

Statement

by

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Vice Chancellor

Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology

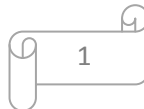
During the official launch of JKUAT PhD Degree Programme

at

Kaduna Polytechnic

Nigeria

Thursday February 24, 2011



Rector, Kaduna Polytechnic

Deputy Rectors,

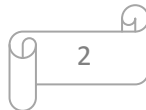
Directors of the various Colleges of the Polytechnic

Teachers and students

Invited Guests

Ladies and Gentlemen

It gives me great pleasure to be here to launch the Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology (JKUAT) PhD programme in entrepreneurship to be offered at the Kaduna Polytechnic under special arrangements between our two institutions. From the onset, I take this early opportunity to express our deep appreciation to the Rector and the entire Kaduna Polytechnic management team for their warm welcome that they have accorded to me and my entourage. In return, I wish to assure you of our commitment to further strengthen the bond between our two institutions that we established slightly over two years ago.



Indeed today's ceremony in which we jointly launch a JKUAT PhD degree programme in entrepreneurship obviously marks yet another milestone in the relations between our two institutions. The event shows that both JKUAT and the Kaduna Polytechnic have so far smoothly honored their part of their obligation that we entered together two years ago in the implementation of a JKUAT MSc degree programme that has so far benefited 30 pioneering students, most of them staffers here at your Polytechnic. The unique arrangement allows JKUAT lecturers to come here to teach at specific times of the year making it cheaper for many students to benefit. It is therefore not surprising that when you made a request for us to launch a PhD programme in the same area, we at JKUAT easily gave the nod.

As you may be aware by now, we at JKUAT remain leaders in training, research and innovation in a number of disciplines notably agriculture, engineering, enterprise development, built environment, health sciences and applied sciences. This has been motivated by our desire as a university to undertake a comprehensive market study to determine the modern requirements in terms of knowledge, skills and attitudes in the

various disciplines that we offer. This explains why our researchers and alumni continue to receive accolades for their innovativeness. You may have sometime last year heard of a Mr. Evans Wandogo who was nominated by the US based Cable News Network (CNN) hero nominee for 2010 for developing an environmentally friendly solar powered lamp that has found enormous application by East Africa's rural poor who can hardly afford kerosene. Mr. Wadongo is a 2009 JKUAT Electrical and Computer Engineering graduate.

A group of our third year students in our Department of Geomatic and Geospatial Information Engineering have recently designed a computer assisted system now deployed in monitoring the use of billions of devolved funds in Kenya while our computer science students have pioneered a number of innovations including, M-Stock, a stock exchange monitoring system; Best Deals, a web application for comparing product prizes by prospective buyers; Online and SMS Fuel Prizes monitoring system, a community web GIS application.

Similarly, our dons continue to excel in the enterprise of applied research where JKUAT has reported a number of accomplishments crucial in fostering Kenya's national development. Only last August, our own scientist at the Department of Zoology pioneered the development and assembly of a trap that is likely to play a central role in the control of Bont ticks in pasture known to cause a number of animal diseases not only in Kenya but in the entire sub-Saharan Africa. Indeed other JKUAT researchers have made advances in initiating more innovations ranging from engineering tools, to chemical, and food products with most of them operating under registered trademarks.

I must however emphasize that JKUAT, that become the sixth autonomous public university in Kenya in 1994, has within a short period of time distinguished itself as a growing centre of academic excellence and technology transfer not only in Kenya but in East, Central, and Southern Africa region. JKUAT had for almost a decade in the 1990s in collaboration with JICA hosted a month long technology transfer workshops for participants drawn from Eastern, Central and Southern Africa countries. The programme covered a number of areas in Applied Food Analysis, Electrical Engineering, and Water

and its analysis and more than one thousand people from the said countries benefitted from the workshops. In neighboring Rwanda, we were instrumental in the initiation of a number of academic programmes taught at the Kigali Institute of Science and Technology. Most of the students from Kigali used to come to JKUAT for their practical sessions in most of their technical academic programmes.

Indeed JKUAT research outputs have been felt in the entire continent of Africa. A recent research project pioneered by JKUAT researchers and aimed at promoting Africa's indigenous vegetables (AIV) that had been relegated to the periphery is now receiving attention at the African Union that has twice honored our scholar for spearheading the initiative. The project is likely to raise the profile of the high nutrient value AIV in international trade to the advantage of majority of our rural women who still have a lot of faith in the indigenous vegetable. Also, it is only last week that we received the pleasant news from the African Union informing us that JKAUT had been selected to host the Pan African University's Institute of Basic Sciences, Technology and Innovation where top notch scientist would be moulded to drive the continent's development.

Our School of Human Resources Development which hosts the entrepreneurship programme has not been left behind in the area of innovations. In 2006/2007, our scholars of entrepreneurship participated in a World Bank funded Global Business network that led to the identification of 42 local business entities now used as case studies in entrepreneurship. These are the cases cited as examples in the teaching of the subject matter of entrepreneurship as opposed to the foreign reference materials that our local students could not easily relate with.

Furthermore, the programme of entrepreneurship has also been instrumental in transforming the traditional thinking of our young graduates to be employment creators as opposed to employment seekers. The programme is expected to help individuals to be self employed and therefore a source of alternative job creation. It is therefore my hope that those of you who have benefitted from the programme should be at the forefront in initiating business enterprises that would also be able to create employment opportunities to the people of Nigeria. Remember that entrepreneurship focuses on creativity, innovation and individualism.

My address would be incomplete if I fail to give you the structure of our PhD programme which consists of course work of three semesters and the research work and thesis writing which has to be completed after 24 months from the time of registration but should not extend beyond 48 months. Obviously, the Doctor of Philosophy programme is more challenging because students are expected to create new knowledge and a PhD thesis has to be supervised by at least two scholars and that one of the supervisors has to be from JKUAT. At this juncture, I want to assure you of our resolve to give you the best possible knowledge.

Finally, I am aware that the main focus of our collaboration was mainly aimed at capacity building to ensure Kaduna Polytechnic produced sufficient personnel who could be relied upon to sustain the programme. In this connection, I am pleased to announce the decision of JKUAT Senate that has now allowed graduates of Kaduna Polytechnic with Higher National Diploma in an area to join the JKUAT Postgraduate Diploma in Entrepreneurship which would then be used as a direct entry into our Master of Science



programme in Entrepreneurship. Similarly post doctoral students who successfully complete nine units or more in order to qualify for PhD programme in Human Resources and Entrepreneurship be awarded a masters in philosophy to be in line with practices elsewhere in the world. This will provide an exit in case one does not proceed to PhD which makes the programme attractive and flexible.

It is now my pleasant duty to declare the JKUAT PhD programme in Entrepreneurship at Kaduna Polytechnic officially launched.