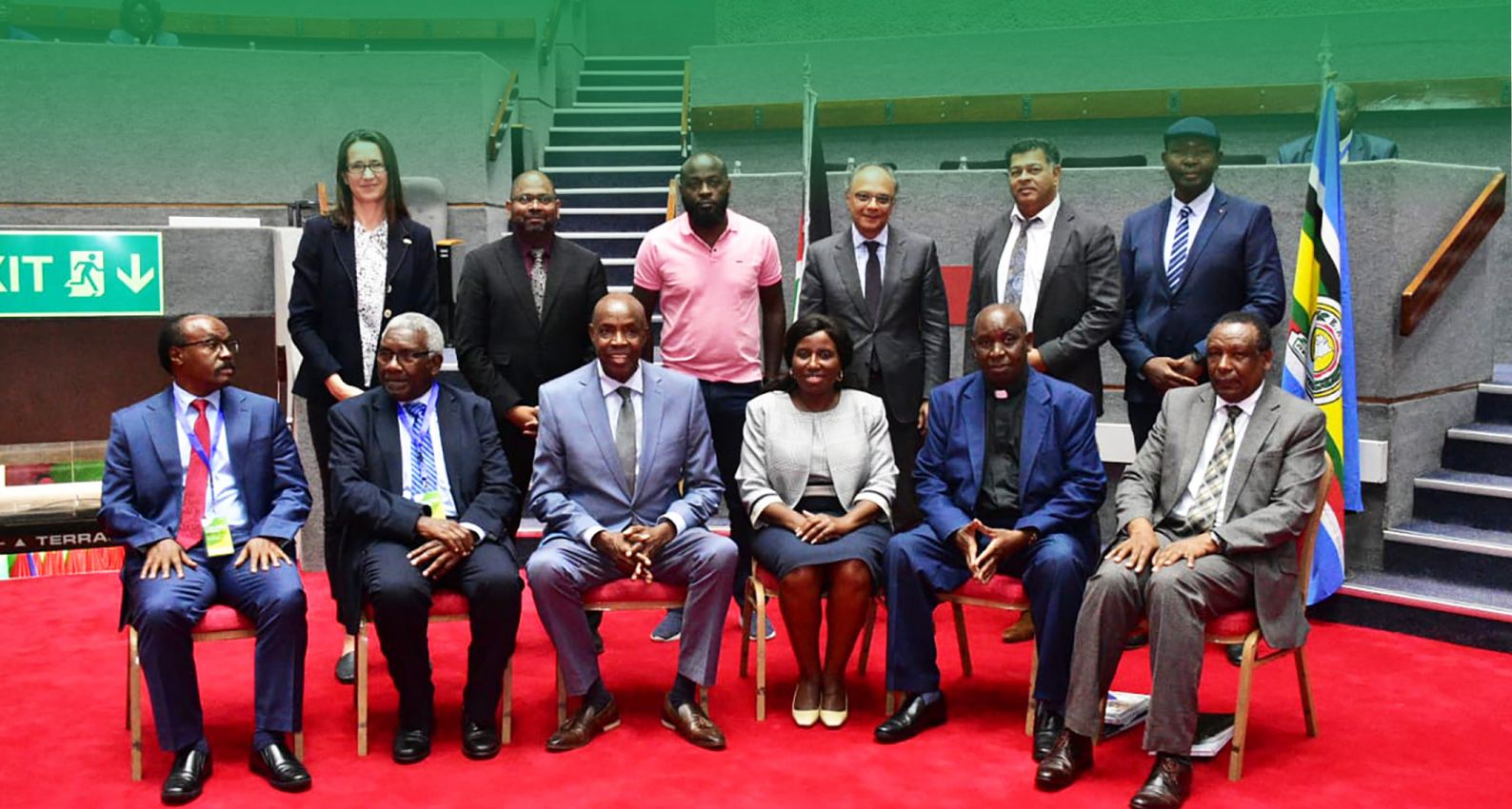


The  
**IUCEA**  
**NEWSLETTER**



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UCEA Champions Higher Education Integration at EAC Conference in Somalia

IUCEA Launches Regional Innovator's Sprint Up Programme

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# IUCEA attends the Biennial Conference for University Education in Nairobi



IUCEA Deputy Executive Secretary, giving remarks at Biennial Conference in Nairobi at KICC on the 12th of June 2024

The Inter-University Council for East Africa (IUCEA), Deputy Executive Secretary Idris A Rai, and Principal Research and Innovation, Dr. Salome Guchu attended the Biennial Conference on Universities Research and Innovation organized by the Commission for University Education (CUE) on the 12th of June 2024.

