TCU @ 20: A Legacy of Excellence in Tanzania's University Education Through the HEET Project

20TH ANNIVERSARY

TCU
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2005-2025

TANZANIA COMMISSION FOR UNIVERSITIES

Celebrating 20 Years of TCU's Outstanding Contribution to Higher Education in Tanzania

CODED CORPORATE CULTURE STATEMENTS

1. We treat every individual with kindness, dignity and care; consider the thoughts and ideas of others inside and outside the Commission with a strong commitment to exemplary personal and institutional altruism, accountability, integrity and honour.

2. We are committed to build up a work culture where employees rigorously communicate with their peers and exchange ideas and thoughts, to gradually building up trust and pride.

3. We strive to manage resources smartly, focus on activities that create value and deliver at an appropriate speed and quality at all times.

4. We are committed to ensure that all the academic outputs are produced in line with the national, regional and international standards by introducing quality assurance measures.

5. We are devoted to foster a spirit of equity that embraces mutual respect, fair play and compassion for those in need and the pursuit of the public good.

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Editorial Policy

The TCU Magazine is specifically designed to serve the diverse information needs of the Commission's stakeholders. These include higher education institutions, students and graduates, parents and guardians, employees, investors in higher education, business partners, professional bodies, development partners, sponsors, employers, Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs), trade unions, the media, the general public, and the staff of the Tanzania Commission for Universities (TCU).

All articles submitted for publication are subject to a rigorous review process conducted by the TCU Magazine Editorial Board or, where appropriate, by qualified external reviewers with expertise in the relevant field. Submissions must be informed by research or practical experience and should address issues of relevance to higher education. Each article is assessed on the basis of its quality, length, substance, and relevance to both national and international audiences.

Articles are accepted on the understanding that the content submitted is the original work of the author and does not contain any plagiarised, defamatory, or libellous material. All opinions and factual assertions expressed in the TCU Magazine remain the sole responsibility of the respective authors and should not be construed as representing the official views of the publisher, the Editorial Board, or TCU staff.

All editorial submissions must be written in English. Where an article is originally prepared in another language, it must be accompanied by a complete and accurate English translation. The Editorial Board endeavours to ensure balanced representation, such that no institution or individual is disproportionately featured. Submissions intended to promote specific products, services, or institutions are not accepted and will be rejected upon identification.

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UNION ANNIVERSARY

The Tanzania Commission for Universities congratulates the President of the United Republic of Tanzania, **Her Excellency Dr. Samia Suluhu Hassan**, and the President of Zanzibar and Chairman of the Revolutionary Council, **Hon. Dr. Hussein Ali Mwinyi**, on the commemoration of the 61st Anniversary of the Union between Tanganyika and Zanzibar.

The Commission reaffirms its commitment to the diligent performance of its statutory functions in the regulation and promotion of university education, and to contributing meaningfully to the socio-economic development of both Mainland Tanzania and Zanzibar.

PROF. CHARLES D. KIHAMPA

MESSAGE FROM
THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

It is with great pleasure and deep appreciation that I welcome you to this Special Edition of TCU Magazine, dedicated to showcasing the transformative initiatives implemented by the Commission under the Higher Education for Economic Transformation (HEET) Project during the 2021/2022 to 2025/2026 financial years.

This project represents a significant milestone in our collective efforts to enhance the quality, relevance, governance and sustainability of university education in the country. Through strategic investments in institutional capacity development, systems strengthening, policy and regulatory review, and infrastructure development, the Commission continues to advance its mandate of promoting accessible,

equitable, and quality university education that responds effectively to national priorities and the demands of the labour market.

This Special Edition documents achievements that are not only measurable in figures and outputs, but also evident in the meaningful transformation taking place across universities and within the broader higher education system. The articles contained herein demonstrate that the capacity development programmes have been highly beneficial to participants and stakeholders. University academic staff have enhanced their pedagogical competence and adopted more interactive teaching and learning approaches, thereby strengthening student engagement and learning outcomes. The training on curriculum design and development has improved the quality and labour market orientation of academic programmes, enabling institutions to produce graduates with competencies aligned to national and global employment needs.

Likewise, university leaders and governance organs have strengthened their leadership, management, and governance practices, contributing to improved institutional accountability and strategic decision-making. Additionally, the development and upgrading of critical online systems have enhanced efficiency, accessibility, and cost-effectiveness in service delivery, benefiting both the Commission and the public.

> " *This project represent a significant milestone in our collective efforts to enhance the quality, relevance, governance, and sustainability of university education in the country.*

I also convey heartfelt appreciation to all authors and contributors who generously devoted their time, expertise, and energy to prepare the articles featured in this publication. Your contributions have enriched this Edition with insightful perspectives, evidence-based information, and practical experiences that demonstrate the tangible value of the project being implemented.

Equally, I wish to express my gratitude to our esteemed readers including university leaders, academic staff, students, development partners, policymakers, stakeholders, and the general public for your continued support and engagement with the work of the Commission. Your interest in the development of university education inspires our ongoing commitment to excellence, integrity, and service to the nation.

As you read through this Special Edition, I invite you to reflect on the progress made, the partnerships strengthened, and the sustained efforts required to ensure that higher education remains a key driver of socio-economic transformation. TCU remains fully committed to working collaboratively with all stakeholders to safeguard quality, strengthen governance, foster innovation, and enhance the relevance of university education for the benefit of the current and future generations.

I thank you for reading, and I trust you will find this Special Edition both informative and inspiring.

HIGHER EDUCATION FOR ECONOMIC TRANSFORMATION

THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA

TANZANIA COMMISSION FOR UNIVERSITIES

PUBLIC NOTICE
HONORARY DOCTORATE DEGREES

The Tanzania Commission for Universities (TCU) reminds stakeholders and the public that honorary degrees in Tanzania are conferred by accredited and registered university institutions in accordance with the provisions of the Universities Act, Cap. 346 R.E 2023.

Similarly, honorary degrees awarded by foreign institutions in other countries are recognised by the TCU only if such institutions are accredited and recognised by the respective countries' regulatory authorities.

Furthermore, the Universities Act and the Universities (General) Regulations, G.N. No. 226 of 2013, outline procedures for foreign institutions wishing to operate in Tanzania. It is, therefore, an offense to conduct university academic activities, including the conferment of academic and other awards, within the United Republic of Tanzania without approval from the Commission.

The public is advised to be cautious of such institutions and to verify the recognition of university institutions in Tanzania by consulting the list of recognised universities available on the TCU website: www.tcu.go.tz, before engaging with any foreign or local universities.

Let us work together to uphold the standards and reputation of university education in our nation.

Issued by:

Prof. Charles D. Kihampa
EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

IN THIS ISSUE

Editorial Note

Dear Reader,

The Editorial Board of TCU Magazine is pleased to welcome you to the Special Edition dedicated to the Higher Education for Economic Transformation (HEET) Project, a flagship initiative implemented by the Tanzania Commission for Universities (TCU) during the 2021/2022 to 2025/2026 financial years.

This Special Edition has been prepared to document, analyse, and share the achievements, milestones, and impacts of this strategic project, which has played a pivotal role in enhancing the quality, relevance, governance, and sustainability of university education in Tanzania. The Edition reflects TCU's steadfast commitment to advancing a higher education system that is responsive to national development priorities, labour market demands, and global trends.

The articles presented in this publication provide clear evidence that the capacity development programmes implemented under the HEET Project have been highly beneficial to participants and stakeholders across the higher education sub-sector. University academic staff have enhanced their pedagogical competencies and adopted more learner-centred and interactive teaching approaches, leading to improved learning experiences and outcomes for students. Training in curriculum design and development has strengthened the alignment of academic programmes with labour market needs, national aspirations, and international standards.

Furthermore, capacity development initiatives targeting university leaders, members of councils and senates, governing boards, peer reviewers, and system developers have contributed to improved governance, effective leadership, stronger quality assurance practices, and more efficient management of higher education institutions. The development and upgrading of online systems have also improved accessibility, efficiency, transparency, and cost-effectiveness in service delivery for both institutions and the public.

The Editorial Board extends its sincere appreciation to all authors and contributors who devoted their time, expertise, and energy to prepare the insightful articles featured in this Magazine. Your contributions have enriched this Edition and ensured that it presents a comprehensive, evidence-based account of the transformative work undertaken through this project.

We also wish to thank our esteemed readers including university leaders, academic staff, policymakers, development partners, students, and the wider public for your continued interest in the work of the Commission and in the development of university education in Tanzania. Your engagement and feedback remain invaluable in shaping future discourse and direction within the higher education sub-sector.

As you read through this Special Edition, we invite you to reflect on the progress achieved, the lessons learned, and the sustained efforts required to build a robust, inclusive, innovative, and globally competitive higher education system. It is our hope that this publication will serve not only as a record of achievement, but also as a source of inspiration and reference for continued collaboration and improvement in the years ahead.

The articles presented in this publication provide clear evidence that the capacity development programmes implemented under the HEET Project have been highly beneficial to participants and stakeholders across the higher education sub-sector.

INVITATION TO CONTRIBUTE AND SHARE FEEDBACK

The Tanzania Commission for Universities (TCU) warmly invites our esteemed readers to contribute articles and share their valuable feedback for the TCU Magazine. This platform is designed to promote knowledge-sharing, informed dialogue, and the exchange of ideas on issues relating to university education in Tanzania and beyond.

Your insights, experiences, and perspectives are important in enriching the content of the Magazine and ensuring that it remains relevant, informative, and responsive to the needs of our diverse stakeholders. We therefore encourage you to submit news articles, feature stories, and constructive feedback to support continuous improvement in the quality and impact of this publication.

Readers interested in taking part are kindly requested to submit their contributions via es@tcu.go.tz or:

The Executive Secretary,
Tanzania Commission for Universities,
P .O. Box 2600,
Dodoma.

We look forward to your contributions and appreciate your continued engagement and support

Editor

OUR ESTEEMED CUSTOMERS AND STAKEHOLDERS,

YOU ARE THE REASON WE STRIVE FOR EXCELLENCE

Thank you for your cooperation and support

Prof. Charles D. Kihampa
EXECUTIVE SECRETARY - TCU

From Ambition to Achievement:

The Journey of Transformation Led by TCU

By Dr. Telemu Kassile

It gives me great honour and satisfaction to share this message with readers of this Special Edition of the TCU Magazine, which is dedicated to documenting the implementation journey, achievements, and impact of the Higher Education for Economic Transformation (HEET) Project (2021/2022 – 2025/2026). Serving as the HEET Project Coordinator at the Tanzania Commission for Universities (TCU) has been both a demanding and deeply rewarding experience, marked by collaboration, learning, and visible transformation across Tanzania's higher education landscape. I am privileged to share reflections on the journey we have travelled, the progress achieved, the lessons learned, and the impact we continue to witness across the higher education landscape.

This article is not merely a summary of activities. Rather, it is an account of transformation of institutions strengthened, professionals empowered, systems modernised, standards raised, and a renewed national commitment to higher education as a driver of socio-economic progress. It is also a tribute to the collective spirit of collaboration that has enabled the Commission to translate strategy into tangible results.

A Project Anchored in a National Vision

The HEET Project was designed to strengthen learning environments and enhance the labour market orientation of programmes in priority disciplines, while improving the management of the higher education system. For TCU, this objective aligned seamlessly with our core mandate: to regulate and assure quality in university education, safeguard standards, and support continuous improvement across institutions.

From the outset, TCU structured the implementation of the HEET Project around six work packages, covering:

- Accreditation and quality assurance systems;
- Access and equity in higher education;
- Leadership capacity of university leaders;
- Strengthening TCU human resource capacity;
- Construction of the TCU Headquarters; and
- Review and update of business processes.

This wide scope demanded disciplined coordination, effective stakeholder engagement, robust implementation structures, and sustained monitoring to ensure that every intervention was purposeful, impactful, and aligned with institutional and national priorities.

Building the Future: Construction of the TCU Headquarters in Dodoma

One of the most visible, symbolic and historic milestones under the HEET Project is the ongoing construction of the TCU Headquarters building in Dodoma City. For the first time since the establishment of the higher education regulator in 1995 (as Higher Education Accreditation Coouncil - HEAC) and later as TCU in 2005, the Commission is realising its long-held aspiration of having a purpose-built headquarters in the capital city. Beyond the structure itself, the headquarters signifies:

- Institutional permanence and national presence;
- A conducive environment for quality service delivery;
- Improved coordination and operational efficiency; and
- A lasting legacy of the HEET Project, representing investment in the regulatory strength of higher education for the present and future generations.

People-Centred Transformation: Capacity Development at Scale

The HEET Project has demonstrated a key truth: higher education transformation is built first and foremost through people. Through extensive capacity development,

TCU has empowered university staff, leaders, governance organs, peer reviewers, and system developers to serve more effectively, lead more confidently, and innovate more purposefully.

a) Curriculum Design and Labour Market Responsiveness

The Commission trained 290 university academic staff (97%) out of the planned 300 in quality assurance aspects related to the design, development, review, and delivery of labour market-responsive curricula. This training has yielded clear outcomes. Universities are now submitting programmes that are better structured, more coherent, and more aligned with national priorities and labour market needs. Participants reported improved competence in:

- Developing learning outcomes and competencies;
- Mapping curricula to skills demand;
- Designing assessment frameworks; and
- Ensuring compliance with quality assurance standards and guidelines.

In practical terms, this has reduced delays in curriculum review processes and strengthened confidence among institutions as they develop new programmes or review existing ones.

b) Pedagogical Skills and Learner-Centred Teaching

One of the most far-reaching interventions has been training in pedagogical skills. The Commission trained 956 university academic staff (95.6%) out of the planned 1,000 in pedagogical competence and interactive teaching and learning methods. This training has helped lecturers shift from content-heavy instruction to learning-focused approaches. Participants have cited improvements in:

- Lesson planning and delivery;
- Use of interactive teaching techniques;
- Student engagement and classroom dynamics;
- Fair, transparent, and competency-based assessment; and
- Integration of educational technology.

Most importantly, trained lecturers have begun cascading these skills within their respective institutions. Several university institutions have already adopted and replicated internal capacity development initiatives, including the Catholic University of Mbeya (CUoM), Jordan University College (JUCo), Dar es Salaam University College of Education (DUCE), St. Augustine University of Tanzania (SAUT), Sokoine University of Agriculture (SUA), KCMC University, and Tumaini University Makumira (TUMA). This development demonstrates sustainability not merely as a theoretical concept, but as an emerging and institutionalised culture within the higher education sub-sector.

c) Leadership and Management for Strong Institutions

Leadership shapes institutional direction, culture, and performance.

Under HEET, TCU trained 327 university staff at different levels in leadership and management skills, including:

- 112 Principals of University Colleges, Deans, and Directors; and
- 215 Heads of Departments, representing 65.4% of the five-year target of 500.

These ongoing trainings have strengthened leadership capacity in strategic planning, performance management, communication, conflict resolution, and institutional governance. Participants have reported increased confidence in decision-making and an improved ability to align departmental and institutional priorities with quality assurance requirements.

d) Strengthening University Governance

Good governance is the backbone of quality, integrity, and accountability. The Commission trained 404 members of University Senates, Councils, and Governing Boards out of the planned 600, representing 67.3% of the overall project target. The ongoing training supported governance organs to better understand their roles and responsibilities in:

- Oversight and strategic direction;
- Policy formulation and compliance;
- Ethical leadership and accountability;
- Risk management; and
- Institutional performance monitoring.

This has contributed to improved governance practices and strengthened institutional stability, an essential condition for academic excellence.

e) Building a Stronger Peer Review System

To deepen quality assurance capacity, TCU trained 47 peer reviewers (47%) out of the planned 100 university academic staff to strengthen skills in academic programme and institutional review. Peer reviewers are indispensable to the credibility and rigour of accreditation processes. This training has strengthened review competence, consistency, and professionalism, thereby reinforcing public confidence in quality assurance systems.

f) Strengthening Data Management and System Integration

The HEET Project has made exceptional progress in the area of data management. TCU trained 237 system developers/administrators and data managers, exceeding the original target of 100 by 137%. This training has enhanced skills in:

- System integration;
- Data governance and quality;
- Data cleaning and validation; and
- Efficient management of staff and student records.

The impact is visible in improved data quality across institutions, which is increasingly enabling evidence-based planning, better policy formulation, and more reliable higher education management at institutional and national levels.

g) Benchmarking through Study Visits

The Commission facilitated 25 university leaders and TCU management/staff (50%) out of the planned 50 to undertake

study visits to successful overseas universities and regulatory bodies. These benchmarking opportunities have provided participants with exposure to global best practices in governance, quality assurance, institutional performance management, and internationalisation. Such learning is essential in positioning Tanzania's higher education sector within an increasingly interconnected global knowledge economy.

h) Digital Transformation: Systems that Improve Service Delivery

Modern regulation requires modern systems. Under HEET, the Commission planned to develop two new online systems and upgrade three existing systems. Notable achievements include:

- Development and operationalisation of the No Objection Certificate System (NOCS), which facilitates the application, processing, and issuance of certificates for Tanzanians seeking further studies abroad.

- The Foreign Awards Assessment System (FAAS) has been redesigned to improve processing efficiency and enhance the timely issuance of recognition certificates for individuals who have studied at foreign institutions.

- The Programme Management System (PMS) has been upgraded to effectively enable universities to submit their curricula to TCU for accreditation or reaccreditation and to allow peer reviewers to efficiently review newly developed or revised curricula.

- The University Informative Management System (UIMS) has been upgraded to efficiently support the management of data and information for all higher educations in Tanzania.

These developments have enhanced accessibility, improved transparency and lowered operational costs, thereby benefiting both the Commission and the public.

i) Quality Assurance Tools and Benchmarks: A National Standard - Setting Legacy

During the reporting period, TCU developed and approved four key quality assurance tools:

- Standards and Guidelines for Postgraduate Studies, Research and Innovation;

- Training Manual for Preparing University Leaders in Tanzania;

- Procedures for Admission of Applicants Holding Foreign Qualifications into Academic Programmes in Universities in Tanzania; and

- Guidelines for Teacher Education Programmes in University Education in Tanzania.

In addition, the Commission developed five programme benchmarks that are now accredited and in use in priority fields, namely:

- Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery Programmes;

- Bachelor of Science in Nursing Programme;

- Bachelor Degree Programmes in Information and Communication Technology;

- Bachelor Degree Programmes in Tourism and Hospitality; and

- Bachelor Degree Programmes in Engineering.

These tools are shaping the quality and consistency of programmes across institutions and strengthening national harmonisation in higher education delivery.

Impact: What Changed and Why It Matters

The HEET Project demonstrates effectiveness not merely through the achievement of planned outputs, but through measurable improvements in outcomes and perceived value among participants. Evidence from online survey data indicates exceptionally high satisfaction and relevance ratings, with one category of respondents reporting satisfaction levels up 99 percent, underscoring the Project's strong performance and positive impact on targeted beneficiaries.

USEFULNESS OF THE TRAINING
1%
99%
- Satisfied
- Not Satisfied

From a sector-wide perspective, the project has contributed to:

- A strengthened culture of quality assurance;

- Improved adherence to standards and guidelines;

- Better quality of curricula and increased labour market relevance;

- Improved data quality for decision-making and planning;

- Increased efficiency in curriculum review and approval processes; and

- Enhanced institutional governance and administration practices through local and international benchmarking.

Reflections: A Shared Achievement and a Continuing Responsibility

As we approach the final stage of the HEET Project implementation period (2025/2026), this Special Edition stands as a record of progress and a call for sustained momentum. The Commission has embedded sustainability through multiple ways: cascade training models, periodic review mechanisms for benchmarks, institutionalised leadership training programmes, modern ICT systems, strengthened internal capacity, and the construction of a permanent headquarters that will serve the Commission and the nation for decades.

Allow me, therefore, to extend my sincere gratitude to all who have supported the implementation of the HEET Project: the Government of the United Republic of Tanzania, Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, the World Bank, the

TCU Management and technical teams, participating universities, facilitators, experts, and above all, the dedicated participants who embraced learning and transformation.

This is our collective journey. These are our shared gains. And it is our common responsibility to ensure that the progress recorded under the HEET Project continues to translate into stronger universities, more competent graduates, and a higher education system that meaningfully contributes to Tanzania's economic and social transformation.

With every trained lecturer, every strengthened governance organ, every upgraded system, every benchmark developed, and every step taken towards modern infrastructure, we are shaping a future where university education is not only accessible and equitable, but also credible, relevant, innovative, and globally competitive!

