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THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

THIRTEENTH PARLIAMENT – FOURTH SESSION – 2025

DIRECTORATE OF DEPARTMENTAL COMMITTEES

DEPARTMENTAL COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION


REPORT ON

THE INSPECTION VISITS TO THIRTEEN (13) PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES

UNDERTAKEN IN APRIL 2024

VOLUME 1

CLERK'S CHAMBERS
DIRECTORATE OF DEPARTMENTAL COMMITTEES
PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS
NAIROBI


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| CLERK-AT THE-TABLE: | ONZOFU MWALE |

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CHAIRPERSON'S FOREWORD

Quality education is a prerequisite for accelerated economic development since it enables participation in productive activities. It ensures that the skills that are released in the economy are aligned with the labour market demands. It is expected that through quality tertiary education, various sectors of the economy will benefit through the supply of requisite and missing skills to support and sustain economic growth and transformation of the country. In realisation of this, the government has invested resources in the Higher Education sub-sector to support various programmes and initiatives aimed at ensuring that the public institutions of higher learning are transformed to centres of excellence in Higher Education, not only in Kenya but also regionally and globally. Part of the resources provided to the Institutions of Higher learning has enabled them to initiate various student-centred projects which are at various stages of implementation.

The Constitution as well as the Standing Orders mandate the National Assembly to exercise oversight over national revenue and expenditure. In this respect, the National Assembly is expected to oversee how public resources are being applied in order to deliver public goods and services for public benefit.

As part of performing the oversight function, the Committee undertook a familiarization visit in selected public universities as well as a physical inspection of capital projects being implemented by the respective universities. The Committee was interested in understanding the following during the visits: the Institutions governance and operations, the implementation status of the 2023/24 approved budget including a detailed presentation on pending bills and a brief of all projects in each University.

The Committee was also interested in understanding the institutions view on key policy issues within the Higher Education sub-sector which include among others- the effectiveness of the new university funding model, view on the various high education sub-sector recommendations contained in the Presidential Working Party Report on Education reforms as well as the bottlenecks faced in accreditation process of various programmes and the initiatives made by the Institutions to support the Bottom up Economic Transformation Agenda (BETA), especially in the areas of research and innovation.

Therefore, this report is a product of successful familiarisation and physical projects inspection visits to thirteen (13) public universities by the Committee. The report, most importantly, contains the findings and recommendations made by the Committee during the visit.

HON. JULIUS K. MELLY, CBS, MP

CHAIRPERSON – DEPARTMENTAL COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

List of Abbreviations

| | | |
|--------|---|--|
| ADR | - | Alternative Dispute Resolution |
| AIA | - | Appropriation in Aid |
| BETA | - | Bottom-up Economic Transformation Agenda |
| CBA | - | Collective Bargaining Agreement |
| CBC | - | Competency-Based Curriculum |
| CUE | - | Commission for University Education |
| DUC | - | Differentiated Unit Cost |
| ERP | - | Enterprise Resource Planning |
| GOK | - | Government of Kenya |
| HEF | - | Higher Education Financing |
| HELB | - | Higher Education Loans Board |
| ICT | - | Information Communication Technology |
| IGA | - | Income Generating Activities |
| JKUAT | - | Jomo Kenya University of Science and Technology |
| KMPDC | - | Kenya Medical Practitioners and Dentists Council |
| KNDI | - | Kenya Nutritionists and Dieticians Institute |
| KPA | - | Key Performance Areas |
| KUCCPS | - | Kenya Universities and Colleges Central Placement Services |
| MDA | - | Ministry Department and Agencies |
| MSME | - | Micro Small and Medium Enterprises |
| MTI | - | Means Testing Instrument |
| NG-CDF | - | National Government Constituency Development fund |
| NFM | - | New Funding Model |
| NRF | - | National Research Fund |
| NSSF | - | National Social Security Fund |
| OUK | - | Open University of Kenya |
| PAYE | - | Pay as You Earn |
| SAGA | - | Semi-Autonomous Government Agencies |
| SRC | - | Salaries and Remunerations Commission |
| STEM | - | Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics |
| TVET | - | Technical Vocational Education and Training |
| TVETA | - | Technical Vocational Education and Training Authority |
| HEQF | - | Higher Education Qualification Framework |
| UFB | - | Universities Funding Board |

List of Annexures

- Annex I Minutes of the Committee Sittings
- Annex II Written Submissions from Universities
- Annex III Adoption Register of the Report

PART ONE

1.1 Committee Membership

The Departmental Committee on Education as constituted by the House comprises the following Members

Hon. Julius Kibiwott Melly, CBS, MP

Chairperson

MP for Tinderet Constituency

UDA

Hon. Eve Obara, MP

Vice Chairperson

MP for Kabondo Kasipul

ODM

Hon. Dr. Christine Oduor Ombaka, MP

MP for Siaya County

ODM

Hon Julius Taitumu M'Anaiba, MP

MP for Igembe North Constituency

UDA

Hon. Mary Emaase, MP

MP for Teso South

UDA

Hon. Nabii Nabwera Daraja, MP

MP for Lugari Constituency

ODM

Hon. Jerusha Mongina Momanyi, MP

MP for Nyamira County

JP

Hon. Peter Ochieng Orero, MP

MP for Kibra Constituency

ODM

Hon. Abdul Ebrahim Haro, MP
MP for Mandera South Constituency

UDM

Hon. (Prof.) Phylis Jepkemoi Bartoo
MP for Moiben Constituency

UDA

Hon. Joseph Makilap, MP

MP for Baringo North

UDA

Hon. Rebecca Noonaishi Tonkei, MP

MP for Narok County

UDA

Hon. Clive Gisairo, MP
MP for Kitutu Masaba, Constituency

ODM

Hon. Elijah Njoroge, MP

MP for Gatundu North

IND

Hon. Dick Oyugi Maungu, MP

MP for Luanda Constituency

DAP-K

1.2 Committee Secretariat

The Committee secretariat comprises: -

Mr. Douglas Katho
Lead Clerk

Mr. Clive Onyancha
Clerk Assistant II

Mr. Dennis Amunavi
Clerk Assistant III

Mr. Eric Kanyi
Fiscal analyst I

Dr Mburu Maina
Research Officer III

Ms Pauline Njuguna
Hansard Reporter II

Mr. Nimrod Ochieng'
Audio Officer

Ms. Fiona Githunguri
Legal Counsel II

Ms. Noelle Chelangat
Media Relations Officer

Mr. Jared Onyancha
Public Communications Officer

Mr. Richard Sang
Serjeant-at-Arms

Ms. Winnie Kulei
Research Officer I

PART TWO

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As at 2024, Kenya had a total of Thirty-Five accredited Public Universities spread across the Country with a student population of over 400,000, with the newest public University being the Open University of Kenya (OUK). These institutions, which are considered as Semi-Autonomous Government Agencies (SAGA's) are funded through public resources, both from the Exchequer and their Income Generating Activities, commonly known as Appropriations in Aid (AIA).

The Exchequer funding is currently being done using two formulas; the Differentiated Unit Cost (DUC) for the continuing students, which is an old formula being phased out and the newly introduced TVET funding model, applied to students who joined various universities in August 2023. Through these funding streams, the Universities can develop their individual budgets to finance their operational as well as development (capital) expenditures. These budgets are sanctioned by the University's respective Councils and the Ministry of Education, with the ultimate approval being granted by the National Assembly.

In terms of project portfolios, the various public universities are implementing over sixty (60) capital projects which are supported directly through the exchequer. On average, each of the public universities is implementing at least two projects which are directly funded by the National Treasury. According to the Ministry of Education, the estimated investment (estimated cost) to be pumped into these projects is at **Kshs 39.9 billion**.

In addition, there exist a number of capital projects which were initiated by individual universities, approved by the Ministry of Education as well as the National Treasury but are funded and implemented through resources realized from Income Generating Activities (IGA's) of individual universities. It is a best budgeting practice that any capital project which is initiated and funded through AIA by a University will not request exchequer allocation for the said project.

Due to the magnitude of the investment being done by the government through support to the various public universities, the various challenges faced by these institutions as well as the various proposed reforms in the Higher Education sub-sector including the introduction of a new funding model, the Committee resolved to undertake a familiarization and projects inspection visits to selected public universities.

During the familiarization and inspection visits, the Committee's goal was to have an understanding of the Universities' operations and was broadly guided by the following four aspects:

- i) The Institutions' governance and operations - The Institution's leadership at various levels (Council, Senate, Management), academic issues including student enrolment, staff establishment as well as the existence of up-to-date strategic plans and other policy documents that guide their day-to-day operations;
- ii) The implementation status of the 2023/24 approved budget including a detailed presentation on pending bills and a brief of all projects that each University is implementing which includes a physical inspection of each of the projects to cross check the validity of the information being presented especially on the aspect of the completion level as well as the value for money.
- iii) The institutions' view on key policy issues within the Higher Education sub-sector which include among others; the effectiveness of the new university funding model, views on the various higher education sub sector recommendations contained in the Presidential Working Party Report on Education reforms as well as the bottlenecks faced in the accreditation process of various academic programmes.
- iv) The initiatives made by the Institutions to support the Bottom-up Economic Transformation Agenda (BETA), especially in the areas of research and innovation.

In this first phase of the visits, the Committee selected thirteen (13) Universities in Mt. Kenya and Western regions. These were selected on the basis of the number of projects being implemented, a blending of both newly established and old institutions as well as ensuring the wider coverage of the selected regions.

In the Mount Kenya Region, the Committee made a physical inspection and held engagements with the management of the following Universities:

- i) Kenyatta University;
- ii) Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology;
- iii) Murang'a University of Technology;
- iv) Karatina University;

- v) Chuka University;
- vi) Tharaka University;
- vii) Meru University of Science and Technology.

In the Western Region, the Committee made physical inspection and held engagements with the management of the following Universities:

- i) Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology;
- ii) Maseno University;
- iii) University of Eldoret;
- iv) Koitalel Samoei University;
- v) Rongo University;
- vi) Kisii University.

During these visits, the Committee had in-depth discussions with the University's management team led by the Vice Chancellors of each of the selected universities where detailed presentations were made and copies submitted to the Committee. The engagements were finalized with physical inspection of capital projects which the respective universities are currently implementing, including stalled projects. On this inspection, the Committee was able to inspect twenty-three (23) capital projects which are being implemented by the thirteen (13) Universities.

PART THREE

3. PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

The governance structure and operations of the public universities are established and guided by several statutory and policy documents, namely, the Universities Act, 2012, the respective University Charters and Statutes, the University Strategic Plan, among other policy documents.

According to the Universities Act, the governance structure of universities comprises four organs/ offices namely: the Chancellor; the Council; the Vice-Chancellor and the University Senate, each organ with specific roles.

The Chancellor who is the Titular Head of Universities gives advice to the Council and confers degrees, diplomas, certificates and other awards among other duties.

The Council is the governing body of the Universities. It is the body with the powers to administer the property and funds of the University. The Council comprises the following members: a chairperson, 4 Independent Members, an Alternate Member – Representing the Principal Secretary, State Department for Higher Education in the Ministry of Education; an Alternate Member – Representing the National Treasury and the Vice-Chancellor. The University Councils work through Committees and Boards which have specific terms of reference.

The Vice-Chancellors are the Chief Executive Officers of the Universities and the Academic and Administrative Head of the Institution whereas the Senate is the body charged by the respective universities' Charter and Statutes regarding the content and academic standards of any course of study being offered by the Universities. The Vice-Chancellor is the Chairperson of the Senate.

PART FOUR

4. SUBMISSIONS BY THE UNIVERSITIES DURING THE INSPECTION VISIT

During the visits, the Committee was able to hold discussions with the management of the respective universities led by the Vice Chancellors where detailed presentations were made. A summary of the presentations made by each University is outlined in this section. The full presentations made are annexed in the report.

4.1 Kenyatta University

The Kenyatta University made the following submissions on the key thematic areas which the Committee had requested the Universities to respond to:

- i) **On the University's strategic priorities, goals and key performance areas**, the University had identified five strategic issues of focus over the next four years and set out corresponding goals and Key Performance Areas (KPAS') to ensure systematic implementation of the 2023-2027 Strategic Plan.