Some of the notable attendees at the conference include the Cabinet Secretary for the Ministry of Education, Republic of Kenya, Hon. Ezekiel Machogu, EGH, and the Principal Secretary for the Ministry of Education, Republic of Kenya, Dr. Beatrice Muganda Inyngala.

Prof. Rai mentioned that the main objectives of IUCEA are to facilitate networking among universities in the EAC member states and with universities outside the region.

The organization also aims to provide a forum for discussion on a wide range of academic topics and the maintenance of internationally comparable education standards in East Africa to boost the region's global competitiveness in higher education. Prof. Rai addressed various university stakeholders and dignitaries in Nairobi with these remarks.

Prof. Rai also stated that IUCEA recognizes strengthening

research and innovation in higher education institutions requires collaborative attention and effort, in addition to sustained financing instruments.

Among the staff that accompanied the Deputy Executive Secretary are Dr. Salome Guchu, Principal of Research and Innovation, and Gai P. Manyuon, Public Relations, and Corporate Communications Officer of the Inter-University Council for East Africa.

The Biennial conference, which was conducted on the 12th to 14th of June 2024 was attended by several Universities in Kenya.

# IUCEA Launches Regional Innovator's Sprint Up Programme



IUCEA Deputy Executive Secretary, Prof. Rai giving remarks at the launch on the 14<sup>th</sup> of June 2024 at Raddison Blu, Nairobi Kenya.

The Inter-University Council for East Africa (IUCEA) Deputy Executive Secretary, Prof. Idris A. Rai, officially launched the Regional Innovators' Sprint Up Programme and Digital Skills Training at Radisson Blu Hotel in Nairobi, Kenya on the 14th of June 2024.

The program aims to showcase the intended impact to stakeholders by strengthening the digital skills, innovation, and entrepreneurship capacities of the youth and universities. It also seeks to strengthen the Regional Collaboration Network of the EAC Innovation Ecosystem to increase cross-border transfer of knowledge, trade, and investments.

During the launch, Prof. Rai emphasized the need for

graduates to consider starting their businesses and highlighted the importance of universities including entrepreneurship in their curriculum to promote innovation and provide guidance to students and faculty. He also stressed the significance of universities working with industries to develop partnerships and create solutions that meet industry needs. Additionally, Prof. Rai emphasized the importance of universities addressing the needs of the community to stay relevant.

The Innovators Sprint Up Programme aims to strengthen academia-industry collaboration in digital skills training and innovation transfer to improve the uptake of digital skills and innovations by the industry in

the region. Its objective is to train and equip young innovators and budding entrepreneurs at universities across the seven EAC Partner States to establish sustainable business models and gain access to knowledge and tools needed to operate and scale up their startup ventures.

The Digital Skills Training Programme aims to equip young people from universities and businesses with the necessary market-oriented digital skills to increase their employability and provide businesses with the skills needed to harness the benefits of digitalisation and become more competitive and innovative. Three distinct digital skills courses will be offered to university staff, unemployed graduates, and company employees.

# IUCEA Concludes Regional ICT Policy Workshop in Kenya



IUCEA Deputy Executive Secretary, Prof. Idris Rai, Staff of IUCEA, and participants at the Nairobi Safari Club on the 10<sup>th</sup> of June 2024.

The Inter-University Council for East Africa (IUCEA) concluded the Regional ICT Policy Workshop in Nairobi, Kenya, which marked a significant step in advancing higher education through Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in the East African Community (EAC).

The Meeting for Development of ICT Policy Framework for Higher Education in the East African Community (EAC) was conducted from the 10th to 12th of June 2024 at the Nairobi Safari Club in Nairobi, Kenya.

The workshop focused on the Comprehensive ICT Policy Framework Draft; a robust policy document designed to meet the specific needs of higher education institutions in the EAC. It covers governance structures, infrastructure standards, access provisions, security protocols, and innovative strategies for teaching and learning.

The main objectives included developing a draft ICT Policy framework tailored to support the unique needs of higher education institutions within the East African Community, fostering active engagement and collaboration

among diverse stakeholders, and proposing an action plan that outlines the steps and timelines for reviewing, refining, validating, and ultimately endorsing the draft framework.

