



NJALA UNIVERSITY MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

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The Public Relations Unit
Njala University

Email: rsesay@njala.edu.sl

+23276336213/+23230317197

Prof. Baimba Commits to Sustaining the Gains of the SPHEIR/AQHED - SL Project



Mr. Samuel Weeks, Director Project Coordinating Committee handing over critical project documents to the Acting Vice-Chancellor and Principal

Acting Vice-Chancellor and Principal, Njala University, Professor Andrew Baimba, has expressed his administration's commitment to supporting the gains of the SPHEIR/AQHED-SL Project during a courtesy call made by the Project Director, Samuel B. Weeks and the Project Coordinating Unit (PCU) members.

The team briefed the VC&P and his administration on the SPHEIR/AQHED-SL Project's outcomes and other critical issues such as the project components, critical milestones of the various clusters like the Njala University Agriculture Cluster, sustainability windows, and presented documents such as the Quality Assurance manual, the Pedagogy textbook, curriculum review template, the National Qualification Framework and such documents, validated and adopted by the Tertiary Education Commission as a blueprint for managing courses and programmes in all Higher Educational Institutions (HEIs) in Sierra Leone.

Professor Baimba commended members of the Project Implementation Taskforce of Njala University, disclosing that, though the institutions had worked in silos, the SPHEIR/AQHED Project was able to implement its visions and plans to completion.

'My administration will prioritise the areas of curriculum review, quality assurance, and pedagogy, and will fully utilise the documents presented by the Project Coordinating Unit (PCU),' the Acting Vice-Chancellor said.

He also praised the originators of the SPHEIR/AQHED Project in the persons of Professor Jonas Redwood-Sawyer of Fourah College, University of Sierra Leone, Professor Bashiru Mohamed Koroma of Njala University, and many others for such thoughtful initiative that had achieved landmark milestones in the history of higher education in Sierra Leone.



Members of the Njala University Administration and the Project Coordinating Committee (PCU)

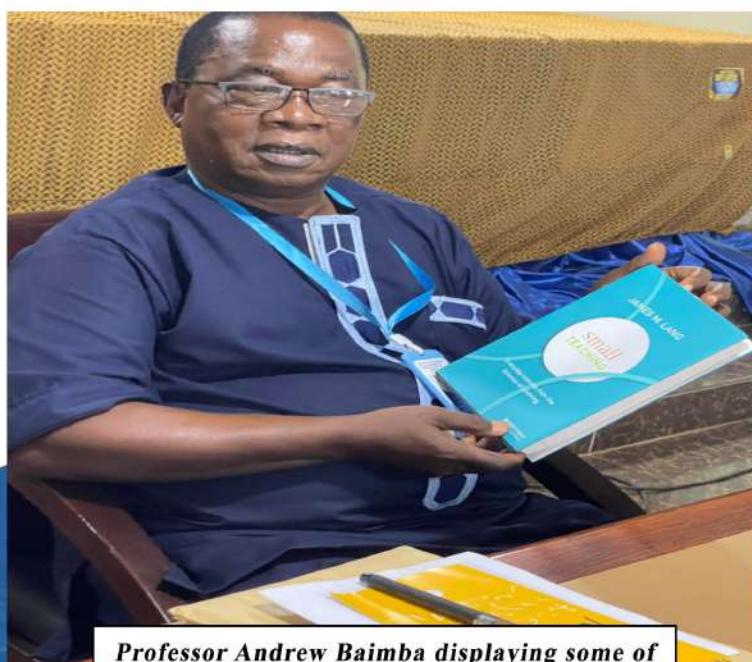
Mr Samuel Weeks told the Njala University Administration that the project's successes were largely possible due to teamwork and collaboration, which he said, was a glaring example of how institutions should work together to achieve a common cause. He highlighted how the PCU was impressed with the level of commitment from the various HEIs, notably Njala University, that adopted the project's four components in delivering the courses, programmes, and the curriculum review process across the lifetime of the project.

Project Cluster-Lead, Njala University, Professor Abdul Rahman Sesay, advocating for a follow-up proposal to address the gaps in the implementation of the deliverables of concluded SPHEIR/AQHED Project, thanked the administration for affording the team considerable leverage in participating in the project and commended the Project Implementation Taskforce for contributing meaningfully to the success of the project.

Professor Bashiru Mohamed Koroma described the SPHEIR/AQHED-SL as a baby of Njala University because of its important contribution to the establishment of the project and called on the University Administration to sustain the deliverables.

Professor Aliou Mohamed Bah, Dean School of Agriculture and Food Sciences, thanked the Project Coordinating Unit for reviewing the BSc. Agriculture General programme.

The SPHEIR/AQHED-SL project, launched because of the need to address issues around poor financing, limited training opportunities for staff members, aligning research infrastructure and the lack of effective quality management systems in HEIs, will officially come to an end in December 2021.



Professor Andrew Baimba displaying some of the project-documents

NJALA UNIVERSITY INDUCTS OVER 2000 STUDENTS FOR THE 2021/2022 ACADEMIC YEAR



Njala University inducted over two thousand students into the respective schools of the University for the 2021/2022 Academic Year.