The Strategic priorities for the University are: Teaching and learning where the goal is to produce a competitive and skilled human resource; Research and Innovation where the goal is to advance research, innovation and dissemination for sustainable development; Institutional Resources and Capacity where the goal is to acquire, upgrade, and maintain adequate resources; and to strengthen institutional capacity; Customer focus where the goal is to improve customer satisfaction and increase market share and pertinent and contemporary issues where the goal is to mainstream pertinent and contemporary issues.

The University had identified annual resource needs for the actualization of the 2023-2027 Strategic Plan totalling Kshs 48 billion with an average requirement of Kshs 9.8 Billion annually. The University envisages that its strategic priorities will be financed through the respective financial year budgets. The University noted that with the Government directive for public institutions to reduce the budgetary estimates by 30%, there will be a need for the University to defer implementation of some targets to a later date. The University submitted that the variance in financing the strategic plan will be addressed through revenue from various Income Generating Activities (IGA's).

- ii) **On student enrolment at the University**, the University is organized in nine (9) schools and seventy-two (72) departments in which various academic programmes are offered. As

at 2024, the total number of students enrolled to various levels of study at the University stood at 74,132. This comprised 1,490 PhD students, 18,131 Masters Students, 412 postgraduate Diploma Students; 51,418 Bachelor's degree students, 2,106 Diploma Students and 575 certificate students.

In the 2023-2024 academic year, the University enrolled 8,841 government-sponsored students out of which only 7,187 reported and were admitted. The University also admitted 4,996 self-sponsored students, where, the total Undergraduate students admitted were 3,171 out of which 1,330 never reported and the total Postgraduate students admitted were 1,825 out of which 943 never reported.

- iii) **On staff establishment**, the University had a total of 1,099 academic staff, comprising 23 full professors, 58 associate professors, 928 Lecturers, 24 Assistant Lecturers and 66 Tutorial fellows. As at 2024, the University had an establishment of 1,885 academic staff against an in post of 1,099, thus a variance of 785. On non-academic staff establishment, the University has a total of 1,650 non- academic staff against an establishment of 1,803.
- iv) **On financial performance**, the University in the last five years ran a deficit budget where the expenditures exceeded the University's income. The deficit had increased from Kshs 678 million in 2019 to Kshs 2 billion in 2023. In terms of income (revenues), in the last five years, the income has decreased by 21 %, from Kshs 8.9 billion in 2019 to Kshs 7 billion in 2023. The various streams of income (government grants, tuition fees and AIA) had been on the decline in the last five years with tuition fees and AIA being the most affected components. The operational expenditures had largely remained the same in the last five years averaging Kshs 9 billion, with the personnel emoluments being the largest driver of the expenditure at an average of Kshs 6.5 billion in the last five years.
- v) **On pending bills**, as at December 2023, the pending bills for the University stood at Kshs 10.1 billion. The biggest component of the pending bills related to the statutory deductions, that is, the pensions and income tax (PAYE), which stood at Kshs 3.6 billion and Kshs 5.3 billion respectively. In terms of strategies to improve the financial status of the University, the management has adopted and was implementing the following strategies

- Aggressive marketing in an effort to increase student numbers especially self-sponsored students through school visits, organizing career weeks for form four leavers and attending career fairs in secondary schools.
 - Enrolment of more KUCCPS students where the University has for the second-year running been admitting the highest number of KUCCPS sponsored students.
 - Leasing of all available rental spaces within the University.
 - Encouraging staff to write research proposals for funding.
 - Adoption of cost-cutting measures, which in 2023/24 yielded a saving of Kshs 834 million;
 - Reduction of overdraft facility from Kshs 700 million to Kshs 250 million.
 - Negotiations with stakeholders on re-payment plans. The effort has allowed the university to operate as debts have reduced gradually.
- vi) **On the implementation of the 2023/24 Budget**, as at the first half of the 2023/24 financial year, the actual expenditure stood at Kshs 5.2 billion against an approved budget of Kshs 9.6 billion. The recurrent expenditure stood at Kshs 5.1 billion against an approved budget of Kshs 9.4 billion whereas the development budget actual expenditure stood at Kshs 97 million against an approved budget of Kshs 231 million.
- vii) **On capital projects implementation**, the University is currently implementing a total of five (5) capital projects which are internally funded. The projects are: construction of a Recreation Centre, School of Business Building, Children's Hospital, School of Architecture Building and the Central Stores. The total cost of these projects which began between 2014 and 2015 is estimated at Kshs 4.1 billion and the actual expenditure stands at Kshs 368 million. According to the submission, these projects are at 10% completion level and are currently stalled due to lack of funds. It was submitted that the main challenge facing project implementation is lack of funding. It was also submitted that since these projects were internally funded, there were no legal and pending bills arising from their implementation.
- viii) **On the effectiveness of the new University funding model**, the University submitted the following as the challenges facing the effective implementation of the new Tertiary Education funding model:

- **The accuracy of the Means Testing Instrument (MTI)** - Most of the admitted students to the University have been categorized under band 4 (3,295) and Band 5 (692) which means they are less needy. The University submitted this is not the case since from their own assessment, the students are from vulnerable backgrounds. This is supported by the non-reporting of admitted students.
- **The classification of students into the five categories (Band 1, Band 2, Band 3, Band 4, and Band 5)** - for purposes of granting government scholarships and HELB loans is not communicated to the University. As such, the University is not able to determine the amount of fees payable by the household. The first-year students have continued to receive university services despite not paying their share of tuition fees.
- **The number of students** - placed by the Government and admitted is not sufficient to support the University budget. The University requires an average of 10,000 annual admissions against a current admission of 7,000 students.
- **The new model** - has led to changes in the University's Students Management Information Systems to accommodate the three modes of financing (HELB Loan, Government scholarship, and the household components). This has been done at an extra cost incurred by the University since the ERP systems needed to be overhauled and configured to capture the new funding modes.
- **Delay in remitting funds by the University Funding Board and Higher Education Loans Board** - affects the University's control processes since the students' unit registration process is dependent on timely, full payment of fees for each semester.
- **Change of programs with different fees structures.** The government scholarship is based on the initial program to which a student is admitted. If the student changes to a higher cost program, they are left with a financial burden. The student may appeal for additional funds, but the appeal process takes long and is not an assurance that the student will get additional financing.

- The other challenges include among others, the inability of the student to apply for funds due to system challenges and their background, delay in categorization of students to their respective bands as well as delay in processing of the students' categorization appeals.

ix) **On higher education sub-sector reforms proposed by the Presidential Working Party Report**, the University was of the view that Universities be allowed to offer certificate and diploma courses. The University gave the following reasons why Universities should offer Diploma and Certificate Programmes;

- There are some unique programmes that the University has been offering that are not offered in the TVET institutions. Some of these include **Diploma and Certificate in Mandarin Chinese Language and Culture**; **Diploma and Certificate Courses in Music**; **Diploma and Certificate Courses in Sports Administration and Management**.
- It is easier to transition from a Diploma course to a Bachelor's course in the same University. This is because the programmes with Certificate and Diploma courses are structured to offer a firm background with progression, from the lowest to the highest level.
- The University has already invested in TVET Centres accredited by TVETA. The TVET programmes developed for these centres are also accredited by TVETA and the various stakeholders including the statutory bodies, where necessary, were involved during the development of the courses. This means that this huge investment will be rendered waste.
- That it is education best practice in most Universities across the world to have Diploma and Certificate courses which enable them to identify bright students or uniquely talented students for progression and mentoring by the professors even up to PhD levels.
- It is important to give secondary school leavers a choice of the institution they would like to do their certificate or diploma courses, especially for the purpose of

progression or the desire to be taught by the experts in the disciplines they wish to pursue.

x) **On the accreditation process of various programmes**, the University submitted as follows:

- Regulatory and professional bodies charge Universities high fees to accredit academic programme which constrains the Universities in terms of finances.
- That the Commission for University Education (CUE) treats any programme that has been reviewed by 30% as a new programme and hence has to be vetted afresh and the accreditation fees applied. This becomes a huge cost to the University since programmes are reviewed regularly to conform to emerging and contemporary issues in a specific field;
- That CUE carries an Institutional audit for all universities every five (5) years. During the audit, the universities are required to pay Kshs 900,000 for the audit and Kshs. 1,000 for each and every student. This means that a university for example Kenyatta University which has a population of 72,132 students will be required to pay more than Kshs 72,132,000 which constraints the institution.

xi) **On research and innovation**, the University through its Division of Research, Innovation and Outreach has created structures which have been critical in ensuring an orderly, accountable, organized, predictable and coherent research and innovation ecosystem with tangible and impactful outputs. Some of the successful innovations which have been commercialized include among others:

- **Ecodudu limited** – An innovation that uses Black Soldier Fly larvae to convert food and organic waste into animal feed protein and fertilizers. Ecodudu currently processes over 2000 tons of organic waste collected from a network of food-producing companies which contributes to the Agricultural pillar of the BETA Agenda
- **Arigiene Limited Company** – which produces sanitation and hygiene products such as bleach, sanitizer, disinfectant, hand wash, car shampoo, multi-purpose

liquid soap, shower gel, and dishwashing liquid contributing to the Healthcare pillar of the BETA Agenda.

xii) **On research initiatives supporting the Bottom-up Economic Transformation Agenda (BETA)**, the University has a number of initiatives and innovation under the various BETA thematic areas. The initiatives among others include:

- **In the Field of Agriculture – INCiTis -FOOD (Integrated and Circular Technologies for Sustainable City Region Food Systems)** seeks to improve food security, reduce food system footprint and empower communities by opening opportunities for them in Agri-food supply and value chains. The project is funded by the European Union.
- **On Transforming Micro, Small and Medium Enterprise (MSME) - KU-Women Economic Empowerment Project** – which aims at ensuring that various stakeholders such as Government Ministries and Department, County government, policy leaders (legislators and policy makers) non-government organization and agencies as well as donors utilize empirical evidence to implement and shape policies, program, interventions and advocacy efforts related to supporting Women’s Economic empowerment in Kenya;
- **On Healthcare- Health Equity and Resource Optimization (HERO) project** designed to support National and County governments to own, lead, and manage the health system in a sustainable way by improving domestic resource mobilization and efficiency for sustainable financing of health; improve social protection systems for health towards equitable access to quality health care services and improve availability and use of quality evidence to inform policy, planning, and implementation of health services in the country;
- **On Digital Superhighway and Creative Economy- Reigniting the agricultural flame in Eastern Africa’s rural lands through CropDig App** – The project has resulted in the development of an innovative mobile Application- “CropDig” which has created a learning and knowledge sharing hub where farmers, extension officers, technology experts, and county leadership come together to shape the future of agriculture. The project has revealed the

transformative power of technology enabling a wider and far reach where traditional approaches have struggled to especially among the marginalized rural communities.

4.2 Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology (JKUAT)

The Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology (JKUAT) made the following submissions on the key thematic areas which the Committee had requested the Universities to respond to:

- i) **On University strategic priorities**, goals and key performance areas- it was submitted that the core mandate of the university revolves around training, research and innovation and the University aligns its priorities to deliver on this mandate. Most of the programmes offered at the University are of technical nature in the fields of Agriculture, Engineering, Technology, Architecture, Medicine and Science which require expensive teaching materials. The university is expected to increase part time staff due to a rise in student population and new programmes that are critical to the attainment of bottom-up agenda.
- ii) **On student enrolment levels** - As at 2024, the student population stood at 39,427, which comprises 1,872 certificate level, 2,362 Diploma level, 32,346 Bachelors level, 2,496 Masters level and 351 at Doctorate level. The population is mainly driven by an increase in the number of GOK sponsored students. The increase is also attributed to the quality training and market driven academic programmes offered by the institution. In line with the Government's agenda to modernize its technical workforce for rapid industrialization and national development, the University Management and Senate approved the establishment of a TVET Institute.
- iii) **On higher education sub-sector reforms proposed in the Presidential Working Party Report**, the University was of the view that Universities be allowed to offer certificate and diploma courses. The University gave the following justifications on why Universities should offer Diploma and Certificate Programmes.
 - Universities are mandated to offer training as well as carry out research and innovation. The Universities Act (2012) provides for training at all levels right from certificate to doctorate degree level.