IUCEA, Deputy Executive Secretary, Prof. Rai called on members to actively participate, share their insights, and collaborate openly and seize the opportunity to shape the future of higher education in the region and create an environment where technology and education intersect to provide students with the best possible learning experiences and opportunities.

## IUCEA Champions Higher Education Integration at EAC Conference in Somalia



Participants from different universities in Somalia at EAC conference in Mogadishu

Following the entry of the Republic of Somalia into the East African Community (EAC), the Inter-University Council for East Africa (IUCEA) together with SIMAD University in Somalia and other partners co-organised the EAC Conference (EACON 2024). IUCEA participation at the conference was to champion the integration of Somali institutions into the EAC Common Higher Education Area.

The conference organised under the theme "Strengthening Regional Cooperation in East

African Community," it served as a platform to raise awareness of the benefits of Somalia's membership to EAC and promote collaboration between institutions in Somalia and the rest of EAC. Other conference co-organisers included the Somali Ministry of Education, Culture, and Higher Education, the University of Bayreuth in Germany, the Tanzanian-German Centre for Eastern African Legal Studies (TGCL), the German Corporation for International Cooperation (GIZ), Europe Central University, and the East Africa Business Council.

During the conference, IUCEA's Deputy Executive Secretary, Prof. Idris A. Rai, delivered a keynote address on EAC Common Higher Education Area and the potential benefits it presents to higher education institutions in Somalia. Prof. Rai emphasized that Somali universities stand to benefit from regional integration, which includes greater academic collaboration with other universities in the EAC, improved quality assurance, and recognition of qualifications offered by accredited universities and other tertiary institutions in Somalia.

Speaking at the conference, the Senior Principal Quality Assurance and Qualifications Framework, commended the Government of Somalia for their exceptional hospitality and highlighted the relevance of the conference's theme in relation to IUCEA's mandate of

enhancing collaboration among higher education institutions and research in the EAC.

Prof. Mawa said IUCEA's re-echoed the importance of integrating Somali institutions in the EAC to facilitate mutual recognition of qualifications, academic mobility,

and harmonisation of higher education standards. The conference participants engaged in discussions aimed at strengthening regional cooperation and fostering a sense of solidarity among institutions in Somalia and other institutions in EAC Partner States.

## IUCEA Hosts Sensitization Workshop on EAC Common Higher Education Area for Universities in Somalia



■ IUCEA Deputy Executive Secretary, Prof. Rai and Universities leaders in Mogadishu, Somalia on 26 June 2024

In an effort to integrate Universities in Somalia in the East African Community (EAC), the Inter-University Council for East Africa (IUCEA) held a national

stakeholders' sensitisation workshop in Mogadishu, Somalia. The event brought together Vice Chancellors and Rectors of leading public and private

universities in Somalis to discuss opportunities for institutions in Somalia in the East African Common Higher Education Area (EACHEA).

The workshop highlighted the importance of harmonising education systems across EAC to promote mutual recognition of academic qualifications, ease student and staff mobility, and enhance the quality of higher education in the region.

Speaking at the sensitisation workshop, the Deputy Executive Secretary of IUCEA,



**We are here to ensure that Universities in Somalia become aware of the benefits becoming members of IUCEA and EAC common higher education area which will ultimately lead to deeper regional integration**



Prof. Idris Rai, said: “The sensitisation workshop is the initial step in integrating Universities in Somalia in

EAC and the Common Higher Education Area”. He urged the universities to join IUCEA to realise the full benefits of EAC integration. “We are here to ensure that Universities in Somalia become aware of the benefits becoming members of IUCEA and EAC common higher education area which will ultimately lead to deeper regional integration.”

The Chairperson of the Association of Somali Universities, Prof. Dr. Mohamed Mohamud Hassan, underlined the importance of the sensitisation workshop to Somali institutions. "This sensitisation workshop is important in raising awareness among Somali higher education stakeholders about the various regional instruments and standards. I hope the Ministry of Education will move fast to establish the relevant institutions to ensure that institutions in Somalia fully benefit from EAC integration."

The Deputy Rector, Research at SIMAD University, Dr. Najib Isse Dirie, expressed optimism

about the possibilities of universities in Somalia joining IUCEA. “For Somali universities, this forum is more than just a meeting; it is a bridge towards greater opportunities in the EAC. We look forward to joining IUCEA to realise the benefits of being part of the EAC.”

