



# UF NEWS

A NEWSLETTER OF THE UNIVERSITIES FUND



## INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY 2023

March is regarded as a significant month in Women's History. On 8th March every year, the world takes a moment to reflect, recognize and celebrate the social, economic, cultural, and political achievements of women around the world. The International Women's Day week was expanded to a full month in 1987 after Congress passed a resolution designating March as Women's History Month, which is celebrated as International Women's Day (IWD) on the 8th of March every year, since the 1900s.

This year's global theme for IWD is "Embrace Equity," emphasizing the need to challenge gender bias and inequality and create inclusive workplaces that support women's advancement.

The United Nations' theme for the year is "DigitALL: Innovation and technology for gender equality," highlighting the role of technology in advancing gender equality.

The Universities Fund (UF) celebrated the day and reaffirmed our commitment to gender mainstreaming in all our operations, with a focus on providing a work environment that caters to the needs of all employees, promoting equal opportunities, fostering a culture of gender equality and inclusion, increasing staff awareness on gender, and preventing and responding to gender-based violence and sexual harassment in the workplace.

The UF has developed a gender-responsive infrastructure, gender-balanced committees, affirmative action in recruitment and selection, equal training and career development opportunities, and the implementation of anti-sexual harassment policies.

We recognise the priceless contributions of women in the education sector and beyond and pledge to continue supporting their advancement, as we call on all stakeholders to join us in creating a gender-inclusive world. Together, let us choose to challenge gender bias and inequality and promote gender equality and inclusion for all.

## CORPORATE SOCIAL INVESTMENT

The Universities Fund (UF) staff visited Kayole South Secondary School on the 11th March 2023, which was a career day for the school. During the visit, the students were encouraged to put their best foot forward and excel in their studies in order to join the Universities and be part of the beneficiaries of the funds issued to grant students through the university.

We issued students 250 geometrical sets and our branded pens. The geometrical sets are a requirement when sitting for the KCSE exams, and the students were encouraged to keep them well as they await the examinations, later in the year. We later engaged the students in 10 general questions, where we awarded those who answered the questions correctly. This session was quite engaging as the students battled to share the correct answers and walk away with our branded books.

The school management was quite happy with our presence and the support offered to the students and invited us to visit the school again to keep encouraging the students, while the students promised to excel in their studies.



### HESLB'S BENCHMARKING VISIT

Universities Fund in partnership with Higher Education Loans Board (HELB) hosted a delegation of the Higher Education Students Loans Board (HESLB) from Tanzania on Friday, March 3rd, 2023. The HESLB team was in the country for a benchmarking mission, on the financing of higher education in Kenya. The discussions were about best practices in the Eastern Africa region on innovative and sustainable ways of financing public universities.

To equip the team with the needed information on matters financing higher education, the Universities Fund team made a presentation for the HESLB team on the current higher education funding status, just to elucidate how and what the Kenyan government is doing in financing higher education, the challenges faced and opportunities in place, alternative sources of funding for universities in Kenya and the future recommendations on how innovatively higher education can be financed sustainably through commercialisation of research, centers of excellence and need-based funding among others factors.





### GLOBAL EMPLOYMENT CHALLENGE

On 14th March 2023, the Universities Fund (UF) organised a networking breakfast session for some Vice Chancellors (VCs) and the team from Intern-Match global employment challenge. The discussion was centered around skills match and international employment opportunities through internships abroad, for Kenyan graduates, who are talented and have the desire to contribute to the global workforce.

According to the Global Employment Challenge, the internship program aims to create 10 million jobs by 2035. Kenyan Universities are encouraged to take advantage of this opportunity. Youth unemployment is a pressing issue that affects millions of young

people around the world and Kenya is no exception. The Global Employment Challenge's mission is to place 10 million African graduates into the international job market by 2035.

With a rapidly growing population and a youthful demographic, Africa offers a wealth of untapped human potential, making it an ideal destination for companies looking to scale talent and do so cost-effectively.

Expected outcomes of participating in the Global Employment Challenge are increased job opportunities, improved employability and economic prospects for young people, and enhanced collaboration between businesses, government, private sector and civil society groups among others.