- Students who have not qualified for direct entry to a degree course but still aspire to pursue a degree course find it easier to transition from Diploma course to Degree course when they undertake their Diploma course at the University.
 - Offering Certificate and Diploma programmes is a common practice in major universities internationally.
 - The certificate and Diploma programmes serve as an additional revenue stream.
 - A number of students prefer to undertake their diploma course in a university for prestige.
- iv) **On the staff establishment**, the University has a total of 2,475 staff, comprising of 900 academic staff and 1,575 non-academic staff. The University has an establishment of 3,827 against the 2,475 in post staff. The academic staff has an establishment of 1,555 against an in post of 900 whereas on non-academic staff establishment, the University has a total of 1,575 staff against an establishment of 2,272. In terms of gender, the male employees are 1,380 whereas the female employees are 1,095.
- v) **On pending bills**, the university submitted that the total amount of pending bills stood at **Kshs 8.9 billion** consisting of PAYE, pensions, service and works and goods. The PAYE pending bill stands at Kshs 3.3 billion and pensions at Kshs 3.2 billion. The pending bills relating to non-payment of part time lecturers as well as other contractual works stands at Kshs 1.2 billion. The accumulation of pending bills is majorly due to reduction in capitation grants, increase in staff payroll costs following implementation of CBAs without commensurate enhancement of funding in 2014 and 2017, as well as reduction in self-sponsored fee revenues in the last four years, due to restructuring in the education sector. To ensure speedy settlement of pending bills, the following measures are being pursued by the University:
- Liquidation of University properties to settle outstanding pending bills.
 - Restructuring loan facilities to free up cash flows to meet statutory deductions.
 - Implementation of austerity measures in all areas of operation
- vi) **On the status of implementation of the 2023/2024 approved budget** - the total approved budget for the year 2023/2024 amounted to Kshs 5.4 billion. As at first half of the financial year, the actual expenditure stood at Kshs 2.7 billion which represents an

absorption of 51%. The expenditures relate to majorly payment of salaries and also funding of the capital projects which the University is implementing.

- vii) **On the capital projects being implemented by the University** -the University currently has three major projects which are under implementation. The projects are New Administration block, College of Engineering and Technology (COETEC) Building and JKUAT Road Beautification Project. The estimated cost of the administration block, which is GOK funded, is Kshs 506 million and so far, Kshs 348 million has been utilized to implement the project and is currently at 80% completion level. The COETEC building which is also GOK funded at an estimated cost of Kshs 254 million is at 75% level of completion where Kshs 209 million has been expended to implement it. The road beautification project which is also GOK funded stalled in 2013 due to legal disputes. The project was estimated to cost Kshs 69 million and before it stalled Kshs 51 million had already been utilized. The courts are yet to make a determination on the dispute. The challenge that hinders the smooth implementation of the other two projects is inadequate funding.
- viii) **On the effectiveness of the new funding model**, the university submitted that the new funding model is one of the key strategies that would resolve the issue of financial sustainability in the institutions of higher learning in the long run subject to timely disbursement of funds and the enrolment numbers which continue to raise. In the academic year (2023/2024), the university received 5,903 Government sponsored students under the new funding Model. Out of this number, 5,434 students had been categorized into various bands. A majority of the students (51%) were categorized under Band 4 which is doubtful whether the students will manage to cater for the remainder of the fees balance.
- ix) **On accreditation Process of various programmes**, the university submitted that after a programme has met the threshold and approved by Senate, it is submitted to the Commission for University Education for accreditation. The university also submitted that even though the Commission for University Education is charged with accreditation of university programmes, universities are in addition required to seek accreditation from various professional bodies such as Engineers Board of Kenya, BORAQS, KMPDC, KMLTTB, Nursing Council, and Council for Legal Education and KNEDI among others.

This results in multiple accreditations at significant costs which strain on public universities.

- x) **On initiatives by the university to support BETA**, the University offers STEM courses in Agriculture, Health, Housing and ICT to support government priority in various BETA fields. Further the University has rolled out various projects across the country aimed at supporting the government agenda. Some of the key projects are: Assembly of wheelchair projects where the University has been making wheelchairs to support the health sector and Assembly and design of interlocking Block Machine which eliminates use of motor joint and hence reducing the total building cost by up to 40%.

4.3 Meru University of Science and Technology

The Meru University of Science and Technology made the following submissions on the key thematic areas under the consideration of the Committee:

- i) **On University strategic priorities and goals**, the University has in place a strategic plan 2023-2027. This is in line with the government directive for all MDAs and SAGAs to align their strategic plans to the government BeTA agenda. The annual work and procurement plans are drawn from the strategic plan ensuring that the activities and various goals set responds to the University's strategic priorities. The University's strategic priorities are on teaching and learning, research and innovation, outreach and linkages and revenue diversification.
- ii) **On student enrolment**, as at 2024, the University had a total population of 11,307 students out of which 7,219 are male and 4,088 are female. The certification levels for the students range from Certificate level to Doctorate level. The students are distributed in eight schools with the highest enrolment being at the school of Education with a total of 3,523 students and the lowest enrolment being at the School of Nursing with a total student population of 305 students.
- iii) **On staff establishment levels**, the University has 430 staff on permanent basis, which translates to 25% of the optimal staff establishment of 630 staff. The University has a total of 167 academic staff comprising of 4 Professors, 10 Associate professors, 24 Senior Lectures, 79 Lecturers and 29 Tutorial fellows/assistant lectures. There are 263 non-academic staff, comprising of 14 librarians and 21 technicians and technologist, who support the faculty.

The University supplements the shortfall by engaging 169 part-time lecturers and 31 Adjunct lecturers. To enhance skill set and competences, the university plans to train 200 hundred staff in various skills and competences which will include 150 academic staff and 50 administrative staff.

- iv) **On pending bills**, the University indicated that they amount to Kshs 733 million. The pending bills mainly relate to payment of part-time lecturers, the outstanding CBA implementation as well as pending bills arising from the various capital projects which the University is implementing and which have entirely stalled. The University is deploying the various strategies to settle the pending bills such as non- initiation of new capital projects initiated during the year, suspension of most of the capital expenditure during the financial year and setting aside funds to clear the bills where for instance, the pending bills relating to payment of part-time lecturers has reduced over time. The University intends to reduce the pending bills by half by 30th June 2024.
- v) **On the status of the implementation of the 2023/24 budget-** the University is implementing a budget of Kshs 1.4 billion in 2023/24. As at the 3rd quarter of the financial year, the University had realized 94% of the total income (budgeted revenue) which was it expected to receive to finance the budget. At the end of the 3rd quarter, the total expenditure for the university stood at 81% of the budgeted expenditure. On average, the expenditure per quarter for the University is Kshs 350 million. The University submitted that there is a danger of the expenditure exceeding the budget by about Kshs 80 million hence a potential risk of accumulating pending bills.
- vi) **On the capital projects which the University is implementing**, the University submitted that it is implementing a total of eight GOK-funded projects with an estimated investment of Kshs 1.9 billion. The eight student-centred projects are the construction of a sports field, the construction of the School of Health Sciences and the School of Nursing, the construction of the engineering complex, the construction of an administration block, a laboratory, and a Library at the Marine Research Institute, as well as cabro works and the installation of CCTV. The commencement timeline for the projects varies between 2013 and 2023. The university has so far utilized Kshs 1.3 billion to fund the projects whose completion rates are the various percentages with the installation of CCTV and cabro having been completed. The projects have a pending bill of Kshs 73.4 million with the construction of school of health

sciences and school of nursing having accumulated the highest pending bill at Kshs 22.3 million.

- vii) **On the effectiveness of the new funding model** - the University admitted 2,310 students in 2023 admission who were eligible to be funded under the new funding model. 79 of these students deferred their studies while 823 students did not report altogether. The University submitted that most of the students admitted were placed in bands 4&5 and yet they are unable to pay the household contribution. A total of 378 students admitted to the University did not receive any support hence there was a lot of deferments and some dropouts who opt to move to private universities which charge less than the household contribution in band 5. The University pointed the following challenges facing the smooth implementation of the new funding model:
- Miscommunication - Students were notified of four categories but they were considered under five (5) bands.
 - Inadequate funding (scholarship as well as loan allocation) due to placement in the inappropriate categories.
 - The Mean Testing Instrument (MTI) tool does not consider the current situation of a parent but the historical background.
 - Disparity in household contribution between band 1 and band 5 is too wide leaving a huge sum of money to household contribution
 - Delay in release of funds to the Universities.
 - Delay in updating students' records after inter-institutional/inter-faculty transfers. The concerned Agencies (KUCCPS, HELB and UFB) managing NFM are not able to access edited data real time.
 - Connectivity challenges of Higher Education Financing (HEF) portal during funding application window.
 - Errors made by candidates in filling the registration details in the HEF portal.

- viii) **On initiatives to support the BETA agenda** – the university has initiated projects and programmes which relate to the five pillars of the BeTA agenda. The initiatives are:

- **Agricultural Transformation-** the University has started its farm enterprise to demonstrate best practices for farm enterprises, provide extension services to the farmers to improve farmer productivity, organize farmer open days to transfer knowledge to farming communities for better productivity as well as offer partnership with seed companies to showcase best seeds and map them for the region

- **Micro, Small and Medium Enterprise (MSME) Economy-** the University through the Black Soldier fly (BSF) Research will enable farmers to harvest the eggs and grow the larvae to clear organic waste in markets and various centres and also to come up with animal feeds through their dried proteins and this promotes circularity for the MSMEs. This is also going to be extended to generate employment and enterprise growth in the communities. The University is also championing Entrepreneurship training by redesigning its curricula to enable learners to enterprise the skills they are acquiring in the University.
- **Healthcare** - the University has equipped its medical research through a grant from NRF and has opened to offer laboratory services to the neighbouring community. The University also owns an Advanced life support Ambulance and has partnered with neighbouring community hospitals and service providers such AAR and St Johns Ambulance to extend the service to the neighbouring communities. The University also aspires to establish a research and referral hospital. A proposal has been developed. Looking for partners to establish it.
- **Housing and Settlement-** the University has established a cement institute and currently championing research on low-cost and low-carbon-emitting clay-based cement (LC3). The plan is to consolidate this at the university and then create enterprises and employment in the neighbouring communities.
- **Digital Superhighway** – the University is working closely with the ICT Authority (ICTA) to come up with the digital hubs through connections of the fibre connectivity in order to open up the innovation centre to the staff and community and synergize with the Community Innovation Hubs set up by the government.

4.4 Karatina University

Karatina University made the following submissions on the key thematic areas under the consideration of the Committee:

- i) **On University strategic priorities and goals-** the University's strategic priorities are aspired to achieve the following objectives; producing quality graduates; Enhance entrenchment of ODEL systems and pedagogies, Production of quality research and innovations, enhance linkages and partnerships with industry and other institutions, Enhance

Resource Mobilization Capacity & prudent Management and strengthen institutional capacity to deliver quality services.

