make wise use of the resources of the nation and contribute to their GDP and personal income. According to Prof. Bisanda, any irrelevant curriculum will be repealed during the process because it would be pointless to continue awarding students with certificates that adds no value in their life.

The professor concluded by saying that curricula and courses ought to be based on the current needs of our communities. We also want to know what is lacking and what the previous curricula main strengths were as part of the review.



Proposed Science Lab to be built at Kasingirima, Kigoma



Proposed Science Lab to be built at North Buswelu, Mwanza



Proposed Science Lab to be built at Mateves, Arusha

