



# MAASAI MARA UNIVERSITY

➤➤ NEWSLETTER ⇐⇐

THE VOICE OF ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE



The Second Lady Pastor Dr. Dorcas Rigathi, the First Lady of Narok County, her Excellency Agnes Ntutu and top University Leaders

## TOP NEWS OF THE MONTH

### IN THIS EDITION

- THE SECOND LADY PASTOR DR. DORCAS RIGATHI, ADDRESSES THE FIRST YEAR'S ORIENTATION 2023/2024 ACADEMIC YEAR
- AG. VICE CHANCELLOR PARTICIPATES IN TRAINING INDUCTION OF NEWLY APPOINTED VICE CHANCELLORS
- HUMAN RIGHTS JOURNALISM CURRICULUM IMPLEMENTATION PIONEERED BY MAASAI MARA UNIVERSITY
- MAASAI MARA UNIVERSITY AJIRA CLUB ACTIVATION ACTIVITY
- CUE AFFIRMS QUALITY UNIVERSITY EDUCATION
- MAASAI MARA UNIVERSITY BREAKS THE LONG-STAGNATED PC ANNUAL EVALUATION COMPOSITE SCORE FROM "GOOD" FOR THE LAST FIVES YEARS TO "VERY GOOD" DURING THE 2022/2023 EVALUATION.

### THE SECOND LADY PASTOR DR. DORCAS RIGATHI, ADDRESSES THE FIRST YEAR'S ORIENTATION 2023/2024 ACADEMIC YEAR

The visit by The Second Lady Pastor Dr. Dorcas Rigathi, of the Republic of Kenya and her speech to the first years was one of its kind. The talk was preceded by an insightful and well-grounded discourse on drug and substance abuse by The Rift Valley Regional Coordinator of NACADA. When the Second Lady arose to speak, her love for the students and desire for them to keep off from misusing drugs was evident. First-year students were encouraged to focus on their studies to be good citizens and leaders in the future. The Second Lady was flanked by the First Lady of Narok County Mrs. Agnes Ntutu who advised the



*Second Lady Pastor Dr. Dorcas Rigathi planting a tree.*

students to concentrate on their studies and avoid risky behaviours. Mrs. Ntutu reminded the students that the main business at the University is academic work.

The first year students reported to the University on Monday, 2nd October 2023. Most of the students were accompanied by their parents/guardians. The reception and registration of the students was done as per the five schools: School of Education, School of Business and Economics, School of Natural Resources, Tourism and Hospitality, School of Pure, Applied and Health Sciences, and School of Arts, Humanities, Social Sciences and Creative Industries.

The process of transitioning from high school to university is a challenging endeavor characterized by a sense of unease and unfamiliar encounters. Orientation program is of great significance in ensuring a seamless and prosperous transfer by offering essential academic, social, and personal assistance, acquainting students with campus



*A section of students listening to the speech by Pastor Dr. Dorcas Rigathi.*



*Second Lady Pastor Dr. Dorcas Rigathi, Narok County First Lady Agnes Ole Ntutu, Chairman of Council Dr. Kennedy Ole Kerei, and Ag. VC Prof. P. Aloo-Obudho*

resources and cultivating a feeling of affiliation and fraternity within the university community.

Remarkable to note in this year's orientation program was the presence of Council Chairman, Ag. Vice-Chancellor, Narok County Government and the Second Lady of the Republic of Kenya, Dr. Pastor Dorcas Rigathi, who addressed the first-year students on 6th and 7th October 2023.

The matriculation ceremony began with an academic procession

and the VC's address, which focused mainly on the 5Ms of the University namely: the Mau Forest, the Mara River, the Maa Culture, the Maasai Mara Game Reserve, and Maombi Kwa Wote (Prayer for all). After the VC's address, the first years had a photo session with their guests and members of faculty who adorned their Academic regalia.

The Chairman of Council Dr. Kerei and other guests from the county led by the county's first lady H.E Madam Agnes Ntutu also addressed the first years and gave words of encouragement.

## AG. VICE CHANCELLOR PARTICIPATES IN TRAINING INDUCTION OF NEWLY APPOINTED VICE CHANCELLORS



Ag. VC Prof. P. Aloo-Obudho (Background) moderating a session

Maasai Mara University Ag. Vice-Chancellor Prof. Peninah Aloo-Obudho, participated in an Induction Training of Newly Appointed Vice-Chancellors at the Sarova Whitesands in Mombasa from 11th – 14th October, 2023. The Vice-Chancellor participated as the Training/Programme Co-ordinator in the training which was organized by the Ministry of Education and sponsored by the British Council.