- ii) **On students' enrolment level** - As at 2023, the University had a total student population of 10,055. This comprised of 9,597 undergraduate, 319 Masters and 139 Doctorate students. In terms of enrolment by gender, out of the total number of 10,055 students in the University, 5,544 are male representing 55% and 4,511 are female representing 45% of the population. The students are undertaking various courses offered in 4 schools with the highest number of students taking courses in the school of Education at 53.3% and the lowest number of students are in the school of Health Sciences at 4.5%. According to the University, the school of Health Science is the latest area of study to be launched in the university and has picked quite well given the observed enrolment level.
- iii) **On the staffing levels** - As at 31st March, 2024 the University workforce was four hundred and eight (408). This comprised of 151 teaching staff and 257 non-teaching staff. The teaching staff include 2 Professors, 17 Associate Professors, 19 Senior Lecturers, 69 Lecturers, 25 Assistant Lecturers, 18 Tutorial Fellows and 1 Graduate Assistant. The university engages around 62 lecturers every year on part-time basis to support in teaching. The University also has 51 members of staff on short contract providing support services in various Departments/Sections such as security, Estates, Hostels, catering and at the University farm.
- iv) **On pending bills** - As at January 2024, the University has a total pending bill of Kshs 124 million. The pending bills relate to the payment of part-time lecturers and partial implementation of the 2017-2021 CBA. The pending bills for payment of part-time lecturers was also occasioned by lack of funds as well as delays in processing payment claims. Some of the strategies the University has put in place to clear the pending bills are the use of AIA to clear all outstanding part-time payments both outstanding and current for the FY 2023/2024 by end of this financial year as well as giving lecturer a timeframe to raise the claim to avoid delays experienced.
- v) **On the status of the implementation of the 2023/24 budget**- the University submitted that over the years, the University has successfully absorbed an average of 98% of its approved budget. In 2023/24, the University had an approved budget of Kshs 1.6 billion and by the third quarter of the financial year, the University had utilized Kshs 860 million (54%)

to fund the planned activities and projects for the year. The University was not been able to optimally absorb its budget compared to the previous trends. This was occasioned by delay in recruitment of the Vice Chancellor. The utilization of the various expenditure items will be finalized in the fourth quarter

- vi) **On capital projects implementation-** the University has one ongoing capital project, the **construction of University Library**. The project is meant to supplement teaching, learning and research for both staff and students. The project commenced in May 2018 and was expected to end in May 2021. However, due to financial constraints, the University had to extend the completion date several times. The estimated investment in the project is Kshs 491 million and the amount which the University has so far received towards funding of this project since inception is Kshs 393 million. The project is at 93% completion level.
- vii) **On the effectiveness of the new funding model-** the University submitted that a majority of the students (over 80%) admitted were placed in the categories of needy and less Needy that have to meet relatively higher household fees, which from the assessment they are not able to afford. Further, the university submitted that amounts awarded as scholarship and loans do not strictly conform to the percentages contained in the funding model. The lack of the ability to pay fees was evident when First Year students were due to sit for First Semester Examinations, whereby the University made a decision and allowed 1,335 students **39.1%** of students who had not cleared fees to sit for examinations. The University also cited the following other challenges of the New Funding Model
- Disbursement of funds for both Scholarship and HELB Tuition fees are not in synchrony with University Calendar. The students reported to the University before release of fund which resulted in high student debtors. This is likely to translate to deferment and dropout cases.
 - The University registration system is designed to ensure that a student is registered after he/she pays requisite fees. Majority of the NFM students reported to the University awaiting disbursement of funds to enable registration. This occasioned partial registration of students and ineffective operation of the systems; hence resulting in manual systems that are cumbersome and inefficient.

- There seems to be a lack of commitment by students in paying fees on the presumption that Scholarship and HELB Tuition fees will cater for the fee needs.
- The high students' debts will have adverse impacts on the completion rate of students as students. Some might be forced to defer studies over a period of time to source for funds as school fees or lead to high drop outs among students.

viii) **On programmes' accreditation** – the University submitted that upon approval by the University Senate, the curriculum for various programmes is presented to the Commission for University Education (CUE) for consideration through an expert peer review process. The accreditation process poses a number of challenges that include:

- Cost of programme accreditation - considering cost incurred at development process and expected accreditation fees at the Commission. Additionally, professional bodies who are key stakeholders also require recognition of the training institution.
- There is a challenge in turnaround time in accreditation of programmes from the time a programme is submitted to CUE to the time the programme is accredited. The process is slow. The Commission secretariat is very lean compared to the number of universities they are expected to handle, both public and private.
- Peer Review at the Commission also come with its own challenges. The experts are from other universities or professional bodies that can be subject to conflict of interest.

ix) **On initiatives to support the BeTA agenda** – the University supports the BeTA agenda by supporting all the five (5) areas through training, research, innovation and extension. Some of the specifics include:

- **Agricultural Transformation/food security** – the University trains manpower and has set up demonstration sites for purposes of farmer extension services.
- **Micro, Small and Medium Enterprise (MSME) Economy** – the University organizes fora aimed at building the capacity of business enterprise owners to run their enterprises competitively. Students are also equipped with entrepreneurial skills so as to develop an entrepreneurial mind-set while still at the University.
- **Healthcare** - the School of Nursing will continue to be developed further by introducing new programmes. In addition, the University intends to set up a

specialized hospital with a main focus on lifestyle diseases. As part of community outreach, the university has been organising free medical camps in the county.

- **Housing and Settlement**- the University works with the local community to develop decent accommodation facilities for students. This will involve signing of MoUs and linking land owners with financial institutions that offer reliable funding.
- **Digital Superhighway and Creative Industry** - the University will enhance internet connectivity to enable students' access and benefit from online resources. The University also intends to resource the Student Affairs department to enable them to scout for and support students with unique talents.

4.5 Tharaka University

Tharaka University made the following submissions on the key thematic areas under the consideration of the Committee:

- i) **On University strategic priorities and goals** – the University has identified six (6) Strategic Goals/Priorities aimed at realizing its mission as clearly outlined in its 2023/2027 Strategic Plan. The strategic goals are to enhance quality teaching and learning for positive societal transformation where the key result area is teaching and research; to foster a culture of research and innovation to meet the real-life needs for societal transformation where the key result area is research and innovation; to leverage modern ICT to enhance University's operations and service delivery; enhancing Student Welfare Services for the comfort and holistic development of students at the University; establishing and operationalize solid partnerships and collaborations to leverage new knowledge and resources and strengthening institutional capacity to ensure all objectives are fully met. To attain outcomes/results in these strategic priorities, the University has a clear budget allocation over the five years implementation period.
- ii) **On student enrolment levels** - as at 2024, the University student population stood at **6,137**. This comprised 5,018 undergraduate, 514 postgraduate and 605 Diploma and Certificate students. The Committee noted that the University lacked infrastructure and was located in a rural area thus failing to attract students. The University aims to roll out more than 6 programmes within the next five years and anticipates to reach an enrolment level of more than **15,000** students in the next five years.

- iii) **On staff establishment levels** – the University was chartered on 2nd August 2022 and the required staffing levels as recommended by the Commission for University Education has not been achieved due to reduced budget. Currently the University has a total of 182 staff against a staff establishment of 230. This represents a staffing level of 79%. The total number of academic staff is 86 (87%) against an establishment of 97 whereas the total number of non-academic staff is 96 (72%) against an establishment of 133. The University has 3 full professors, 2 Associate Professors, 9 Senior Lecturers, 14 Lecturers, 53 Tutorial Fellows and 5 Teaching Assistants.
- iv) **On pending bills** - the University current liabilities stand at **Kshs 19 million** due to delayed payment of part time lecturers. The University intends to offset this liability when the Universities funding board releases the funds for the second semester under the New Funding Model.
- v) **On the status of the 23/24 budget implementation** – the 2023/24 budget for the University stood at Ksh 519 million and the sources of revenue to finance this budget consisted of government capital and recurrent grants and internally generated revenue (AIA). As at 3rd quarter of the financial year, the University had utilized Kshs 385 million which is equivalent to 74% of the approved budget to fund both recurrent and development expenditure.
- vi) **On capital projects implementation** - the university is implementing a total of 7 projects, out of which 3 projects are funded through exchequer grants and 4 projects are funded internally through AIA. The projects which are funded through the exchequer are the construction of a science tuition, Administration and a library block. The projects which are internally funded are the water intake tunnel, cabro paving, construction of swimming pool and a lactating house. Phase 1 of the science tuition block and Administration block is 100% complete whereas phase 1 of the library block is at 70% completion level. The total envisaged investment in these three projects is estimated at Kshs 1.9 billion. The 4 projects which are internally funded are the various levels of completion with the construction of water tunnel being at 94% completion level with the construction of lactation room being at 11%. The total cost outlay for the internally funded projects is estimated at Kshs 79 million. Some of the challenges cited in implementation of the projects are delays in disbursement of funds,

Delay in completion due to budget cuts, high inflation drives cost of material up and difficulties in accessing the university due to poor road network.

vii) **On the effectiveness and Challenges of the New University Funding Model-** the University submitted that it participated fully in the processes leading to the implementation of the New Funding Model. In the 2023/2024 academic year the University received the first cohort of students under the new funding model. The key concerns regarding the model were highlighted as follows:

- **Funding disparities and inequalities** - the enrolment-based funding model created disparities among universities, with well-established institutions receiving more funds due to their existing programmes, resources and infrastructure whereas the less-resourced universities, particularly those in rural or marginalized areas such as Tharaka University struggle to attract students leading to further underfunding and widening the gap in educational quality.
- **Quality of education concerns** - there is a risk that universities may prioritize increasing student enrolment over maintaining academic standards and quality of education to secure more funding. This could lead to overcrowded classrooms, strained resources, and a potential decline in the overall quality of teaching and learning.
- **Research and innovation challenges** - the new Funding Model places greater emphasis on student enrolment and teaching activities, potentially neglecting the importance of research and innovation.
- **Financial sustainability concerns** - Universities heavily reliant on government funding may face financial instability if the allocated funds are insufficient or if there are delays in disbursements. This could lead to operational challenges.
- **Application and awarding process for students' fund-** where there exist delays in the processing of applications, appeals, and disbursement of funds to students. In addition, some very needy students are being placed in higher bands where household amounts are too high and making them unable to clear their huge fees.

viii) **On Initiatives to support Bottom-Up Economic Transformation Agenda** - the University is committed to supporting the Bottom-Up Economic Transformation Agenda (BETA) by implementing the following initiatives:

- **Affordable Housing Program** - the University is in full support of the affordable housing program under BETA and has fully complied in remitting of staff deductions on housing levy. The University is willing to set aside land for the construction of houses under the Affordable Housing Program.
- **Health Care** - the University has a functional Health Unit and plans to open its services to the Community. This will ensure affordable health services to the community. To enhance research in health sciences the University has developed seven health sciences programmes which will be rolled out in the next financial year. Additionally, the University is carrying out outreach programmes by organizing regular medical camps and funding activities related to health care.
- **Agriculture/Food Security** - the University has established demonstration units dedicated to showcasing best practices in dryland agriculture. These units serve as practical learning hubs where farmers, agricultural practitioners, and students learn about sustainable farming techniques tailored to arid and semi-arid environments. Recognizing the rich mineral potential within the Proterozoic Mozambique Belt where the University is located, it aspires to become a premier centre for mining education, research, and innovation.

4.6 Chuka University

Chuka University made the following submissions on the key thematic areas under the consideration of the Committee:

- i) **On University strategic priorities and goals** - the University has been committed to implementing the strategic objectives spelled out in its Strategic Plans for five-year cycles. The institution is currently implementing the 2022-27 strategic plan which focuses on the following six strategic goals; academic excellence, research, student welfare, dynamic resources, competitive image and progressive governance.

- ii) **On Student enrolment levels** – as at 2024, the institution had a total student population of 20,711 students enrolled in eight Faculties and one School. This enrolment consists of 18,421 government sponsored students and 2,290 self-sponsored students. The University intends to exploit opportunities for third semester enrolment by enrolling 2,500 students in Main Campus, 250 in Nairobi Campus, 400 in Embu campus and 140 in Igembe Campus. The Igembe campus is also accredited by Technical and Vocational Education and Training Authority (TVETA) as a TVET institute and will start admitting students KUCCPS in September, 2024.
- iii) **On the staff establishment-** the institution has a full-time staff population of 669, which consists of 318 academic teaching staff and 351 non-academic staff. The University also engages the services of 241 part-time academic staff, bringing this cadre to 559 lecturers. The ratio of academic (full-time and part-time) staff to non-academic staff is 2:1, which is the recommended ratio by CUE.
- iv) **On pending bills** – the University submitted that it owes no debt to any statutory body. The only pending bill the Institution currently has is Kshs 902 million, which relate to payment of contractors engaged in various projects that the University is implementing. This pending bill has been submitted to the National pending bills Committee for consideration. The Institution new management had also inherited other liabilities that included Ksh151m for Part-time Lecturers, and unsettled bills payable to suppliers and all these have been fully settled and the operational financial liquidity of the University has stabilized. The University has taken the following measures to mitigate against accruing pending bills: putting a freeze in starting new projects, contractual negotiations with contractors, prioritizing sectional and functional finishing of ongoing projects as well as committing 30% of the AIA to fund AIA supported projects.
- v) **On the Status of Implementation of the approved 2023/2024 Budget-** the University strictly adheres to the approved budget. The Institution is operating on a budget of Ksh2.5 billion in the Financial Year 2023/2024. As at 31st March 2024, the University had received Ksh1.34 billion and absorbed Ksh1.3 billion, which represents an absorption rate of 60%. The Institution ensures that the procurement plan and the University budget are aligned and the procurement plan ensures that it is fully compliant to the provisions of the procurement Act.

