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IUCEA successfully wraps up the APPPF in Kigali



IUCEA Executive Secretary, Prof. Banyankimbona, Hon. Joseph Nsengimana, Minister of Education, Rwanda and EASTECO Executive Secretary Dr. Sylvance Okoth during the APPPF on 12th of March 2025 in Kigali, Rwanda

The Inter-University Council for East Africa (IUCEA) successfully concluded a three-day forum on Academia-Public-Private Partnerships (APPPF) in Kigali, Rwanda, held from March 12 to 14, 2025. The forum was opened by Hon. Joseph Nsengimana, Rwanda's Minister of Education, who set the stage for insightful discussions on the crucial role of collaboration between academia, industry, and policymakers.

Keynote addresses were delivered by distinguished speakers, including IUCEA Executive Secretary Prof. Gaspard Banyankimbona and EASTECO Executive Secretary Dr. Sylvance Okoth, representing the East African Community (EAC) Secretary General. These leaders emphasized the importance of strengthening synergies between universities, industries, and government institutions to foster innovation and sustainable

development across the region. On the first day, expert panelists shared valuable insights on critical themes, such as leveraging university research for industry and community transformation, as well as enhancing university-industry partnerships to advance East Africa's sustainable development and global impact. Discussions highlighted the need for applied research, industry-driven curricula, and strategic investments in

technology and innovation to close the gap between academic knowledge and real-world solutions.

By fostering strong partnerships, East Africa can harness the power of research and innovation to address societal challenges, enhance economic growth, and position itself as a global leader in knowledge-driven development. The APPPF serves as a crucial platform for stakeholders to develop actionable strategies that will shape the region's future of education, industry, and policy.

During the opening ceremony of the APPPF in Kigali, Hon. Joseph Nsengimana officially launched the Research Excellence Framework for Higher Education in East Africa (REFHE-EA) and the IUCEA University-Industry Collaboration Strategy. These initiatives represent a significant step toward enhancing research excellence and fostering deeper collaboration between universities and regional industries.

"As a nation, Rwanda firmly believes that a well-integrated education system—one that is dynamic, inclusive, and responsive to real-world challenges—is key to unlocking shared prosperity. Strong academia-industry partnerships are essential for ensuring that our graduates are not merely job seekers but also job creators and solution providers, driving Africa's development forward," stated Hon. Joseph Nsengimana, Minister of Education, Rwanda.

Prof. Gaspard Banyankimbona, Executive Secretary of IUCEA, welcomed participants to APPPF 2025 and expressed gratitude to the Rwandan government for hosting the 13th forum. He urged participants to collaborate, share insights, and drive the development of transformative policies in higher education and research across the EAC.

In a bid to foster meaningful innovation and entrepreneurship

in East Africa, the Academia-Public-Private Partnership Forum (APPPF) resolutions have highlighted the importance of aligning university research agendas with industry needs. Collaboration between academic institutions and industry is deemed essential for developing solutions to local challenges.

Key to these partnerships is building trust and ensuring early industry involvement in academic processes. Experts advocate for co-creation and co-development of solutions, emphasizing sustainability as a shared goal.

Furthermore, universities are urged not only to generate ideas but also to establish pathways for commercialization. This includes implementing structured programs that support intellectual property and promote entrepreneurial thinking through dedicated innovation hubs.

The Heads of Institutions meet the EAC Secretary General



Hon. Veronica Nduva, EAC Secretary General with Heads of the Institutions on the 28th of February 2025 in Arusha, Tanzania.

On February 28, 2025, the Forum of EAC Heads of Institutions, led by IUCEA Executive Secretary Prof. Gaspard Banyankimbona, had the distinct honor of meeting with Hon. Veronica Nduva, the Secretary General of the East African Community (EAC), in Arusha, Tanzania. This pivotal engagement allowed for a thorough exploration of the latest developments within the EAC's institutional framework, while also addressing emerging needs that are crucial for the region's progress.

The atmosphere during the meeting was remarkably constructive and

collegial, promoting an open dialogue that encouraged each Head of Institution to articulate their unique challenges and concerns. Such collaborative spirit led to insightful feedback and actionable guidance from the Hon. Secretary General, underscoring a shared commitment to advancing the EAC's objectives.