The workshop featured a number of presentations including the history and establishment of IUCEA, overview of the East African Common Higher Education Area, Quality Assurance and Standards, mobility of students and staff in the EAC, including opportunities for scholarships and exchange programmes, as well as the benefits and processes for joining IUCEA.

The Inter-University Council for East Africa (IUCEA) is an institution of the East African Community (EAC) responsible for coordinating the development of higher education and research in the EAC.

# Arusha Technical College Unveils AI X-Ray Machine to Improve diagnosis and treatment of medical ailments



The guest of honor Dr. Baraka Kichonge (2nd left) On behalf of the ATC Rector) in a group photo with ATC officials and participants of the first ATC Research, Innovation and Career Guidance Week

Arusha Technical College held the Research, Innovation, and Career Guidance Week from 20th to 25th May 2024 to showcase and promote research and innovation from students and staff.

One of the standout innovations showcased was a revolutionary AI X-ray machine from the Electrical Engineering department. The AI X-ray machine displays diagnostic images and utilizes advanced technology to verbally communicate the findings to the operator, identifying the problem area. This provides clear verbal feedback, thereby minimizing the risks associated with misinterpreting X-ray images and enhancing accuracy in diagnosis and treatment.

There were several other innovations showcased during the week, with students showcasing their work through poster

presentations and prototypes. Notable contributions came from departments including Electrical Engineering, Information and Communication Technology (ICT), Mechanical Engineering, Civil Engineering, and Transportation Engineering.

Throughout the week, students had the opportunity to share their experiences with stakeholders both locally and internationally. Among the international participants were students from Clemson University in the United States, who presented their innovative projects to ATC students.

The week also involved career talks and guidance sessions focusing on practical advice for students on preparing and patenting their work. These sessions covered several important topics, including:

1. Business Startups
2. Grant Proposal Writing
3. Business Plan Writing
4. Intellectual Property Rights (IPR)
5. Proper Use of Digital Technology
6. Scientific Writing for Publication

The event successfully provided a platform for students to demonstrate their creativity and technical skills, fostering an environment of learning and collaboration. The innovations showcased exemplify the spirit of invention and technological advancement at the heart of ATC's academic community.

**By Makundi Senzota, Public Relations Officer at Arusha Polytechnic College**

## KIHBT Develops Innovative Highway Engineering Programs to Bridge Skills Gap in Infrastructure Sector



The guest of honor Dr. Baraka Kichonge (2nd left) On behalf of the ATC Rector) in a group photo with ATC officials and participants of the first ATC Research, Innovation and Career Guidance Week

Kenya Institute of Highways and Building Technology (KIHBT) specializes in capacity building for the infrastructure sector, with a focus on the roads subsector and TVET training programs. Since its inception, the institute has developed programs aimed at enhancing the quality of training and fostering regional integration.

Through the EASTRIP Project, KIHBT has developed 14 programs specifically in highway engineering technologies within the roads subsector. These programs are designed based on labor market surveys and the specific demand for capacity building from both government

and private sector organizations. Throughout the development process, the institute engaged with internal and external stakeholders, including industry representatives and county governments. The Ministry of Education provided oversight during this phase.

The newly developed programs aim to address skills gaps identified through labour market surveys. With participation from industry stakeholders, occupational standards were created and validated for adoption. The fourteen programs consist of six long-term competency-based programs at Level 5 and eight

short-term programs accredited by the Industry Advisory Committee (IAC).

Currently, these programs are being prepared for submission to the national accreditation agencies within the Ministry of Education. The institute is optimistic about soon enrolling students in the newly developed long-term courses.

**By Beatrice Njenga,**  
Communication Officer for  
EASTRIP at Kenya Institute  
of Highways and Building  
Technology

# Hawassa Polytechnic College Advances Toward Becoming a Textile and Garment Technology Centre of Excellence

Hawassa Polytechnic College is currently working to establish itself as a centre of excellence in Textile and Garment Technology, as part of the East African Skills for Transformation and Regional Integration Project (EASTRIP).

The project seeks to increase access to Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) programmes that are aligned with market demands. To support this goal, the EASTRIP Project at the college level, allocated over 80% of its budget to constructing essential training facilities and acquiring relevant machinery.

Construction of the TVET centre of excellence began on July 22, 2022, with a budget of 616,196,977.00 Ethiopian Birr (approximately 11.59 million USD). The project is being developed on a 6-hectare plot of land and includes multiple facilities: a learning factory, a G+5 dormitory for 360 trainees, a G+2 cafeteria and kitchen, a G+4 library, three storage buildings, and a perimeter fence.

