



CHANCELLOR BAILS OUT NEEDY STUDENTS



Dr. Lazarus Chakwera, President of the Republic of Malawi and Chancellor of MZUNI (left) handing over a dummy cheque to Vice-Chancellor Professor Wales Singini

Mzuzu University (MZUNI) Vice-Chancellor, Professor Wales Singini, has expressed his gratitude to Dr. Lazarus McCarthy Chakwera, President of the Republic of Malawi and Chancellor of Mzuzu University, for his commitment to supporting needy students through the Presidential Charity Initiative.

On 17th April 2025, MZUNI was among the public universities that received K50 million each aimed at supporting underprivileged students in their academic pursuits.

"This initiative has been key in enabling many deserving students to access higher education. The Chancellor's exemplary gesture not only alleviates financial burdens but also inspires us all to enhance our efforts in supporting these students further," said Professor Singini.

Launched in 2022, the Presidential Charity Initiative is aimed at mobilising resources for underprivileged students and communities affected by natural disasters, reinforcing a collective commitment to education and resilience in times of crises.

MZUNI COMMITTED TO INCREASE ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION



Vice-Chancellor and training participants pose for a group photograph

MZUNI is committed to increase access to higher education as one way of actualising the Mw2063 through the provision of online and distance learning programmes.

Speaking on Monday 14th April 2025, when he opened training for Open, Distance and e-Learning (ODEL) for members of staff, Vice-Chancellor Professor Wales Singini said the trends in modern and higher education in most universities is shifting to ODEL mode of delivery.

"Due to its mode of delivery, ODEL is popular and it is the reason for high enrolment in most universities in the world. The University can afford to enrol more students without being restricted by physical infrastructure. More importantly, we have ODEL centres in Karonga, Balaka, Lilongwe and Mulanje which provide support to students from all districts in Malawi," he said.

Professor Singini encouraged the facilitators who participated in the training to continue supporting the students.

"I have some positive feedback from the students who find the delivery mode flexible. A lot of students are working but also are able to attend classes and this is possible because of the commitment of the facilitators at MZUNI," he said.

The training covered the following areas: Instructional design for online courses, course structure and organization, creating and integrating learning materials, assessment and feedback in ODEL, using digital tools for engagement, and creating and marking assignments.

MZUNI RECEIVES INTERNATIONAL AWARD



Dr. Mavuto Tembo

Mzuzu University alumnus Dr. Elias Gaveta and Director of African Centre of Excellence in Neglected and Underutilised Biodiversity (ACENUB) Dr. Mavuto Tembo have been awarded for their study Impact of Climate Variability on Child and Maternal Wasting among Smallholder Farming Communities in Malawi.

The two are award winners for The International Journal of Climate Change: Impacts and Responses Journal Volume 17.

Gaveta said he was excited to have contributed to this important study.



Dr. Elias Gaveta

"I am excited to be part of this study and the recognition testifies that great work and research being done at MZUNI," he said.

Dr. Tembo said the award recognises outstanding contributions to climate change research that bridge knowledge gaps and drive actionable solutions.

"The study contributes to the growing global recognition of research that addresses the intersection of climate change and human health, particularly for farming communities," he said.

The study examines the impact of climate variability on undernutrition, specifically on the severity, trends, and seasonality of wasting, a crucial aspect of undernutrition, among children and mothers in rural Malawi.

Various statistical methods were utilised to assess and analyse trends, seasonality, and correlations between climatic factors and wasting occurrences from January 2011 to December 2018.

Although no significant trend changes were observed in climate variables, a notable increase in wasting cases over time, particularly during wet seasons, indicates a heightened susceptibility to climate-related stressors.

While temperature and rainfall exhibit weak correlations with wasting, regression analyses reveal a significant influence of these factors on moderate child wasting and maternal wasting but not on severe child wasting.

The findings underscore the persistent challenge of wasting, highlighting vulnerabilities within the population even under relatively stable weather conditions. This emphasizes the urgency for integrated climate-smart nutrition programs, targeted health interventions, and policy support to address malnutrition.