Reflecting on these productive discussions, it becomes evident that regular meetings of this nature are essential for reinforcing our collective efforts toward successful regional integration. By fostering ongoing collaboration among EAC

Institutions, we can strengthen partnerships that will empower us to more effectively navigate the complexities of regional development.

“As we look toward the future, we must prioritize these engagements. They are not just opportunities for dialogue, but essential platforms for innovation and problem-solving. Let us commit to making these gatherings a regular occurrence, as they will undoubtedly enhance our collective ability to bring about sustainable growth and integration within the East African Community” said Prof. Banyankimbona.

Strengthening Collaboration for a Healthier Future: IUCEA Welcomes APHRC Delegation



IUCEA Staff with the delegation from APHRC on 3rd of March 2025 at IUCEA Headquarters.

On March 3, 2025, the IUCEA Headquarters had the honor of hosting a delegation led by Dr. Florah Karimi, the Head of Research and Capacity Strengthening at the African Population and Health Research Center (APHRC).

The visit marked an important step toward fostering deeper collaboration between two pivotal

institutions dedicated to advancing knowledge and improving health outcomes across the region.

Upon their arrival, the delegation was warmly welcomed by Gai Peter Manyon, IUCEA's Head of Public Relations and Corporate Communications, who extended sincere greetings on behalf of Executive Secretary Prof. Gaspard Banyankimbona. The atmosphere

was one of enthusiasm and shared purpose, as both teams recognized the potential synergy that could be harnessed through partnership. The meeting featured members from IUCEA, including Prof. Michael Mawa, the Head of Quality Assurance and Qualifications Framework; Dr. Salome Guchu, Head of the Research, and Higher Education Research Coordinator,

Prof. Philippe Tunamsifu. Their collective expertise enriched the discussions, validating the importance of interdisciplinary collaboration in tackling pressing health and education challenges. A highlight of the visit was the APHRC delegation's presentation of 200 copies of the latest publication on the Supervision and Mentorship Framework co-created by IUCEA and APHRC. This significant work showcases innovative practices and approaches that are vital for enhancing research capacity within the academic community. The sharing of such valuable resources exemplifies the commitment of both institutions to support research

excellence and mentorship.

The ensuing discussions delved into strategies to strengthen the partnership between IUCEA and APHRC, focusing on collaborative initiatives that could amplify their impact in both academia and public health. The exchange of ideas and insights served as a catalyst for envisioning future projects that promise to benefit not only their institutions but also the wider academic and health communities.

Manyuon expressed heartfelt appreciation for the visit, underscoring the shared commitment to advancing research

and capacity-building initiatives across the region. This meeting has not only solidified the bond between APHRC and IUCEA but has also laid a robust foundation for future endeavors.

As the two institutions embark on this collaborative journey, the potential for transformative change is immense. By working together, IUCEA and APHRC are poised to make significant contributions that will enhance educational frameworks and health outcomes, ultimately benefiting countless individuals across the region.

IUCEA Hosts Workshop on Educational Landscape in EAC



Fredrick Ndambuki, the Secretary of Administration in the State Department for Higher Education and Research in Kenya, IUCEA Executive Secretary, Prof. Gaspard Banyankimbona, and stakeholders from both basic and higher education in EAC at Nairobi Safari Club.

The Inter-University Council for East Africa (IUCEA) hosted a transformative one-day workshop on March 20, 2025, in Nairobi, aimed at improving the educational landscape in the East African Community (EAC). This important event brought together a diverse group of key stakeholders dedicated to tackling the significant quality challenges present at the intersection of basic and higher education.

The workshop serves as a dynamic platform for collaboration, allowing participants to share insights and develop actionable strategies to enhance educational quality across East Africa. It aligns directly with the ambitious EAC Vision 2050, which envisions a

harmonized educational system in the region. This system will feature thoughtfully designed curricula that meet job market demands and degree certificates that have recognized value across borders.

The potential for job creation and skill development is significant, and by participating in this workshop, stakeholders are taking essential steps toward achieving these goals. The day began with opening remarks from Fredrick Ndambuki, the Secretary of Administration in the State Department for Higher Education and Research in Kenya, who set the stage for impactful discussions.

"This workshop is a crucial opportunity for stakeholders to

address the quality challenges in education systems within the EAC region. We recognize the gaps between secondary and higher education that need our attention. The IUCEA's role is to facilitate dialogue and work toward solutions, as education is vital for socio-economic development.