Dr. Telemu Kassile is the HEET Project Coordinator at TCU

This article is not merely a summary of activities. Rather, it is an account of transformation of institutions strengthened, professionals empowered, systems modernised, standards raised, and a renewed national commitment to higher education as a driver of socio-economic progress.

Opening Doors to Global Learners:

TCU Unveils New Procedures for Admission of Applicants with Foreign Qualifications into Tanzanian Universities

Jacob Mosenda is the Awarded Investigative Journalist of the Year 2024 and serves with The Citizen

Tanzania on bold move to boost enrollment of foreign students

Prof. Charles Kihampa
Executive Secretary – TCU

By Jacob Mosenda

Tanzania is taking decisive and forward-looking steps to position itself as a competitive destination for international students by developing comprehensive guidelines for the admission of foreign applicants into university academic programmes. This strategic initiative reflects the country's broader ambition to internationalise its higher education system in response to growing global demand for quality university education and the increasing international interest in Kiswahili, African studies, and East Africa's socio-economic development.

For many years, university institutions in Tanzania have welcomed students from diverse parts of the world. However, variations in global education systems, qualification structures, and entry requirements have often posed challenges that limited the scale of international student enrolment. Recognising these constraints, the Tanzania Commission for Universities (TCU) has taken a proactive role in addressing these barriers through the development of admission guidelines for applicants holding foreign qualifications.

Speaking in an exclusive interview, the Executive Secretary of TCU, Prof. Charles Kihampa, emphasised that the new guidelines are a critical response to the realities of an increasingly globalised higher education environment. He noted that education systems across the world differ significantly in terms of structure, duration, curriculum content, and assessment approaches. Without harmonised admission procedures, universities face difficulties in fairly and consistently assessing international applicants.

"Globally, education systems differ," Prof. Kihampa explained. "Acknowledging this reality, TCU has developed guidelines that clearly outline how students from education systems different from ours can be admitted into Tanzanian universities. These guidelines provide clarity not only to institutions but also to prospective international students."

He further stressed that the initiative is aligned with Tanzania's long-term vision of transforming its universities into internationally recognised centres of learning. According to Prof. Kihampa, the guidelines are designed to ensure fairness, transparency, and academic integrity, while at the same time creating a welcoming environment for international learners.

"We believe these measures will make Tanzania a more attractive destination for foreign students, particularly those eager to learn Kiswahili and to experience our rich culture and heritage," he added.

Strengthening Internationalisation and Global Engagement

The introduction of admission guidelines for applicants with foreign qualifications is expected to significantly enhance the international profile of Tanzanian universities. By reducing uncertainty and administrative bottlenecks, the guidelines enable institutions to actively market their programmes to international audiences and to participate more effectively in global academic networks.

Increased international student enrolment offers multiple benefits to university institutions and the country at large. Beyond boosting institutional visibility and reputation, internationalisation fosters academic exchange, cross-cultural understanding, and the sharing of global perspectives. Local students benefit from exposure to diverse cultures and ideas, while international students gain insights into Tanzania's academic traditions, society, and development context.

Universities are also better positioned to develop exchange programmes, joint degrees, and collaborative research initiatives, thereby strengthening their competitiveness at regional and global levels. These developments align with national priorities aimed at positioning higher education as a driver of innovation, diplomacy, and socio-economic transformation.

Balancing Growth with Quality Assurance

While welcoming the prospect of increased international students enrolment, Prof.

Kihampa underscored that quality assurance remains a non-negotiable pillar of Tanzania's higher education system. He cautioned that expansion must never come at the expense of academic standards.

> *"The influx of students is welcome; however maintaining high standards is imperative,"* he stated. *"There must be comprehensive teaching, adherence to approved curricula, and strict observance of examination and assessment processes. Quality should never be compromised, regardless of demand."*

This emphasis is particularly relevant given the rapid growth of student enrolment within Tanzania's higher education sub-sector. Current estimates indicate that more than 350,000 students enroled in universities and other higher education institutions during the 2024/2025 academic year.

Expert Perspectives on Readiness and Sustainability

Education consultant Ms. Maria Ntinda welcomed the initiative to attract international students, describing it as timely and strategic. However, she cautioned that internationalisation must be matched with adequate investment in institutional capacity.

> *"Bringing in foreign students is a commendable initiative,"* she noted, *"but it must go hand in hand with investments in infrastructure, recruitment of additional academic staff, and strengthening of management and student support systems."*

Ms. Ntinda further highlighted that international students often have distinct needs, including language support services, orientation programmes, and cultural integration mechanisms. Addressing these needs, she argued, is essential if Tanzanian universities are to compete effectively with institutions in other countries that are actively attracting global students.

She also emphasised that internationalisation extends beyond student mobility. "Our universities should engage more deeply in research that addresses global challenges," she said. "This would position Tanzania not only as a destination for learning, but also as a hub for generating solutions to regional and international issues."

Policy Alignment and Institutional Responsibility

The Ministry of Education, Science and Technology is already supporting these efforts through the implementation of the Education and Training Policy of 2014 (2023 Edition) and ongoing curricula reforms aimed at enhancing relevance, flexibility, and labour market alignment. These reforms provide a supportive policy environment for universities to internationalise while remaining responsive to national development needs.

Prof. Kihampa reiterated that University Councils, Senates and Governing Boards play a central role in sustaining quality during this period of transformation. He urged these

governance organs to align institutional strategies with national policies and reforms to ensure that academic programmes meet both local and international benchmarks.

> *"University Councils, Senates, and Governing Boards are the backbone of quality assurance in higher education,"* he observed. *"Their strategic oversight is critical in ensuring that growth, internationalisation, and quality move hand in hand."*

Towards a Global Academic Future

As Tanzania opens its doors to a wider international academic community, the introduction of clear admission guidelines marks a significant milestone in the evolution of its higher education system. The initiative signals the country's readiness to engage more fully with the global education landscape while safeguarding academic standards and institutional credibility.

Summing up the opportunity ahead, Prof. Kihampa remarked, "This is an exciting time for Tanzanian universities. If we get it right, we can transform our education system, nurture global citizens, and firmly strengthern Tanzania's position on the international academic map."

Through strategic planning, sustained investment, and unwavering commitment to quality, the new admission guidelines are poised to become a cornerstone of Tanzania's higher education internationalisation agenda benefiting universities, students, and the nation as a whole.

PROCEDURES FOR ADMISSION OF APPLICANTS HOLDING FOREIGN QUALIFICATIONS INTO ACADEMIC PROGRAMMES IN UNIVERSITIES IN TANZANIA

NOVEMBER 2024

Are You an International Student Wishing to Study in Tanzania?

By Correspondent

Tanzanian universities continue to attract international students by offering a structured and inclusive academic environment supported by clear admission procedures and a wide range of academic programmes. Higher education institutions in Tanzania provide opportunities for international applicants to pursue short courses, certificate programmes, undergraduate degrees, and postgraduate studies in diverse fields.

Short courses and certificate programmes are primarily skills-based and focus on areas such as languages, business, information technology, and related disciplines. These programmes typically run for a period ranging from a few months to one year. Admission requirements are generally flexible and may take into account an applicant's prior education and professional background.

Admission to undergraduate programmes requires completion of secondary education equivalent to the Tanzanian Advanced Certificate of Secondary Education (ACSEE) or another internationally recognised qualification. To be eligible for entry into a Bachelor's degree programme, international applicants must have completed at least 12 to 13 years of formal pre-university education. Applicants who do not meet this requirement may be required to undertake a bridging programme lasting between six and twelve months. These programmes are designed to equip students with essential academic skills and subject-specific knowledge necessary for successful university-level study. Upon successful completion, students may be admitted into Bachelor's degree programmes of their choice.

Postgraduate education in Tanzania comprises Master's and Doctoral programmes. Master's degrees generally take one to two years to complete, while Doctoral programmes may require three years or more, depending on the field of study. Admission to postgraduate programmes typically requires a strong academic background, including satisfactory performance in a relevant Bachelor's degree and, where applicable, a Master's degree obtained from a recognised higher education institution.

Each university in Tanzania independently manages its application and admission

procedures and provides specific guidelines to prospective students. International applicants are therefore encouraged to consult individual university websites

or contact admission offices directly for detailed information on requirements and deadlines. Applicants are also advised to familiarise themselves with the Procedures for Admission of Applicants Holding Foreign Qualifications, which are available on the website of the Tanzania Commission for Universities at www.tcu.go.tz.

In addition, continuing international students who wish to transfer academic credits earned from universities outside Tanzania may apply for credit transfer to Tanzanian universities, subject to established regulations and assessment procedures.

With its structured admission systems, diverse academic offerings, and supportive learning environment, Tanzania remains an increasingly attractive destination for international students seeking quality higher education within a rich and vibrant cultural setting.
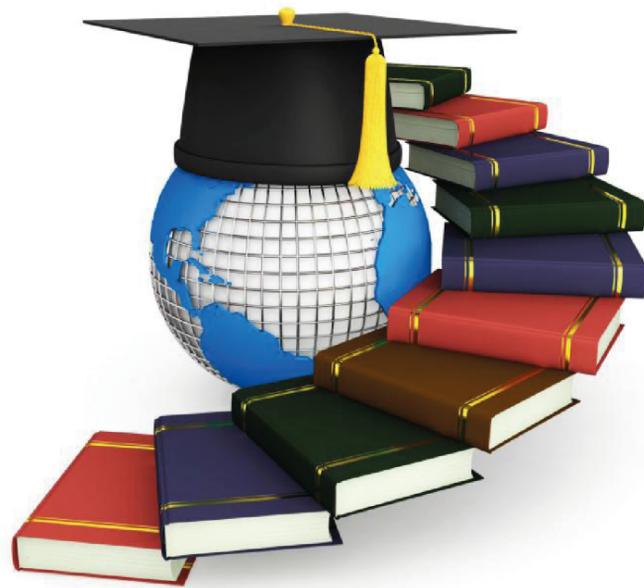
Universities for Prosperity

Each stakeholder in higher education has a distinct role to play. Ours is to regulate, support, and provide advisory services on university education, while contributing to the economic growth of our nation.

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Beyond Compliance to Impact:

How TCU is Powering a Future-Ready, Quality University Education System in Tanzania

Dr. Blackson Kanukisya is a Senior Lecturer in the School of Education at the University of Dar es Salaam (UDSM)

By Dr. Blackson Kanukisya

Quality assurance has long been recognised as a cornerstone of sustainable higher education systems. As Eaton (2021) aptly observes, quality assurance through both internal and external examination of institutional effectiveness, has historically played a crucial role in sustaining what higher education has achieved while enabling it to build for the future. This observation is particularly pertinent to Tanzania, where the Tanzania Commission for Universities (TCU), as the national external quality assurance agency, has been navigating a rapidly transforming university education landscape.

Over the past three decades, university education in Tanzania has undergone profound structural change. As in many parts of the world, the sector has transitioned from a small, elite system characterised by a single university in the 1970s to a mass higher education system shaped by demographic growth, expanded secondary education completion, labour-market demand for advanced skills, and ambitious national development agendas. This transformation has been accompanied by institutional diversification, heightened public scrutiny, and growing internationalisation.

While expansion has significantly improved access, it has also exposed systemic tensions. Institutional capacity has not always kept pace with growth, resulting in persistent concerns regarding programme quality, academic staffing, student progression, and the credibility of university qualifications (Materu, 2007; Salmi, 2017; UNESCO, 2018; World Bank, 2018). In response, the role of national regulatory agencies has evolved. Contemporary quality assurance bodies are increasingly expected to act not merely as gatekeepers, but as system stewards combining regulation with guidance, coordination, and capacity development (Blackmur, 2010; Harvey & Williams, 2010; Ryan, 2015).

It is within this context that the Tanzania Commission for Universities has progressively operationalised a supportive and developmental regulatory approach, aimed at balancing expansion with quality, autonomy with accountability, and compliance with institutional learning.

Expansion, Massification, and Emerging Systemic Opportunities

Following the liberalisation policies of the early 1990s, university education in Tanzania expanded remarkably in terms of institutional numbers, academic programmes, enrolment, and graduate output. Data from TCU show a steady rise in accredited academic programmes, increasing from 1,748 in 2019 to 2,328 in the 2024/2025 academic year, an expansion of over 33 per cent within five years. This growth signals strong institutional responsiveness to student aspirations and national human capital priorities, while also underscoring the importance of sustained investment in staffing, infrastructure, laboratories, libraries, and internal quality assurance systems to support continued progress.

Enrolment trends further reflect this positive transformation. Between 2016/2017 and 2024/2025, total enrolment increased from 225,731 to 259,434 students. Encouragingly, female participation improved substantially,

with the proportion of women rising from 35.0 per cent to 45.7 per cent, an important milestone towards greater gender equity in access. During the same period, academic staffing also increased, rising from 7,187 in 2020/2021 to 8,709 in 2024/2025. While growth in staffing has been more gradual than enrolment expansion, it provides a foundation for targeted strengthening of staff capacity and distribution, particularly in high-enrolment disciplines.

At system level, the overall student-staff ratio of approximately 1:30 appears broadly manageable, reflecting notable efforts by institutions and regulators to maintain balance during expansion. At the same time, discipline-specific patterns especially in Arts, Social Sciences, and Business highlight opportunities for strategic staffing enhancement and innovative delivery approaches to ensure that quality keeps pace with demand. Similarly, the rapid growth of open and distance learning (ODL) presents a valuable pathway for widening access, particularly for working professionals and geographically remote learners, provided it is supported by strong instructional design, learner support services, and robust digital infrastructure.

Overall, these developments point to a maturing higher education system in which expansion can be consolidated through purposeful quality strengthening. As widely argued in the literature, regulation that combines standards enforcement with guidance, partnership, and capacity development is best suited to sustaining quality in fast-growing systems (Materu,

2007; Shabani, Okebukola & Oyewole, 2014). In this context, a supportive and developmental regulatory approach becomes not only desirable, but essential for ensuring that growth translates into credible qualifications, strong graduate outcomes, and long-term national development impact

The Mandate of TCU: Regulatory, Advisory, and Supportive Functions

The Universities Act, Cap. 346 R.E 2023 established the Tanzania Commission for Universities and defines its mandate under Section 5(1), which can be categorised into three interrelated functions: regulatory, advisory, and supportive.

The regulatory function empowers TCU to define and enforce quality standards, accredit and register universities, audit quality assurance mechanisms, coordinate admissions, recognise and equate qualifications, and oversee institutional performance. These statutory responsibilities ensure adherence to minimum standards and protect the integrity of university education.

Beyond enforcement, the Act positions TCU as an advisory body to the Government. The Commission is mandated to advise the Minister responsible for education on all matters relating to university education, including institutional transformation, long-term planning, staff development strategies, and budgeting norms. Through this role, TCU links institutional growth to labour-market needs, national development priorities, and international commitments such as Tanzania Development Vision 2050, the African Union Agenda 2063, and the Sustainable Development Goals.

Central to this article, however, is the supportive function of TCU. The Act mandates the Commission to provide guidance to universities, collect and publish higher education data, promote quality assurance and gender equity, coordinate admissions, standardise promotion schemes, establish student transfer procedures, and promote cooperation and networking among universities. These provisions legally anchor TCU's developmental role as a capacity-building and enabling agency within the higher education system.

A Developmental Regulation Lens

This feature article adopts Developmental Regulation Theory (DRT) as the analytical framework for understanding TCU's

supportive role. Originating from lifespan developmental psychology and self-regulation theory, DRT conceptualises development as a continuous process of goal setting, monitoring, feedback, adaptation, and improvement (Baltes et al., 2006; Bandura, 1991; Zimmerman, 2000).

Applied to quality assurance, DRT reframes regulation as a cyclical, learning-oriented process through which institutions actively construct and enhance quality over time (Harvey & Newton, 2007; Stensaker, 2008). In this perspective, quality assurance functions not merely as a compliance mechanism but as a developmental system that supports institutional learning, capacity building, and sustainable improvement.

This theoretical lens is particularly relevant to Tanzania's massified and diverse university education system, where institutions operate under uneven capacity conditions. It helps explain how TCU has combined enforcement with guidance, training, benchmarking, and coordination, treating regulation and support as complementary rather than contradictory.

Programme Development, Accreditation, and International Benchmarking

Evidence shows that TCU's support for programme quality begins well before formal accreditation. Universities engage the Commission through consultative meetings and technical clarification sessions focusing on curriculum design, learning outcomes, credit allocation, staffing qualifications, laboratory and library readiness, ICT infrastructure, and assessment strategies.

The Handbook for Standards and Guidelines for University Education in Tanzania and the University Qualifications Framework function as detailed developmental instruments, providing explicit guidance on competence-based curriculum design, staffing thresholds, student–staff ratios, assessment moderation, and international comparability. Accreditation outcomes are accompanied by structured written feedback, enabling institutions to revise and strengthen programmes. In this way, accreditation functions as an iterative learning process rather than a binary pass-fail exercise.

Capacity Building as a Core Quality Assurance Strategy

Capacity building emerged as the most visible expression of TCU's supportive role. Between 2018 and 2025, over 2,200 participants including academic staff, peer reviewers, quality assurance officers, system administrators, and university leaders were trained.

Academic staff constituted the largest beneficiary group. Training focused on pedagogical skills, competence-based curriculum design, learner-centred teaching, assessment for and of learning, and the effective use of ICT in teaching and learning. This emphasis reflects recognition that quality assurance ultimately manifests in the classroom.

Peer reviewers were trained on ethics, standardised review templates, and practical curriculum evaluation, addressing concerns about subjectivity and inconsistency in accreditation processes. Governance and leadership training targeted Vice Chancellors, Deputy Vice Chancellors, Principals, Deans, Directors, and Members of Councils and Senates, reinforcing role clarity, strategic leadership, and quality-informed decision-making.

Coordinated Admissions, Data Systems, and Planning

TCU's coordination of admissions through the Universities Information Management System (UIMS) has standardised entry requirements, enhanced transparency, and reduced inequities. Enrolment growth has been sustained without evidence of declining entry standards, while female participation has continued to rise.

Equally significant has been TCU's role in national higher education data governance. Through systematic data collection, validation, and publication via *VitalStats on University Education in Tanzania*, the Commission has strengthened evidence-based planning, benchmarking, and accountability. Training of system administrators and quality assurance officers has further enhanced institutional data integrity and interoperability.

Postgraduate Education, Research Integrity, and Innovation

In postgraduate education, TCU's supportive role combines regulatory standards with institutional capacity development. Growth in postgraduate enrolment has been accompanied by stricter supervisory requirements, strengthened ethics clearance mechanisms, plagiarism control, and transparent examination procedures. These measures have contributed to improved research integrity and alignment of postgraduate programmes with national development priorities.

Networking, Harmonisation, and Flexible Learning

TCU has actively promoted cooperation and networking among universities, creating platforms that facilitate collaboration, co-authorship, joint supervision, and shared innovation. Regionally and internationally, alignment with East African quality assurance frameworks has enhanced comparability, academic mobility, and recognition of Tanzanian qualifications.

In response to digitalisation and the COVID-19 pandemic, TCU has also provided regulatory guidance for open, distance, and blended learning. By setting equivalence standards across delivery modes, the Commission has enabled flexible expansion without compromising academic rigour.

Policy Reflections

This article demonstrates that the Tanzania Commission for Universities has progressively operationalised a supportive and developmental regulatory model that goes well beyond compliance enforcement. Through programme development guidance, capacity building, admissions coordination, data systems, governance training, and international harmonisation, TCU has combined regulation with institutional support while respecting university autonomy.

In an era of massification, digital disruption, and rising societal expectations, this integrated regulatory approach offers valuable lessons for quality assurance agencies across Sub-Saharan Africa and the Global South. Quality assurance is most effective when pedagogy, governance, and data systems are addressed simultaneously; when digital infrastructure is treated as a quality issue; and when institutions are empowered to learn and improve rather than merely comply.

While this article focused on system-level dynamics, future research could extend this work by examining how developmental regulation influences teaching quality, learning outcomes, and institutional cultures at micro level. Nonetheless, the evidence presented affirms TCU's evolving role as a developmental steward of quality in Tanzania's university education system, positioning higher education not only for growth, but for credibility, relevance, and long-term sustainability.

Universities at the Heart of National Transformation

By Correspondent

Tanzania's aspiration for inclusive and sustainable development places university education at the centre of national transformation. By reinforcing institutional systems, strengthening governance, and empowering university leadership, higher education is being transformed into a dynamic force that nurtures talent, drives innovation, and equips graduates with the skills and competencies required to shape the nation's future.