Enhancing the resilience of rural farming communities in the face of climate change is imperative to improve nutritional outcomes and overall resilience to its effects. The study's insights contribute to understanding the complex interplay between climate variability and malnutrition, advocating for multifaceted strategies to combat the adverse effects of climate change on vulnerable populations.

Climate Change: Impacts and Responses is a peer-reviewed journal published by the Common Ground Research Networks (CGRN), an academic organisation based at the University of Illinois, USA, that promotes interdisciplinary research and global knowledge exchange.

MZUNI AND MEGA DONATE PRESSURECOOKERS TO MJ COMMUNITIES



Mwale (left) handing over a cooker to one of the beneficiaries flanked by MEGA officials

Mzuzu University (MZUNI) and Mega Limited have donated pressure cookers to 94 households in the area of T/A Sunganinzeru in Mulanje.

Mega Limited's Operations Manager Samuel Mambo said they donated to pressure cookers to promote use of clean energy.

“ Pressure cookers significantly decrease cooking times by cooking food at higher temperatures. Pressure cookers retain heat and moisture and they require less energy compared to conventional cooking methods,” he said. ”

Mulanje District Council Director of Agricultural Services Osmond Chapotoka hailed the partners for the plan and the donation saying it will significantly help in protecting the environment especially trees.

MZUNI Lecturer in the Department of Energy Studies, Vincent Mwale said the provision of the pressure cookers is part of the institution's social responsibility adding that the country needs to promote use of energy from sources that are environmental friendly.

The items were made available with financial support from Loughborough University of United Kingdom.

ACENUB PARTICIPATES IN ACE'S 10TH ANNIVERSARY



Researchers, policymakers, industry experts, development partners and higher education leaders gathered in Accra, Ghana for a three-day celebration from April 7-9, 2025 marking the tenth anniversary of the African Centres of Excellence.

The celebration of this key milestone was marked by the presence of His Excellency John Mahama Dramani, the President of the Republic Ghana, who presided over the opening ceremony.

“The ACE Programme has emerged as a model of distinction, fostering innovation, nurturing world-class expertise, and strengthening

institutional capacities in critical sectors,” said Mahama adding that the ACE journey was a reminder that the future of higher education in Africa lied in uniting the efforts to unlock talent, transfer knowledge, and build a resilient workforce to drive sustainable development across Africa.

The African Centre of Excellence in Neglected and Underutilised Biodiversity (ACENUB) participated in the celebrations represented by MZUNI Deputy Vice-Chancellor Professor Wapulumuka Mulwafu, ACENUB Director Dr. Mavuto Tembo and Environmental and Social Safeguards Coordinator Dr. Elijah Wanda.

In an interview, Professor Mulwafu said the demand for research-led solutions, skilled professionals, and regionally relevant innovations continues to grow across the continent.

“Our university, through ACENUB, is working tirelessly to align academic work with national and regional

development goals. With the partnerships that the University has established, we are positioning ourselves to remain relevant in the research and innovation space,” he said.

The three-day event was co-organised by the government of Ghana, the Association of African Universities, and the Inter-University Council for East Africa, in collaboration with the World Bank.

This milestone recognises a decade of strengthening Africa’s higher education, fostering regional integration, improving industry linkages and driving meaningful impact on Africa’s development. Participants will seize the opportunity to share success stories, discuss emerging challenges, and engage stakeholders in charting a future where Africa’s higher education sector continues to build on its current gains and scales its contributions to the continent’s economic growth and social development.

ACENUB ENGAGES STAKEHOLDERS



ACENUB engaged stakeholders during the Community Action Research Project for Enterprise (CARP-E) Needs Assessment Validation Meeting at Chatonda, Mzuzu on Thursday, 16th April, 2025.

Speaking at the meeting, ACEBUB Director Dr. Mavuto Tembo said the project aims at addressing the needs and constraints of specific community groups, including the youth, women, farmers, and consumers.