The ceremony, which took place on the 15th, 16th and 17th November 2021, was held under the distinguished Grand Chief Patronage of the Acting Vice-Chancellor and Principal, Professor Andrew Baimba on both campuses of the University.

After the customary welcome address by the DVCs of both campuses, the Registrar and his deputies explaining the programme's overview and taking the students through the management and governance structure of the University, the Acting Vice-Chancellor and Principal admonished the students to manage what he referred to as their 'New Found Freedom' in the interest of themselves and the nation. He referred to Higher Education Institutions as refineries that transform raw materials into finished products for the job market.

The respective units of the University made similar presentations to the fresh students.

Njala University Deploys Mushroom Interns to District Headquarter Towns



A group photo of mushroom interns deployed to Pujehun

As part of the internship skills development exercise in the Mushroom Value Chain skills training, the Horticulture Department of the School of Natural Resources Management, Njala University, has deployed two hundred and eighty trainees to all the district headquarter towns in the country.

The project lead and head of the Horticulture Department revealed that interns would receive personal supervision from the various District Agricultural Officers in the preparation, processing, preservation and harvesting of mushrooms during the six-week internship programme.

Njala University is among sixty-seven institutions benefiting from the World Bank Skills Development Project/Ministry of Technical and Higher Education Grant to train vulnerable youth in the mushroom value chain. This grant has supported the development of the requisite infrastructure, including microbiology lab, spawn and compost laboratory facilities and equipment in the school. This project will make Njala University the hub of mushroom cultivation and training in Sierra Leone.

Njala University Inaugurates Bontech Transition Committee



A cross section of members of the Bontech Transition Committee during a visit to Bonthe

As provided for in the 2005 Universities Act, Njala University has officially instituted the Bonthe Technical Institute Transition Committee, which will see Bonthe Technical Institute become a campus of the University.

In 2008 the University administration established a task force to, among other functions, assess staffing, infrastructure and curricular related issues, resulting in the formation of the transition committee.

The committee is to engage relevant stakeholders, coordinate financial and other physical/material resources, and ensure the physical presence of Njala University in Bonthe by December 2021.

The Bonthe Sherbro Njala University Campus will host the School of Maritime Studies, the School of Sustainable Tourism and Hospitality Management; the Centres of Entrepreneurship and Vocational Studies; and Educational Studies offering degrees at the diploma, bachelor's, and master's levels in specific disciplines, and offer short courses in Maritime, Sustainable Tourism and Hospitality Management, Entrepreneurship and Vocational Studies and Educational studies as it used to be provided by the erstwhile BONTECH.

School of Technology Champions the Adoption of the SPHEIR/AQHED Syllabus Template

The Departments of Agricultural Engineering and Industrial Technology of the School of Technology has, on Thursday 4th November 2021, held a workshop to adopt the Strategic Partnership for Higher Education, Innovation and Reform (SPHEIR) syllabus template.

The Critical Thinking Officer of the project, Ms Georgiana Alie, a lecturer at the School of Technology, disclosed the need to align the course contents of various departments of the University with the syllabus template.

The rationale, according to her, was to develop outcome-based teaching that would put the students at the centre and provide for sound and measurable teaching outcomes.

The head of Agricultural Engineering, Dr Mathew Blango, expressed that such a workshop would refresh his staff to effective teaching and learning. He underscored the enormous challenges of undertaking practical sessions with students primarily due to the unavailability of the requisite teaching facilities.



A photo of staff members in the School of Technology who benefited from the training

The workshop trained the staff in pedagogy, writing educational objectives, formal assessment of learning and related skills.

The Strategic Partnership for Higher Education Innovation and Reform (SPHEIR) is a UK funded project implementing the Assuring Quality in Higher Education in Sierra Leone (AQHed-SL).

Parliament Enacts Students' Loan Scheme Fund Act, 2021



Professor Alpha Tejan Wurie,
Minister of Technical and Higher Education

The Parliament of Sierra Leone has passed the Bill entitled: 'The Students' Loan Scheme Fund Act, 2021' to provide financial assistance to students to increase higher education enrolment in Sierra Leoneans.

Being an Act that seeks to complement the Government Grant-in-Aid (GIA), the Students' Loan Scheme would allow tertiary institutions to get their resources at the start of the academic term and trigger quality assurance that will empower students to take full responsibility for their education.

The Minister, Technical and Higher Education, told Members of Parliament that the increase in the number of students at tertiary institutions significantly depended on the Grant-in-Aid (GIA). The reason the government had considered the Loan Scheme as an alternative mode of funding tertiary education.

'The scheme will initially start with tuition support but expand to books, research, field trips, accommodation, and lodging,' the minister concluded.

OBITUARY



The Death is reported of **Mr. Mory Kemoh Tarawally,** Former Employee attached to the University Total Filling Station, Njala Campus, Njala University. This sad event took place on Wednesday 13th October 2021.