Within this transformative landscape, TCU has maintained a clear and purposeful focus, under the Higher Education for Economic Transformation (HEET) Project, on championing strong institutional governance, visionary leadership and a culture of internal quality assurance across university institutions. This commitment was demonstrated during a two-day Consultative Training Workshop for Member of University Councils, Senates and Governing Boards, held on 14th and 15th November 2024 in Dar es Salaam, reaffirming the Commission's role in shaping resilient, accountable and future-ready universities.

Bringing together more than 150 university leaders from public and private universities, the workshop served as a high-level platform for knowledge exchange, sector reflection and practical capacity development. Convened under the theme *"Enhancing the Quality of University Education through Strengthening University Governance, Leadership and Internal Quality Assurance Systems"*, the training responded directly to emerging challenges and strategic reforms influencing the higher education sector. More importantly, it delivered concrete value to stakeholders by strengthening governance competence, improving leadership decision-making, reinforcing internal quality assurance systems, and enhancing institutional readiness for digital transformation, education reforms and internationalisation.

This article highlights how the training was beneficial to participants and stakeholders, and why such interventions remain crucial for strengthening university education as a foundation for national development.

A Capacity Development Intervention with Direct Stakeholder Benefits

A defining feature of the HEET Project is its emphasis on strengthening the enabling environment for quality university education by reinforcing institutional systems that promote academic excellence, accountability and sustainability. In higher education, systems are only as effective as the leaders who interpret, implement and champion them. University Councils, Senates and Governing Boards are the core governance organs responsible for institutional direction, policy oversight, academic integrity and long-term sustainability. Their performance determines how well universities plan strategically, manage resources, protect academic standards, respond to regulatory requirements, and maintain public confidence in the credibility of university qualifications.

The Consultative Training Workshop was therefore more than a routine engagement. It was a strategic investment in stakeholders who shape institutional outcomes. For participants, the workshop strengthened their understanding of statutory and functional roles, equipped them with governance tools, clarified quality assurance responsibilities, and reinforced leadership approaches required to guide institutions through complex reforms and emerging risks. For the broader stakeholder community including students, parents, employers, government, professional bodies and society, the training represented a concrete step towards ensuring that universities remain credible, relevant and responsive to national needs.

Strengthening Shared Purpose, Policy Alignment and Collective Ownership

The workshop commenced with welcoming remarks delivered by Prof. Charles Kihampa, Executive Secretary of TCU, who underscored the purpose and strategic significance of the consultative engagement. He highlighted the continuity of this capacity development initiative, referencing a similar workshop held in March 2023,

and reaffirmed TCU's ongoing efforts to strengthen the capacities of diverse categories of university leaders, including Heads of Departments.

A key benefit to participants at the outset was the clear framing of the workshop as a platform for shared learning and knowledge dissemination. Prof. Kihampa acknowledged resource constraints, yet encouraged participants to approach the training as a multiplier intervention, one in which knowledge gained is transferred to colleagues within respective institutions. This approach is highly beneficial to stakeholders because it ensures institutional learning is widened and sustained, contributing to improved governance practices beyond the workshop venue.

In his opening remarks, Dr. Leonard Akwilapo, the then Chairperson of TCU, described the workshop as both timely and necessary in view of persistent quality assurance concerns and governance-related challenges facing the higher education sub-sector. He reaffirmed the Commission's

commitment to consultative platforms that facilitate the sharing of best practices and the strengthening of institutional accountability. Furthermore, he disclosed plans to support leaders of both public and private universities through study tours to internationally renowned institutions, reflecting a forward-looking approach to benchmarking, global exposure, and continuous improvement.

For stakeholders, these messages reinforced confidence that TCU is committed not only to its regulatory mandate but also to providing support through capacity development initiatives. Furthermore, the emphasis on aligning university curricula with the new education policy signalled a clear strategic link between institutional governance and national development priorities, thereby ensuring that universities produce graduates whose competencies are responsive to the evolving socio-economic landscape.

Benefit 1: Clearer Governance Roles and Stronger Institutional Oversight

One of the most immediate benefits to participants was enhanced clarity on governance structures and the operational linkages among Councils, Senates and Governing Boards. This was achieved through the presentation delivered by Prof. Idrissa Mshoro, former Vice Chancellor of Ardhi University (ARU), on the linkages and broad rules governing the three-tier cluster of university governance.

Drawing on definitions from United

Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), International Association of University Presidents (IAUP), Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and TCU, Prof. Mshoro positioned governance as a structured system intended to foster transparency, accountability and participatory leadership. He elaborated on autonomy, academic freedom and equity as fundamental features of a university's ethos, emphasising that these values must be protected through effective governance organs.

Participants benefited from a strengthened understanding of the statutory basis for governance under the Universities Act, Cap. 346 R.E 2023. The distinction between the Council as the principal policy-making organ responsible for institutional strategy, stewardship and resource governance, and the Senate as the academic authority responsible for curricula, research oversight, admissions policies and academic standards, helped participants to better define their own roles and reduce governance ambiguity within institutions.

By highlighting decentralisation as an approach for cascading governance structures to subordinate levels, the session strengthened stakeholders' capacity to ensure decisions are informed by operational realities while aligned with institutional strategy. Importantly, Prof. Mshoro identified common governance gaps such as irregular committee meetings, weak delegation and limited accountability. For

participants, this was beneficial because it allowed them to recognise governance challenges as practical issues requiring discipline and reform, rather than as structural inevitabilities.

The interactive discussion deepened this benefit by addressing autonomy concerns, academic freedom tensions amid funding constraints, and the need for policy coherence and international exposure. These discussions enabled stakeholders to share experiences, learn from peers and develop collective strategies to strengthen institutional governance.

Benefit 2: Strengthened Quality Assurance Capacity and a Culture of Continuous Improvement

In her presentation, Dr. Jennifer Sesabo, former Director of Quality Assurance at Mzumbe University, provided participants with a comprehensive understanding of quality assurance as both a system and a culture. She presented quality as a multi-dimensional concept shaped by diverse stakeholders including academics, students, regulators and employers, each with different expectations and definitions of excellence.

A critical stakeholder benefit derived from this session was the reinforced understanding that quality assurance is not an external imposition, but an internally driven responsibility that must be integrated across all university functions. Dr. Sesabo emphasised internal quality assurance (IQA) mechanisms such as institutional quality assurance units, structured self-evaluation, curriculum reviews, student satisfaction surveys, staff development initiatives and systematic documentation of academic processes.

For universities, these mechanisms translate into improved teaching and learning, stronger academic integrity, enhanced programme relevance, and higher graduate employability. For external stakeholders including employers and professional bodies, the strengthening of IQA systems contributes to greater confidence in graduate competencies and the credibility of qualifications.

The session also explored external quality assurance (EQA), implemented through accreditation and evaluation by regulatory agencies such as TCU, highlighting its role in accountability, public trust and continuous improvement. Participants gained clarity on how governance organs must resource and support quality assurance systems, ensuring that quality assurance is not left solely to technical units but is fully owned at leadership level.

The discussion that followed identified implementation gaps such as erosion of academic rigour, overreliance on examinations, and limited emphasis on critical thinking and independent study. Participants also raised concerns regarding uneven quality assurance compliance, particularly in universities facing resource and staff development constraints. By openly addressing these realities, stakeholders benefited from a shared understanding of the reforms needed to protect academic standards and improve educational outcomes.

Benefit 3: Improved Regulatory Literacy and More Constructive Engagement with Oversight

In his presentation, Prof. Charles Kihampa outlined the regulatory framework governing university education in Tanzania, providing an operational and strategic view of quality assurance from both institutional and regulatory perspectives. He defined a university as a centre for teaching, research and public service governed by academic freedom, collegiality and structured quality assurance.

Participants benefited from improved regulatory literacy, including understanding that quality is comparative and must be assessed against agreed benchmarks involving multiple stakeholders. The distinction between internal quality assurance as the university's responsibility and external quality assurance as the regulator's oversight function strengthened participants' ability to navigate compliance requirements more coherently and proactively.

Prof. Kihampa's historical overview, tracing the evolution of quality assurance from the establishment of the Higher Education Accreditation Council (HEAC) in 1995 to the establishment of TCU in 2005, enabled participants to appreciate the development of quality assurance systems in Tanzania and the rationale for national regulatory oversight. His explanation of the legal and policy frameworks governing TCU's operations, including its statutory committees and regional collaborations, further strengthened stakeholders' understanding of how national quality standards are aligned with regional and continental frameworks, notably those of the East African Community (EAC) and the

Southern African Development Community (SADC).

During the discussion, participants questioned whether existing regulations are overly stringent or whether challenges arise primarily from non-compliance, raising concerns regarding the functionality of internal quality assurance systems and the consistency of enforcement practices. They also highlighted leadership capacity gaps in some universities, as well as the underutilisation of institutional charters. The session proved beneficial to stakeholders by facilitating a balanced and constructive dialogue on how TCU can effectively maintain regulatory oversight while simultaneously supporting institutional capacity development. A key conclusion emerging from the discussion was that quality assurance must be embedded as an institutional culture, rather than being treated merely as a compliance requirement!

Benefit 4: Enhanced Leadership, Ethical Governance and Participatory Decision-Making

Prof. Daniel Mkude, Deputy Principal for Academic Affairs at Jordan University College (JUCo), and former Chief Administrative Officer at the University of Dar es Salaam (UDSM), examined leadership and management in university institutions, emphasising that effective governance requires a balanced integration of visionary leadership and disciplined management. Participants benefited from the clarification that leadership is a process of inspiring and guiding individuals towards shared institutional goals, while management

focuses on planning, organisation, and control.

The session promoted participatory governance as a foundation for legitimacy, and reinforced ethical standards guided by the Seven Principles of Public Life: selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership. This focus benefits stakeholders by improving institutional integrity, reducing governance risks, and strengthening public trust in university leadership.

Participants discussed real-life governance challenges, including managing difficult individuals in leadership roles, promoting inclusivity without compromising governance integrity, and strengthening policy adherence. The discussion also addressed curriculum design, with Prof. Mkude advocating a broad-based undergraduate education model that fosters critical thinking and interdisciplinary competence. For stakeholders, this contributes to improved graduate adaptability and labour-market relevance.

Benefit 5: Stronger Strategic Planning, Resource Mobilisation and Risk Management

FCPA Dr. Neema Kiure-Mssusa, an Assurance Partner at Ernst & Young and former Vice Chairperson of the National Board of Accountants and Auditors, delivered a presentation that strengthened participants' capacity for strategic decision-making and the promotion of institutional welfare. The session equipped university leaders with practical tools and frameworks for strategic

planning, change management, and risk management, which are key factors for ensuring institutional sustainability in a rapidly changing environment.

Participants benefited from insights on resource mobilisation and the need to diversify funding sources through government engagement, private sector partnerships and donor support. Her emphasis on financial oversight including cash-flow management, interpretation of financial statements and transparency in budgeting, reinforced financial accountability as a governance responsibility.

Nevertheless, the discussion on preparedness for future employment trends and calls to rethink assessment models, including overreliance on Grade Point Average (GPA), strengthened stakeholders' capacity to lead curricular and assessment reforms. This benefits students through more meaningful learning outcomes and benefits employers through improved graduate competencies.

Benefit 6: Increased Readiness for Digital Transformation and AI-Driven Change

Mr. Jumanne Mtambalike, Chief Executive Officer at Sahara Ventures, provided participants with practical insights into emerging technologies and their implications for university education. Participants benefited from understanding how universities must evolve into innovation-driven institutions, with educators acting increasingly as mentors and coaches in skill development.

The session's focus on Artificial Intelligence (AI) highlighted opportunities for personalised learning, administrative efficiency and research enhancement, while also addressing ethical risks such as academic dishonesty and algorithmic bias. Participants benefited from guidance on developing artificial intelligence strategies, redesigning assessments towards critical thinking, investing in digital literacy, and building partnerships with technology companies.

This session benefited stakeholders by strengthening institutional readiness for digital transformation, ensuring universities remain relevant and that graduates are equipped with future-proof skills.

Benefit 7: Better Preparedness for National Education Reforms and Learner Transitions

In her presentation, Dr. Anneth Komba, Director General of the Tanzania Institute of Education (TIE), focused on reforms in basic and teacher education. Participants benefited from a clearer understanding of how structural reforms, including the introduction of compulsory ten-year basic education, curriculum revisions, and the differentiation into vocational and general streams are expected to influence university admissions, pedagogical approaches, and programme design.

Stakeholders gained foresight to anticipate student preparedness changes and adapt institutional policies accordingly. Calls for stronger collaboration between TIE and universities reinforced the importance of

coherent transitions across education levels, benefiting learners and institutions alike.

Benefit 8: Improved Understanding of Internationalisation and Graduate Mobility

Dr. Telemu Kassile, Director of Accreditation at TCU, delivered a presentation that strengthened stakeholders' understanding of internationalisation as a strategic lever for quality enhancement, institutional competitiveness, and graduate mobility. Participants benefited from valuable insights into the key drivers of internationalisation and its associated benefits, including improved teaching quality, enhanced academic cooperation, curriculum enrichment, and increased graduate employability.

The session also encouraged context-sensitive international engagement that preserves local relevance, thereby benefiting institutions seeking global recognition without compromising national identity.

Stakeholder-Centred Results for a Stronger Higher Education System

In his closing remarks, Prof. Charles Kihampa reaffirmed that such workshops are part of a sustained programme of capacity development, consultative dialogue and institutional improvement. Participants were encouraged to take the lessons learned back to their institutions and champion reforms that strengthen governance, leadership accountability and internal quality assurance functionality.

Overall, the Consultative Training Workshop delivered direct and meaningful benefits to participants and stakeholders. It strengthened governance competence, clarified statutory roles, enhanced leadership practice, promoted ethical and participatory decision-making, reinforced internal quality assurance culture, improved regulatory literacy, and increased preparedness for technological transformation, education reforms and internationalisation.

For stakeholders, the value is both immediate and long-term: stronger governance and quality assurance lead to improved academic standards, credible qualifications, better student outcomes, enhanced graduate employability, and increased public confidence in university education. Through the HEET Project, and through strategic interventions such as this, TCU continues to strengthen university education as a dependable driver of Tanzania's socio-economic transformation.

Poem

THE PURSUIT OF HIGHER EDUCATION

Higher Education,
For some, it is a privilege,
For others, it is a right,
The difference between darkness,
And a future that is bright.

Some will think it is a burden,
Where others see a gift,
The key to moving forward,
And to give your life a lift.

If Higher Education is not your calling,
Look beyond its doors,
The world can be a teacher,
Many adventures are in store

As long as you are learning
Your education grows,
That will lead to contributions,
As you share the things you have learnt.

Bridging Classrooms and Careers:

Over 300 University Academics Equipped with Quality Assurance Tools to Design and Deliver Labour Market-Responsive Programmes

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By Correspondent

Strengthening the quality, relevance and integrity of university education in Tanzania is central to the nation's broader socio-economic transformation agenda. Through deliberate investments in systems, institutional capacity and human capital development, higher education is being repositioned as a strategic driver of skilled workforce development, innovation and responsive research. At the heart of this transformation lies the continuous strengthening of academic programmes, ensuring they remain competitive, future-oriented and closely aligned with labour market needs and national development priorities.

In pursuit of this goal, the Tanzania Commission for Universities (TCU) organised a series of Consultative Training Workshops for Staff of University Institutions, held from 17th to 19th August 2022, 25th to 27th August 2022, and 10th to 12th October 2022 in Morogoro. Funded by the Higher Education for Economic Transformation (HEET) Project and convened under the theme *"Quality Assurance Aspects on the Design, Development, Review and Delivery of Labour Market-Responsive Curricula"*, the workshops brought together over 300 academic staff from university institutions across the country.

This article highlights how the training delivered concrete benefits to participants and stakeholders by strengthening quality assurance understanding, improving curriculum development competence, promoting evidence-based programme review, and reinforcing the shared responsibility of universities, regulators, and industry in advancing a workforce-ready and future-oriented higher education system.

Capacity Development Investment for Stakeholder-Centred Outcomes

The transformation of higher education cannot be achieved solely through policy instruments and institutional infrastructure. At its core, curriculum quality depends on the competence, commitment, and shared understanding of academic staff who design, deliver, assess, and continuously improve academic programmes.

Through these workshops, HEET Project invested directly in the academic workforce and strengthened the institutional capability required to sustain reforms. Participants benefited from structured knowledge on internal and external quality assurance systems, curriculum models, pedagogical approaches, learning outcomes design, needs assessment methodologies, tracer studies, benchmarking, and the application of national standards and frameworks.

For stakeholders including students, employers, professional bodies, parents, government, and society, the training provided a pathway to improved programme relevance and graduate employability. It reinforced the expectation that university education must respond to economic realities, emerging technologies, and the evolving competencies required by both national and global labour markets.

Building Shared Purpose, Equity of Participation, and National Commitment

In his welcoming remarks, Prof. Charles Kihampa, Executive Secretary of TCU, outlined the objectives of the workshop series, centred on sharing experiences and strengthening capacities relating to the design, development, review, and delivery of curricula responsive to labour market needs. He explained that the training was planned for approximately 300 academic staff, organised into three cohorts, with institutional representation determined primarily by institution size and participant nominations formally submitted by universities following TCU's request.

In addition to other benefits, participants were supported through HEET Project funding, which covered both subsistence and transport costs. This inclusive approach enhanced equity and ensured that participation was not constrained by institutional resource limitations. It further reinforced stakeholder confidence that the HEET Project is designed to deliver system-wide improvements, including targeted capacity development interventions that extend across both public and private university institutions.

Government Alignment and National Reform Agenda

The official opening was delivered by Hon. Prof. Adolf Mkenda (MP), Minister for Education, Science and Technology. He emphasised that the training was timely and strategically aligned with national curriculum reforms across all education levels, including the integration of Information and Communication Technology and the need to respond to the Fourth Industrial Revolution.

The Minister reaffirmed Government support for the HEET Project implementation and highlighted that while public universities would benefit substantially from infrastructure enhancement, private universities would benefit primarily through capacity building. This clarity was of direct value to private institutions and stakeholders, as it demonstrated that HEET Project implementation is tailored to address different institutional realities while maintaining a shared national focus on quality, relevance, and academic excellence.

Benefit 1: Enhanced Understanding of Quality Assurance as a Tool for Improvement, Not Mere Compliance

A key outcome of the workshops was an enhanced understanding of quality assurance as a continuous improvement mechanism rather than a bureaucratic requirement. In his presentation, Prof. Masoud Muruke, former President of the East African Higher Education Quality Assurance Network (EAQAN), provided a comprehensive overview of quality and quality assurance within higher education. Participants benefited from his clear distinction between internal quality assurance (IQA) and external quality assurance (EQA), and from understanding how quality is conceptualised differently by academics, regulators, students, government, employers, and quality assurance practitioners.

By contextualising quality assurance within global reforms such as the Bologna Process, Prof. Muruke

demonstrated how intensified focus on quality issues emerged in response to challenges including outdated teaching methods, limited mobility, and weak student support systems. He further explained Tanzania's evolution from self-regulated quality systems to the establishment of national oversight structures responding to the expansion and diversification of higher education during the 1990s.

Participants gained valuable clarity that quality is context-specific, subjective, and dynamic, and that quality assurance is a systematic, continuous evaluation process aimed at improvement. The distinction between quality assurance and quality control further enriched participants' understanding, reinforcing that quality assurance is proactive and more suitable to academia, while quality control is reactive and more appropriate in industrial environments.

The discussion that followed strengthened stakeholder benefit by highlighting common challenges such as misinterpretation of quality assurance, underfunding, and limited training. Participants recommended inclusive stakeholder participation and called for the sector to shift from treating quality assurance as compliance towards adopting it as a strategic tool for institutional growth.

Benefit 2: Improved Clarity on Curriculum Approval and Accreditation Processes

A major practical benefit of the workshops was strengthened understanding of how curricula move from institutional development to national validation and quality assurance recognition. The presentation by Prof. Charles Kihampa, the Executive Secretary of TCU, highlighted the quality assurance framework governing curriculum development, approval, and accreditation. He clarified two critical concepts:

- **Approval** as an internal institutional process led primarily by the Senate and relevant academic organs, granting permission for a curriculum to be implemented; and

- **Accreditation** as an external validation process conducted by TCU to confirm that programmes meet national standards and align with broader educational and national development goals.

This distinction directly benefits university institutions by strengthening procedural accuracy, improving documentation practices, and reducing avoidable errors during programme submissions. It also benefits institutions by improving compliance readiness, reducing delays in accreditation processes, and enhancing credibility of academic programmes.

