



THE MERU NATIONAL
POLYTECHNIC
Technology for Innovation & Development

Meru National Polytechnic Launches Competency-Based Education & Training (CBET), to boost skills that guarantee jobs for young people

Meru County, Kenya, 1 February 2019: The Meru National Polytechnic (NP) launched an ambitious Competency-Based Education & Training (CBET) pilot program today, in a bid to address building concerns over the current skill gap in Kenya's manufacturing sector and the high rates of unemployment among the youth. The program provides an opportunity for form 4 leavers to develop skills that guarantee them a job in the manufacturing industry.

While launching the program at Meru NP, Dr. Kevit Desai, Principal Secretary-State Department of Vocational and Technical Education (TVET) said, "manufacturing is a critical catalyst for industrialization and a contributor towards the realization of other goals under the Big Four Agenda, such as, affordable housing, universal healthcare and adequate food solutions for the country." He noted that young people now have an opportunity to drive Kenya's economic growth and wealth creation through such technical training programs.

Even though Meru NP is launching its program today, Mr. Geoffrey Rukunja, the Principal, Meru NP, explained, that "the government is piloting the same program in five other Institutions, namely: Nyeri National Polytechnic, Kabete National Polytechnics, Rift Valley Technical Training Institute, Eastlands College of Technology and St Kizito Vocational Training Institute". He said that the pilot is in 3 occupations namely:

- **Instrumentation and control**
- **Manual Arc Welding**
- **Mechanical Technology**

CBET is an internationally recognized training methodology that delivers technical education focusing on specific industry needs. Students have an advantage because the training involves the participation of industry in all aspects, including facilitation of training as well as assessment of competency. This means that trainees now learn on a technology relevant to industry. They spend 3 months in the learning institution and 3 months in an industry, training under a mentor.

While addressing the participants, Mr Kiraitu Murungi, the governor of Meru County said, “We are excited about the CBET approach because training is short term. We need a massive group of young unemployed youth with relevant skill to either enter the job market or employ themselves if Meru County is to achieve its projected growth through the manufacturing and processing sectors and in the shortest time possible.”

According to the CEO, TVET CDACC, “The Competency Based Curricula will be implemented by TVET Institutions and TVET Departments under the regulation of TVETA”. TVET CDACC gives guidelines on development of Competency Based Curricula, competency assessment and certification of competent individuals.

“I have learnt a lot in the industry. At school I had the basics. Here things are complex, we are learning something new every day. You have to be excellent! We are building machinery for the client, unlike at school where we used to build it for learning purpose,” says Maureen Akinyi, a graduate from Technical University of Kenya (TUK) where the program was first piloted. She completed her industrial attachment and is employed at Tea Machinery and Engineering

Company (TEMEC) Ltd, a manufacturer of processing machinery and equipment serving Kenya and the East Africa region.

Mr. Nathan Nyasae Onyon, the Head of Machining Section at TEMEC, and her mentor and supervisor, notes that the industry is more competitive and one needs to adapt to new work practices and technologies for the 21st century industry.

The Kenyan government has been collaborating with private sector players to implement capacity building initiatives to support the program, including those from oil and gas. Industries have been contributing in determining the relevant courses and curricula and providing students with industry placement for the required 3 months practical training where they train on an industry relevant technology. They have also been volunteering workshops as testing centres.

***Curriculum Development Assessment and Certificate Council (CDACC)**

***Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET)**