“We have established a robust network. Successful businesses thrive on such connections. The wealth generated by these networks should be converted into tangible benefits and we are here to support your innovations,” Dr. Tembo said.

The cooperatives and stakeholders that attended the meeting were Doroba COMSIP Cooperative, Lusangazi Dairly Farmers’ Cooperative, Mpharayi Producers

and Marketing Society Limited, Lunyangwa Club, Muelalumbo Farmers and Marketing Cooperative Society, Kwithu Kitchen, Department of Agriculture and Malawi Bureau of Standards.

ACENUB’s CARP-E is a platform for fostering innovation, nurturing start-ups and mentoring the start-ups, accelerating their growth, providing business planning support, access to seed capital, industry partners, trainings and other relevant components required for encouraging innovative start-ups.

The project seeks to develop innovative, community-driven solutions to address value chain constraints in agri-food and nutrition systems, support the creation and scaling up of enterprises focused on underutilised biodiversity and sustainable agriculture, and provide targeted business development services to accelerate innovation and market readiness.

MZUNI SUPPORTS DMI-ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST UNIVERSITY



DMI's Acting Registrar Backster Makungwa interacts with MZUNI Registrar Yonamu Ngwira

MZUNI's Faculty of Health Sciences has supported DMI-St. John the Baptist University (DMI) in benchmarking Bachelor of Science in Public Health programme. DMI's Acting Registrar Backster Makungwa said he was grateful to MZUNI for the valuable insights.

"We discussed key areas such as curriculum design, academic quality assurance, assessment strategies, and faculty development which provided us with essential guidance as we develop our own programme," he said.

Makungwa said the benchmarking exercise is very important in upholding excellence in education. "We conducted the exercise to enhance the programme's effectiveness in key areas. We hold

MZUNI's Public Health Programme in high esteem and we believe the insights and experience would be invaluable to the development of our curriculum," he said.

The Dean of Faculty of Health Sciences Dr. Ellemes Phuma said collaboration with other institutions is important because it validates the relevance of the programmes offered.

"As much as we provided the information DMI was looking for, we also learnt a lot from them which is very important in improving our programmes. Such exercises give us an opportunity to know where we stand and the feedback from other important stakeholders is very important," she said.

Earlier, DMI-Registrar met with MZUNI Registrar Yonamu Ngwira to discuss the universities' strategic vision and to prioritize strengthened collaboration on academic programmes.



EVENTS AND UPDATES



MZUNI wishes to congratulate the new members of staff, newly appointed Deans and Heads of Department as follows:

a. New Members of Staff:

S/N	Name	Position	Department	Date of Appointment
1	Faith Mwangonde	Research Ethics Administrator	Directorate of Research	4 th March, 2025
2	Charles Maluwa	Materials Production Specialist	Administration	4 th April, 2025

b. Deanship:

S/N	Name	Position	Faculty	Date of Appointment
1	Dr. Precious Madula	Dean	Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences	1 st April, 2025
2	Dr. Brighton Chunga	Dean	Faculty of Environmental Sciences	1 st April, 2025
3	Dr. Joshua Kumwenda	Deputy Dean	Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences	1 st April, 2025
4	Dr. Kumbukani Mzengereza	Deputy Dean	Faculty of Environmental Sciences	1 st April, 2025

c. Headship:

S/N	Name	Position	Department	Date of Appointment
1	Dr. Chimango Nyasulu	Head of Department	Information and Communication Technology	1 st April, 2025
2	Dr. Benjamin Kondowe	Head of Department	Fisheries and Aquatic Science	1 st April, 2025
3	Mr. Wilson Banda	Head of Department	Hospitality	1 st April, 2025
4	Mr. Kennedy Masamba	Head of Department	Forestry and Environmental Management	1 st April, 2025
5	Mr. Willy Chipeta	Head of Department	Water and Sanitation	1 st April, 2025