Prof. Kihampa further outlined the responsibilities of universities in curriculum development process, including the use of market surveys, tracer studies, stakeholder consultation (employers, students, alumni, professional bodies), and labour market analysis. His emphasis on inclusive and iterative curriculum development strengthened academic staff capacity to produce programmes that are evidence-based and responsive.

In addition, his presentation on instruments such as the Universities Act Cap 436 R.E 2023, Universities (General) Regulations, GN 226 of

2013, the University Qualifications Framework (UQF), and the Standards and Guidelines for University Education strengthened stakeholders' understanding of what quality entails in measurable terms, and how institutional quality assurance systems should align with national expectations.

Benefit 3: Improved Skills for Employability and Workplace Relevance

Employability and workplace relevance skills remain central expectations of higher education stakeholders. The workshops therefore placed strong emphasis on skills integration and the development of transferable competencies.

The presentation by, Dr. Blackson Kanukisya, Head of the Department of Quality Assurance in Teaching and Learning at the University of Dar es Salaam, examined the concept of skills and their integration into curriculum design, development, and review. By categorising skills into four levels from basic manual tasks to complex decision-making, creativity, and innovation, participants gained a structured method for mapping curriculum content to workplace requirements. The distinction between technical (hard) skills and soft skills further strengthened curriculum design thinking, ensuring that programmes address both discipline-specific competence and the behavioural attributes required in real professional environments.

Importantly, participants were introduced to three complementary categories of skills particularly specialist skills, self-management skills, and transferable skills, reinforcing the understanding that employability is multi-dimensional. The session's emphasis on 21st-century skills, including the "Four Cs" (critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, and communication), strengthened the capacity of academic staff to design learning activities and assessment methods that prioritise competence development rather than rote memorisation.

For stakeholders, this translates into curricula that produce graduates who are adaptable, capable of solving problems, able to communicate effectively, proficient in collaborating within diverse teams, and able to demonstrate resilience and responsibility, qualities that are increasingly demanded by employers and are essential for national productivity and socio-economic development.

Benefit 4: Improved Curriculum Design Competencies

In her presentation, Dr. Eugine Kafanabo, Dean of School of Education at the University of Dar es Salaam (UDSM), enhanced participants' understanding of curriculum design as a structured and continuous process. She reinforced that a curriculum is not merely a list of courses, but a reflection of an institution's mission, philosophy, and vision for graduate competence.

Participants benefited from learning that curriculum development is iterative and must respond to changing labour market demands, societal needs, technological advancement, and global academic trends. Through a review of models by Tyler, Taba, Wheeler, and Kerr, academic staff gained practical ways of organising curriculum development processes in their institutions.

The exploration of curriculum development approaches including subject-centred, learner-centred, competence-based, and problem-based learning strengthened participants' pedagogical adaptability. It emphasised flexibility and contextual application, enabling institutions to combine approaches to match discipline requirements, student needs, and available resources.

This benefits stakeholders by ensuring curricula are not only compliant, but also pedagogically sound, current, and capable of producing graduates who meet contemporary workplace and societal expectations.

Benefit 5: Constructive Alignment and Outcome-Based Learning

Dr. Blackson Kanukisya, delivered a presentation that reinforced the importance of aligning curriculum design with learning objectives, learning outcomes, teaching methodologies, learning activities, and assessment strategies.

Participants benefited from understanding the value of diagnostic, formative, and summative assessment, and the role of continuous feedback in strengthening learning. The introduction of constructive alignment was particularly valuable, as it helps university institutions ensure coherence between what students are expected to learn and how learning is conducted and assessed.

Through Bloom's Taxonomy and the SMART criteria, participants gained practical tools for developing learning outcomes that are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound. This benefits stakeholders by strengthening academic rigour, improving transparency of learning expectations, and enhancing the credibility of graduate competencies.

Benefit 6: Evidence-Based Curriculum Improvement through Needs Assessment and Tracer Studies

A critical contribution of the workshops was strengthening participants' capacity to design and review curricula using evidence rather than assumptions.

In Presentation Eight, Dr. Nsubili Isaga, Senior Lecturer, and Former Director of Quality Assurance at Mzumbe University (MU), provided methodologies for conducting needs assessments and tracer studies, highlighting that stakeholder engagement is essential for curriculum responsiveness. Participants benefited from practical techniques including surveys, interviews, focus group discussions, and secondary data analysis to identify gaps between current conditions and desired outcomes.

Tracer studies were presented as a valuable tool for tracking graduates' employment status, job relevance, and career progression, enabling university institutions to evaluate programme effectiveness and make informed revisions.

Stakeholder involvement including employers, alumni, students, professional bodies, and policymakers, was reinforced as a quality assurance obligation and a strategic necessity. For stakeholders, these approaches ensure curricula remain connected to labour market realities and national development needs, thereby strengthening graduate employability and institutional credibility.

Benefit 7: Benchmarking, International Comparability, and Recognition of Qualifications

The presentation by Prof. Masoud Muruke explored benchmarking and international comparability, emphasising that university institutions benefit from comparing internal performance over time and external performance against peer institutions and recognised standards.

Participants benefited from understanding how international comparability supports student and labour mobility, cross-border recognition of qualifications, and alignment with global education quality standards. The session also reinforced transparency and honest documentation during curriculum submissions, strengthening trust between institutions and regulators and protecting public interest.

Benefit 8: Standardisation and Consistency through the Curriculum Development and Review Framework (2021)

Dr. Telemu Kassile, Director of Accreditation at TCU in his presentation examined the Curriculum Development and Review Framework (2021), providing a structured national guideline for standardising curriculum processes. Participants benefited from clarity on key components such as institutional profile alignment, programme rationale, learning outcomes articulation, and stakeholder involvement. Adherence to this framework promotes consistency,

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quality assurance, and continuous improvement across institutions. For stakeholders, this ensures that academic programmes are systematically developed, clearly justified, aligned with labour market needs, and designed to deliver measurable graduate competencies.

Tangible Value of the Heet Project to Participants and Stakeholders

The 2022 Consultative Training Workshop series stands as a strong example of HEET Project implementation translating into meaningful outcomes for higher education stakeholders. For academic staff, the training strengthened professional capacity, enhanced understanding of quality assurance systems, improved curriculum design competence, and provided practical tools for outcome-based learning and assessment alignment. For university institutions, it strengthened internal quality assurance mechanisms, improved readiness for accreditation and programme review, and promoted a culture of continuous improvement grounded in evidence and stakeholder feedback.

For students, employers, and society, these benefits translate into labour market-responsive curricula, stronger graduate employability, improved learning outcomes, and increased confidence in the quality and credibility of university qualifications. By supporting universities to integrate transferable skills, adopt modern pedagogical approaches, benchmark internationally, and align curricula with national frameworks, the HEET Project implemented through TCU, continues to strengthen higher education as a strategic driver of Tanzania's socio-economic transformation.

Through such targeted capacity development investments, HEET Project has demonstrated that sustainable reform is achieved not only by building infrastructure, but also by strengthening the people and systems that shape curriculum quality, academic integrity, and the long-term competitiveness of Tanzanian university education.

Delegates from TCU led by the Executive Secretary, Prof. Charles Kihampa, undertook a benchmarking visit to the Commission for University Education (CUE) in Kenya on 19th March 2024. During the visit, the delegation held a consultative meeting with the CUE Chief Executive Officer, Prof. Mike Kuria, and senior management at the Commission's offices in Nairobi, providing a platform to exchange best practices, address shared challenges, and explore opportunities for collaboration in the regulation and quality assurance of university education across the East African region.

Advancing Regional Integration through the East African Common Higher Education Area

By Correspondent

Tanzania continues to strengthen regional integration in higher education through active participation in the East African Common Higher Education Area. As a member of the East African Community (EAC) and the Inter-University Council of East Africa (IUCEA), Tanzania has adopted and implemented the common higher education system developed by IUCEA with the aim of enhancing quality assurance, academic mobility, and harmonisation of higher education across the region.

The Tanzania Commission for Universities (TCU) plays a central coordinating role in aligning Tanzania's higher education system with regional standards, frameworks, and best practices. Through policy alignment, regulatory oversight, and capacity development, the Commission ensures that Tanzanian universities effectively integrate into the regional higher education landscape.

One of the key pillars of this integration is curriculum harmonisation. Tanzania has aligned its curriculum development frameworks with regional standards to ensure compatibility and comparability among EAC member states. This alignment facilitates academic consistency and supports the mutual recognition of qualifications, enabling graduates to pursue further studies or employment across the region without unnecessary barriers.

Another critical component is the Credit Accumulation and Transfer (CAT) system, which has been aligned with the East African Credit Transfer System (EACTS). This harmonisation allows academic credits earned at Tanzanian universities to be seamlessly transferred to institutions in other EAC member states, and vice versa. As a result, student mobility within the region has been significantly enhanced, promoting flexible learning pathways and cross-border academic experiences.

In the area of quality assurance and accreditation, Tanzania has aligned its national quality assurance mechanisms with the East African Higher Education Quality Assurance Framework (EAQFHE). This ensures that university institutions comply with regional accreditation requirements and maintain comparable academic standards. The alignment strengthens confidence in the quality and credibility of higher education qualifications awarded within the region.

The recognition of qualifications has also been strengthened through the alignment of the University Qualifications Framework (UQF) with the East African Qualifications Framework (EAQF). This alignment enables mutual recognition of degrees and diplomas across EAC partner states, facilitating graduate employability, professional mobility, and academic progression within the region and beyond.

Furthermore, TCU actively promotes academic and research collaboration among Tanzanian universities and their regional counterparts. These partnerships support staff and student exchanges, joint research
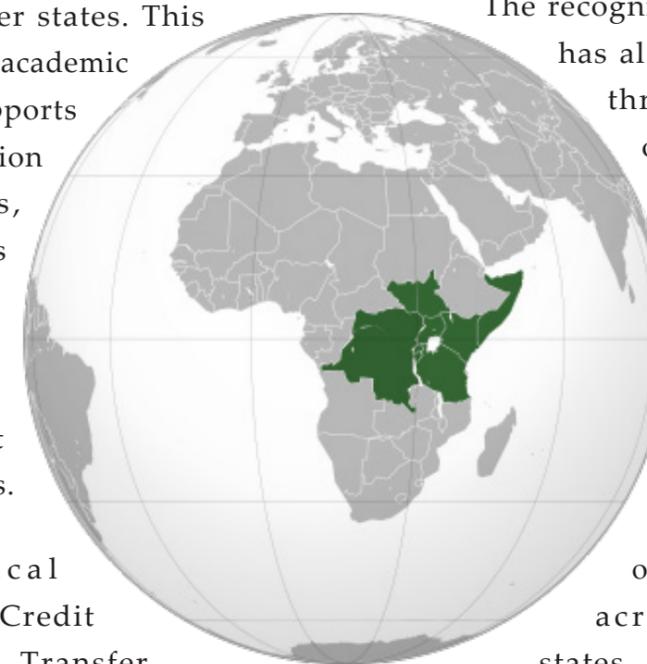
initiatives, and collaborative academic programmes, thereby enhancing knowledge sharing and innovation across borders.

The implementation of the common higher education system has significantly improved student mobility within Tanzania and other EAC member states. Students are now able to move across institutions and countries with assurance that their academic credits will be recognised, increasing international exposure and fostering a shared regional academic identity.

By adopting IUCEA's common higher education system, Tanzania has not only aligned its higher education framework with regional standards but has also contributed to broader continental initiatives, including alignment with the African Continental Qualifications Framework (ACQF). These efforts collectively enhance academic mobility, strengthen quality assurance systems, and improve the international recognition of qualifications awarded by Tanzanian universities.

Through sustained collaboration, regulatory alignment, and commitment to quality, Tanzania continues to play a vital role in advancing the East African Common Higher Education Area and promoting a more integrated, competitive, and globally recognised higher education system in the region.

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The Chairman of the TCU Accreditation Committee, Prof. Makenya Maboko (seated at the centre), is pictured with members of the Accreditation and Admissions Committees of the Commission, Management, and a team of experts during a working session convened to receive and deliberate on a report on the assessment of university systems in Tanzania. The session was organised by TCU and held at APC Hotel and Conference Centre in Dar es Salaam on 27th March 2024.

Shaping the Future of Teaching:

Strengthening the Implementation of Teacher Education Programme Guidelines in Tanzania

By Correspondent

The quality of a nation's education system is inextricably linked to the competence, professionalism, and preparedness of its teachers. Recognising this reality, the Tanzania Commission for Universities (TCU) has continued to place strong emphasis on strengthening teacher education as a cornerstone of higher education quality assurance. Under the Higher Education for Economic Transformation (HEET) Project, the Commission has implemented a series of nationwide dissemination workshops aimed at enhancing the effective implementation of Teacher Education Programme Guidelines across universities in Tanzania.

These workshops form part of TCU's broader HEET-supported capacity development agenda, which seeks to strengthen learning

environments, improve labour market orientation of academic programmes, and enhance the overall management and quality of the higher education system. By directly engaging university academic staff responsible for designing and delivering teacher education curricula, the Commission has taken a deliberate and strategic step towards ensuring that guidelines are not only known, but clearly understood, consistently applied, and sustainably embedded within institutional practice.

Development of Teacher Education Programme Guidelines as a Strategic Response to Quality Assurance Needs

Teacher education programmes play a pivotal role in shaping the future of Tanzania's education sector. However, variations in programme design, delivery approaches, and interpretation of standards have historically posed challenges to harmonisation and quality assurance. In response, TCU developed comprehensive Guidelines for Teacher Education Programmes in University Education in Tanzania, which set out minimum standards, expectations, and best practices aligned with national priorities, regional frameworks, and international benchmarks.

The nationwide dissemination workshops were therefore designed to bridge the gap between policy formulation and practical implementation of the developed

guidelines. They provided a structured platform for academic staff to interrogate the guidelines, discuss their implications, and collectively reflect on how best to integrate them into existing and new curricula.

Nationwide Reach for Inclusive Participation

To ensure broad and equitable participation, TCU organised the workshops in three strategically selected locations, enabling academic staff from universities across the country to attend with minimal logistical constraints. The workshops were held as follows:

- Zanzibar on 11ᵗʰ February 2025 at the State University of Zanzibar (SUZA), Maruhubi Campus;

- Morogoro on 14ᵗʰ February 2025 at Magadu Hotel, Mzinga Corporation; and

- Dodoma on 18ᵗʰ February 2025 at St. Gaspar Hotel and Conference Centre.

Prof. Charles Kihampa
Executive Secretary – TCU

These workshops brought together a total of 166 participants from public and private universities, creating a diverse learning environment that enriched discussions through the sharing of varied institutional experiences and perspectives.

Engaging Academic Staff at the Centre of Curriculum Delivery

The workshops specifically targeted university academic staff involved in the design, review, and delivery of teacher education programmes. This group is central to curriculum quality, as it translates guidelines and standards into classroom practice and learning outcomes.

Through expert-led presentations, facilitated discussions, and practical case study analyses, participants were guided through the structure, scope, and application of the Teacher Education Programme Guidelines. The interactive nature of the sessions encouraged open dialogue, enabling academic staff to seek clarification, raise implementation challenges, and exchange best practices with peers from other institutions.

Participants revealed that the workshops significantly improved their understanding of curriculum alignment, learning outcomes formulation, assessment strategies, and quality assurance requirements. Many noted that the sessions provided practical tools for refining programme structures to better meet both regulatory expectations and the evolving needs of the education sector.

Leadership Perspectives and Strategic Direction

Speaking at the opening session of the Dodoma workshop on 18th February 2025, the Executive Secretary of TCU, Prof. Charles Kihampa, underscored the strategic importance of the initiative. He emphasised that effective implementation of the guidelines is critical to improving teaching methodologies, strengthening learning outcomes, and upholding high academic standards in university education.

"This workshop marks a significant milestone in our efforts to ensure quality university education in Tanzania. By directly engaging academic staff, we can ensure that the guidelines are well understood and properly implemented in their respective institutions," he stated.

His remarks highlighted the Commission's commitment to moving beyond regulatory compliance towards meaningful quality enhancement, where academic staff are empowered as partners in reform rather than passive recipients of policy directives.

Benefits for Participants and Institutions

Feedback from participants across all three workshops demonstrated a high level of satisfaction and perceived usefulness of the training. Academic staff reported that the workshops enhanced their professional confidence and competence in curriculum development and review. A lecturer who attended the Morogoro session remarked: "The discussions were insightful, and I now have a clearer understanding of how to incorporate these guidelines into our teacher education programmes."

Such feedback reflects a broader trend observed under HEET-supported capacity development initiatives, where training translates into immediate improvements in professional practice. Participants indicated that they were better equipped to align teacher education curricula with national education policies, regional harmonisation frameworks, and international standards, while also addressing contextual needs within their institutions.

For universities, the benefits extend beyond individual capacity building. Improved understanding and application of the guidelines contribute to greater consistency across programmes, smoother accreditation and review processes, and enhanced credibility of teacher education qualifications awarded by Tanzanian universities.

Stakeholder Impact and System-Wide Gains

The impact of the workshops goes beyond academic staff and universities. By strengthening teacher education programmes, the initiative contributes to the preparation of well-trained, competent, and ethically grounded teachers who will serve at various levels of the education system. This, in turn, supports national goals related to education quality, human capital development, and socio-economic transformation.

From a regulatory perspective, the workshops have reinforced collaboration and trust between TCU and university institutions. They have demonstrated the Commission's commitment to consultative, supportive, and capacity-driven regulation, an approach that enhances compliance while fostering a shared culture of quality assurance.

The Way Forward: Sustaining Momentum under HEET

TCU has reaffirmed its commitment to supporting universities in the effective

and sustained implementation of the Teacher Education Programme Guidelines. Universities are encouraged to integrate the guidelines into their curricula, internal quality assurance systems, and staff development plans.

As the HEET Project approaches its final phase, initiatives such as these nationwide workshops stand as practical examples of how targeted capacity development can yield lasting benefits. By investing in people, fostering dialogue, and promoting shared understanding, TCU is contributing to a more robust, harmonised, and internationally competitive higher education system.

In the long term, the strengthened implementation of teacher education guidelines is expected to play a critical role in improving the quality of education delivered in schools and universities across Tanzania. It is through such deliberate, inclusive, and well-coordinated interventions that higher education continues to fulfil its transformative role in national development.
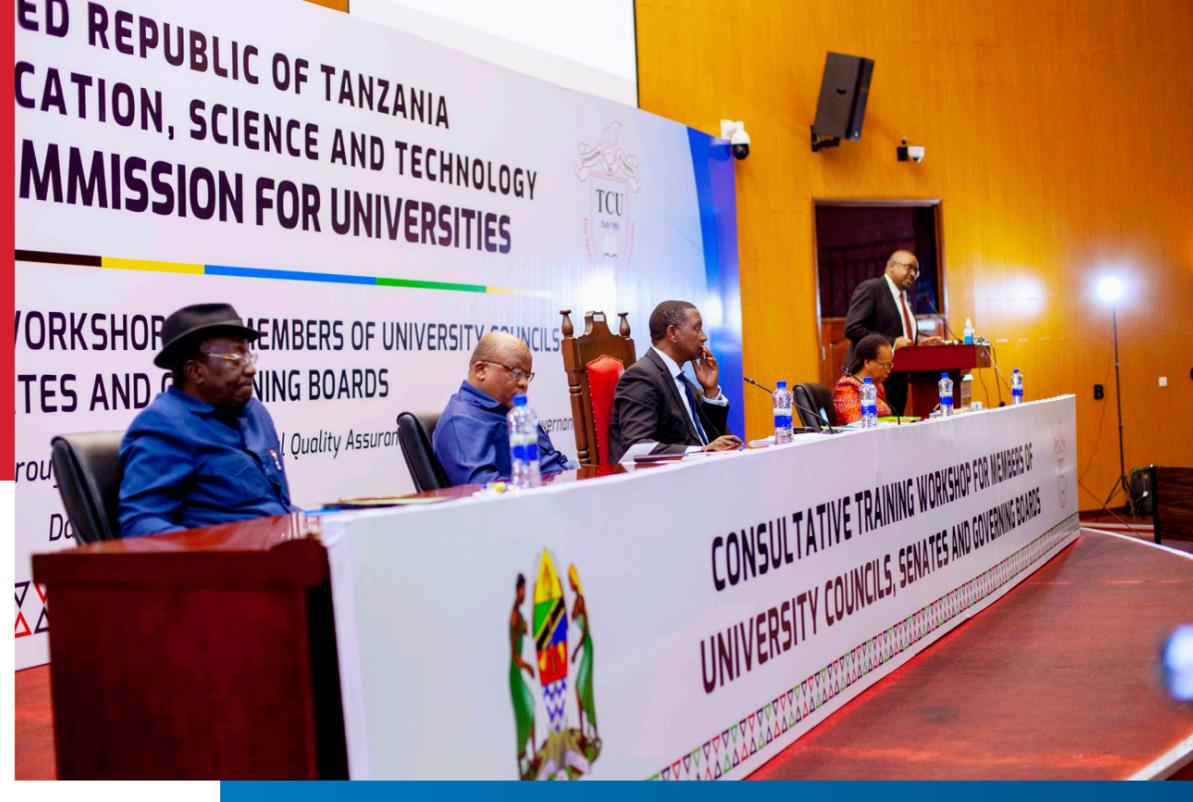
Transforming Universities through Strong Governance and Leadership

By Correspondent

Transforming universities begins with the strength of their governance and the clarity of their leadership. As a higher education confronts rising expectations and complex societal demands, institutions are being called to lead with purpose, integrity and strategic vision. Through strong governance frameworks and principled leadership, universities are reshaping their institutional character, strengthening public confidence and positioning themselves as enduring drivers of national and sustainable development.

