

# MAASAI MARA UNIVERSITY

### >>> NEWSLETTER <<<

THE VOICE OF ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE



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### TOP NEWS OF THE MONTH

### PROF P. ALOO-OBUDHO APPOINTED VICE CHANCELLOR OF MAASAI MARA UNIVERSITY

The Maasai Mara University community welcomes a distinguished academic and leader, Professor P. Aloo-Obudho, as its new Vice Chancellor. Her appointment marks a turning point for the institution, injecting a blend of academic excellence, proven leadership, and deep commitment to community impact. Professor Aloo-Obudho's journey began in 1990 as a Tutorial Fellow at Kenyatta University, igniting a passion for Fisheries Ecology that would define her career. From earning her Bachelor of Education (Science) and MSc. from the University of Nairobi to culminating in a PhD from Kenyatta University, she built a solid foundation in her field.

Her academic and managerial prowess further flourished as Deputy Vice-Chancellor in charge of Academics, Research and

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Student Affairs (ARSA) at Karatina University, where she honed her leadership skills and dedication to fostering vibrant academic communities.

Beyond academia, Professor Aloo-Obudho actively engages in consultancy and community service. Her work on projects like "Lake Baringo Community based integrated land and water management" and contributions to "Fisheries Industry in Kenya: towards the Development of a National Policy" illustrate her commitment to real-world application of knowledge. Further, her affiliation with professional bodies like the Fisheries Society of Africa and the Aquatic Science Association of Kenya showcases her recognized standing within the scientific community.

Professor Aloo-Obudho's achievements extend beyond mere accolades, with numerous national and international awards. Her work, some of which have had a profound impact on society and academia, exemplifies her dedication to advancing knowledge and making a difference.

This dedication is further reflected in her roles as Chairman of the Kenya Marine Board of Directors and East African Coordinator of the International Ichthyoparasitological Society, where she actively contributes to shaping the future of her field. Maasai Mara University stands poised for a new era of growth and transformation under Professor Aloo-Obudho's leadership. Her arrival brings excitement and anticipation, echoing across the vibrant campus from the heart of the Great Rift Valley.

The staff, faculty, and students stand united in their eagerness to learn and grow under her guidance, recognizing in her a leader who inspires, empowers, and champions the dreams of her community.

With Professor Aloo-Obudho at the helm, Maasai Mara University envisions itself becoming a global hub for knowledge creation, attracting renowned scholars and researchers. and leading groundbreaking research in critical areas like environmental sustainability and social justice. The university community, united in its commitment to excellence, stands ready to embark on this exciting journey alongside their new Vice Chancellor. Together, they will propel Maasai Mara University to even greater heights, leaving an indelible mark on the landscape of higher education.



The Deputy Vice Chancellor (A&SA) also had his appointment renewed for the second and final term by the University Council. This gives him another five years to serve in that capacity.

# EMBRACING INNOVATION: MAASAI MARA UNIVERSITY'S ODEL TRAINING WORKSHOP FOSTERS EXCELLENCE IN ONLINE EDUCATION



COL consultant Dr. Rebecca Wambua with Maasai Mara university Faculty members and staff during the ODeL policy development training workshop

Maasai Mara University (MMARA-U) recently concluded a highly successful Online Distance Education and Learning (ODel) Training Workshop, held from January 16th to 18th, 2024. This dvnamic initiative underscores institution's unwavering commitment to providing cutting-edge educational experiences that meet the needs of a diverse and evolving student body. dedicated faculty members Thirty-seven various academic representing disciplines participated in the workshop. The first phase, expertly facilitated by Anil Kumar, Dr. Sammy Mutisya, Professor Manyagi and Ms. Nila, with the invaluable guidance of COL consultant Dr. Rebecca Wambua, focused on the crucial task of ODeL policy development.

A spirit of collaboration permeated the workshop, evident in the insightful discussions, engaging activities, and collaborative policy development exercises.