The theme of the training was “*Developing Visionary and Effective University Leaders*” while the goal was to develop strategic, effective, focused, forward-thinking, and result-oriented leaders for the dynamic and expanding higher education sector.

In her presentation to the Vice-Chancellors, Prof. Aloo-Obudho shared with them a quote by Peter Drucker “*Leadership is not rank, privileges, title or money, it is about responsibility*”. She concluded by saying that one of the expected outcomes of the training was to make the leaders understand their roles and responsibilities and make them resilient to forge forward in the face of uncertainty as they start their leadership journey.



*The Acting Vice- Chancellor and some participants with the CS for Education.*



*Photo of the newly appointed Vice- Chancellor's with CS for Education Hon. Ezekiel Machogu (seated in the middle), Acting Vice- Chancellor (seated 2nd from left), PS of State Department of University Education and Research (3rd from right). .*

## HUMAN RIGHTS JOURNALISM CURRICULUM IMPLEMENTATION PIONEERED BY MAASAI MARA UNIVERSITY



Maasai Mara University has finalized plans to incorporate and implement the Human Rights Journalism Curriculum, a new spice in the Media and Communications disciplines. This is after the curriculum was launched in April 2023, a milestone that is attributed to entire Journalism for Human Rights (JHR) Organisation and stakeholder efforts, since the year 2019 when JHR commenced its activities in Kenya by implementing a project called - Voice for Women & Girls Rights.

The climax of implementing the Human Rights Journalism Curriculum was characterized by Trainer-of-Trainers training of faculty members drawn from the Department of Media, Film and Communication; School of Arts, Humanities, Social Sciences and Creative Industries.

Speaking during the training opening ceremony at a hotel in the outskirts of Narok Town, the Deputy Vice Chancellor Academic and Students Affairs Professor Bulitia Godrick Mathews, lauded the Journalism Human Rights organization for developing the curriculum which is a historic move in training for journalists.

“For a long time in the past, we have had little or no trace of directly incorporating and prioritization of human rights content in higher education curricula hence we cannot underestimate the industriousness and

creativity that JHR has invested in developing this curriculum.

It is from this backdrop that I also acknowledge JHR for choosing to mentor the Maasai Mara University Media, Film and Communication faculty members on implementation of the Human Rights Journalism Curriculum, as Trainers-of-Trainers. On the same note, I urge my treasured academic staff to proactively engage with the trainers to enhance their ability and capacity to roll out this curriculum at the University at shortest time possible,’ Prof. Bulitia said.

He also challenged the media curriculum trainers and academics to prioritize imparting top-notch investigative skills to journalism students so as to fill the increasing gap of exhaustive investigative news stories that inspire positive change and solutions.





The two-day training was believed to improve their capacity of lecturers to impart conflict sensitive reporting skills to journalism students thus eventually lead newsrooms in broadening search for reliable solutions and pacification of warring or differing parties rather than fuelling conflicts.

'Research will be boosted too as this curriculum has unlocked a green area in research thus, we look forward to robust research activities leaning on this field from the Media, Film and Communication faculty members. Likewise, we will ensure that Human Rights Journalism will feature prominently among the key research themes and sub-themes during our annual International Research Conference to be held in May, 2024,' Prof. Bulitia added.

Dr. Dennis Ikachoi who is the Chairperson of the Department of Media, Film and Communication said he was delighted to have led his team to take part in the training and did not hesitate to give an assurance that graduands who will be churned out of Maasai Mara University once they roll out the curriculum will be more informed to tackle human rights assignments.

'Indeed, this area of human rights is critical in the development of any nation because if rights are violated, then even communication will be difficult and the media cannot play its role effectively and we cannot get to know about issues that affect our society,' said Dr. Ikachoi.

He added that the curriculum will empower both students and staff to educate communities, especially those that still record low literacy levels, on importance of embracing respect to human rights.

# MAASAI MARA UNIVERSITY AJIRA CLUB ACTIVATION ACTIVITY



The Ajira Club Activation Event held on 19th October 2023 marked a pivotal moment in our club's journey. The event aimed to engage new and existing members, introduce them to the club and foster a sense of community among participants. This report captures the essence of that moment, providing a comprehensive account of the event's proceedings, outcomes, and the collective spirit that was ignited. This report serves as a testament to our commitment to our club's mission and the promise it holds for the future. It reflects our collective determination to strengthen the bonds of our club and fulfill its purpose with renewed energy and vigor. Here's a list of the events that took place during the activation:

1. Welcoming the visitors
2. Membership Drive
3. Club Outreach
4. Members Registration
5. Fun and games, Photography

The overall events began with prayer and a warm welcome from the event coordinator, Madam Martha who emphasized the importance of the club's mission and the role of the members in achieving our goals. The coordinator also allowed everyone to introduce themselves and encouraged each of the members to pair themselves up for the next event which is the Club Outreach. The members were allowed to find a partner and each of the members was to identify another from the visiting team and form a pair.