It was against this backdrop that the Consultative Training Workshop for Members of University Councils, Senates and Governing Boards was convened from 1st to 2nd June 2023 at the APC Hotel and Conference Centre, Dar es Salaam. Organised by the Tanzania Commission for Universities (TCU) under the auspices of the Higher Education for Economic Transformation (HEET)

Project, the workshop brought together a broad cross-section of stakeholders from Tanzania's higher education sub-sector. The training was held under the theme *"Enhancing University Education through Strengthening University Governance, Leadership and Internal Quality Assurance Systems"*.

The workshop provided a high-level consultative platform aimed at enhancing leadership effectiveness, strengthening governance oversight, and embedding a culture of internal quality assurance within universities. For participants and stakeholders alike, the engagement delivered substantial benefits by fostering shared understanding, strengthening strategic decision-making, and reinforcing the collective responsibility of institutional leaders in safeguarding academic quality and relevance.

A Focused Platform for Leadership and Governance Reform

A defining feature of HEET Project implementation is its emphasis on strengthening the enabling environment for quality university education. This includes reinforcing governance systems, leadership accountability, and internal quality assurance mechanisms that directly influence institutional performance, academic standards, graduate outcomes, and public confidence in higher education.

University Councils, Senates and Governing Boards occupy a pivotal position within this ecosystem.

Their decisions shape institutional strategy, approve academic programmes, allocate resources, oversee quality assurance systems, and ensure compliance with national regulatory frameworks.

This article highlights how the consultative training workshop represented a targeted HEET Project investment in individuals entrusted with institutional stewardship, recognising that sustainable reform must be driven from the top while being informed by participatory governance.

For stakeholders including students, parents, employers, government, and the wider society, the workshop signalled a clear and deliberate commitment by TCU and the Government to strengthening university leadership as a foundational pillar for enhanced academic quality, relevance, and institutional accountability.

Setting the Tone for Consultative Capacity Development

In his welcoming remarks, the Executive Secretary of TCU, Prof. Charles Kihampa emphasised that the training was designed to strengthen governance structures and internal quality assurance systems, recognising leadership development as a cornerstone for institutional enhancement. The workshop formed part

of an ongoing capacity-development programme that began with Heads of Departments and would progressively include Deans, Deputy Vice Chancellors and Vice Chancellors, thereby ensuring inclusive leadership development across all levels of universities governance.

A key benefit to participants was the consultative and interactive design of the workshop. Rather than relying on one-way presentations, the programme encouraged dialogue, experience-sharing, and collective problem-solving. Participants, many of whom possess extensive experience in higher education governance were invited to reflect on practical challenges and contribute to the formulation of actionable solutions. This approach reinforced

Prof. Charles Kihampa
Executive Secretary – TCU

Prof. Adolf Mkenda
Minister for Education, Science and Technology

Participants benefited from a historical overview of Tanzania's transition from self-regulated universities to a regulated framework, culminating in the establishment of the Higher Education Accreditation Council (HEAC) in 1995 and TCU in 2005. This perspective strengthened understanding of why national oversight exists and how it serves to protect academic standards and public interest.

The distinction between quality assurance (process-oriented, preventive, and continuous) and quality control (output-focused and reactive) was particularly valuable. Prof. Muruke emphasised that quality assurance is better suited to academic environments and must be embedded internally through functional quality assurance units responsible for curriculum review, assessment integrity, teaching quality, and student satisfaction.

For stakeholders, the session reinforced that quality assurance should be viewed as an institutional culture and governance responsibility rather than a compliance exercise.

Regulatory Framework for University Education in Tanzania

In his presentation, Prof. Charles Kihampa, the Executive Secretary of TCU provided a comprehensive overview of Tanzania's regulatory framework for university education. He traced the evolution of regulation following the liberalisation of the

peer learning and strengthened stakeholder ownership of reform initiatives.

National Priorities and Alignment

The opening remarks were delivered by Prof. Adolf Mkenda, Minister of Education, Science and Technology. In his keynote address, the Minister commended TCU for its leadership in organising the HEET-supported training and acknowledged the critical role played by members of Councils and Senates in institutional governance and academic decision-making.

Prof. Mkenda addressed the ongoing public discourse on the quality and relevance of university education in Tanzania. While acknowledging that some criticisms may be overstated, he conceded that

legitimate concerns exist and must be addressed through deliberate reform. He noted that challenges relating to quality and relevance are global in nature, as countries seek to align higher education outputs with labour market demands and societal expectations.

He reaffirmed the Government's commitment to education reform, referencing directives by Her Excellency Dr. Samia Suluhu Hassan, President of the United Republic of Tanzania. The Minister stressed that quality assurance must be safeguarded at all levels of education, observing that weaknesses in pre-university preparation inevitably affect university outcomes.

The Minister outlined key

government priorities, including:

- Ensuring financial sustainability of universities through diversified income sources;
- Standardising academic promotion criteria;
- Strengthening postgraduate supervision, including public thesis defences;
- Safeguarding academic quality amid enrolment expansion;
- Fostering a strong research culture and high-impact publications;
- Enhancing inter-university collaboration; and
- Aligning academic programmes with labour market needs.

For stakeholders, these remarks reinforced confidence that HEET Project implementation is firmly anchored within national development priorities and that both public and private universities are recognised as critical partners in Tanzania's higher education landscape.

Quality Assurance as a Strategic Governance Function at Institutional Oversight Level

Prof. Masoud Muruke, former President of the East African Higher Education Quality Assurance

Network (EAQAN), delivered presentation on the growing importance of quality assurance at the level of institutional oversight.

Prof. Muruke highlighted that while quality has always been integral to academia, recent global developments particularly following the Bologna Process have intensified the need for structured, measurable quality assurance systems. He linked this shift to global trends such as massification, privatisation, marketisation, globalisation, and cross-border education.

education sector and the rapid expansion of universities, which necessitated stronger external quality assurance mechanisms.

He explained that while HEAC initially focused on private institutions, the establishment of TCU under the Universities Act, Cap. 346, created a balanced public-private regulatory framework. TCU's mandate spans three pillars: regulatory, advisory, and supportive.

Participants benefited from a clearer understanding of the legal and policy instruments guiding university education, including the Standards and Guidelines for University Education, the University Qualifications Framework, and Student Credit Transfer Guidelines. Prof. Kihampa also highlighted regional and international collaborations that support harmonisation and consistency in quality assurance.

Discussions addressed emerging issues such as artificial intelligence in education, programme duration standards, and the misuse of honorary degrees. The session reinforced the need for flexibility, innovation, and robust internal systems to sustain quality in an expanding higher education system.

Governance Structures and the Three-Tier University Model: Strengthening Institutional Alignment and Accountability

Prof. Idrissa Mshoro, former Vice Chancellor of Ardhi University (ARU), delivered two closely linked presentations on the three-tier cluster of university governance and the statutory roles of Councils, Senates and Governing Boards.

He emphasised core university values, autonomy, academic freedom, inclusiveness, transparency, and accountability, and that governance structures translate these values into decision-making processes. The three-tier model comprises:

- Tier One: University Council and Senate;
- Tier Two: Boards at colleges, faculties, institutes and schools; and
- Tier Three: Departmental committees.

Participants benefited from a deeper appreciation of how this structure ensures alignment between institutional strategy and operational implementation. Prof. Mshoro also highlighted governance challenges, including weak implementation of Tier Three structures, limited performance evaluation mechanisms, and insufficient stakeholder engagement.

The discussions clarified that while legislation provides a framework, institutions retain flexibility to structure governance appropriately. For stakeholders, this session reinforced the importance of effective governance as a driver of institutional coherence, accountability, and quality.

Responding to Contemporary Issues in University Education

Eng. Henry Kulaya, Senior International Consultant for Education Reforms and Development, explored contemporary global forces shaping higher education. His presentation examined the impact of technological change, globalisation, demographic shifts, youth unemployment, climate change, and the COVID-19 pandemic.

Participants benefited from insights into the transformative role of technology, including virtual learning environments, artificial intelligence, and flipped classrooms. He emphasised curriculum internationalisation and university-industry collaboration as key strategies for enhancing employability and innovation.

For stakeholders, the session underscored the need for student-centred learning, youth inclusion, and recruitment of technologically competent faculty to drive pedagogical transformation.

Graduate Employability: Bridging the Skills Gap

A high-level panel discussion on graduate employability brought together perspectives from government, employers, and industry. The panelists Dr. Laurean Ndumbaro, former Permanent Secretary at the President's Office, Public Service Management and Good Governance; Kabeho Solo from the Association of Tanzania Employers (ATE); and George Celestine, Training Officer at the Confederation of Tanzania Industries (CTI), highlighted persistent skills mismatches despite increasing student enrolments and the expansion of university institutions across the country.

Drawing on regional data, the panel noted that a proportion of graduates lack job readiness due to outdated curricula, limited practical exposure, and weak soft skills. Participants benefited from frank discussions on the need for curriculum reform, strengthened internships, industry engagement, and the integration of practitioners into academic delivery.

For stakeholders, the session reinforced the urgency of aligning university outputs with labour market realities through sustained collaboration between universities, government, and industry.

Financing, Leadership and Institutional Sustainability

The final sessions addressed institutional sustainability and leadership. Prof. Ephata Kaaya, Vice Chancellor at KCMC University, highlighted chronic underfunding, over-reliance on tuition fees, and the impact of limited institutional financing on quality. He advocated for diversified funding strategies, including international student recruitment and commercial ventures.

Prof. Daniel Mkude concluded with a session on leadership in higher education, distinguishing between visionary leadership and managerial control. He emphasised institutional values, evidence-based reforms, and resilience in the face of resistance as hallmarks of effective leadership.

Delivering Value through Leadership and Governance Capacity Development

The Consultative Training Workshop for Members of University Councils, Senates and Governing Boards stands as a strong demonstration of HEET Project implementation translating into tangible benefits for participants and stakeholders. For university leaders, the training strengthened governance competence, strategic oversight, and understanding of quality assurance responsibilities. For institutions, it reinforced alignment between governance, academic quality, and national development priorities. For students, employers, and society, it contributed to a higher education system that is more accountable, relevant, and responsive to contemporary challenges.

Through such consultative and capacity-development interventions, TCU continues to foster institutional excellence, cohesive governance, and adaptive leadership, ensuring that Tanzania's higher education system remains a critical driver of sustainable socio-economic transformation.

Learning without Borders:

Credit Accumulation and Transfer System Boosts Student Mobility

By Roserine Moshi

Tanzania continues to strengthen student mobility and academic progression through a structured Credit Accumulation and Transfer system aligned with regional and international frameworks. As a member of both the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and the East African Community (EAC), Tanzania, through the Tanzania Commission for Universities (TCU), has adopted regional credit transfer frameworks that are harmonised with the SADC Qualifications Framework (SADCQF) and the East African Qualifications Framework for Higher Education (EAQFHE).

These frameworks standardise the allocation and recognition of academic credits, enabling students to transfer between universities within Tanzania, the EAC, and SADC member states without academic disadvantage. The harmonised approach facilitates seamless student mobility across borders, allowing credits earned in one recognised institution to be considered and applied in another, both regionally and internationally.

TCU ensures that Tanzanian higher education institutions recognise and honour credits transferred from accredited universities within the EAC and SADC regions, as well as from other recognised national accreditation systems worldwide. In the same vein, credits earned from Tanzanian universities are recognised by institutions in other member states and beyond, promoting continuity of academic progression and global academic integration.

By promoting student mobility, faculty collaboration, and cross-border research, the Credit Accumulation and Transfer system enables students to pursue part or all of their studies outside Tanzania without losing academic credits. The system contributes to the harmonisation of higher education, enhances institutional competitiveness, and supports national and regional development through a quality-assured and integrated credit transfer mechanism. Consequently, students wishing to transfer credits to Tanzanian universities are eligible to apply in accordance with established procedures.

The legal basis for credit accumulation and transfer is provided under the Universities Act, Cap. 346 R.E 2023, which mandates TCU to establish procedures, issue guidance, and monitor criteria governing the transfer of students between universities or academic programmes. These provisions apply to students at all levels of study who have earned credits through the successful completion of courses or modules at higher education institutions accredited by TCU or by other recognised national accreditation bodies worldwide.

Students seeking to transfer credits are required to initiate the process by submitting a formal application to the receiving institution. The application must be accompanied by an official release letter from the releasing institution, certified official academic transcript(s), copies of previously attained lower-level academic certificates, course syllabi or descriptions where required, and any additional documents prescribed by the receiving institution.

Upon receipt of the application, the receiving institution evaluates the submitted documentation by verifying the accreditation status of the releasing institution and programme, confirming the student's entry qualifications, and assessing the equivalence of the credits earned against its own curriculum. This evaluation includes a review of course content, learning outcomes, credit values, and grading systems. Where courses are found to be equivalent or sufficiently comparable, the institution may approve the transfer of credits in accordance with its internal decision-making structures.

Both students and receiving institutions are required to observe the quality assurance criteria set out in Standards 3.19 to 3.21 of the Standards and Guidelines for University Education in Tanzania. These standards, among other provisions, stipulate that core courses completed at the releasing institution may not necessarily qualify as core courses at the receiving institution; approval of course equivalency and credit transfer is subject to the consent of the Senate of the receiving institution; students must be duly registered at the releasing institution at the time of application; students who have been discontinued from studies are not eligible for credit transfer; credits must be transferred within a period not exceeding five years from the date they were earned; and at least 50 per cent of the core credits required for graduation must be completed at the receiving institution.

Following approval and within the timelines stipulated in the Commission's academic almanac, the receiving institution is required to submit the list of students approved for credit transfer to TCU for auditing purposes. Upon receiving feedback from the Commission, the institution must formally communicate the Senate's decision to the student in writing, clearly outlining any conditions or reasons attached to the decision.

Through this structured and regulated approach, the Credit Accumulation and Transfer system continues to play a critical role in supporting student mobility, safeguarding academic standards, and strengthening regional and international integration of higher education in Tanzania.

Ms. Roserine Moshi

Serves as the Legal Counsel at TCU

Learning Without Borders

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The Education Policy Review Commission from the Republic of Uganda conducted a benchmarking visit to the Tanzania Commission for Universities (TCU) to gain insights into curricula development and university operations in Tanzania. The study visit took place on 22nd April 2024 at the TCU offices in Dar es Salaam.

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Prof. Charles Kihampa
Executive Secretary – TCU

Empowering Academic Leaders at the Frontline:

Targeted Training for Heads of Academic Departments Strengthens Leadership, Quality Assurance and Accountability in Higher Education System

By Correspondent

Building leadership capacity at departmental level is strengthening quality assurance, accountability and institutional responsiveness, while enabling academic departments to deliver relevant curricula, uphold academic standards and respond effectively to labour market demands and national development priorities. Through empowered Hedas of Academic Departments and strengthened governance practices, universities are reinforcing their role as centres of excellence.

In advancing this vision, the Tanzania Commission for Universities (TCU) convened a two-day training workshop for Heads of Academic Departments, held on 7th and 8th March, 2024 in Morogoro.

The workshop aimed to strengthen university governance, leadership, and internal quality assurance systems, recognising the pivotal role played by Heads of Academic Departments as the operational custodians of academic quality, curriculum delivery, staff development, and ethical practice within universities. By targeting Heads of Academic Departments, TCU reaffirmed its understanding that sustainable institutional reform must be anchored at the departmental level, where policies are translated into daily academic practice.

A Strategic Investment in Academic Leadership

The HoDs' training workshop formed part of a broader series of HEET-funded consultative engagements aimed at building leadership capacity across all levels of university governance. While Councils and Senates provide strategic oversight, Heads of Academic Departments serve as the critical link between institutional strategy and classroom reality. Their decisions directly influence curriculum relevance, assessment integrity, research productivity, staff performance, and student learning outcomes.

This article highlights how the workshop provided participants with a structured platform for professional development, peer learning, and reflective dialogue. For stakeholders including students, parents, employers, government, and the wider society, the initiative signalled a clear and deliberate commitment by the Tanzania Commission for Universities and the Government to strengthening academic leadership as a prerequisite for enhanced quality, relevance, and accountability in higher education.

Emphasising Professional Growth and Shared Responsibility

In his welcoming remarks, Prof. Charles Kihampa, Executive Secretary of TCU, expressed sincere emphasised that the workshop was consultative in nature, aimed to promote interaction, experience-sharing, and collective problem-solving rather than passive learning.

Prof. Kihampa highlighted that the training was embedded within the HEET Project's leadership development agenda, which aims to equip academic leaders with the competencies required to foster institutional excellence and sustainability. He underscored the importance of peer collaboration and knowledge-sharing, encouraging participants to cascade the insights

gained to colleagues within their respective institutions. This approach, he noted, enhances system-wide impact, nurtures a culture of continuous improvement, and reflects the Government's strong support for capacity-development initiatives in higher education.

Understanding University Governance: The Three-Tier Leadership Structure

The first technical session, delivered by Prof. Idrissa Mshoro, former Vice Chancellor at Ardhi University (ARU), focused on the linkages and broad rules governing the three-tier cluster of university governance structures. Drawing on global definitions from UNESCO, the International Association of University Presidents (IAUP), and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), Prof. Mshoro contextualised governance as a system of decision-making processes and institutional arrangements that promote accountability, participation, transparency, and responsiveness.

Participants benefited from a detailed exposition of the three-tier governance model comprising Councils and Senates (Tier One), Colleges and Faculties (Tier Two), and Departments (Tier Three). Particular emphasis was placed on the role of HoDs within Tier Three, where strategic objectives are operationalised through teaching and learning, research and innovation, and community engagement and service.

The session enhanced participants' understanding of autonomy in academia-academic, organisational, staffing, and financial and clarified that where full autonomy is constrained, sound governance must prevail. Discussions around weak delegation, absence departmental committees, and limited involvement of HoDs in planning processes resonated strongly with participants, highlighting areas for institutional reform.

For university institutions, strengthened governance at departmental level translates into better-aligned academic programmes, improved accountability, and more effective use of resources in pursuit of national development goals.

Quality Assurance as an Institutional Culture

Prof. Masoud Muruke, former President of East African Higher Education Quality Assurance Network (EAQAN), provided an in-depth exploration of quality assurance in higher education. He traced the evolution of quality assurance in Tanzania from self-regulated systems to the establishment of the Higher Education Accreditation Council (HEAC) in 1995 and the Tanzania Commission for Universities in 2005, driven by expansion, diversification, and the emergence of private universities.

Participants gained clarity on the multifaceted nature of quality, shaped by diverse stakeholder expectations from academic excellence and fitness-for-purpose

to value-for-money and societal relevance. A critical distinction was made between Quality Assurance (preventive, systematic, and improvement-oriented) and Quality Control (reactive and defect-focused), reinforcing that quality assurance is more suited to academic environments.

Internal Quality Assurance (IQA) was emphasised as a shared institutional responsibility encompassing curriculum review, staff development, assessment practices, student satisfaction surveys, and continuous sensitisation. External Quality Assurance (EQA), exercised by bodies such as TCU and the Inter-University Council of East Africa (IUCEA), was presented as a complementary mechanism for accountability and benchmarking.

For participants, the session strengthened their capacity to view quality assurance not as compliance, but as a strategic tool for institutional growth. For stakeholders, it reaffirmed that universities are being guided to embed quality assurance as a living culture that protects academic standards and public trust.