- vi) **On the status of the implementation of the ongoing projects** – the university is currently implementing 6 major projects, with an estimated investment value of Kshs 6.6 billion. The projects are: the food technology tuition complex which is 95% complete and funded through the University internal funds at a cost of Kshs 323 Million; a milk processing plant which is funded internally at a cost of Kshs 53 Million and is at 60% completion level; construction of male hostel wing A and B which is at 82% level with a total estimated investment of Kshs 1.3 Billion fully funded by the exchequer, the science research park which is estimated to cost Kshs 1.9 Billion and is at 84% completion level and is partially funded by the exchequer, with the GOK component being Kshs 1.4 Billion, construction of administration block at an estimated cost of Kshs 1.4 Billion, fully funded internally and is at 85% completion level, construction of a library phase 2 at an estimated cost of Kshs 1.6 Billion, fully funded through internal funds and is at 30% completion level. The projects have so far accumulated pending bills amounting to Kshs 902 million with projects being funded by the exchequer having accumulated the highest pending bills.
- vii) **On the effectiveness of the new funding model-** the university submitted that the model first applied to candidates who joined the universities September 2023. 4,507 students were placed to the University but only 3411 students reported representing a 75.7% of transition. The University projects that in the next three years, the total Revenue Base from all Government Placed Students will be Kshs 2.5 Billion which is sufficient to run the operations of the University sustainably as per the strategic plan. This, according to the University, depends entirely on full remittance of resources by UFB and HELB. The University pointed the following challenges in the implementation of the new funding model:
- Delayed disbursement of funds by the government which affects proper planning by the University due to the uncertainty of when the funds will be disbursed
 - Lack of proper guidance to students when applying for funding
 - Lack of network infrastructure in some areas thus some students are not able to access the network making it difficult to apply for funding
 - The model maybe too expensive especially for those who may not be able to raise the household balance

- Lack of understanding of the new University Funding systems by both the parents, students and stakeholders

viii) **On the institution views on the proposed Higher Education reforms-** the University supports the enrolment of Diploma and Certificate Students to Universities to support local community students as well as diversify on revenue streams. The institution is of the opinion that KUCCPs, CUE, HELB and UFB should not be merged since each plays an independent role and the merger may result to confusion, internal fights and non-defined lines of operations

ix) **On accreditation of programmes-** the University has developed a total of 207 academic programmes, of which 167 have been accredited by the Commission for University Education (CUE) while the recently developed 40 programmes are in the process of accreditation. The University also offers certificates and diploma programs that are approved by the Senate. The University is of the view that Professional Bodies be utilized by CUE during the accreditation process to avoid double accreditation as well as duplicated expenses which are putting a strain on Universities'.

x) **On initiatives to support the Bottom-up Economic Transformation Agenda -** the institution reviewed its Strategic Plan in December 2023 to reflect and support the aspirations of the government's BETA Plan. The University has contributed and continues to advance these aspirations in the relevant areas through research and innovations. Some of the key initiatives being implemented by the University are:

- **Investment, Trade and Industry, Cooperatives and SMEs** – the University has provided land and laboratory space for trade innovations and development of an industrial park in collaboration with the Government of Tharaka-Nithi County.
- **Housing and Urban Development** – the university has provided land for development of 2000 housing units under the National Affordable Housing Programme and has also developed hostels with a capacity to accommodate 1,700 students

- **Health sector-** the university has established a community health centre that provides medical care to local communities as part of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)

4.7 Murang'a University of Technology

Murang'a University of Technology made the following submissions on the key thematic areas under the consideration of the Committee:

- On University strategic priorities and goals** - the institution is currently implementing a 5 year (2023-27) strategic plan. The plan has focused and prioritized five key result areas, that is, academic excellence, quality research, innovation, student welfare, capacity development and Technology. The plan is implemented through yearly action plans that are aligned to the budgetary allocations. The plan also forms part of the yearly targets in the performance contracting and monitored yearly.
- On Student enrolment levels** – as at 2024, the institution had a total student population of 10,161 students. This enrolment consists of 112 diploma, 8,471 Masters and 118 Doctorate students. The Institution has 7 schools where these students are admitted for various programmes.
- On the staff establishment-** the institution has an approved staff establishment of 434 staff with the current in-post of staff being 315. The in-post staff consist of 278 permanent staff and 37 contractual staff. The University has 100 academic staff and 215 administrative staff.
- On pending bills** – as at 2024, the university had a pending bill amounting to Kshs 225 million. These pending bills comprised Kshs 97 million for CBA salaries arrears and Kshs 128 million on payment relating to GOK funded capital projects. On strategies deployed by the University to clear the pending bills, the University has to Ministry relating to capital projects pending bills and through internal funds, the University is defraying the CBA arrears based on the cash flow.
- On the Status of Implementation of the approved 2023/2024 Budget-** the University 2023/24 budget is Kshs 1.4 billion, comprising Kshs 1.1 billion for recurrent expenditure and Kshs 303 million development expenditure. This budget was funded by the exchequer through grants as well as internally generated revenues (AIA). The University submitted

that the implementation of the budget is done through allocation of funds into 4 quarters of the financial year through the Enterprise Resource Planning system (ERP) that helps to manage and prevent expenditure. Commitments of funds are usually done after confirmation of the ability to pay.

vi) **On the status of the implementation of the ongoing projects** – the university is currently implementing 5 major projects, namely, construction of science complex phase 1, hostel block phase III, Hostel block phase I- wing 2, tuition block phase II and asbestos removal. The total contract sum of the five projects is Kshs 1.4 billion and all the five projects are funded through the exchequer. The University has received Kshs 796 million in the last five years to finance the projects. The outstanding costs for the projects are Kshs 617 million. The completion levels for the projects ranges between 14% and 100%. The construction of the science complex is complete, however, there are pending certificates which need to be paid before the project is handed over to the University. The key challenge affecting the implementation of the projects is delay in release of funds since they are GOK funded projects.

vii) **On the effectiveness of the new funding model-** the university supports the decision by the government to introduce the new funding model where funding under the model will be through scholarships, loans and fees paid by households and which will form part of AIA for the University. The University is projecting more revenues if the funds are disbursed fully and in a timely manner hence a reduction in budget deficit. The University pointed the following challenges in the implementation of the new funding model:

- Delayed disbursement of funds by the government which affects proper planning by the University due to the uncertainty of when the funds will be disbursed
- Delays in notification of bands where students have been placed hence the households are not well prepared to meet their part
- Misdirection of funds to other universities occasioned by inter-university transfers;
- Lack of training and capacity building of Officers who manage the student funds which affects information flow on issues of funding.
- Long bureaucracies in updating of records in the case of course change by students

- viii) **On the institution views on the proposed Higher Education reforms-** the University supports the development of a Higher Education Qualification Framework (HEQF) by CUE to provide learners with deficits in some disciplines with an opportunity to bridge in order to meet admission requirements for university education. The university also supports the enhancement of research support to universities, which is one of their core mandates.
- ix) **On accreditation of programmes-** the University has developed a total of 80 academic programmes, of which 70 have been accredited having fully undergone the entire accreditation processes and procedures. The University is of the view that CUE is the only legal accreditation body and that Professional Bodies need to be part of CUE accreditation process and not undertake a standalone accreditation

4.8 Kisii University

Kisii University made the following submissions on the key thematic areas under the consideration of the Committee:

- i) **On University Governance, strategic priorities and goals** - the institution is currently implementing a 5 year (2019-2024) strategic plan. The University has also established a niche in Health Sciences and is therefore aligning its next Strategic Plan (2024-2029) in the context of this new niche. In terms of governance, the University is awaiting the appointment of two (2) independent Council members and a request for their appointment has been submitted to the Ministry of Education.
- ii) **On Students enrolment-** As at 2024, the University had a total enrolment of 28,681, which comprises 490 Doctorate, 1,107 Masters, 26,297 Bachelors, 672 Postgraduate Diploma and 115 Certificate students spread across various faculties.
- iii) **On Staff establishment levels, both academic and non-academic** – according to the approved structure of 2019, the university should have a total staff of 1,447 against the current in –post staff of 628. This represents less than 50% of the approved staffing levels. The in-post non- academic staff is 297 against an establishment of 497 whereas the number of in- post academic staff is 357 against an establishment of 950. The University submitted that it has a serious gap in the teaching staff since the ratio currently stands at 1:90, which is against the recommended ratio by the Commission for University Education (CUE)

Guidelines (2014). Due to this, the University heavily relies on part-time lecturers to support teaching and learning at the University.

- iv) **On pending bills** - As at 2024, the University had a total exposure to pending bills of Kshs 1.5 billion. The major pending bills are on pension arrears of Kshs 550 million, part time lecturer claims of Kshs 237 million and redundancy court ruling of Kshs 455 million, which the University is disputing in court. Some of the initiatives being implemented by the University management to address the pending menace are: having agreed with various institutions which the University owe on active payment plans, closure of satellite campuses which are financially non-viable as well as reduction of rented space, controlled and essential travelling as well as initiating mediation for out of court settlement with claimants.
- v) **On the status of implementation of the approved 2023/24 budget** – the University had an approved budget of Kshs 3.4 billion, which consisted of capitation grants of Kshs 915 million and AIA of Kshs 2.5 billion. As at 3rd quarter of the financial year, the University had received 64% (Kshs 2.2 billion) of the approved budget, which comprises a receipt of Kshs 609 million as capitation grants and had collected Kshs 1.6 billion as AIA. The University indicated a delay in exchequer releases by government as one of the obstacles to delays in the implementation of the budget.
- vi) **On the status of projects' implementation** - The University has three ongoing projects which are internally funded and are at various levels of completion. These projects are construction of ICT centres, Hostels and lecture theatres with an estimated investment of Kshs 2.0 billion. The University has so far spent Kshs 1.8 billion in implementing these three projects. The University has also two stalled projects, the 5th and 6th floor of the Tuition Complex and the ICT Block B caused by delays in disbursement of the development budget funds compelling the University to utilize funds from A-in-A to meet the contractual agreements with the constructors of these projects. The University also intends to initiate additional projects given the huge student population and the need to provide the recommendable learning experience to the students. These projects are, Construction of the University Fence (Perimeter wall), Science Laboratories, ICT Labs, Lecture Halls and Multipurpose Halls, Student Centre for provision of student services, Seat of the University, Teaching and Research Hospital, Student Hostels and Office Spaces for Lecturers.

- vii) **The effectiveness of the new University funding Model** – the University submitted that the model will work effectively if the Government releases students’ funds on time. The University submitted that for instance, the scholarship and loan funds for the second semester had not been received. The other challenge highlighted by the University was lack of proper flow of information between the various Government agencies charged with the implementation of the new model, i.e., HELB, KUCCPS and the University Funding Board. This had resulted in many students missing out on the allocations and funding.
- viii) **The University’s view on higher education sub-sector recommendations as contained in the Presidential Working Party Report** – the University expressed support to the various recommendations. Specifically, the University made the following submissions on this matter:
- The University has reservations on the model of recruiting and appointment of University Senior Administrative staff where there is involvement of the Public Service Commission.
 - In supporting research in universities, the University recommended an allocation based on the percentage of the national recurrent budget (for example 1.5%) towards research in universities.
 - With respect to the establishment of Open University of Kenya, the university recommended that the admission criteria to this university should be the same as any other university in the country.
- ix) **On Initiatives to support the Bottom-Up Economic Transformation Agenda (BETA)** - the university has made **two initiatives to support the** Digital Superhighway and Creative Economy pillar:
- **Digital literacy training through Ajira Digital Programme** – the programme was started in 2021 by students as a club that focuses on training digital skills for self-employment. Over 2,000 students are registered as members of Ajira Digital club and more than 2,500 students have been trained, both online and physically on digital skills. The Club has extended this training to the community around the University, which has seen local traders use digital skills to improve their businesses. About 150 students are already earning from online jobs.