With a young population in East Africa, we have a chance to build a prosperous future. Therefore, we must focus on addressing these educational challenges to ensure effective integration within the East African Community," stated Prof. Gaspard Banyankimbona, IUCEA Executive Secretary, during his address to representatives from various educational institutions in Nairobi.

National Sensitization on EAC Common Higher Education Area concludes in Nairobi



Higher Education Stakeholders in Kenya with IUCEA Staff in Nairobi, Kenya on the 17th of March 2025 in Safari Club Hotel

The National Sensitization Forum on the Common Higher Education Area which started from March 17 to 19, 2025, in Nairobi, concluded. The event concluded with an insightful address from the Chief Guest, Fredrick Ndambuki, who is the Secretary of Administration in the State Department for Higher Education and Research in Kenya. Ndambuki highlighted the significance of harmonizing tuition fees across the East African Community (EAC) and said such measures are essential for promoting integration among citizens of the member states.

The workshop, which brings together vice-chancellors and various higher education stakeholders in Kenya, aims to address critical issues surrounding

the future of higher education within the EAC.

Discussions will focus on collaboration, standardization, and the creation of a cohesive educational framework throughout the region.

Prof. Mike Kuria, CEO of the Commission for University Education, Kenya remarked on a pivotal moment in the evolution of higher education within the East African Community (EAC), stating, "As we stand on the brink of fully implementing the EAC Common Higher Education Area, it is crucial to recognize the tremendous potential this initiative holds for our universities and students across the region."

Prof. Gaspard Banyankimbona emphasizes the transformative potential of the EAC Common Higher Education Area roadmap, a pioneering initiative developed by IUCEA. He states, "One of the key outcomes is the regional accreditation of programs, which is already operational."

This vital step not only seeks to harmonize our education systems but also significantly enhances the recognition of qualifications and the mobility of students across the region.

Furthermore, Prof. Banyankimbona highlights a significant achievement: "the establishment of the East African Qualifications Framework for Higher Education."

EAC Higher Education Leaders Assemble in Nairobi



EAC Higher Education Stakeholders from Partner States in Nairobi Kenya on 21st of March 2025

The Meeting of Higher Education Authorities concluded in Nairobi, Kenya, on March 21, 2025. It gathered Heads of Higher Councils and Commissions from the East African Community (EAC) partner states.

This important event aimed to enhance collaboration among various national commissions and officials from the Ministry of Higher Education, with a particular focus on the qualifications framework. Key stakeholders engaged in discussions regarding pressing policy issues related to the recognition of qualifications, the diversity of entry requirements, and other contemporary challenges

in the education sector. This dialogue provided valuable insights into the differing standards and expectations across the region.

Another significant objective of the meeting was to identify and analyze the challenges involved in implementing the Convention on Common Higher Education in Africa (CHEA). The discussions included strategies to improve student mobility and establish effective qualifications frameworks among EAC partner states.

Additionally, higher education stakeholders reflected on the readiness of institutions to transition to competency-based

education and adopt transformative pedagogical approaches. This reflection is crucial for ensuring that educational practices evolve in response to student needs and job market demands.

The anticipated outcome of the meeting is a comprehensive understanding of the qualifications framework, along with the development of actionable strategies to address contemporary issues in the implementation of the Common Higher Education Area. This knowledge will ultimately guide policy development across the EAC partner states, fostering a more cohesive and effective higher education landscape in the region.

IUCEA Executive Committee Meeting concludes in Tanzania



Hon. Veronica Nduva, EAC Secretary General and IUCEA Executive Committee Members on 25th of March 2025 in Dar es Salaam.

The IUCEA Extraordinary Executive Committee Meeting concluded on the 25th of March 2025 in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, marking a significant moment for educational leadership in the region.

This important gathering has brought together IUCEA Board members from the East African Community (EAC) partner states, including the Permanent Secretaries responsible for education and Vice Chancellors from IUCEA member universities. They are engaging in meaningful discussions aimed at enhancing IUCEA's initiatives.