Operationalising Quality Assurance: The Central Role of HoDs

Dr. Joan Munissi, Senior Lecturer and Director of Undergraduate Studies at the University of Dar es Salaam (UDSM), emphasised that quality assurance at the operational level depends heavily on clearly defined and consistently applied procedures. Particular attention

was given to structured credit transfer processes, which safeguard academic standards while facilitating student mobility, as well as the importance of thorough preparation and effective communication in maintaining examination integrity and smooth academic operations. Dr. Munissi also highlighted institutional mechanisms that support postgraduate supervision, underscoring the importance of coordination, timeliness, and

the University of Dar es Salaam, where he previously served as Head of Department, Director of Undergraduate Studies, and Principal of the College of Natural and Applied Sciences. He focused his contribution on systemic challenges that continue to undermine effective quality assurance in many university institutions.

Among the key concerns identified were the appointment

Prof. Mushi cautioned that such challenges not only compromise internal quality assurance systems but also erode staff morale, institutional cohesion, and academic accountability.

His candid reflections resonated strongly with participants, some of whom face similar constraints within their institutions. The discussion enabled participants to contextualise their own experiences,

accountability in promoting academic excellence.

Addressing Systemic Challenges in University Operations, Prof. Allen Mushi, Deputy Vice-Chancellor for Planning, Finance and Administration at Mzumbe University (MU), complemented these reflections by drawing on his extensive leadership experience at

of underqualified individuals to Head of Department positions, understaffing in certain academic units, limited inclusion of Heads of Departments in strategic and operational decision-making processes, insufficient management and leadership training for academic leaders, and the persistence of highly centralised leadership styles that weaken collegial governance.

validate shared challenges, and consider practical strategies for strengthening departmental leadership and engagement within existing governance frameworks.

The session proved highly beneficial to participants by providing a structured platform for reflection, peer learning, and critical dialogue on operational quality assurance.

It enhanced participants' capacity to identify weaknesses within their departments, strengthened their appreciation of inclusive leadership practices, and reinforced the importance of aligning operational activities with institutional policies and national quality assurance standards. Strengthened operational quality assurance translates into more reliable academic processes, fair assessment practices, credible qualifications, and graduates who are better prepared for further study and the labour market.

Leadership, Management and Strategic Decision-Making

Leadership and management emerged as key themes in subsequent sessions. Prof. Daniel Mkude, Deputy Principal Academic Affairs at Jordan University College (JUCo), and former Chief Administrative Officer at the University of Dar es Salaam (UDSM), examined the foundations of leadership and management in higher education, distinguishing between leadership (vision and inspiration), management (resource coordination), and administration (procedural compliance). Participants gained valuable insights into balancing these roles while transitioning from purely academic responsibilities to managerial and strategic leadership positions.

Complementing this, Prof. Joseph Kuzilwa, former Vice Chancellor

Mzumbe University (MU), delivered a comprehensive session on strategic decision-making and its implications for institutional welfare. He outlined the strategic planning cycle, emphasising the importance of aligning departmental action plans with institutional five-year strategic plans. Participants benefited from practical examples linking strategic decisions to curriculum relevance, research development, and internationalisation.

For stakeholders, strengthened strategic leadership at departmental level ensures that universities remain adaptive, financially sustainable, and aligned with labour market and societal needs.

Ethics as the Bedrock of Academic Leadership

The session on ethics in higher education, delivered by Prof. Kallunde Sibuga, underscored the moral responsibilities of academic leaders. Through participatory approaches, participants reflected on ethical and unethical practices in teaching, research, assessment, and leadership.

Heads of Academic Departments were reminded of their influential role in shaping ethical culture within their departments, guided by core values such as honesty, fairness, integrity, respect, responsibility, and transparency. For stakeholders, ethical leadership enhances trust, strengthens institutional credibility, and safeguards the rights of students and staff, elements that are critical to

a respected and sustainable higher education system.

Benefits and Impact

Key benefits to participants included enhanced leadership competence, improved understanding of governance and quality assurance systems, strengthened ethical awareness, and renewed commitment to COLLABORATIVE institutional reform. For stakeholders, the training represents a concrete investment in leadership capacity that directly contributes to improved academic quality, relevance, accountability, and graduate outcomes.

A Shared Commitment to Excellence

The HoDs' training workshop stands as a compelling example of HEET Project implementation that goes beyond infrastructure and systems to invest in people and leadership. By strengthening governance, leadership, and internal quality assurance at the operational level, TCU continues to lay a strong foundation for institutional excellence and national transformation.

As participants were equipped with new insights and shared resolve, the message to stakeholders is clear: Tanzania's higher education system is being strengthened from within, through informed, ethical, and accountable academic leadership committed to delivering quality education for national development.

Event 4

The Chairperson of TCU Accreditation Committee, Prof. Makenya Maboko (seated at the centre), is pictured with university leaders and members of the TCU management team during a one-day working session convened to receive presentations from six university leaders who undertook study visits to successful overseas universities to learn modern approaches to university leadership and management. The session, organised by TCU was held on 17th May 2024, at APC Hotel and Conference Centre in Dar es Salaam.

University leaders from public and private universities who undertook study visits to successful overseas universities to learn modern approaches to university leadership and management.

Turning Vision into Impact:

Stronger Universities and Employable Graduates

The quality, sustainability and relevance of university education are inherently linked to the effectiveness of institutional governance and leadership. In response, the Tanzania Commission for Universities (TCU) organised a high-level, two-day consultative training workshop designed to strengthen governance frameworks, build leadership capacity, and ensure that higher education outcomes are aligned with labour market requirements.

The workshop, held from 23rd to 24th June 2025 at the APC Hotel and Conference Centre in Dar es Salaam, brought together a total of 150 members of university councils, senates, and governing boards from university institutions across the country.

Organised within the framework of the Higher Education for Economic Transformation (HEET) Project, the workshop constituted a key component of TCU's broader capacity development strategy aimed at strengthening higher education system management and ensuring that universities remain responsive,

accountable, and sustainable within an increasingly competitive global landscape

Setting the Strategic Tone: Governance and Leadership at the Centre

The workshop was officiated by the then Chairperson of the Commission, Dr. Leonard Akwilapo, who underscored the central role of effective governance and visionary leadership in safeguarding academic standards and institutional resilience. In his opening remarks, he emphasised that university councils, senates, and governing boards serve as custodians of institutional integrity, responsible not only for oversight but also for strategic direction and long-term sustainability.

He noted that strong governance frameworks enable universities to align

their institutional strategies with national development priorities while remaining competitive within the global higher education landscape. The workshop, he observed, provided a timely opportunity for governance actors to reflect on their responsibilities, share experiences, and strengthen collective capacity to steer institutions through complex and rapidly changing environments.

Deepening Understanding of University Governance Structures

Throughout the two days, participants engaged in structured and interactive sessions that examined the roles, mandates, and interrelationships of university councils, senates, and governing boards. Emphasis was placed on the importance of clarity in reporting structures, effective delegation of responsibilities, and coordinated

decision-making among governance organs and executive leadership.

A key session on university governance was delivered by Prof. Ephata Kaaya, Vice Chancellor of KCMC University, under the theme "University Governance: The Roles and Functions of University Councils, Governing Boards and Senates." He elaborated on the three-tier governance model, highlighting the complementary responsibilities of strategic oversight, academic quality assurance, and institutional management. He cautioned that weak delegation, ambiguous governance structures, and limited engagement between governance organs can undermine institutional effectiveness, calling for deliberate reforms to strengthen governance practices.

Participants noted that this session enhanced their understanding of governance dynamics and provided practical insights into improving cooperation between councils, senates, and management teams within their respective institutions.

Quality Assurance as a Shared Institutional Responsibility

Quality assurance emerged as a central pillar of the workshop discussions. In a detailed presentation titled "Quality Assurance in Higher Education and the University Regulatory Framework in Tanzania," Dr. Telemu Kassile, Director of Accreditation at TCU, emphasised that responsibility for quality lies first and foremost with university institutions themselves.

He stressed that councils and senates must play an active role in ensuring compliance with national standards, promoting data-informed decision-making, and fostering a culture of continuous improvement. Strong internal quality assurance systems, he noted, are essential for enhancing academic credibility, improving graduate outcomes, and strengthening international competitiveness.

For participants, the session reinforced the link between governance effectiveness and academic quality, equipping them with a clearer understanding of how regulatory frameworks and internal systems can be harmonised to support institutional excellence.

Leadership and Management for Sustainable Universities

The workshop also placed strong emphasis on leadership and management competencies among governance actors. In his presentation, Prof. Daniel Mkude, Deputy Principal Academic Affairs at Jordan University College (JUCo), and former Chief Administrative Officer at the University of Dar es Salaam (UDSM), highlighted the distinction between leadership and management, noting that sustainable universities require both strategic vision and effective operational execution.

He called for participatory, ethical, and transformative leadership styles that empower academic communities, promote accountability, and encourage innovation. Participants were encouraged to view themselves not merely as policy overseers

but as strategic leaders capable of inspiring institutional change.

Complementing this perspective, FCPA Dr. Neema Kiure-Mssusa, Assurance Partner at Ernst & Young, delivered a presentation on "Strategic Decision-Making and Its Implications for University Welfare." She urged governance leaders to move beyond compliance-based approaches and embrace proactive stewardship, underpinned by strategic planning, performance monitoring, ethical leadership, and innovation. Her presentation resonated strongly with participants, particularly in highlighting the connection between sound governance decisions and long-term institutional sustainability.

Responding to Change: Emerging Issues in University Education

The changing landscape of higher education, shaped by technological advancement, financial pressures, and shifting stakeholder expectations, was addressed by the Executive Secretary of TCU, Prof. Charles Kihampa. In his address titled *"The Changing Landscape of University Education: Emerging Issues and What They Mean,"* he underscored the need for adaptive, forward-looking leadership at all levels of university governance.

Prof. Kihampa highlighted key strategic priorities, including financial sustainability through diversified income streams,

Prof. Charles Kihampa
Executive Secretary – TCU

alignment of academic programmes with labour market needs, and the integration of emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence into teaching, learning, and administration. He further stressed the importance of continuous professional development for governance leaders and adherence to transparent and accountable practices.

Participants acknowledged that this session broadened their strategic outlook and enhanced their capacity to anticipate and

respond to emerging challenges within their institutions.

Linking Higher Education to Employability and the Labour Market

A critical dimension of the workshop focused on graduate employability and the alignment of higher education with labour market needs. In a joint session titled *"Aligning Higher Education with Workforce Demands,"* Dr. Aggrey Mlimuka, former Executive Director of the Association of Tanzania Employers (ATE), and Mr. Hussein Sufian, Director of Corporate Affairs at the Bakhresa Group, highlighted the persistent mismatch between academic training and labour market requirements.

They urged universities to strengthen industry linkages, review curricula regularly, and embed employability skills within academic programmes. Emphasis was also placed on involving students and employers in curriculum development and fostering partnerships between academia, industry, and policymakers. This session was particularly valued by participants, who recognised its relevance in enhancing graduate outcomes and institutional relevance.

Tangible Benefits for Participants and Stakeholders

Members of councils, senates, and governing boards noted that the training enhanced their understanding of governance responsibilities, strengthened their leadership competencies, and equipped them with practical tools for more effective decision-making.

University institutions stand to benefit from improved governance coherence, stronger quality assurance oversight, and more responsive leadership. For students and employers, the long-term benefits include improved programme quality, enhanced employability of graduates, and greater confidence in the credibility of university qualifications. At a national level, the workshop contributes to a more accountable, innovative, and sustainable higher education system aligned with Tanzania's development aspirations.

A Shared Commitment to Transformation

As part of the HEET Project, this consultative training workshop stands as a powerful illustration of how targeted capacity development can move institutions from strategy to sustainability, ensuring that Tanzania's universities remain engines of knowledge creation, skills development, and national transformation.

Event 5

The Deputy Chief Executive Officer of the Zimbabwe Council for Higher Education (ZIMCHE), Prof. Wilson Parawira, is pictured during a study visit to the Tanzania Commission for Universities (TCU), where he was received by the Executive Secretary, Prof. Charles Kihampa, together with senior officials of the Commission, at the TCU offices in Dar es Salaam. The visit, conducted from 9th to 20th June 2025, aimed at strengthening bilateral collaboration, benchmarking quality assurance practices, and promoting the exchange of experiences in the regulation and enhancement of university education across the African region.

CONSULTATIVE TRAINING WORKSHOP FOR MEMBERS OF UNIVERSITY COUNCILS, SENATES AND GOVERNING BOARDS

Organised by the Tanzania Commission for Universities (TCU) | THEME Enhancing Quality of University Education Through Strengthening University Governance, Leadership, and Internal Quality Assurance Systems | DATE 23rd - 24th June, 2025

Beyond the Certificate:

Why Skills, Adaptability, and Lifelong Learning Matter More Than Ever

By Correspondent

For many years, graduating with a top-grade Bachelor's or Master's degree has been widely regarded as a guaranteed pathway to employment and professional success. Likewise, obtaining a Master of Business Administration has often been perceived as a definitive qualification for running a successful enterprise, while the prestige of one's alma mater has been assumed to determine career outcomes. However, the realities of today's labour market increasingly challenge these long-held assumptions.

In practice, academic excellence alone does not guarantee immediate employment, nor does it automatically equip a graduate with the competencies required to thrive in complex, competitive, and rapidly changing professional environments. A degree, therefore, matters less than is often believed, not because education lacks value, but because its true worth lies in how knowledge is applied, updated, and transformed into practical impact.

From Qualifications to Competence

Modern employers are placing growing emphasis on demonstrable competence rather than academic titles alone. Increasingly, the critical question is not simply what qualification do you hold? But rather what value can you bring to the organisation? Whether one holds a Bachelor's degree or a postgraduate qualification, the ability to solve problems, communicate effectively, adapt to change, and apply knowledge in real-world contexts has become the defining factor of employability.

A degree remains an important indicator of foundational training. It reflects exposure to structured learning, analytical thinking, and intellectual discipline. However, it is no longer sufficient in isolation. Graduates who rely solely on academic credentials, without developing complementary skills and experience, often struggle to translate their qualifications into meaningful career opportunities.

The Imperative of Lifelong Learning

One of the most critical lessons for university students is that learning does not end at graduation. On the contrary, graduation marks the beginning of a lifelong learning journey. Knowledge acquired during university studies can quickly become obsolete if it is not continually refreshed and expanded. New technologies, methodologies, and professional standards are constantly reshaping the world of work, demanding that graduates remain curious, adaptable, and proactive learners.

Lifelong learning involves more than formal education. It includes professional training, self-directed learning, mentorship, online courses, industry certifications, and experiential learning in the workplace. Graduates who actively seek opportunities to learn beyond the classroom are better positioned to remain relevant, competitive, and resilient throughout their careers.

Skills in the Age of Technological Disruption

The rapid advancement of technology has fundamentally altered the nature of work. Automation, artificial intelligence, and digital transformation are redefining roles across industries, raising important questions about the future relevance of many professions. Tasks that once required human labour are increasingly being performed by machines, while new roles demanding advanced digital and cognitive skills continue to emerge.

In this context, graduates must critically assess the durability of their skills. Will their competencies remain valuable if their current role is automated or significantly transformed? The answer lies in cultivating transferable skills that transcend specific job titles. These include critical thinking, creativity, emotional intelligence, leadership, teamwork, digital literacy, and the ability to learn new skills quickly.

At a recent career development forum, a human resource expert succinctly captured

this shift by emphasising "skills, not degrees". This phrase does not dismiss the importance of academic qualifications. Rather, it underscores the need for a balanced approach—one that recognises degrees as a foundation upon which practical, adaptable, and continuously evolving skills must be built.

Reframing Success for University Students

For university students, this evolving landscape presents both challenges and opportunities. The challenge lies in moving beyond the traditional mindset that equates academic success with guaranteed employment. The opportunity lies in proactively shaping one's own employability by combining academic learning with practical experience, personal development, and strategic skill acquisition.

Students are encouraged to seek internships, engage in research projects, participate in extracurricular activities, volunteer in community initiatives, and develop entrepreneurial ventures. Such experiences not only enhance practical competence but also help students discover their strengths, interests, and career aspirations. Importantly, they provide evidence of capability that employers increasingly value.

The Role of Universities and Personal Responsibility

Universities play a crucial role in preparing graduates for this new reality by integrating skills development, innovation, and experiential learning into academic programmes. However, institutional support alone is not enough. Students themselves must take responsibility for their growth, actively seeking opportunities to learn, practise, and refine their skills.

A successful graduate of the future is not defined solely by certificates but by adaptability, initiative, and a commitment to continuous improvement. Academic qualifications open doors, but skills determine how far one progresses once inside.

Building a Future-Ready Graduate

In conclusion, while degrees remain valuable markers of academic achievement, they are no longer the sole currency of success in the modern labour market. What truly distinguishes graduates today is their ability to apply knowledge, adapt to change, and continue learning throughout their lives.

For university students, this message is both empowering and instructive. By embracing lifelong learning, cultivating relevant skills, and remaining open to growth and transformation, graduates can future-proof their careers and contribute meaningfully to society. In an era defined by rapid change, the most valuable qualification is not merely a degree, but the capacity to learn, adapt, and create value wherever one goes.

Leading with Purpose:

Advancing Excellence, Strengthens Governance and Fostering Accountability across Universities

By Correspondent

Purpose-driven leadership has become a defining requirement for universities operating within an increasingly complex and demanding environment. As institutions of higher education are entrusted with shaping knowledge, skills and societal progress, the need for effective governance, ethical decision-making and clear accountability has never been more pronounced.

By advancing excellence through sound leadership and robust governance frameworks, universities are strengthening institutional performance, safeguarding academic standards and reinforcing public confidence in higher education system. In recognition of this, the Tanzania Commission for Universities (TCU) organised a high-level, two-day training workshop in Morogoro, bringing together Deputy Vice Chancellors, Deputy Principals, and Deputy Provosts responsible for academic affairs from universities nationwide. The session, held from 20th to 21st March 2025, formed part of the Commission's broader capacity development agenda under the Higher Education for Economic Transformation (HEET) Project.

Held under the theme *"The Role of Academic Leaders in Fostering Academic Excellence"*, the working session brought together a total of 45 participants and provided a strategic platform for senior academic leaders to reflect, share experiences, and strengthen their collective capacity to uphold quality assurance, institutional governance, and academic integrity within Tanzanian universities. The initiative underscored TCU's commitment to strengthening leadership at the heart of higher education transformation.

The Dialogue on Academic Excellence

The session was officially opened on 20th March 2025 by the then Chairperson of TCU, Dr. Leonard Akwilapo, whose keynote address set a strong tone for deliberations. He emphasised that Deputy Vice Chancellors, Deputy Principals, and Deputy Provosts occupy a pivotal position in the governance architecture of universities, serving as custodians of academic standards and drivers of institutional performance.

Dr. Akwilapo noted that academic leaders are entrusted with safeguarding the integrity of curricula, overseeing programme delivery, managing student admissions and credit transfers, and ensuring compliance with accreditation and regulatory requirements. These responsibilities, he stressed, are central to building public confidence in university education and to producing graduates equipped with relevant knowledge, skills, and values demanded by the labour market.

> *"These leaders are instrumental in upholding academic standards,"* Dr. Akwilapo observed. *"By ensuring proper curriculum structuring, transparent admissions processes, and efficient programme delivery, we create a solid foundation for producing competent graduates who can meet the demands of the job market."*

Academic Leadership as a Pillar of Quality Assurance

Discussions during the session highlighted the critical role of academic leaders in embedding a strong culture of quality assurance within institutions. Participants examined how internal quality assurance mechanisms when effectively coordinated by academic leadership, can enhance programme credibility, improve learning outcomes, and reduce risks associated with non-compliance.

Under the HEET Project, TCU has placed particular emphasis on strengthening leadership capacity as a sustainable pathway to systemic improvement. This working session therefore complemented HEET-supported interventions that targeted pedagogical skills, curriculum design, and governance training for university councils,

senates, governing boards and peer review capacity.

Participants acknowledged that the forum enabled them to revisit their roles with renewed clarity and confidence. Through guided discussions and shared experiences, academic leaders explored practical strategies for aligning institutional academic processes with national standards, regional harmonisation frameworks, and international best practices.

Governance, Transparency, and Institutional Credibility

A key area of focus during the session was the intersection between academic leadership and institutional governance. The Executive Secretary of TCU, Prof. Charles Kihmapa underscored the importance of transparent, merit-based systems for staff recruitment, promotion, and progression, noting that these processes directly influence academic quality and institutional reputation.

