



Kabete International Research Conference champions TVET transformation and skills innovation

By Felix Wanderi

Kabete National Polytechnic has successfully concluded its Fourth International Research Conference, Skills Competition, Innovation, Career Guidance and Expo, bringing together policymakers, researchers, industry leaders, development partners, trainers and students to deliberate on the future of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) in Kenya.

The three-day international event, held under the theme **"Transforming TVET in Kenya for Market-Ready Skills, Employability and Sustainable Development,"** provided a platform for knowledge exchange, research dissemination, innovation showcases, skills competitions and policy dialogue aimed at strengthening Kenya's skills development ecosystem.

The conference attracted participants from various TVET institutions, universities, industries, government agencies and development organizations, reflecting the growing importance of technical and vocational education in driving Kenya's economic transformation agenda.

In a message delivered to the conference, Deputy President H.E. Prof. Kithure Kindiki emphasized the critical role TVET institutions play in supporting the Bottom-Up Economic Transformation Agenda (BETA) and the realization of Kenya Vision 2030.

The Deputy President noted that emerging technologies such as Artificial Intelligence, automation, robotics and digital platforms are rapidly transforming the world of work, requiring TVET institutions to adapt and equip learners with future-ready skills.

He called for stronger industry-academia partnerships, expanded apprenticeship programmes, workplace-based learning opportunities and Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) to ensure graduates acquire practical skills aligned with labour market demands.

Prof. Kindiki further challenged institutions to embrace digital transformation, climate resilience and green skills development, noting that Kenya's leadership in renewable energy presents enormous opportunities for employment and enterprise development.

Education Cabinet Secretary Julius Migos Ogamba underscored the government's commitment to developing a skilled and globally competitive workforce through Competency-Based Education and Training (CBET).

He highlighted the importance of strengthening linkages between industry and training institutions to improve employability, productivity and entrepreneurship among graduates.

The Cabinet Secretary also stressed the need for inclusive TVET programmes that provide equal opportuni-



Kabete National Polytechnic Principal Patrick Muchemi displays the institution's award during its Fourth International Research Conference, Skills Competition, Innovation, Career Guidance and Expo

ties to women, youth and persons living with disabilities through accessible infrastructure, assistive technologies and targeted support mechanisms.

Principal Secretary for TVET Dr. Esther Thaara Muoria outlined ongoing reforms within the sector, including the implementation of Modular Competency-Based Education and Training, which allows learners to acquire market-relevant skills through flexible and progressive learning pathways.

She noted that TVET institutions are increasingly becoming centres of innovation, entrepreneurship and local economic development, supporting government priorities on industrialization, food security and job creation.

Dr. Muoria urged institutions to embrace digital learning technologies, virtual laboratories, simulation-based training and blended learning approaches to expand access to quality technical

education across the country.

The conference featured numerous research presentations addressing emerging issues in TVET, including technology-driven learning, artificial intelligence in education, industry-academia partnerships, quality assurance, governance, renewable energy, climate-resilient skills development, agricultural value addition, entrepreneurship and inclusion.

Researchers presented papers examining strategies for improving graduate employability, strengthening industrial attachment programmes, promoting innovation and commercialization, integrating green technologies into training programmes and enhancing access to skills training for marginalized groups.

Several presenters emphasized the importance of applied research in

generating practical solutions to national development challenges, while others explored the role of TVET institutions in supporting manufacturing, agribusiness, housing and digital economy initiatives.

The conference also highlighted the growing significance of Recognition of Prior Learning, which enables individuals to obtain formal certification based on skills and competencies acquired through work experience and informal learning.

One of the major attractions of the conference was the Skills Competition and Innovation Expo, which showcased the creativity, technical expertise and innovative capacity of trainees from different institutions.

Participants demonstrated competencies in engineering, building technology, information and communication technology, automotive engineering, fashion design, hospitality, agribusiness, renewable energy, creative arts and emerging technologies.

Innovators exhibited a range of solutions aimed at addressing challenges in agriculture, environmental conservation, waste management, energy efficiency, digital transformation and enterprise development.

The Career Guidance and Expo segment connected students with industry players, employers and training experts, providing valuable insights into career pathways, entrepreneurship opportunities and emerging labour market trends.

Speaking during the conference, Kabete National Polytechnic Governing Council Chairperson Eng. Benjamin Njenga described research as a powerful tool for solving societal challenges and driving institutional excellence.

He challenged participants to think beyond conventional approaches and develop innovative solutions capable of transforming communities and industries.

Eng. Njenga commended researchers, sponsors, partners and organizers for contributing to the success of the conference and reaffirmed the institution's commitment to advancing applied

research and innovation.

Kabete National Polytechnic Chief Principal Dr. Patrick W. Muchemi said the conference demonstrated the institution's dedication to fostering research, innovation and skills excellence.

He noted that collaboration between academia, government and industry remains essential in developing practical solutions that address contemporary economic and social challenges.

Dr. Muchemi emphasized that the conference outcomes would contribute significantly to strengthening TVET policies, improving training delivery and enhancing institutional performance.

Participants at the conference unanimously called for increased investment in research, innovation and technology integration within TVET institutions.

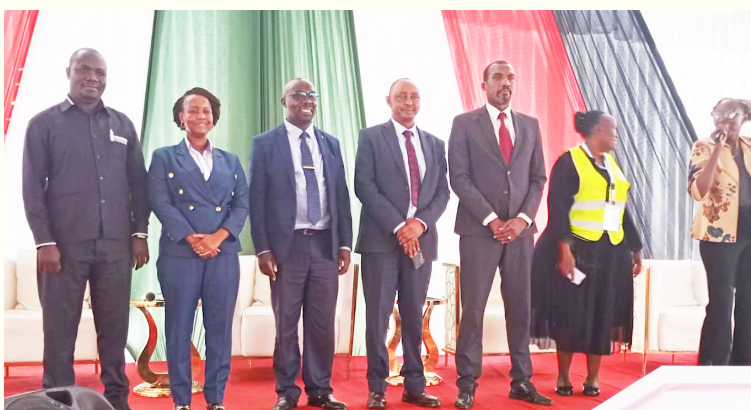
They further recommended stronger partnerships between industry and training institutions, expanded work-based learning opportunities, modernization of training equipment and enhanced support for innovation commercialization.

The conference also highlighted the need to mainstream green skills, climate action and renewable energy training as Kenya transitions towards a sustainable and low-carbon economy.

As the curtains fell on the successful international conference, stakeholders reaffirmed their commitment to building a responsive, inclusive and technology-driven TVET sector capable of producing highly skilled graduates for Kenya, Africa and the global labour market.

The event concluded with recognition of outstanding research contributions, innovation exhibits and skills competition participants, whose work demonstrated the transformative potential of technical and vocational education in advancing national development.

The conference resolutions are expected to inform future TVET policy, strengthen institutional practices and contribute to Kenya's journey towards industrialization, sustainable development and shared prosperity.



Panelists pose for a photo during Day One of the International Research Conference at the Kabete National Polytechnic



The 4th International Research Conference attended by Education CS Julius Ogamba, TVET PS Esther Muoria among other stakeholders.

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