The faculty members actively contributed to building a robust and effective framework for

online education, demonstrating their commitment to ensuring accessibility and quality for all learners.

The success of this initial phase can be attributed to the seamless coordination and expertise of the organizing team. Their dedication and guidance fostered a productive environment where diverse perspectives were encouraged and valuable insights were exchanged.

Going forward, the second phase of the workshop will delve into the equally crucial aspect of ODeL policy development. Faculty members will be equipped with the skills and knowledge necessary to create rich and engaging online learning experiences that cater to the unique needs of distance learners.

Professor P. Aloo-Obudho, Vice Chancellor of Maasai Mara University, expressed her full support for this initiative, stating, "The ODeL Training Workshop represents a significant step forward in our journey towards becoming a leader in online education.

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"We are committed to providing our faculty with the resources and training they need to deliver high-quality, accessible online programs that benefit all our students."

The anticipation for the second phase is palpable, with faculty members eager to build upon the momentum generated by the successful first phase. The insights gained during this workshop will undoubtedly shape the future of online education at MMARA-U, leading to more engaging and effective learning experiences for students across diverse backgrounds and locations around the world.



Maasai Mara University Faculty members and staff during the workshop

Maasai Mara University's commitment embracing innovation and inclusivity in education is evident in this ODeL Training Workshop. This initiative serves as a powerful example of how institutions can invest in faculty development to ensure that online education programs are at the forefront of quality and accessibility. As the university moves forward. this successful workshop paves the way for a future where technology and innovation are harnessed to empower students and faculty alike, propelling MMARA-U to even greater heights as a leader in online education.



Maasai Mara University Faculty members and staff during the workshop



Maasai Mara University Faculty members and staff during the workshop

# MAASAI MARA UNIVERSITY UNVEILS SMART CLASSROOMS, PIONEERING TECHNOLOGICAL TRANSFORMATION IN EDUCATION



Vice Chancellor- Prof. P. Aloo Obudho, Director Research and Innovation-Prof. Justus Simiyu, Registrar academic affairs- Dr. Otieno Fredrick Onyango, Director ICT and E-Learning- Anil Kumar and Dean School of Education- Prof. Beatrice Manyasi.

Maasai Mara University (MMARA-U) proudly strides into a new era of technological education with the unveiling of two state-of-the-art smart classrooms, officially opened by vice chancellor Prof. P. Aloo Obudho on January 30, 2024. The ceremony, graced by the presence distinguished university senators, marked momentous occasion, symbolizing the institution's unwavering commitment to equipping its students and faculty with the most advanced learning tools. These dedicated smart labs, brimming with cuttingedge smart boards and other innovative educational technologies, represent a first for MMARA-U. They are strategically designed to seamlessly integrate into the university's blended learning approach, enriching both online and offline educational experiences. This initiative embodies MMARA-U's dedication to continuous improvement and fostering a technology-driven learning environment where curiosity flourishes.

The interactive smart boards empower faculty members to become architects of interactive and dynamic learning experiences.

Imagine lecturers effortlessly recording tutorials directly on the boards, with the flexibility to share them across various cloud platforms, ensuring accessibility for all students. This innovative functionality allows students to revisit lectures and materials at their own pace, fostering a deeper and knowledge retention that understanding transcends the confines of traditional classrooms. The benefits extend far beyond mere convenience. This transformative step empowers faculty to adopt more engaging and dynamic teaching methods, stimulating active student participation and knowledge retention. Recorded lectures and readily available online materials ensure equal access to course content for all students, regardless of their location or learning pace. The smart boards further facilitate collaborative learning activities. encouraging students to work together, from each other, and hone critical

communication and teamwork skills that are

invaluable in the modern workplace.





Vice Chancellor- Prof. P. Aloo Obudho along with senators during launching of smart classrooms.