The Ethical Artificial Intelligence Project in partnership with Mozilla Foundation -trains students and staff on responsible artificial intelligence. The project offers training on integration of ethics and morality in the handling of emerging and disruptive technologies such as the Internet of Things, robotics, virtual reality and artificial intelligence that are increasingly gaining prominence in the manufacturing practices and processes. This training on ethics and morality in the digital space will soon be cascaded from the University to the local community to nurture the culture of responsible use of technology and the digital environment to do business and to create jobs.

4.9 Rongo University

Rongo University made the following submissions on the key thematic areas under the consideration of the Committee:

- i) **On the University Leadership and Governance-** the University derives its mandate from the various laws and statues as well as the Rongo University Charter. The University currently has no Chancellor but has submitted names for the position of Chancellor to the Public Service Commission for consideration. The University Council is also partially constituted. The University's strategic priorities in the delivery of its mission and vision are outlined in the 2022/2027 Strategic Plan, which is the third Strategic Plan of Rongo University since it became a chartered Public University in 2016.
- ii) **On student enrolment-** the university currently has four (4) Schools and each School has three (3) teaching Departments. As at 2024, the student population stood at 9,639 in the different programmes across different levels of study, that is, from Certificate to Graduate studies. The Bachelor students' population is at 8,860, with Masters and Doctorate students being 189 and 87 respectively. The Diploma and certificate students are 499 whereas the postgraduate diploma population stands at 4.
- iii) **On staff establishment-** the total staff population in the University is currently 357 against an establishment of 566 staff. The in-post for academic staff is ninety-nine (99) against an approved establishment of 266. The in-post consists of 8 technical, 91 teaching staff. The in-post administrative staff are two hundred and forty-eight (248) against an establishment of 300. The University has also engaged 122 part-time teaching staff to support teaching.

- iv) **On pending bills** - the University has liabilities totalling Kshs 404 million, a bulk of which is on pending bills which as at 2024 stood at Kshs 312 million and salary arrears at Kshs 72 million. The other huge liabilities are the payroll deficit standing at Kshs 49 million and operations related liabilities totaling to Kshs 33 million. The University attributes the pending bills and liabilities to lack of exchequer.
- v) **On 2023/24 Budget Implementation** – the University is working with an approved budget of Kshs 1.2 billion in 2023/24. This consists of Kshs 515 million as capitation grants, Kshs 662 million as AIA and Kshs 48 Million as development budget. As at 3rd quarter the expenditure stood at Kshs 774 million which represents a 63 % absorption of the approved budget. A low absorption rate of 30% is observed on the capital development expenditure with an approved budget of Kshs 191 million against an expenditure of Kshs 58 million.
- vi) **On the new funding model** - the University submitted that the model has proved effective since it provides clarity on the fiscal responsibility of parents, sponsors and government as well as potentially providing an equitable access to higher education by students from different economic backgrounds among other reasons. The University pointed out the following challenges which need to be ironed out to make the model more effective: delay in the processing and updating inter-university and intra programme transfers, delays in release of funds as well as inaccurate banding of students.
- vii) **On accreditation of academic programmes-** the process at the University follows the CUE laid down guidelines, from the Departmental level up to the Senate level with the last and ultimate approval being granted by CUE upon payment of the requisite fee. The University indicated that the cost of accreditation for one programme is high and could be waived considering the requirement for transition to CBC.
- viii) **On strategies to diversify revenue sources** - the University has constantly strived to diversify its resources to enhance its capabilities and impact through two vital aspects. The first aspect is leveraging the research fund to expand its research initiatives and collaborations in order to increase its financial capacity. The second aspect is on enhancing AIA generation through expanding income generating activities through three projects namely, Rongo University Textile Production Unit (RUTEPU), Hass Avocado Project and Apiculture for Honey and Associated Products.

- ix) **On initiatives to support Bottom-up Economic Transformation agenda (BETA) in research and innovation** – the University has put in place two key initiatives to support BETA:
- Mobilization of external funding for Research and Innovation - through different project proposals to contribute to different sectors which are part of the BETA enablers. Some of the projects are Development of Aqua-Culture Education in Higher Educational Institutions in Kenya - Funded by European Union- 172,858 Euros (2023-2025), McKnight Foundation aimed at transforming sorghum-based farming system in Eastern and Western Kenya through Agro-ecological intensification (USD 400,000) (2020-2024) and Building Entrepreneurial Skills and Tenacity (BEST) among university students with a support grant of USD 10,000) (2023-2024).
 - Fostering strategic partnerships and collaboration to support different BETA pillars- THE University highlighted the following partnerships FLOW partnership between Rongo University and the Winfrid Laurier University in Canada (2023-2028) as well as collaboration between Rongo University and Konza Technopolis Development Authority.

4.10 Koitalel Samoei University

Koitalel Samoei University made the following submissions on the key thematic areas under the consideration of the Committee:

- i) **On Governance structure** – the University College was established through a legal notice as a constituent college of the University of Nairobi. The governance structure comprises the Council, Management Board, College Academic Board and the Students' Governing Council. The governance team is guided by the University mission of academic excellence and institutional advancement, ensuring transparency, accountability, and effective leadership. The University received its first enrolment cohort of fifty-five (55) students in September 2019. The Institution has in place a Strategic Plan which is running from 2019 to 2024 where its strategic objectives have been prioritized.
- ii) **On student enrolment** – the College witnessed a positive trend in student enrolment from initial 55 undergraduate students in the 2019/2020 academic year to the current enrolment

of 1,649 students in 2024. The enrolment comprises 1,578 undergraduate students and 71 postgraduate students. The university college projects to admit at least 1,000 students in the 2024/ 2025 academic year and the total student population to increase to 2,500.

- iii) **On staff establishment** - As of 31st March 2024, the University had a staff complement of one hundred and Six (106), both permanent and contractual. The Institution has 32 permanent staff of which 20 are academic staff and 12 are non-academic. The University did put forward the need to recruit more full-time academic staff to achieve the staffing needs where the optimal number is 74 faculty staff against the current establishment of 22.
- iv) **On the status of the implementation of the 2023/24 Budget** - In 2023/24 the University was operating a budget of Kshs 393 million, which consisted of Kshs 313 million as recurrent budget and Kshs 60 million capital budget. The financing of this Budget consisted of GOK grants capitation and an AIA of Kshs 175 million. As at March 2024, the recurrent expenditure stood at Kshs 184 million which translates to 58.76% of the total recurrent expenditure. The University received Kshs 15 million development funds in the month March which were yet to be utilized since the University was waiting for a certificate from the contractor.
- v) **On the status of the capital projects being implemented by the University** – the University gave an overview of the progress made in securing land for development by the University. The University has so far secured 150 acres for the Nandi Hills and Mosoriot Campuses while the process of acquiring title deeds for the remaining parcels of land where the University campuses are situated is ongoing. The University is currently implementing one capital project funded by GOK capital grants, that is, an Administration block, in Nandi Hills campus at an estimated cost of Kshs 682 million. The management highlighted insufficient development capitation as the main reason for the delay in the implementation of this project which currently stands at 24% completion level. The other challenge to the project was geotechnical conditions which occasioned the change in foundation design. In the Strategic Plan 2023-2027, the University has identified 14 projects at an estimated cost of Kshs 3 billion to be funded through government support.
- vi) **On the effectiveness of the new funding model** - the University pointed a number of challenges in the implementation of the new funding model among them failure by the

students to apply due to lack of sensitization, defective means testing leading to mis-categorization of students and a lengthy appeal process as well as inter-faculty and Inter-University transfers by students and the bureaucracies involved which are time consuming.

- vii) **On the accreditation process of various programmes** – the university follows the laid down guidelines and procedures developed by CUE in programme accreditation. The process begins at Departmental level to the Senate and ultimately to CUE for final approval. The Commission for University Education (CUE) visits the Institution and once satisfied, issues approval of the programme. The Commission for University Education (CUE) assesses among others; the university staff, facilities and equipment as well as relevant materials to support the programmes. Once approved the University mounts the programme and communicates to Kenya Universities and Colleges Placement service (KUCCPS) for undergraduate students to be placed.
- viii) **On the initiatives to support the Bottom-up Economic Transformation Agenda (BETA) especially in the areas of research and innovation** – the university fully supports the government BETA anchored on five aimed at socio-economic transformation. The university being an institution of higher learning disseminates knowledge towards having a skilled workforce to support the economy and has aligned its programmes both directly and indirectly through the enablers.

4.11 Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology

Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology made the following submissions on the key thematic areas under the consideration of the Committee:

- i) **On the overview of the institution's governance structure and strategic priorities** - the University was chartered in 2013. The governance structure of the University, that is, Council, Senate, and Management Board are fully constituted. The University strategic priorities are well aligned with resource allocation which is aimed at optimizing resource utilization and enhancing accountability. The university has developed a plan comprising five key result areas (KRAs) through which resources are allocated, utilized, and evaluated. These areas are Institutional Capacity – People and Culture, Academic Excellence, Research and Innovation, technology and automation, Financial Stability, Growth, and Social Value.

- ii) **On student enrolment** - the current student enrolment is at 24,049 distributed in the eleven schools, forty-nine (49) Departments and three (3) Institutes. A majority of the students, numbering 20,260 are undergraduate students undertaking various degree programmes. The University offers 250 programs, with 72% focused on Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM), 20% on Social Sciences, and 8% on Humanities.
- iii) **On staff establishment-** as at March 2024, the University had a total staff population of nine hundred and twenty-eight (928). This is against an approved staff establishment of 1,630. The short fall in staff is bridged by a part time staff of four hundred and ninety-two (492) and twenty-eight (28) adjunct staff. The staff are distributed as follows: Academic- 455 and non-academic 473.
- iv) **On the status of pending bills** - the university has pending bills totalling Kshs 162 million of which a huge component is on part time claims. The university is employing the following strategies in handling pending bills; progressively moving courses especially postgraduate to online platforms to reduce the use of part time staff, seeking Government bailout as well as putting in place austerity measures.
- v) **On the status of implementation of the approved 2023/2024 budget** - the University was implementing a budget of Kshs 3.6 billion in 2023/24, which comprised Kshs 3.3 billion recurrent budget and Kshs 339 million development budget. The financing of this budget consisted of Kshs 1.9 billion from internal sources and Kshs 1.5 billion from national government grants. As at March 2024, the overall budget performance is at 74% which compares favourably to the anticipated budget absorption of 75% at 3rd Quarter of the financial year.
- vi) **On the status of the projects being implemented** – the University is currently implementing a total of 6 projects, out of which, 4 projects are internally funded and 2 are funded through exchequer. The total investment in the entire 6 projects of Kshs 856 million. The internally funded projects are: Solar installation works at a cost of Kshs 19 million which has been completed, Installation of flood lights at a cost of Kshs 12 million which has been completed and construction of a foot bridge at Kshs 11.4 million which has also been completed. The Exchequer funded projects are; construction of engineering and TVET complex at a cost of Kshs 717 million which is at 30% completion level and so far, Kshs 216

million expenditure has been incurred. The other project is Construction of a library at a cost of Kshs 19 million which is currently at 55% completion where Kshs 6 million has been utilized so far.