An ice-breaker session was organized that encouraged the participants to interact, get to know one another, and set a positive tone for the event.

The pairs formed engaged in personalized, one-on-one conversations with students around the school. They provided insights into the club's objectives, upcoming activities, and the benefits of joining the club. They also guided them through the registration in the Ajira Portal, [ajiradigital.go.ke](http://ajiradigital.go.ke) and filled in their details in the Google form provided.





A membership desk was set up, attracting a significant number of new sign-ups and renewals from existing members. The desk was set up outside PROF. OLE KAREI Complex.

The DJ and MCs entertained the students with nice music and anecdotes.

Fun games such as miniature Golf and Turkish Draughts were an integral part of the activation event. Attendees had the opportunity to participate in friendly golf competitions, fostering a relaxed environment and also helping draw them closer to the set-up area.

Photography was an integral part of the club activation event, serving as a means to document and celebrate the moments that unfolded throughout the day. Prior to capturing any images, attendees were thoughtfully approached and given the opportunity to provide their informed consent by signing a consent form.

### **The photography consent**

Before any photographs were taken, the event organizers ensured that a clear and transparent consent process was in place. Attendees were informed about the purpose of the photography, which was primarily for documenting the event, sharing highlights on the club's website and social media, and preserving memories. Participants were presented with consent forms outlining the intended use of the images and the club's commitment to respecting privacy.

The positive energy and engagement at the Activation Event have set the stage for an exciting year ahead for the Ajira Digital Club Maasai Mara University. We will follow up with all new members, provide them with information about upcoming events and activities, and ensure they feel welcome and valued as part of our club.

We extend our gratitude to all participants, volunteers, and speakers for their contributions to the event's success. A special thank you to the Ajira Digital team for organizing and leading the event effectively and our Patron Mr. Anil Kumar for being there for us, May the Almighty God bless you abundantly.

We are excited about the opportunities and growth that lie ahead, and we look forward to an inspiring and productive year for our club.



# CUE AFFIRMS QUALITY UNIVERSITY EDUCATION



The Commission for University Education (CUE) has lauded Maasai Mara University for upholding quality in teaching and learning, research and consultancy services. This is after pitching tent at the University for three days with an aim of assessing suitability of its academic programmes and associated facilities.

Speaking during the opening ceremony of the exercise, the Maasai Mara University Acting Vice Chancellor Professor Peninah Aloo-Obudho ushered the CUE team and academic programme experts to Maasai Mara University, and assured them that the university was ready for the rigorous activity.

She acknowledged the efforts that the Academic Division had put in preparing for the exercise urging her faculty members to fearlessly take part in the exercise. Prof. Aloo-Obudho expressed confidence that the activity was geared towards improving academic standards of Maasai Mara University.

"I am happy that you are here to audit our academic programmes and I believe that at the end of this exercise, we will come out with quality programmes.

So, your presence to us is a blessing," Prof. Aloo-Obudho assured.

The Acting Vice Chancellor highlighted the niche of 'Tourism, Environmental Resource Management and Conservation'. She made reference to University's key brand assets such as the African Medicinal Botanical Garden, and the innovative Waste Water Management and Treatment System. Her sentiments concurred with those of the CUE Chief Executive Officer Professor Mark Kuria who divulged that some institutions of higher learning panic whenever they visited to audit or assess their academic programmes and facilities, but the calmness and poise exuded by Maasai Mara University team was exceptional.

Prof. Kuria called on Universities to perceive the Commission as a partner in shaping quality university education rather than seeing it as a troubling watchdog. He reminded the University of previous CUE audits and accreditation assessments that have gone a long way in boosting quality of education and thus attracting an increase of new students every year.



“I want you to believe that we can benefit from each other. We are partners in the quest for quality university education in Kenya. Therefore, we encourage universities to join us in walking the talk of ensuring that we churn out graduands who will have requisite skills, knowledge and qualifications that are globally accepted and recognized,” Prof. Kuria urged.

He added that they have realized that Kenyan universities have more student capacity than the number that qualify to join those universities. Prof. Kuria therefore urged institutions of higher learning to ensure they offer quality education so as to compete favorably and outsmart their peers in scrambling for the limited number of prospective students.