This bold step forward positions MMARA-U as a leader in innovative educational practices within the region, setting a new standard for excellence in teaching and learning. It is not just about embracing the latest technology; it is about preparing students for the future. By equipping them with the familiarity and skills to utilize cutting-edge technological tools effectively, MMARA-U empowers them to thrive in the ever-evolving global landscape.

The university's vision extends beyond these two initial smart labs. Plans are underway to extend this technological transformation to all schools, ensuring that every academic discipline benefits from these advanced tools. MMARA-U remains dedicated to fostering an environment where curiosity meets technology, and where learning transcends conventional boundaries.

With more innovations on the horizon, the university encourages both faculty and students to embrace these smart boards and explore the

endless possibilities they bring to the academic community.

This journey towards a tech-enabled academic future would not be possible without unwavering support of the University Council and the esteemed Vice-Chancellor. Their visionary leadership and commitment to championing the integration of technology into teaching and learning have paved the way for this transformative milestone.

Maasai Mara University stands tall as a beacon of educational excellence, shaping the future of education through technology. This momentous occasion marks the beginning of a connected and interactive learning experience, where students are empowered to become lifelong learners and responsible global citizens. The university takes pride in being at the forefront of this positive change, embracing technology as a catalyst for a brighter future in education.

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Vice Chancellor- Prof. P. Aloo Obudho during launching of smart classrooms.

#### University senators and staff during launching of



#### SPARKING INNOVATION TRAINING SESSION AT MAASAI MARA UNIVERSITY



MMARA-U Faculty, University Senate, School Programme Leaders and Post Graduate Students during training on Commercialization of Innovation and Entrepreneurial Institutional Maturity Framework by Dr. Tony Omwenga, CEO KeNIA

Maasai Mara University, a leading institution of higher learning in Kenya, took a significant step towards fostering innovation on 24th Jan 2024 with a training session titled "How to Promote Innovation in Institutes of Higher Learning: A Case Study of Maasai Mara University." The session, opened by the esteemed Prof. P. Aloo Obudho , Vice Chancellor and facilitated by the renowned Dr. Tony Omwenga, CEO KeNIA, proved to be an enriching and engaging experience for all participants.

The core focus of the training revolved around Entrepreneurial Institutions the Maturity Framework (EIMF), a valuable tool designed to guide aspiring entrepreneurial universities on their journey towards fostering innovation and entrepreneurship within their academic ecosystems. Dr. Omwenga delved into the aspects of the EIMF, including its application to higher education institutions, its differentiation traditional between and emerging entrepreneurial universities, and the

critical role of entrepreneurship in today's world.

To illustrate the transformative power of universities. Dr. entrepreneurial Omwenga presented compelling case studies. Participants learned about the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) Licensing Office, which has generated over \$3 billion revenue since 1986. and the licensing University of Waterloo's Velocity program, a successful start-up incubator that empowered entrepreneurs to raise over \$800 million funding. Additionally, Oxford in University Innovation, a renowned technology transfer office, showcased its impressive track record of supporting over 160 companies and generating over £90 million in licensing revenue.

Beyond the EIMF and case studies, the training session explored crucial elements for building a thriving entrepreneurial university.

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Dr. M. Newton during the training question session.



Prof. P. Aloo Obudho, Vice Chancellor, Dr. Tony Omwenga, CEO KeNIA

These included leadership, governance, and funding mechanisms, essential infrastructure, development of human capital, fostering robust linkages with external stakeholders, and implementing effective entrepreneurial education programs. The session also emphasized the importance of crafting clear policies and strategies to guide and sustain the university's journey towards innovation.

The training session concluded with an open and interactive discussion, where participants actively engaged with Dr. Omwenga and exchanged valuable insights. The overall atmosphere was one of enthusiasm and commitment, as faculty, staff, and students alike expressed their dedication



Dr. Tony Omwenga, CEO KeNIA, and Mr. Omuse during tree planting.

to propelling Maasai Mara University towards future marked by innovation and entrepreneurial spirit.