As it stands, the construction is roughly 59.59% complete. Progress in the construction of specific facilities includes the learning factory at 53.74%, the dormitory at 61.6%, the library at 61.85%, the cafeteria at 70.03%, the fence at 59.22%, and the storage buildings at 68.95%.

The EASTRIP project is supporting Hawassa Polytechnic College to



improve the quality and availability of technical education at the College, helping the institution become a recognized hub for textile and garment technology education.

By Biruk Kassahun, M&E Specialist at Hawassa Polytechnic College

## TVET Students at Meru National Polytechnic Invent Robot to Automate Dairy Cattle Feeding



Students during the innovation exhibition at Meru National Polytechnic

Students at Meru National Polytechnic's Electrical Department have developed a robot that is poised to improve the way dairy farming is practiced in Kenya, making it more efficient and sustainable.

The robot automates the process of feeding cows in sheds by delivering fresh grass at programmed intervals. This not only reduces the labour required for manual feeding but also ensures that the cows receive their feed consistently and efficiently. The invention of the robot by students at Meru

National Polytechnic, highlights the value of the polytechnic's hands-on, competency-based training, demonstrating the ability of students to apply their skills to solve real-world problems. The Polytechnic is one of the first institutions in Kenya to receive accreditation from the Kenya National Qualifications Authority (KNQA). Upholding KNQA standards, the institution equips students with competency-based skills, fostering innovation and practical problem-solving capabilities.

Similarly, the Hospitality Department at Meru National Polytechnic is

also a hub of creativity, where students have crafted unique wines from ripe bananas and dates. These creations not only demonstrate resourcefulness in utilizing surplus fruit effectively but also showcase the students' commercial product development skills.

The polytechnic's hands-on approach ensures that graduates possess not just theoretical knowledge but also the practical skills needed to devise solutions in their fields. As a result, they enter the workforce as competent professionals ready to contribute meaningfully.



# General Wingate Polytechnic College Leads the Way in Green TVET Initiatives



Some of the greening initiatives at Gen Wingate Polytechnic College

General Wingate Polytechnic College has taken steps towards creating a more environmentally friendly campus through its green TVET initiatives. The College is focusing on activities such as tree planting and landscaping with grass to enhance the beauty of its surroundings and advance a culture of sustainability among its community.

The college's efforts to greening its campus has set an example for other TVET institutions

to emulate. Through the greening initiatives, General Wingate Polytechnic College has demonstrated how leadership and initiative can drive positive change towards a more sustainable TVET environment. The college has already improved its immediate environment and introduced conservation values to its students.

The greening initiative is in line with Ethiopia's goals for a "green plantation revolution," which puts

emphasis on green TVET practices and proactive approach towards environmental sustainability thus contributing to a more eco-conscious and sustainable society.

By Jemal Hansen, the EASTRIP Project Coordinator and Lemessa Demie, M&E Specialist at Gen Wingate Polytechnic College.



## Meru National Polytechnic to enhance TVET Training with Online Campus and Multimedia Studio



Instructors at the ODeL Centre at Meru National Polytechnic

The Meru National Polytechnic has introduced an Online Campus, named the Open Distance and eLearning Centre (ODeL Centre), that allows students to enrol in online courses and complete assessments remotely, offering flexibility to learners across the East Africa region.

This initiative, supported by the East Africa Skills for Transformation and Regional Integration Project (EASTRIP) with funding from the World Bank, includes establishment of a multimedia studio within the ODeL Centre.

The studio allows student engagement in dynamic and

interactive environment.

Trainers can easily share their courses and activities on social media platforms, boosting visibility and showcasing the institution's offerings globally. Instructors can create more captivating and effective learning experiences that include videos, animations, and interactive content to aid in explaining complex ideas, enhancing student understanding and retention for improved academic outcomes.

The Online Campus is relevant today's landscape where digital skills and remote learning are increasingly gaining popularity. The online learning environment provides a flexible learning environment catering to diverse

student needs, accommodating those balancing work or family commitments. This inclusivity promotes lifelong learning and ensures education is within reach for all, irrespective of circumstances.

EASTRIP's support included purchasing equipment to be used at the OdeL Centre which enhances educational infrastructure at the polytechnic, positioning it as the regional flagship TVET institute and fostering regional integration.

By David Maingi, Communication Officer, Meru Polytechnic College



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