“I am really glad that you have identified your unique niche area. I believe students must ask themselves that why should I leave university A in Nairobi or somewhere in Mombasa and join Maasai Mara University to pursue a course in Tourism or Hospitality,” said Prof. Kuria.

The CUE team led by Prof. Kuria toured the University where he marveled at quality teaching, learning and research facilities, most importantly the ultra-modern science laboratories and the African Medicinal Botanical Garden.

He also attended various lectures that were ongoing, a case in point, Bachelor of Nursing Classes that were ongoing and he motivated students to take full advantage of the quality education offered at Maasai Mara University.

At the closing ceremony, the Deputy Vice Chancellor Academic and Students Affairs Professor Bulitia Godrick Mathews lauded the CUE team for conducting the exercise in a professional manner.

“We are humbled to recognize the guidance that the professionals and academic programme experts offered our faculty members during the critical exercise. Your constructive criticism captured in the exit reports will be instrumental in enabling us offer advanced quality university education,” Prof. Bulitia approved.

The DVC (ASA) also appreciated the Maasai Mara University team for their dedication and support that saw the Academic Division and the university in entirety to give the CUE team a smooth time and experience while conducting the academic programmes accreditation assessment process.



## MAASAI MARA UNIVERSITY SCORES “VERY GOOD” DURING THE PERFORMANCE CONTRACT EVALUATION IN THE 2022/2023 PC YEAR.

Performance Contract guidelines require among others that an annual performance evaluation is conducted to Ministries Departments and Agencies (MDA) that sign and implement Performance Contracts. The Evaluation and subsequent grading also provide the basis for performance rewards. Maasai Mara University signed and implemented PC for the FY 2022/2023 and therefore was subjected to an annual evaluation by the Public Service Performance Management and Monitoring Unit (PSPMU) under the Office of the Prime Cabinet Secretary on 19th October, 2022 in the University Conference Hall.

The University Council and Management takes Performance Contract seriously because it is a key commitment for results framework in its endeavor to improve service delivery in the University. For this reason, the University Council Chairman, Dr. Kennedy Ole Kerei and the Independent Member of Council CPA Dickson Malanga Shikanga were both present during the evaluation to ensure its success. The University Management team was led by the Acting Vice-Chancellor Professor. Peninah Aloo-Obudho, who has put a spirited effort to ensure that the University MUST achieve the set targets in the Performance Contract.

Also present were the DVC (AF&S), Professor James Nampushi and DVC (A&SA), Professor Godrick Bulitia, Management and Senate Members. The PC Coordinator for Maasai Mara University Mr. Moses Okombo, Assistant Registrar (PC&QMS) was also present.

In his opening remarks, the Chairman of Council assured the Evaluators that the Council is fully committed to the achievement of the PC targets. He added that the Council will support the Vice-Chancellor and her team to achieve the targets. The Acting Vice-Chancellor, Prof. P. Aloo-Obudho added that Performance Contract is about measurement and what gets measured gets done.

The University's composite score at the end of evaluation process was 2.8155 (Very Good), an improvement above the previous FY 2021–2022 Composite score of 3.0156 (Good). This is a clear sign that the university is on the right track and aims to receive an “excellent” rating during the evaluation for the FY 2023–2024. It is worth noting that the average composite score for the last five years of the University performance contract evaluation had stagnated at 3.12882 (Good).



From left Mr. Macloud Malonza, Director of Economic Planning (Evaluation Team Leader) Signing the moderated Evaluation score for the FY 2022/2023, CPA Dickson Malanga Shikanga who is the Independent Council Member on the right and Ag. Vice-Chancellor Prof. P. Aloo-Obudho are looking on.



Independent Council Member CPA Dickson Malanga Shikanga and Ag. Vice-Chancellor Prof. P. Aloo-Obudho signing the moderated Evaluation score for the FY 2022/2023



Director, Economic Planning (Evaluation Team Leader) handing over the fully signed Evaluation score to the Independent Council Member CPA Dickson Malanga Shikanga, in the Presence of Ag. Vice-Chancellor, Prof. P. Aloo-Obudho, DVC (A&SA) DVC(AF&S) and Chief Legal Officer.



Independent Council Member CPA Dickson Malanga handing over the fully signed Evaluation score to the Ag. Vice-Chancellor in the Presence of, DVC(A&SA), Ag. DVC(AF&S) and Chief Legal Officer



The Ag. Vice-Chancellor, Prof. P.Aloo-Obudho handing over the moderated evaluation report to the Ag. DVC(AF&S) Prof. James Nampushi



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