This training session marks a significant milestone Maasai University's in Mara endeavor to cultivate а dynamic and innovative learning environment. Βv embracing the valuable insights gleaned from the EIMF and the inspiring case studies the university is presented. poised empower its students and faculty to become generation of innovators and the next entrepreneurs, ultimately contributing to the prosperity Kenya progress and of and beyond.

## MAASAI MARA UNIVERSITY STAFF TRAINING OF QUALITY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (QMS) AT ESIKAR GARDENS HOTEL IN NAROK



Acting DVC (AF&S) and Members of staff pose for a group photo with the Director Great Conkors East Africa Limited (GCEAL) at the Esikar Gardens Hotel in Narok after the training.

Maasai Mara University conducted a training of Quality Management System (QMS) for its 32 selected staff members as Internal Quality Auditors, drawn from both academic and administrative divisions. focusing on ISO 9001:2015 and ISO 19011:2018 standards. The training took five days, from 12th to 16th January 2024 at Esikar Gardens Hotel in Narok and was facilitated by Mr. Martin Wekesa Nyongesa, the Director of Great Conkors East Africa Limited (GCEAL). The opening and closing ceremonies of the training workshop were presided over by Prof. James S. Nampushi, the Acting DVC (AF&S) on behalf of the Vice-Chancellor, Professor P. Aloo-Obudho. The entire exercise of the was coordinated Mr. Moses training by Okombo, the Assistant Registrar (PC&QMS). The objective of the training programme was to equip the participants with the knowledge and skills necessary for conducting quality internal audits based on the standards of the

5th Edition of the International Organization for Standardization (ISO). It covered seven topics: overview of key an quality management, understanding ISO 9001:2015 and ISO 19011:2018 standards, documented information for the quality management svstem. terminologies and principles auditing, audit process, audit preparation and conducting the audit.

At the end of the training, participants underwent a 90-minute examination. successful ones receiving certificates completion. The facilitator, Mr. Nyongesa, advised all auditors to familiarize themselves further with the ISO standards and the university's applicable QMS documents to skills. He further enhance their auditing recommended that the University Management should organize to train and sensitize all QMS process owners and implementors.



Members of staff Keenly following the training session at the Esikar Gardens Hotel in Narok.

# MAASAI MARA UNIVERSITY LAUNCHES 30 ENVIRONMENTAL CLUBS IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN NAROK COUNTY



Students and their patrons from 30 primary schools pose for photo at botanical garden after training on tree nursery production and management.

Maasai Mara University took a significant step towards environmental conservation in Narok County by launching 30 environmental clubs in primary schools in Narok County. The launch event, held on February 9th, 2024 was a remarkable initiative with the Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Peninah Aloo-Obudho hosting the Director General the National Environmental Management Authority (NEMA)-Mamo Boru Mamo who graced the occasion as the chief guest. The event aimed to not only promote environmental awareness but also foster a culture of sustainability among the younger generation. Mr. Mamo commended Maasai Mara University leadership taking а role in nurturing environmental stewardship at the grassroots level. Each school was represented by 5 students and two teachers referred to as patrons. The diversity of schools and participants showcased a collective commitment to environmental conservation across the region. During the launch, the Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Obudho said that the project is targeting young children because they will grow up with respect for the environment.

She informed the participants that the event is part of the initiative by the First Lady of the Republic of Kenya who launched a model Tree and Fruit Nursery at Maasai Mara University. In his remarks, Reverend Dawson Mudenyo representing Mama Doing Good lauded Maasi Mara University for taking the lead in promoting environmental conservation activities.

#### **Activities and Highlights:**

Distribution of Tree Seedlings and Tree Nursery Development Manual: Each participating school was provided with tree seedlings to kickstart their own tree planting initiatives together with a manual on tree nursery development and management.

The launch of 30 environmental clubs in primary schools by Maasai Mara University was a resounding success, marked by the establishment of the Maasai Mara University Environment clubs' corner by the Vice-Chancellor and the Director General NEMA. The University envisions expanding this initiative to 100 primary schools in the future.