He emphasised that effective governance requires collaboration among various university organs, including departments, academic boards, human resource committees, and university councils. When these structures function coherently, institutions are better positioned to attract and retain qualified academic staff, promote fairness, and enhance operational efficiency.

Participants engaged in robust discussions on governance challenges commonly faced by universities, including balancing academic autonomy with regulatory

compliance, managing institutional growth, and responding to increasing stakeholder expectations. The exchange of experiences across institutions enabled participants to benchmark practices and identify workable solutions applicable within their own contexts.

Data Management and Regulatory Compliance

Another critical dimension of the working session was the role of academic leaders in ensuring accurate data management and compliance with legal and regulatory frameworks. Participants were reminded of their responsibility to oversee the integrity of student and staff records and to ensure timely submission of accurate data to TCU.

"Effective data management enhances accountability," Prof. Kihampa noted. This emphasis aligned closely with HEET-supported investments in data management systems and capacity development for system developers and data managers, reinforcing the interconnected nature of leadership, systems, and quality assurance.

Benefits to Participants and Stakeholders

For participants, the working session provided an invaluable opportunity for professional reflection and peer learning. Academic leaders reported that the discussions deepened their understanding of regulatory expectations, clarified their leadership responsibilities, and strengthened their ability to make informed academic and administrative decisions.

Universities, as key stakeholders, stand to benefit from stronger academic leadership through improved programme quality, more consistent application of standards, enhanced governance practices, and greater institutional credibility. Students and employers, in turn, benefit from more reliable qualifications, improved learning environments, and graduates whose competencies align with labour market needs.

Reflections and the Way Forward

The two-day working session concluded with closing remarks by the TCU Commissioner, and the Vice Chancellor of the University of Dodoma, Prof. Lughano Kusiluka who urged academic leaders to translate the insights gained into concrete actions within their institutions, emphasising that sustained improvement requires consistency, accountability, and continuous learning.

> *"The path to excellence requires strong leadership, accountability, and a commitment to continuous improvement,"* Prof. Kusiluka remarked. *"Let us take the insights gained here and translate them into tangible actions that will transform our institutions and the education sector as a whole."*

The Commission of TCU, Prof. Lughano Kusiluka (seated at the centre), in a group photograph with Deputy Vice Chancellors, Deputy Principals and Deputy Provosts responsible for Academic Affairs from Public and private universities in Tanzania, taken during a training workshop held on 21st March, 2025 in Morogoro.

Reinforcing Academic Quality:

Strengthening Internal Quality Assurance Systems in Universities

By Correspondent

As higher education systems worldwide continue to respond to rapid expansion, technological disruption, and rising stakeholder expectations, the assurance of academic quality has emerged as both a strategic priority and a complex institutional responsibility. In Tanzania, this evolving context has placed renewed emphasis on the effectiveness of Internal Quality Assurance (IQA) systems within university institutions. In recognition of this imperative, the Tanzania Commission for Universities (TCU) convened a two-day national capacity development workshop for Directors and Coordinators of Quality Assurance from university institutions across the country.

The workshop, held from 5th to 6th June 2025 in Morogoro, was organised under the Higher Education for Economic Transformation (HEET) Project. It was conducted under the theme *"Defining the Role of Quality Assurance Officers for Effective Internal Quality Assurance in Higher Education"*, and brought together 54 key Quality Assurance Officers/ Directors/ Coordinators within Tanzanian universities.

Responding to a Changing Higher Education Landscape

The workshop was convened against a backdrop of increasing complexity in university education. Expanding enrolments, diversified modes of delivery, digital learning innovations, and growing demands for labour market relevance have all intensified the need for robust, responsive, and well-coordinated quality assurance systems. For TCU, strengthening the capacity of quality assurance practitioners is a strategic investment in the sustainability and credibility of the entire higher education system.

By targeting Directors and Coordinators of Quality Assurance, those directly responsible for operationalising internal quality assurance frameworks within institutions, the workshop sought to move beyond compliance-driven approaches and promote a culture of continuous improvement, evidence-based decision-making, and institutional accountability.

Reflections: Quality Assurance as a Strategic Function

The workshop was officiated by the Vice Chairperson of TCU, Prof. Makenya Maboko, who delivered a thought-provoking address on the growing demands placed on quality assurance systems in contemporary higher education.

Prof. Maboko observed that quality assurance has become increasingly multifaceted, requiring constant monitoring of academic, administrative, and governance-related parameters. He emphasised that effective quality assurance cannot be treated as a routine administrative exercise, but must instead be anchored in strong institutional governance, visionary leadership, and well-functioning internal systems.

> *"Quality assurance in higher education is inherently complex, given the numerous dimensions that must be continuously assessed and improved,"* he noted. *"A comprehensive and integrated approach is essential if institutions are to respond meaningfully to current and emerging challenges."*

He further highlighted a critical structural challenge facing many universities: the appointment of quality assurance officers without prior specialised training in quality assurance. Such circumstances, he cautioned, may limit the effectiveness of IQA units and undermine institutional efforts to achieve and sustain academic excellence.

A Comprehensive Programme for Capacity Enhancement

The workshop programme was carefully structured to address both the conceptual

and practical dimensions of internal quality assurance. Over the two days, participants engaged in expert-led presentations, interactive discussions, and reflective sessions covering a range of timely and relevant topics, including:

- Enhancing quality assurance in academic governance and institutional decision-making;

- Strengthening internal quality assurance practices within the national regulatory framework;

- Expectations, lived experiences, and challenges associated with the role of Quality Assurance Officers;

- Advancing quality assurance practices to address institutional weaknesses and emerging risks;

- Leadership and management competencies for effective quality assurance professionals; and

- Reimagining quality assurance in an era characterised by Artificial Intelligence, digital learning, and systemic disruptions.

Facilitation was provided by distinguished scholars and practitioners in higher education and quality assurance, including Prof. Daniel Mkude, Prof. Idrissa Mshoro, Prof. Kallunde Sibuga, Dr. Nsubili Isaga, and Dr. Telemu Kassile. Their extensive experience enriched the discussions and provided participants with practical insights grounded in both national and international contexts.

Benefits to Participants and Institutional Stakeholders

Participants revealed that the workshop significantly enhanced their understanding of the strategic role of quality assurance within university institutions. Many noted that the sessions clarified expectations under the regulatory framework, strengthened their capacity to advise institutional leadership, and equipped them with practical tools to improve the effectiveness of IQA systems.

Quality Assurance and National Development

In his concluding reflections, Prof. Maboko reiterated that the role of quality assurance personnel extends far beyond institutional compliance. He stressed that quality assurance is central to ensuring universities remain relevant, innovative, and responsive to societal needs.

> *"The expectations of stakeholders, including the Government, are clear,"* he observed. *"Universities must produce graduates who are competent, innovative, and capable of addressing real-world challenges. Quality assurance officers play a pivotal role in fulfilling this mandate."*

His remarks reinforced the alignment between the workshop objectives and the broader goals of the HEET Project, which seeks to strengthen learning environments, enhance labour market orientation of programmes, and improve higher education system management.

Self-care, Self-love Key elements towards Personal growth

Small Choices, Big Futures:

How Self-Care and Discipline Lay the Foundations for a Successful University Life

By Correspondent

In everyday life, we are constantly reminded of the importance of simple habits that safeguard our future. Dentists, for instance, advise us to spend at least two minutes brushing our teeth. This guidance is neither complex nor demanding, yet many people fail to follow it consistently. The consequences of such neglect are often realised years later, when preventable dental problems become costly, painful, and irreversible. Some individuals reach old age having lost most, if not all, of their teeth, simply because they failed to care for them in their youth.

This example illustrates a fundamental truth about life: when we ignore small but essential responsibilities, the long-term cost can be immense. Preventive care, whether in health, education, or personal development, is far less demanding than corrective action taken too late. Unfortunately, human nature often favours convenience and immediate comfort over discipline and foresight.

The same principle applies to general health and lifestyle choices. We are well aware that maintaining a balanced diet and a healthy body weight is essential for long-term wellbeing. Yet many people continue to consume excessive amounts of unhealthy food and neglect regular physical activity. The result is a growing prevalence of lifestyle-related diseases that strain individuals, families, and national health systems. These conditions rarely arise overnight; they are the cumulative result of years of neglecting simple, well-known principles of healthy living.

Lessons for University Students: Prevention over Regret

For university students, these examples carry powerful lessons that extend far beyond health. University life is a critical period during which habits, attitudes, and character are shaped. The choices made at this stage often determine not only academic outcomes, but also professional success, personal wellbeing, and social responsibility in later life.

As educators, many of us have repeatedly advised young people on how to succeed academically: attend lectures, read actively, revise consistently, and approach studies with discipline and commitment. Most students express a strong desire to pass their examinations and graduate successfully. However, desire alone is not enough. Without sustained effort, effective study habits, and personal discipline, academic success remains elusive.

Laziness, procrastination, and disregard for academic responsibilities can have severe consequences. In some cases, students are discontinued from university programmes, not due to lack of intelligence or ability, but because of poor choices and insufficient effort. Years later, such individuals often look back with regret, lamenting decisions that could have been avoided through discipline and commitment.

The Unforgiving Principles of Life

Life operates according to principles that are firm, impartial, and uncompromising. One cannot plant maize and expect to harvest beans. Similarly, it is impossible to expect positive outcomes from negative actions, or success from sustained indifference. Our

> "Live as if you were to die tomorrow. Learn as if you were to live forever."
> - Mahatma Gandhi

daily actions, character, and work ethic inevitably shape the results we experience.

This reality may appear harsh, but it is also fair. The effort we invest today determines the opportunities available to us tomorrow. The discipline we cultivate now protects us from regret later. The small sacrifices we make in the present often yield the greatest rewards in the future.

Many cultural expressions capture this wisdom succinctly. A well-known Kiswahili adage states, "Mtoto akililia wembe mpe," meaning "If a child cries for a razor blade, give it to him." The saying reflects a troubling reality of modern society: some young people reject guidance, believing they know better than those who have gone before them. Unfortunately, such disregard for wisdom and experience often leads to avoidable suffering and failure later in life.

Self-Care as Self-Respect and Self-Love

At the heart of this discussion lies the concept of self-care. Self-care is not indulgence or selfishness; it is an expression of self-respect and self-love. It involves taking responsibility for one's body, health, mental wellbeing, and personal development.

For university students, self-care includes maintaining healthy routines, managing stress effectively, seeking help when needed,

and balancing academic demands with rest and recreation. It also means cultivating positive values such as discipline, integrity, humility, and respect for guidance. These qualities not only support academic success but also prepare students for leadership, service, and responsible citizenship.

Importantly, self-care is not only about the present moment. It is an investment in the future. Students who develop healthy habits, strong work ethics, and emotional resilience are better equipped to navigate the challenges of professional life, family responsibilities, and societal expectations.

A Call to Responsibility and Purpose

There is also a moral and spiritual dimension to these reflections. Many believe in a higher power that calls humanity to do good, work diligently, and live virtuously. These principles are not abstract ideals; they provide practical guidance for building meaningful and productive lives. Those who choose destructive paths whether through crime, dishonesty, or persistent irresponsibility often reap consequences that mirror the harm they have caused.

For university students, this understanding reinforces the importance of making conscious, ethical, and disciplined choices. Education is not merely about acquiring

certificates; it is about shaping character, sharpening judgment, and preparing individuals to contribute positively to society.

Choosing Wisely Today for a Better Tomorrow

In conclusion, the message to university students is clear and urgent: take responsibility for your life, your health, your studies, and your future. Small, consistent actions such as brushing your teeth properly, eating responsibly, studying

diligently, and seeking guidance, may seem insignificant in isolation, but together they form the foundation of a successful and fulfilling life.

Self-care is self-love, and self-love is the beginning of wisdom. By embracing discipline, valuing guidance, and committing to personal growth, university students can avoid future regret and position themselves as healthy, competent, and responsible leaders of tomorrow. The choices you make today will determine the life you live tomorrow. Choose wisely!

The greatest love story:
The one with yourself

Strengthening the Pillars of University Excellence:

Reshaping Governance and Academic Standards

By Correspondent

The sustainability and global competitiveness of a higher education system depend fundamentally on the quality of its leadership, the strength of its governance organs, and the effectiveness of its internal quality assurance mechanisms. It is within this context that the Tanzania Commission for Universities (TCU) convened a high-level, two-day capacity development workshop in Morogoro on 3rd and 4th April 2025, bringing together 99 Principals, Deans, and Directors of Academic Units from university institutions across the country.

Organised under the Higher Education for Economic Transformation (HEET)

Project, the workshop formed part of TCU's deliberate strategy to strengthen leadership capacity, reinforce institutional governance, and deepen the culture of internal quality assurance within Tanzanian universities. Held under the theme *"Enhancing University Education through Strengthening University Governance Organs and Internal Quality Assurance Systems"*, the workshop provided a reflective, analytical, and forward-looking platform for senior academic leaders to interrogate current practices and chart a more resilient future for university education.

A Strategic Forum for National Academic Leadership

The workshop was more than a routine professional gathering. It was a strategic forum designed to address systemic challenges facing the higher education sub-sector, while equipping academic leaders with the knowledge, skills, and perspectives required to navigate an increasingly complex academic environment.

The workshop was officiated by Ms. Aida Juma Maoulid, TCU Commissioner and Head of the Higher Education Coordination Unit in the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training - Zanzibar. In her keynote address, Ms. Maoulid emphasised that strong leadership and effective governance are indispensable to academic excellence and national development.

She underscored that universities must

be governed not merely as academic institutions, but as complex organisations with responsibilities to students, employers, communities, and the nation at large. Robust internal quality assurance systems, she noted, are the mechanisms through which institutional vision is translated into credible academic outcomes.

Reinforcing Governance Organs and Legal Foundations

A central focus of the workshop was the role of university governance organs in safeguarding academic integrity and institutional credibility. Participants engaged in in-depth discussions on the statutory and legal frameworks that underpin governance in Tanzanian universities, with particular reference to the Universities Act, Cap. 346 R.E 2023 and its subsidiary regulations.

Sessions examined how governance organs such as University Councils, Senates, Boards, and Committees interact within a cascading decision-making structure. While acknowledging the strengths of this model in promoting accountability and shared oversight. Participants also reflected on areas requiring refinement to enhance responsiveness, efficiency, and strategic alignment in a rapidly evolving higher education landscape.

Through facilitated discussions and case analysis, academic leaders gained deeper clarity on their roles as custodians of institutional integrity, balancing academic

freedom with regulatory compliance, financial stewardship, and ethical decision-making.

Internal Quality Assurance as a Driver of Excellence

At the heart of the deliberations was a shared recognition that quality assurance is not a peripheral administrative function, but a core academic responsibility. Participants explored how Internal Quality Assurance (IQA) systems serve as the primary engines for curriculum relevance, teaching effectiveness, assessment integrity, and continuous improvement.

The workshop highlighted Tanzania's dual quality assurance framework, in which institutional IQA mechanisms operate in synergy with external oversight by TCU. This complementary arrangement was widely acknowledged as a strength, ensuring both institutional ownership of quality and national harmonisation of standards.

Academic leaders examined practical approaches to strengthening IQA structures, including programme reviews,

self-assessment processes, stakeholder feedback mechanisms, and evidence-based decision-making. Many participants noted that the sessions helped demystify quality assurance, reframing it as a shared academic culture rather than a compliance-driven obligation.

Leadership beyond Administration

A distinguishing feature of the workshop was its strong emphasis on leadership as distinct from routine management. Facilitators challenged participants to reflect on their leadership styles and to embrace more transformative approaches that inspire innovation, accountability, and collegiality.

Key themes included delegation, succession planning, ethical communication, emotional intelligence, and human resource management within academic units. Participants were encouraged to view themselves not only as administrators of academic processes, but as mentors, visionaries, and enablers of institutional growth.

Interactive discussions revealed that

many participants found these sessions particularly beneficial, as they provided practical insights into managing diverse academic teams, resolving conflicts constructively, and nurturing future leaders within their institutions.

Harnessing Technology and Innovation

In recognition of the digital transformation reshaping higher education globally, the workshop devoted significant attention to emerging technologies and their implications for teaching, learning, research, and administration. Participants examined opportunities and challenges associated with Artificial Intelligence (AI), digital learning platforms, and data-driven management systems.

While acknowledging the transformative potential of these technologies, presenters cautioned against uncritical adoption. Emphasis was placed on the importance of ethical frameworks, academic integrity, and capacity development for staff and students to ensure that technology enhances, rather than undermines, educational quality.

Participants revealed that these discussions broadened their understanding of how universities can remain agile and competitive, while equipping graduates with future-oriented skills such as critical thinking, creativity, and digital literacy.

Aligning University Practice with National Policy Direction

Another major highlight of the workshop was the analysis of the Revised Education and Training Policy, 2014 (2023 Edition). The Policy's renewed focus on practical skills, vocational flexibility, and diversified learning pathways carries significant implications for universities.

Academic leaders were urged to critically review their curricula, pedagogical approaches, and assessment methods to ensure alignment with national priorities. Discussions underscored the need for universities to move beyond traditional models and embrace more flexible, skills-oriented programme designs that respond to labour market realities.

According to Dr. Telemu Kassile, Director of Accreditation at TCU, universities

must position themselves as centres of innovation and skills development, capable of supporting Tanzania's socio-economic transformation agenda.

Benefits to Participants and Stakeholders

The workshop yielded tangible benefits for participants, institutions, and the higher education system at large. Academic leaders enhanced their understanding of governance responsibilities, clearer interpretation of regulatory frameworks, and renewed confidence in leading quality assurance initiatives within their institutions.

Universities stand to benefit through strengthened internal systems, improved programme quality, and more consistent application of standards, thereby enhancing institutional credibility. Students and employers, as key stakeholders, benefit indirectly through improved learning environments, credible qualifications, and graduates whose competencies align more closely with societal and economic needs.

Charting the Path to University Establishment in Tanzania:

A Comprehensive Guide to Regulatory Requirements and Accreditation Procedures

By Alexander Kamwela

The establishment of a university institution in Tanzania is governed by a clearly defined regulatory framework designed to safeguard quality, sustainability, and public interest in higher education. A university institution is defined as an establishment that offers education and training leading to intermediate and full academic or professional qualifications and competencies, including certificates, diplomas, and degrees.

The regulation of university education in Tanzania is vested in the Tanzania Commission for Universities (TCU), which was established on 1st July 2005 through the enactment of the Universities Act, Cap. 346 R.E 2023. The Commission is legally mandated to regulate, accredit, and oversee both public and private university institutions operating in the country.

As of December 2025, Tanzania has a total of 52 approved university institutions, comprising 20 public-owned and 32 private-owned universities. This growth reflects the expanding demand for higher education and the Commission's commitment to ensuring that expansion is matched with quality assurance and effective regulation.

The process of establishing a university institution in Tanzania involves two main stages. The first stage is the application for a Provisional Licence, which allows an institution to commence preparations for offering university education. The second stage is the application for a Certificate of Accreditation, which grants full authority to operate as an accredited university institution.

Any institution, organisation, or individual intending to establish a university institution is required to submit a formal application using TCU Form No. 1, as provided in the First Schedule of the Universities (General) Regulations, G.N 226 of 2013. The application must be submitted both electronically and in hard copy, written in English, and accompanied by payment of the prescribed application fee.

In addition to the completed application form, applicants are required to submit several supporting documents. These include three copies of a comprehensive project write-up for the proposed university, evidence of basic facilities necessary for the development of the institution, and a title deed or offer letter in the name of the proposed university or other acceptable proof of ownership or access to the proposed facilities. Applicants must also provide a master plan outlining the long-term development of the institution, together with an implementation plan for the master plan.

Further requirements include draft curricula for the initial academic programmes, a proposed fee structure and a draft Charter. In cases where the proposed university operates under a foreign Charter, the approved Charter must be submitted together with a supporting letter from the foreign body that accredited the institution. Applicants are also required to provide detailed information on the proposed location of

the university and any additional details as may be determined by the Commission.

The application process attracts a non-refundable fee, payable in advance. Local investors are required to pay an application fee of TZS 5,000,000, while foreign investors are required to pay USD 5,000.

Through these structured procedures, TCU ensures that only institutions with adequate planning, resources, and commitment to quality are permitted to operate as university institutions in Tanzania. The regulatory framework not only promotes orderly growth of the higher education sector but also safeguards academic standards,

institutional credibility, and the long-term sustainability of university education in the country.