The presence of influential figures such as Hon. Veronica Nduva, the EAC Secretary General; Prof. Robert Deng, the Chairperson of the IUCEA Executive Committee; and the Vice Chancellor of the University of Juba highlights the significance of this meeting. With contributions from Prof. Gaspard Banyankimbona, the IUCEA Executive Secretary, the dialogue recommended key resolutions expected to drive impactful changes in the educational landscape.

This collaboration presents an exciting opportunity to advance education in our region, ensuring

that we are well-prepared to tackle future challenges and seize emerging opportunities.

During her opening remarks at the IUCEA Extraordinary Executive Committee meeting in Dar es Salaam, EAC Secretary General, Hon. Veronica Nduva commended the Inter-University Council for East Africa (IUCEA) for its important contributions. She stated, "IUCEA plays a crucial role in shaping higher education in the region."

New Mobile App Set to Enhance Handling of Grievances at Technical and Vocational Institutions in East Africa



Participants in a Group photo after the validation of the mobile APP.

A new mobile application is poised to enhance management of grievances at Regional Flagship Technical and Vocational Institutions in Ethiopia, Kenya and Tanzania supported by the World Bank through the Eastern Africa Skills for Transformation and Regional Integration Project (EASTRIP).

The Inter-University Council for East Africa (IUCEA), the Regional Facilitation Unit (RFU) for EASTRIP, is coordinating the development and implementation of this centralized Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM) mobile app.

The development of the Mobile App comes at a time when technical and vocational education

institutes are implementing various infrastructure projects, as part of EASTRIP, that require continuous tracking of grievances and complaints associated with project implementation.

The GRM App is a result of a collaborative effort between Dar es Salaam Institute of Technology (DIT) and IUCEA. DIT is one of the



■ Dr. Cosam Joseph, the EASTRIP Regional Project Coordinator during the workshop

■ Participants during the validation exercise of the mobile app in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

Regional Flagship TVET Institute in ICT that is supported by EASTRIP. The mobile app is designed to be more convenient for application by all project stakeholders.

Speaking at the Validation Workshop in held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, Dr. Cosam Joseph, the Regional Coordinator for EASTRIP, said: “The workshop is important in gathering feedback, discussing necessary improvements, and establishing a timeline for the app’s complete operationalization”.

The workshop brought together key stakeholders, including Environment and Social safeguards specialists from Regional Flagship TVET Institutes (RFTIs), and National Project Coordination Units (NPCUs).

During the five-day workshop, participants engaged in various activities, including presentations on the app’s features and functionality by the DIT app development team, up-to-date reports on environmental and social safeguards from RFTIs and NPCUs, and hands-on sessions for entering sample data and generating reports.

The App aims to provide a more flexible platform for handling grievances, especially those involving confidential information and stakeholders in remote locations. The system is also designed to support the collection, analysis, and reporting of grievance data, with plans to present this information in a dashboard

format accessible at various levels, including RFTIs, NPCUs, and the RFU.

“The development of the EASTRIP GRM mobile application underscores a commitment to efficiently and effectively manage grievances that may occur during the project’s lifecycle,” Dr. Cosam said.

Upon successful deployment, the GRM mobile app is expected to become an important tool for ensuring transparency and accountability within the EASTRIP project and contribute to the successful implementation and the achievement of the project goals. The mobile app can be accessed at: <https://shorturl.at/ONKgK>



IUCEA Staff with the delegation from APHRC on 3rd of March 2025 at IUCEA Headquarters.



IUCEA Executive Secretary and Burundian diplomat during APPPF conference in Kigali Rwanda



IUCEA Executive Secretary, Prof. Banyankimbona giving remarks during APPPF on 12th of March 2025 in Kigali, Rwanda.



IUCEA Staff , EASTECO Executive Secretary, Dr. Okoth , with Hon. Joseph Nsengimana, Minister of Education, Rwanda during APPPF on the 12th of March 2025 in Kigali, Rwanda



IUCEA Deputy Chairperson for EXEcutive Committee, Prof. Rose Nanyonga, IUCEA Executive Secretary, Prof. Banyankimbona, Hon. Joseph Nsengimana, Minister of Education, Rwanda and EASTECO Executive Secretary Dr. Sylvance Okoth during the APPPF on 12th of March 2025 in Kigali, Rwanda.



Penalists at APPPF Conference in Kigali Rwanda



Penalists and participants during APPPF in Kigali Rwanda



Penalists during APPPF in Kigali Rwanda



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