- vii) **On the effectiveness of the new university funding model** - The University pointed out the following challenges being faced by the new funding model; delayed remittance of funds to the University leading to cash flow disruptions, Inter-university transfer challenges where the funds are channelled to the original university where the student was initially placed, means testing tool challenges, non- funding of TVET students in universities and programmes change by students.
- viii) **On the University view on the recommendations of the Presidential Working Party Report on Higher Education Sub-Sector** – the University submitted that there is need to increase funding to Technical Universities due to the cost of offering their programmes. The University also submitted the need to allow Universities to continue offering Diploma and Certificate programs. The need to harmonize the new funding model with bursaries to students that are offered by other institutions including NG-CDF and any other donors as well as harmonization in accreditation of programmes.
- ix) **On accreditation of university programmes** - the university that all the degree programmes were reviewed as per the Commission for University Education Standards and Guidelines to address the emerging market trends and demands. The University however submitted that the process of approval of new academic programmes at the Commission for University Education was too slow which disadvantages many potential students who are interested in joining University.
- x) **On initiatives to support the Bottom-up Economic Transformation Agenda (BETA) in research and innovation** - the University directorate of research has been instrumental in aligning the Research activities to the Bottom-up Economic Transformation Agenda (BETA). The University Science Park aligns with BETA, focusing on the informal sector and SMEs to create jobs and alleviate poverty. Some of the innovations done by the University are:
- Bio innovate support- a proposal for jigger drug treatment has been up scaled into a commercial product;

- Value addition efforts are underway for products developed in the science park. The initiatives include; startup using a patented local laundry machine to ease housework, development of locally sourced shoe polish pending KEBS approval for market rollout, collaboration with industries to upscale mug production and related food supplements for malnutrition alleviation among others.

4.12 University of Eldoret

The University of Eldoret made the following submissions on the key thematic areas under the consideration of the Committee:

- i) **On the overview of the Institution's Governance Structure and strategic priorities** – the university was awarded charter in 2013 and is largely science, agriculture and technology. The University has strategic priorities which are anchored in the strategic plan 2019-2024. The priorities are: enhance quality of teaching and learning, position the university as a research centre, improve governance and corporate image, attract and retain competent human resource, develop and maintain physical and technological infrastructure and to strengthen resource mobilization and utilization.
- ii) **On students' enrolment** - the University runs twenty-seven (27) Diploma, Fifty-four (54) undergraduate programmes, 54 Masters, two (2) Postgraduate Diplomas and thirty-nine (39) Doctorate programmes in the thirty-one (31) academic departments. As at 2024, the current student population is 11,601 distributed across 53 academic programs in 7 schools. This consists of 10,386 government sponsored students and 1,215 self-sponsored students.
- iii) **On Staffing levels** – As at March 2024, the University staff population stood at 1,054. A total of 955 are on permanent and pensionable terms while 99 are on contract. The number of academic staff stands at 322 whereas the non-academic staff is 732. The approved staff establishment stands at 1,295 against an in-post staff at 1,054. The University staff recruitment and promotion have been affected by the Government moratorium and budget rationalization. The management pointed out the need for budgetary support to promote its staff who have stagnated in one job ground for more than 33 years.
- iv) **On the status of the 2023/24 budget implementation** - the University was operating a budget of Kshs 2.6 billion which consisted of Kshs 2.5 billion recurrent budget and Kshs 15 million development budget. As at March 2024, the actual expenditure stood at Kshs 1.9

billion. On capital expenditure, Kshs 15 Million for construction of Amphitheatre and was going to process the outstanding certificates in quarter four of the financial year. Further, Capital projects financed from internal sources were budgeted at Kshs 29 million while Kshs 16 million was utilized.

- v) **On the Status of Capital Projects Implementation** - In 2023/24 the University was implementing two ongoing capital projects, that is, completion of the perimeter fence at a cost of Kshs 245.3 million and the construction of School of Education Amphitheatre at a cost of Kshs 373 million. The construction of perimeter fence, phase VII is the last phase of a 7.6 km masonry wall perimeter fencing project that commenced in 2016. This last phase consisting of an 850 m masonry wall, razor wire and a watch tower was completed and handed over in March 2023. The project commenced with GoK funding, which covered for the first 3 phases totalling 3km and which cost Kshs 99.2 million. After exchequer funding stopped, the University completed the last 4 phases measuring 4.6 km using A-in-A funds at a cost of Kshs 146 million.

The construction of the School of Education Amphitheatre, which is a GOK funded project commenced in 2019 and was scheduled to be completed in 2023. The actual expenditure towards this project stands at Kshs 164 million. The management pointed out that this project is currently stalled due to inability to pay contractors with certified payments totalling Kshs 70 million. The University is also in the process of preparing documentation for the proposed new projects namely, school of science complex, consisting of teaching and research laboratories, auditoria, lecture halls and offices.

- vi) **On the New Higher Education Funding Model** - the University highlighted the following challenges; the Means Testing Instrument (MTI) does not properly identify the vulnerable and needy cases and thus students were not accurately banded, the initial model was modified without communication to stakeholders, the cost of programmes in public universities are relatively higher compared to private universities, the model loads higher loan burden on the students, the household component is too high to be sustained by the humble families and disbursements are irregular. The University gave a number of recommendations to make the model effective among them: the need for the MTI to be improved to enable accurate categorization of students, the new categorization needs to be publicized, disbursements to

be processed timely and that the model should be reviewed to make it affordable and sustainable.

- vii) **On initiatives to support BETA especially in research and innovation** – the University is engaged in several research activities which support the Bottom-up economic transformation agenda (BeTA). This has been done under research through both internally and externally funded research projects and publications done.

4.13 Maseno University

Maseno University made the following submissions on the key thematic areas under the consideration of the Committee:

- i) **On the University Governance Structure, including the Composition of the Council-** the Committee observed that the Council was not fully constituted as it lacked two independent members and a substantive representative of the Principal Secretary in charge of higher education.
- ii) **On University's Strategic Priorities and Alignment with Budget Allocations,** the Committee was informed that the University's Revised Strategic Plan 2022–2027 outlined the following priorities: academic excellence and student services, research and linkages, quality assurance, revenue base and infrastructure, human resource management and development, and mainstreaming of pertinent cross-cutting issues.
- iii) It was reported that the 2023/2024 rationalized budget took these priorities into account. Specifically, it was highlighted that:
 - Kshs.128 million was allocated to teaching-related activities, including curriculum review and the launch of new programmes such as the Bachelor of Education in Fine Arts with IT.
 - Kshs.105 million was earmarked for research, linkages and outreach.
 - Kshs.12.4 million was set aside for quality assurance.
 - Kshs.69.2 million was allocated towards ICT infrastructure, while Kshs.218 million was committed towards completion of Students' Hostels Phase II through a bank loan.

- The University allocated Kshs. 8 million for staff welfare in addition to personal emoluments of Kshs. 2.5 billion.
 - Kshs.1.7 million was directed towards mainstreaming of cross-cutting issues such as sustainability and social engagement.
- iv) The Committee observed that while the allocations aligned with the strategic plan, the funding for quality assurance and cross-cutting issues was relatively low compared to institutional needs.
- v) **On Student Enrolment Data**, the Committee was informed that Maseno University had a total student population of 25,473 distributed across the Main, Kisumu and Odera Akang'o campuses.
- vi) **On Staff Establishment Levels**, it was reported that the University's staff establishment stood at 1,783, out of which 1,088 positions were filled. Of these, 555 were teaching staff and 533 were non-teaching staff serving on permanent and pensionable terms or on contract. The Committee further learnt that there was a shortfall of 695 positions in the staff establishment.
- vii) **On University's Assets, Liabilities and Pending Bills**, the Committee was informed that as of the reporting period, the University's assets were valued at Kshs. 7.7 billion while liabilities stood at Kshs. 984 million. The pending bills amounted to Kshs. 744 million.
- It was further explained that the University had adopted strategies to address pending bills, including prioritization of payments, negotiation with NSSF and KRA for waiver of penalties, engagement with Government for settlement of debts, discussions with unions on outstanding CBA payments, and prioritization of supplier payments.
- viii) **On status of implementation of the approved 2023/2024 Budget and Procurement Plan**, the Committee was informed that the approved revenue budget for FY 2023/2024 was Kshs. 3.6 billion, out of which Kshs. 3.34 billion had been realized. Expenditure during the same period stood at Kshs. 2.59 billion. It was reported that revenue disbursements were received in bulk during the first and third quarters, whereas expenditures were spread throughout the year.

- ix) On Development Projects,** the Committee was informed that the University had three development projects: Tuition Block and Laboratories Complex, Students' Hostel Phase I and Students' Hostel Phase II.

It was reported that the Tuition Block and Hostel Phase I had been completed and handed over, while Hostel Phase II was ongoing. The Tuition Block cost Kshs. 549 million, while the two hostels together cost Kshs. 857 million. Hostel Phase II was being financed through a bank loan and internally generated funds. The Committee was apprised of challenges in project implementation, including pending bills of Kshs. 170 million, unplanned cost escalations, and insufficient budgetary allocations. However, it was emphasized that there were no stalled projects, disputes, or audit queries.

- x) On the effectiveness of the University Funding Model,** the Committee was informed that the new funding model was effective in programme costing. However, it was reported that the University experienced challenges due to late disbursement of scholarship and loan funds. In FY 2023/2024, the University received 6,351 first-year students with an estimated revenue of Kshs. 1.19 billion. However, HELB loans amounting to Kshs. 392 million and scholarship funds from the University Funding Board had not been received in time. This posed liquidity challenges that could compromise implementation of programmes.
- xi) On University's View on the Presidential Working Party Recommendations,** the Committee was informed that Maseno University had taken steps to align its programmes with the recommendations of the Presidential Working Party on Education Reforms. It was reported that the University had developed an online teaching certificate programme, reviewed curricula for Bachelor of Education programmes, introduced new programmes such as B.Ed. (Fine Arts with IT), and hosted workshops to align teacher education to CBC/CBTE. On financing reforms, it was highlighted that late disbursement of scholarship and loan funds remained a key challenge.
- xii) On Accreditation of Programmes,** the Committee was informed that Maseno University offered 255 academic programmes, all accredited by the Commission for University Education. It was further reported that professional programmes such as Medicine, Pharmacy, Nursing, Nutrition, Public Health and Law had also been accredited by their respective regulatory bodies.

xiii) **On Revenue Diversification**, the Committee was informed that apart from government capitation and tuition fees, the University had diversified its revenue streams through research funding, asset monetization (Varsity Plaza and Kisumu Hotel), farm produce to supplement catering, e-learning initiatives, business incubation, and credit facilities for hostel projects. It was highlighted that research funding increased from Kshs. 111 million in FY 2022/23 to Kshs. 141 million in FY 2023/24.

xiv) **On Initiatives Supporting the Bottom-Up Economic Transformation Agenda (BETA)**, the Committee was informed that Maseno University had aligned its research and innovation to the six pillars of BETA, focusing on agriculture, healthcare, and creative industries.

It was reported that under agriculture, the University developed new maize, cassava, millet and sorghum varieties and carried out extensive community outreach on improved agricultural practices. In healthcare, the University had undertaken research on malaria, nutrition markets, and established the Western Kenya Cancer Care and Research Centre. In the creative industry, the University had focused on renewable energy research, particularly in bio-diesel and bio-ethanol production using both natural and artificial intelligence approaches. The Committee observed that these initiatives demonstrated strong alignment with the national development agenda.

PART FIVE

5. COMMITTEE OBSERVATIONS

The Committee made the following observations regarding the submissions made by the various Universities as well as the physical inspection made to the various capital projects being implemented. The observations were guided by the four aspects identified by the Committee.