Alexander Kamwela is a Senior Quality Assurance Officer at TCU

University Institutions Approved to operate in Tanzania as of November 07, 2025

The Tanzania Commission for Universities (TCU) was established on July 1st, 2005 through the enactment of the Universities Act, Cap. 346 R.E 2023, with the legal mandate to regulate both private and public-owned university institutions in Tanzania.

As of November 2025, the number of approved university institutions operating in Tanzania is **52**, whereas **20** are public-owned and **32** are private-owned university institutions.

1.0   FULLY FLEDGED UNIVERSITIES

1.1   Public Universities

SN	NAME OF THE UNIVERSITY	HEAD OFFICE	STATUS
1.	University of Dar es Salaam (UDSM)	Dar es Salaam	Accredited and Chartered
2.	Sokoine University of Agriculture (SUA)	Morogoro	Accredited and Chartered
3.	Open University of Tanzania (OUT)	Dar es Salaam	Accredited and Chartered
4.	State University of Zanzibar (SUZA)	Zanzibar	Accredited
5.	Mzumbe University (MU)	Morogoro	Accredited and Chartered
6.	Nelson Mandela African Institution of Science and Technology (NM-AIST)	Arusha	Accredited and Chartered
7.	Muhimbili University of Health and Allied Sciences (MUHAS)	Dar es Salaam	Accredited and Chartered
8.	Ardhi University (ARU)	Dar es Salaam	Accredited and Chartered
9.	University of Dodoma (UDOM)	Dodoma	Accredited and Chartered
10.	Mbeya University of Science and Technology (MUST)	Mbeya	Accredited and Chartered
11.	Moshi Cooperative University (MoCU)	Moshi	Accredited and Chartered
12.	Mwalimu Nyerere University of Agriculture and Technology (MNUAT)	Musoma	Accredited

1.2 Private Universities

SN	NAME OF THE UNIVERSITY	HEAD OFFICE	STATUS
1.	Kairuki University (KU), formerly HKMU	Dar es Salaam	Accredited and Chartered
2.	Abdulrahman Al-Sumait University (SUMAIT)	Zanzibar	Accredited
3.	St. Augustine University of Tanzania (SAUT)	Mwanza	Accredited and Chartered
4.	Zanzibar University (ZU)	Zanzibar	Accredited and Chartered
5.	Tumaini University Makumira (TUMA)	Arusha	Accredited and Chartered
6.	Aga Khan University (AKU)	Dar es Salaam	Accredited and Chartered
7.	Catholic University of Health and Allied Sciences (CUHAS)	Mwanza	Accredited
8.	University of Arusha (UoA)	Arusha	Accredited and Chartered
9.	St. Joseph University in Tanzania (SJUIT)	Dar es Salaam	Accredited
10.	Teofilo Kisanji University (TEKU)	Mbeya	Accredited and Chartered
11.	Mwenge Catholic University (MWECAU)	Moshi	Accredited
12.	Muslim University of Morogoro (MUM)	Morogoro	Accredited and Chartered
13.	University of Iringa (UoI)	Iringa	Accredited
14.	St. John's University of Tanzania (SJUT)	Dodoma	Accredited and Chartered
15.	Kampala International University in Tanzania (KIUT)	Dar es Salaam	Accredited
16.	United African University of Tanzania (UAUT)	Dar es Salaam	Accredited
17.	Ruaha Catholic University (RUCU)	Iringa	Accredited
18.	Mwanza University (MzU)	Mwanza	Provisional Licence
19.	Catholic University of Mbeya (CUoM), formerly CUCoM	Mbeya	Accredited
20.	Dar es Salaam Tumaini University (DarTU), formerly TUDARCo	Dar es Saaam	Accredited
21.	Rabininsia Memorial University of Health and Allied Sciences (RMUHAS)	Dar es Salaam	Provisional Licence
22.	University of Medical Sciences and Technology (UMST)	Dar es Salaam	Provisional Licence
23.	Islamic University of East Africa (IUEA)	Dar es Salaam	Provisional Licence
24.	KCMC University	Moshi	Accredited

2.0 UNIVERSITY COLLEGES

2.1 Public University Colleges

SN	NAME OF THE INSTITUTION	AFFILIATION	HEAD OFFICE	STATUS
1.	Dar es Salaam University College of Education (DUCE)	University College under UDSM	Dar es Salaam	Accredited and Chartered
2.	Mkwawa University College of Education (MUCE)	University College under UDSM	Iringa	Accredited and Chartered
3.	Mzumbe University – Dar es Salaam Campus College (MU – Dar es Salaam Campus College)	Campus College under MU	Dar es Salaam	Accredited
4.	Mzumbe University – Mbeya Campus College (MU – Mbeya Campus College)	Campus College under MU	Mbeya	Accredited
5.	Mbeya College of Health and Allied Sciences (MCHAS)	Campus College under UDSM	Mbeya	Accredited
6.	Mbeya University of Science and Technology – Rukwa Campus College (MUST – RC)	Campus College under MUST	Rukwa	Accredited
7.	Sokoine University of Agriculture – Mizengo Pinda Campus College (SUA – MPC)	Campus College under SUA	Katavi	Accredited
8.	Mbeya University of Science and Technology – Mtwara Campus College of Technical Education (MUST – MCCTE)	Campus College under MUST	Mtwara	Accredited

2.2 Private University Colleges

SN	NAME OF THE INSTITUTION	AFFILIATION	HEAD OFFICE	STATUS
1.	Stefano Moshi Memorial University College (SMMUCo)	University College under TUMA	Moshi	Certificate of Full Registration and Chartered
2.	Archbishop Mihayo University College of Tabora (AMUCTA)	University College under SAUT	Tabora	Accredited
3.	Jordan University College (JUCo)	University College under SAUT	Morogoro	Accredited
4.	St. Francis University College of Health and Allied Sciences (SFUCHAS)	University College under SAUT	Morogoro	Accredited
5.	Stella Maris Mtwara University College (STeMMUCo)	University College under SAUT	Mtwara	Accredited

6.	Marian University College (MARUCo)	University College under SAUT	Bagamoyo	Accredited
7.	St. Joseph University College of Health and Allied Sciences (SJCHAS)	University College under SJUIT	Dar es Salaam	Accredited
8.	Mwenge Catholic University, Hedaru Campus College (MWECAU-HCC)	Campus College under MWECAU	Same, Kilimanjaro	Accredited

3.0   UNIVERSITY CAMPUSES, CENTRES AND INSTITUTES

3.1   Public University Campuses, Centres and Institutes

SN	NAME OF THE INSTITUTION	AFFILIATION	HEAD OFFICE	STATUS
1.	Institute of Marine Sciences (IMS)	University institute under UDSM	Zanzibar	As per status of the Mother University
2.	Kizumbi Institute of Cooperative Business Education (KICoB)	University institute under MoCU	Shinyanga	As per status of the Mother University

3.2   Private University Campuses, Centres and Institutes

SN	NAME OF THE INSTITUTION	AFFILIATION	HEAD OFFICE	STATUS
1.	St. Augustine University of Tanzania, Dar es Salaam Centre	University Centre under SAUT	Dar es Salaam	As per status of the Mother University
2.	Stefano Moshi Memorial University College, Mwika Centre	University Centre under SMMUCo	Moshi	As per status of the Mother University
3.	St. Augustine University of Tanzania, Arusha Centre	University Centre under SAUT	Arusha	As per status of the Mother University

The public is hereby notified that any university institution which does not appear in this list is NOT authorised to offer university education in Tanzania in line with the Universities Act, Cap. 346. The public is requested to report any suspicious institution to:
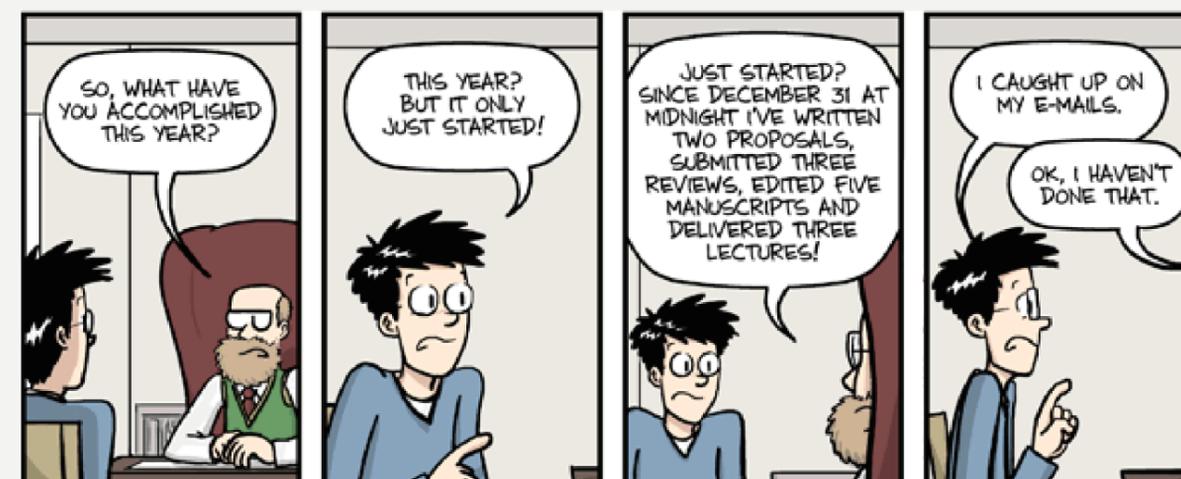
Executive Secretary,
Tanzania Commission for Universities,
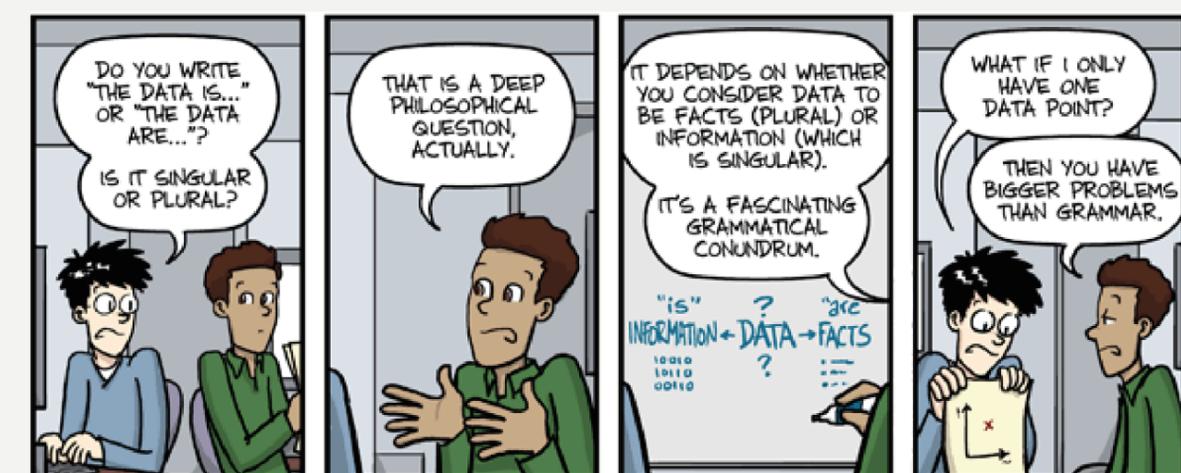P.O. Box 2600,
Dodoma, Tanzania

OR

P.O. Box 6562,
Dar es Salaam, Tanzania
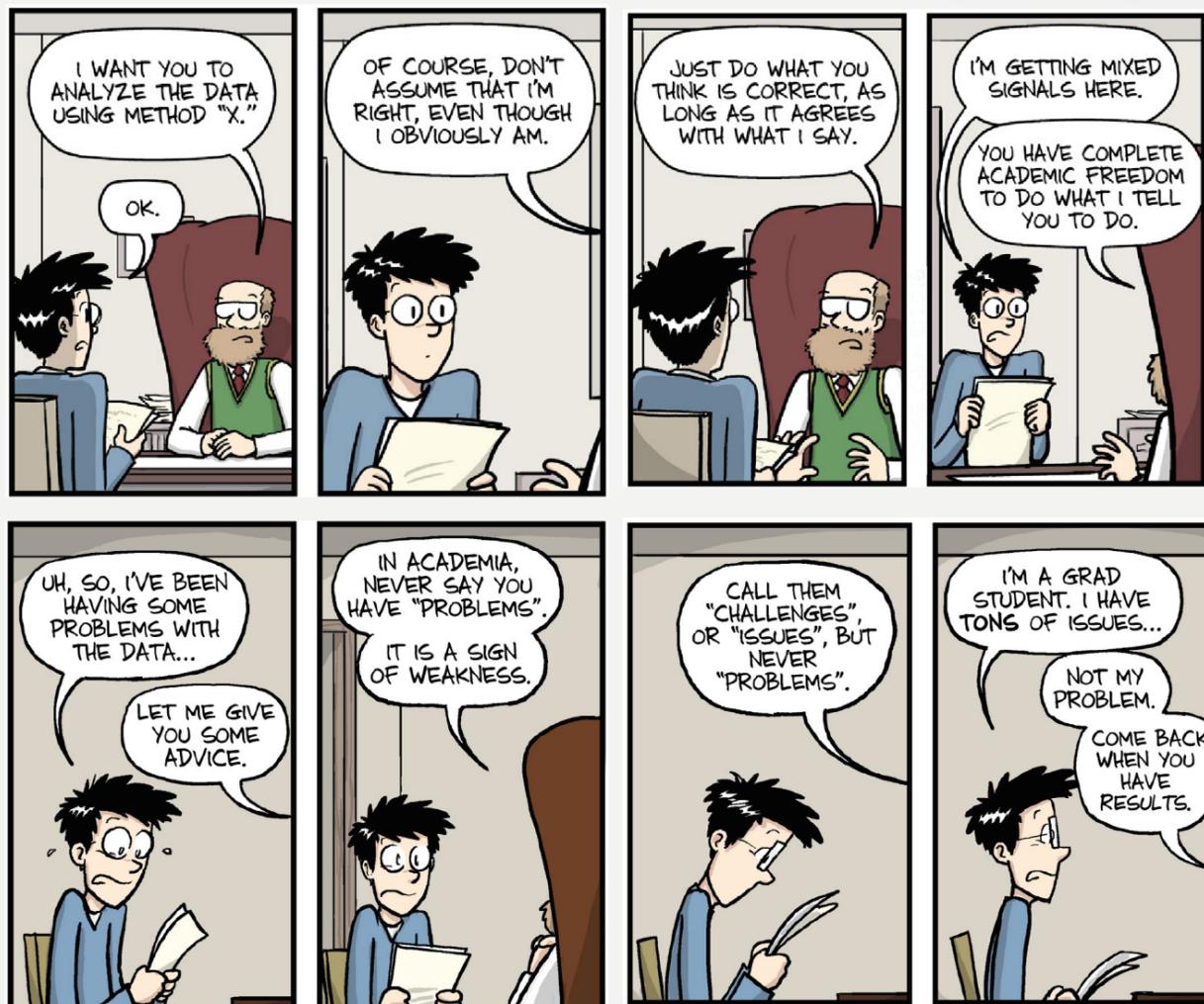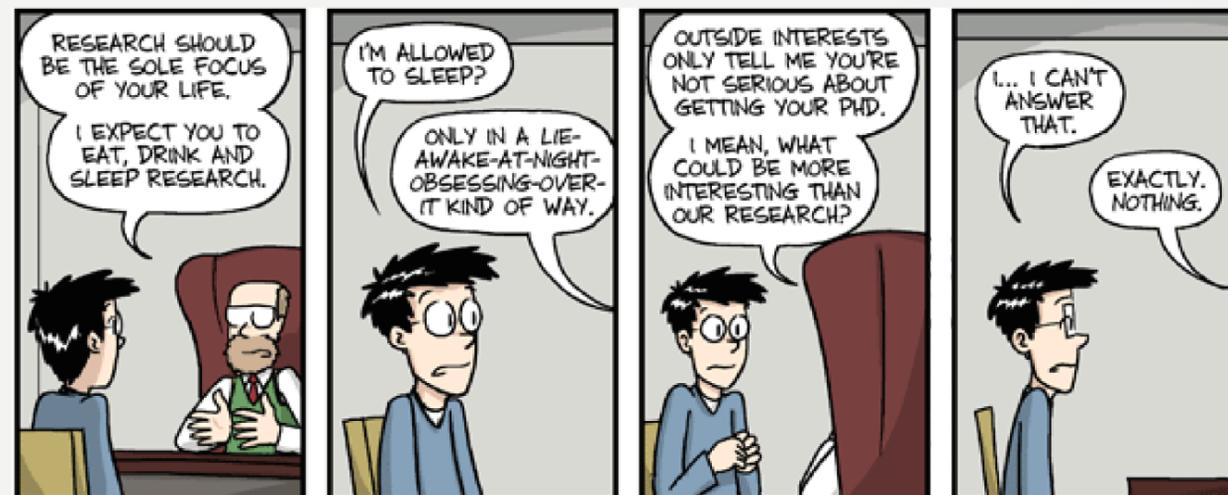Email: es@tcu.go.tz

Cartoon / Jokes Corner

Data

Panel 1: I WANT YOU TO ANALYZE THE DATA USING METHOD "X." / OK.

Panel 2: OF COURSE, DON'T ASSUME THAT I'M RIGHT, EVEN THOUGH I OBVIOUSLY AM.

Panel 3: JUST DO WHAT YOU THINK IS CORRECT, AS LONG AS IT AGREES WITH WHAT I SAY.

Panel 4: I'M GETTING MIXED SIGNALS HERE. / YOU HAVE COMPLETE ACADEMIC FREEDOM TO DO WHAT I TELL YOU TO DO.

Panel 5: UH, SO, I'VE BEEN HAVING SOME PROBLEMS WITH THE DATA... / LET ME GIVE YOU SOME ADVICE.

Panel 6: IN ACADEMIA, NEVER SAY YOU HAVE "PROBLEMS". / IT IS A SIGN OF WEAKNESS.

Panel 7: CALL THEM "CHALLENGES", OR "ISSUES", BUT NEVER "PROBLEMS".

Panel 8: I'M A GRAD STUDENT. I HAVE TONS OF ISSUES... / NOT MY PROBLEM. COME BACK WHEN YOU HAVE RESULTS.

Cartoon / Jokes Corner

Research

Panel 1: RESEARCH SHOULD BE THE SOLE FOCUS OF YOUR LIFE. / I EXPECT YOU TO EAT, DRINK AND SLEEP RESEARCH.

Panel 2: I'M ALLOWED TO SLEEP? / ONLY IN A LIE-AWAKE-AT-NIGHT-OBSESSING-OVER-IT KIND OF WAY.

Panel 3: OUTSIDE INTERESTS ONLY TELL ME YOU'RE NOT SERIOUS ABOUT GETTING YOUR PHD. / I MEAN, WHAT COULD BE MORE INTERESTING THAN OUR RESEARCH?

Panel 4: I... I CAN'T ANSWER THAT. / EXACTLY. NOTHING.

CORE PRINCIPLES IN RESEARCH

OCCAM'S RAZOR

"WHEN FACED WITH TWO POSSIBLE EXPLANATIONS, THE SIMPLER OF THE TWO IS THE ONE MOST LIKELY TO BE TRUE."

OCCAM'S PROFESSOR

"WHEN FACED WITH TWO POSSIBLE WAYS OF DOING SOMETHING, THE MORE COMPLICATED ONE IS THE ONE YOUR PROFESSOR WILL MOST LIKELY ASK YOU TO DO."
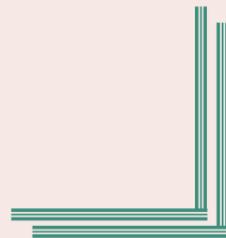
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Executive Secretary,
Tanzania Commission for Universities,
P .O. Box 2600,
Dodoma.

Thank you for your continued support,

Editor

TANZANIA COMMISSION FOR UNIVERSITIES

In the discharge of its mandate and core functions, the Tanzania Commission for Universities is guided by the following vision, mission, motto, and core values:

VISION

To become a leading regional higher education regulatory agency supporting systematic growth and excellence of university education in Tanzania.

MISSION

To promote accessible, equitable, harmonised and quality university education systems that produce nationally and globally competitive outputs.

MOTTO

Universities for Prosperity

CORE VALUES

Professionalism, Transparency, Efficiency, Integrity, Tolerance, Equity Accountability, Commitment, and Creativity

3D Architectural Visualisation of the Forthcoming TCU Headquarters in Dodoma City

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Tanzania Commission for Universities
Universities for Prosperity