DG NEMA planting a tree during the launch of Environmental Clubs. Looking on are the VC and Cncil Member, Ms. Agnes Busienei ( light blue suit).

The university is committed to providing ongoing support, resources, and expertise to ensure the success and sustainability of the environmental clubs.

This expansion aligns with the university's broader mission of promoting environmental stewardship and education in the region.



Vice- Chancellor and DG NEMA at the Environmental Clubs Corner



DG NEMA and Vice Chancellor with young environmentalists



DG NEMA, Mamo Boru Mamo Vice-Chancellor Prof. P. Aloo- Obudho , Council Member, Agnes Busienei with County officials during the launch of Environmental Clubs



Vice-Chancellor, DG NEMA, Prof. F. Mburu and Mr. G. Omuse after the launch of the Environmental Clubs



Rev. Dawson Mudenyo from Mama Doing Good giving a speech during the launch of Environmental Clubs.



A group Photo of DG NEMA, University Management and County officials at the Botanical Garden during the launch of Environmental Clubs

# SIGNING OF AN MOU BETWEEN WINDLE INTERNATIONAL KENYA AND MAASAI MARA UNIVERSITY



The Vice-Chancellor, Prof. P. Aloo-Obudho (3rd from left) and WIK Team led by the CEO, Ms. Phylis Mureu (4th from left).

A team from Windle International Kenya (WIK) led by Ms. Phyllis Mureu, the Executive Director visited Maasai Mara University on Tuesday 6th February 2024. They were welcomed by the Vice-Chancellor ,Prof. Peninah Aloo-Obudho. The objective of the visit was to sign a framework of agreement between Windle International Kenya and Maasai Mara University.

A meeting was held between the two teams to discuss possible areas of collaboration between Maasai Mara University and WIK. The Vice - Chancellor welcomed the Windle International Kenya team led by Ms. Phylis Mureu - the Executive Director to Maasai Mara University and acknowledged the walked with Windle iournev she has International Kenya way back while she was at Kenyatta University as Director Career Services, and at Karatina University, as the Deputy Vice-Chancellor in charge of Academics.

The VC acknowledged the noble role by WIK uplifting the lives of refugees and vulnerable communities. ln addition. she confirmed that Maasai Mara University was ready to partner with WIK in areas of mutual interest. WIK CEO, Ms Mureu appreciated the warm welcome and gave a brief about WIK. She stated that Windle International Kenya (WIK) is a Non-governmental Organization (NGO), based in Nairobi and its aim is to education livelihood improve the and and vulnerable opportunities for refugees communities affected by conflicts and displacement. It provides support for those communities in Dadaab, Kakuma Refugee camps and Kalobeyei intergrated settlement to access quality education and training (Secondary, Tertiary and Vocational training Colleges). WIK manages tertiary education scholarships at Certificate, Diploma, degree and postgraduate levels.



Signing of MOU between Maasai Mara University and Windle International Kenya



Maasai Mara University members and the WIK Team

# MAASAI MARA UNIVERSITY SIGNS AN MOU WITH GALILEE INTERNATIONAL MANAGEMENT INSTITUTE



The Vice Chancellor, Prof. P. Aloo-Obudho and the President of Galilee International Management Institute, Prof. Joseph Shevel signing the MOU

Maasai Mara University recently signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Galilee International Management Institute in Israel. The purpose of the MOU is to explore areas of cooperation in order to develop capacity building activities, research and other programmes. In implementing the MOU, either Party will be expected to exchange information that promotes the best practices with respect to policies and procedures particularly those related to quality assurance of joint activities. The key areas in the collaboration include joint research activities, exchange of staff and students, capacity building, joint seminars, conferences and workshops and any other activities as the parties may deem fit.

The MOU will cover the components of the university niche including Tourism, Natural and Resource conservation Management. Galilee International Management Institute is an internationally recognized institution with regard to capacity building of leaders in institutions of higher education. The MOU will enhance collaboration between the University and international organizations. The understanding will last for a period of three (3) years and will be reviewed successful implementation.