5.1 The Institution's Governance, operations and management.

The Committee made the following observations;

- i) That, all the Universities have in place active and updated strategic plans which guide their day-to-day operations. The strategic priorities and goals revolve around the key mandate of these institutions of Higher Learning, that is, academic excellence, research and innovation. However, there is a lack of mechanism put in place by the individual institutions to assess and track in real time the implementation of their strategic plans in order to evaluate the extent to which the Universities are adhering to the various goals set out in their respective plans;
- ii) That, as provided in the Universities Act, the inspected Universities have fully constituted Councils except Murang'a University of Technology, Maseno University, Kisii University and Rongo University whose respective Councils were not fully constituted at the time of the inspection. Even though the Councils for these four Universities have requisite quorum to transact business and make policy directions and decisions on behalf of the Universities, it is critical that all the Universities and University Colleges have fully constituted Councils.
- iii) That, the inspected Universities have students enrolled at various levels to different programmes which each University is offering. The enrolment of the students ranges from the Certificate level up to the Doctorate level. The Committee noted that the student's population in a number of universities notably Meru University and Tharaka University is way below the declared capacity for these institutions;
- iv) That, at least 30% of the student population is accommodated within the institutions' hostels. This aligns with international best practices on student accommodation within institutions. However, the Committee also noted that upcoming universities such as Tharaka University and Koitalel University College need to be supported since most of

the students reside outside the institutions. Special consideration needs to be given to Tharaka University since it is situated in a relatively remote area making it difficult for students to get adequate accommodation within the surroundings;

- v) That, the staff in-post in the inspected universities is way below the approved staff establishment. However, the Committee is concerned that the full adherence to the staff establishment levels will require huge resources in terms of the wage bill hence the need for the Universities to right size their workforce, which includes a review of their staff establishment to conform with best practices in terms of student faculty ratio and teaching and non-teaching staff ratios, gender considerations as well as available resources;
- vi) That, some Universities have engaged some staff in positions which are not provided for in their approved staff establishment. This is an indication that some universities are not strictly implementing and adhering to the approved staff establishment. This has the risk of creating audit queries as well as the danger of ballooning the wage bill for the institutions concerned;
- vii) That, some institutions lack ownership documents for land they sit in as well as other prime properties they own which exposes these institutions to the risk of losing the properties if not addressed. In addition, some institutions are battling several court cases relating to property ownership, contractual obligations as well as other matters which also exposes the institutions;

5.2 The 2023/24 budget, capital projects implementation and pending bills status

The Committee made the following observations;

- i) The inspected universities were well on course in terms of the implementation of the 2023/24 budget. However, what came out clearly in all institutions inspected is the delay in exchequer release by the National Treasury which affects the implementation of their programmes and activities. The most affected component is the exchequer releases for the capital projects with the risk of stalling them.

- ii) That, the inspected universities are implementing a number of capital projects aimed at enhancing access to quality education. The projects are mainly financed through exchequer as well as Internally Generated Revenue (AIA). Some of the inspected projects have various characteristics such as having been incepted a long time ago, some having been incepted recently, some having stalled and some being ongoing among other aspects;
- iii) That, a number of the inspected institutions have more than four ongoing projects. This has resulted in spreading thin of resources available to finance the projects which has led to undesired outcomes such as extended completion timeline as well as stalling of the projects. There is need for the Universities to prioritize critical projects instead of multiple projects whose public benefit will be delayed due to the spreading thin of resources allocation;
- iv) That, some institutions commence some projects through internally generated income but in the middle of implementation the institutions request for exchequer to support the same projects hence putting unnecessary pressure on the exchequer leading to stalling of these projects;
- v) That, there is no clear criteria for allocation of development budget among various Universities. For instance, there are Universities with huge projects which require huge financial outlay as well as Universities which urgently require certain facilities. However, resource allocation does not reflect or take into account such considerations;
- vi) That, there is lack of guidelines on infrastructure development including having in place a standard guideline in project conceptualization and development. This has resulted to different institutions having different cost outlays for the same projects yet the student population is almost the same. For instance, the cost of constructing a library varies significantly from one institution to the other despite the institutions having the same number in terms of student population;
- vii) That, there are numerous instances of cost variations for various projects which is mainly attributed to delayed implementation of the projects, design variations as well as the changing economic environment. This has led to cost overruns, some as high as 25% of the initial cost of the projects. These uncertainties bring with them risks in terms of

project financing where some projects end up using more than double of the initial projected cost;

- viii) That, there is a lack of value for money in some projects being implemented by some Universities, case in point being Meru University and Koitalel University College on the construction of sports field and construction of the administration block respectively. These projects require a detailed audit to assess the value for money aspect;
- ix) That, the State Department for Higher Education has a weak monitoring and evaluation framework/system which has resulted in the proliferation of many projects within universities without proper feasibility studies on the projects. This has contributed to dragged implementation as well as stalled projects within these institutions leading to lack of value for the projects' money;
- x) That, all the institutions inspected have an accumulated stock of pending bills mainly arising from those related to statutory deductions, salaries arrears in universities such as Rongo University, Kenyatta University and Masinde Muliro University, pending bills among others. This pending bill problem is more pronounced in institutions established earlier. The institutions have endeavoured to put in place both long term and short-term measures to address these challenges which are critical in ensuring that they have home grown solutions to the problems;

5.3 Institution's view on policy issues within the Higher Education sub-sector and initiatives to support the BETA agenda in research and innovation

The Committee made the following observations;

- i) That, the Institutions expressed support to the new tertiary funding model provided the model is well funded and resources disbursed in a timely manner. However, the institutions also pointed out areas that need to be improved to ensure it works effectively. One of the key areas pointed out was the need to improve the accuracy of the Means Testing Instrument (MTI) in banding of the students into various categories.;
- ii) That, regarding the higher education sub-sector recommendations in the Presidential Working Party Report on Education reforms, the institutions submitted that they be allowed to continue offering certificate and diploma courses given the investment they have already made, including some having established TVET institutions. The

institutions argued that it is a global best practice in education citing that best universities in the world still offer certificate and diploma courses since it provides for a seamless career progression through credit accumulation up to Doctorate level;

- iii) That, regulatory and professional bodies charge universities high fees to accredit academic programmes which creates bottlenecks faced in accreditation process as well as straining the universities financially. Professional bodies are undertaking the assessment independently from the Commission on University Education (CUE) which is the institution mandated by law to carry out accreditation of various programmes. This has led to double payment of accreditation fees by universities which constrains the institutions financially;
- xiii) That, the institutions visited, through their Division of Research and Innovation have incepted and nurtured various research and innovations by students and the faculty in key areas of food security and health with tangible and impactful outputs. Some of the successful innovations have been commercialized by the institutions.

PART SIX

6. COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee makes the following recommendations regarding the submissions made by the various Universities as well as the physical inspections made;

6.1 The Institution's Governance, operations and management.

- i) That, the State Department for Higher Education through the Commission for University Education (CUE) to ensure that all public Universities have in place active strategic plans and service delivery charters to strengthen institutional governance and management. The institutions should also institute mechanisms through leveraging ICT to assess and track the implementation of their plans to evaluate the extent to which the Universities are responding to their clients' needs;
- ii) That, the State Department for Higher Education to ensure that all Public Universities have fully constituted Councils in line with the Universities Act, 2012. This will support prompt strategic decision-making and provision of policy direction in the Universities;
- iii) That, the various public universities and university colleges through guidance from relevant government institutions such as Salaries and Remuneration Commission (SRC) review their respective staff establishment levels with the aim of right-sizing the establishment and having in place a fit for purpose workforce as well as progressively work towards having in place workforce ratios which are in tandem with international best practice;
- iv) That, the Public Universities and Colleges engage the Ministry of Lands to come up with a roadmap that will ensure that land ownership documents are provided and secured to safeguard the institutions from the risks associated with non-documentation of land as well as ensure the institutions make full use of these assets. Further, the institutions to explore court sanctioned Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) mechanisms to settle some of the disputes they are facing;

6.2 The 2023/24 budget, capital projects implementation and pending bills status

- i) That, the National Assembly and the National Treasury support nascent and upcoming Universities through strategic budgetary allocation to ensure that they have in place essential amenities to support conducive learning for students. This allocation should cater for amenities such as tuition blocks, administration blocks, laboratories as well as student hostels for universities located in relatively remote areas;
- ii) That, the National Treasury ensure that there is prompt release of funds for exchequer-funded capital projects which are being implemented by the universities to ensure that the projects are not exposed to risks such as stalling, delays in completion, revision of contracts, accumulation of pending bills, disputes, court cases among others which are synonymous with the projects. This will also ensure that the public benefit expected of these projects is not delayed;
- iii) That, the State Department for Higher Education to develop an effective and robust monitoring and evaluation framework. This will ensure Universities are compelled to prioritize critical projects instead of implementing multiple projects which result to spreading thin of resources for implementation resulting to delays in completion as well as public benefit expected of the projects;
- iv) That, the State Department for Higher Education in collaboration with the Department for Public works develops clear guidelines on infrastructure development including having in place a standard guideline in project conceptualization and development. This will ensure some uniformity and cost control for near similar projects;
- v) That, the Auditor General undertakes a special value for money audit on the construction of sports field in Meru University and construction of administration block at Koitalel University College and submit the same to the National Assembly;
- vi) That, the Technical Committee is established to review the effectiveness of the new university funding model to expedite on this work and ensure that all the concerns regarding the model are fully addressed, especially on the accuracy of the Means Testing Instrument (MTI) which is a tool that categorizes students into various bands;
- vii) That, the Kenya Universities and Colleges Central Placement Service (KUCCPS), Universities Fund (UFB), Higher Education Loans Board (HELB) together with the respective Universities to develop within the next three months modalities to address

and deal with administrative bureaucracies relating to inter/intra faculty transfers as well as inter university transfers to support effective and seamless implementation of the new funding model;

- viii) That, the National Treasury and Economic Planning through its Committee on Pending Bills Verification Committee reviews pending bills of Public Universities including historical pending bills. The review should prioritize developing a clear framework for verification, settlement, and long-term management of these obligations to restore financial stability in public universities.

6.3 Institution's initiatives to support the BETA agenda in research and innovation as well as accreditation of academic programmes

- i) That, accreditation of various academic programmes in various Universities should only be undertaken by the Commission for University Education (CUE) as provided in law and professional bodies should not undertake accreditation independently without the involvement of CUE. This will guard universities from the high cost associated with the accreditation process as well ease existing bottlenecks in the accreditation process;
- ii) That, the State Department for Higher Education, the State Department for Research and Development alongside the Universities to develop a framework and strategies to ensure that all innovations and research work are nurtured and midwived to being fully commercialized to support Universities growth as well as contribute towards economic growth and development.

SIGNED.....




DATE.....

21/12/2025

HON. JULIUS KIBIWOT MELLY, CBS, MP.

CHAIRPERSON, DEPARTMENTAL COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

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|  THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY PAPERS LAID | |
| DATE: 02 DEC 2025 | |
| DAY: TUESDAY | |
| TABLED BY: | Hon. JULIUS MELLY (CHAIRPERSON) |
| CLERK-AT THE-TABLE: | INZOPU MUNDUS |



REPUBLIC OF KENYA
THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY
13TH PARLIAMENT – FOURTH SESSION – 2025
DEPARTMENTAL COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

ADOPTION SCHEDULE

AGENDA: CONSIDERATION AND ADOPTION OF THE COMMITTEE REPORT
ON THE INSPECTION VISIT TO VARIOUS PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES ACROSS
ALL PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES

| NO. | NAME | SIGNATURE |
|-----|---|-----------|
| 1. | Hon. Julius Melly, MP Chairperson | |
| 2. | Hon. Eve Obara, MP Vice-Chairperson | |
| 3. | Hon. Dr. Christine Oduor Ombaka, MP Member | |
| 4. | Hon. Jerusha Momanyi, MP Member | |
| 5. | Hon. Abdul Haro, MP Member | |
| 6. | Hon. Mary Emaase, MP Member | |
| 7. | Hon. Clive Gisairo, MP member | |
| 8. | Hon. Dick Maungu MP Member | |
| 9. | Hon. Julius Taitumu M'Anaiba, MP Member | |
| 10. | Hon. Nabii Daraja, MP Member | |
| 11. | Hon Peter Orero, MP Member | |
| 12. | Hon. (Prof.) Phylis Bartoo, MP Member | |
| 13. | Hon. Rebecca Tonkei, MP Member | |
| 14. | Hon. Elijah Kururia, MP Member | |
| 15. | Hon. Joseph Makilap, MP Member | |