The Vice Chancellor and the President of GIMI exchanging the MOU after signing



Prof. Francis Mburu, President of GIMI, Vice-Chancellor and Mr. Alfred Nyabochua after the signing of the MOU

### MAASAI MARA UNIVERSITY'S CULTURAL WEEK 2024

Maasai Mara University held its 2024 cultural week whose theme was "Celebrating Diverse Cultural Heritage for Development" The event took place between 5th and 9th February, 2024. The event comprised the following activities:

- i) Display and show casing material culture of the Local Communities.
- ii) Food Expo and Festivals and,
- iii) Dance and Folk songs.

One of the activities was the Food Expo and Festival. The activity involved showcasing traditional cuisines. Eleven teams participated in the above contest which was held between the student mess and Serengeti hostel and was adjudicated by two members of staff.

done at the Ole Ntimama Squire, an exercise which was graced by the University Vice-Chancellor, Prof P. Aloo-Obudho, members of the University Management Board and the Cultural Week Planning Adhoc-Committee. The contesting teams were allowed to sell their food and retain any proceeds from the sales. The first three positions in the food expo competition were taken by the listed teams in the order in which they appear: Mijikenda, Maasai and Iteso in that order.

The second activity was a Dance and Folk

Food display by the contesting teams was

The second activity was s Dance and Folk Songs. Eight teams participated in the above contest which was held in LT 011 Lecture Room and was adjudicated by two external resource persons.





Pictorials During the Food Expo and Festival









Pictorials During the Food Expo and Festival

The first three positions in the dance competition were taken by the listed teams in the order in which they appear Mijikenda, Maasai and Iteso. Similarly, the following teams who participated in the folk songs competition carried the day in the order in which they appear as follows: Maasai, Mijikenda and Iteso.

The Cultural Week addressed the intended purpose of celebrating diverse cultural



Pictorials During Dance and Songs





heritage by giving each community an equal opportunity to showcase their cultures as depicted in their dances, folk songs and food. The students demonstrated that communities can embrace cultural diversity as as a source of strength and unity rather than division. The synergy experienced in this year cultural week is evidence that Kenyan community can co-exist to form a cohesive nation.





Pictorials During Dance and Songs



Pictorials During Dance and Songs

#### MAASAI MARA UNIVERSITY LIBRARY DEDICATION

The University Library was dedicated on the 6 th February, 2024. This is in line with biblical teaching where King David dedicated the Temple of the Lord before construction work started. The dedication event was presided over by Bishop Augustine Rugut. The event was attended by members of the University Management, staff and students led by the Vice-Chancellor, Prof. P. Aloo-Obudho. The Bishop urged the representative of the contractor to implement the project with integrity and according to the procurement procedures.

During the dedication of the project, the Bishop prayed that God will provide the resources required to complete the project. He urged members present to shun evil ways and walk in the ways of God. He added that the library project is part of the many projects that will be implemented in the university because of the Maasai Mara University of the New Beginning. The Bishop used the phrase; "The snare has been broken" meaning it is a new chapter in the history of the university. The Bishop stated that the forces that have worked against the university have been rendered powerless. In her opening remarks, the vice Chancellor, Prof. P. Aloo-Obudho elaborated on the importance of dedicating the library project being her first project in the university and looks forward to many more such projects to raise the profile of the university.

In conclusion, Bishop Rugut dedicated the site using anointing oil saying that the site where the library is being constructed is dedicated to God. He warned those who take shortcuts during such huge projects that they will face the wrath of God if they try to do so in this project.



Staff and students led by the VC during a short sermon to dedicate the Library



Ground breaking during the dedication



Dedication of the Library by Bishop Rugut



Bishop Augustine Rugut and the Vice Chancellor heading to the site of the library



Bishop Rugut and the VC before the dedication of the Library





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