



Universities Fund Hosts Training Workshop on Centralised Database Returns Portal



Universities Fund and stakeholders during the sensitisation workshop on the new Data Returns Portal at Lake Naivasha Resort on June 18, 2025.

The Universities Fund hosted a training workshop on the use of the newly-developed Data Returns Portal.

The two-day workshop targeted registrars, finance, and ICT officers from 79 local universities.

The portal is a centralised digital platform designed to improve data submission, data management, and enhance accuracy and transparency. It replaces the manual data submission process.

Speaking during the event at Lake Naivasha Resort on June 18, Universities Fund acting Chief Executive Officer Dr Edwin Wanyonyi explained that universities currently submit data every semester to the Fund manually using spreadsheets — a method prone to inconsistencies, delays, and errors.

“One of the biggest challenges we have faced is the inconsistency in data formats submitted by universities — often leading to delays in verifying student enrolment and releasing funds,” Dr Wanyonyi said.

“The new portal is a game-changer. It ensures we are all working within the same environment, enabling quicker data validation, timely disbursements, and greater transparency.”

The training workshop precedes the opening of the Higher Education Financing (HEF) portal for application of scholarships, bursaries, and loans by students joining both public and private universities.

Dr Wanyonyi added that the new system will also improve tracking of student transfers, deferments, and course changes:

“Transfers happen in different forms — within

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Over 150,000 Varsity Students to Seek Funding

More than 150,000 students are expected to apply for government scholarships after qualifying for placement in public universities.

Education Cabinet Secretary Julius Ogamba said that 965,501 candidates, out of whom 950,711 were Kenyans, sat the 2024 Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE) examination.

Mr Ogamba said that 244,563 of the Kenyans that sat the examination attained a mean grade of C+ and above, hence qualified for admission to degree programmes, while 706,148 qualified for placement to Technical and Vocational Training (TVET) programmes.

Of the students who qualified for degree programmes, 201,695 – an equivalent of 83 percent – applied for placement to various levels, with 194,372 (80 percent) being placed to different programmes.

“I am happy to report that this process has been concluded seamlessly and without any technical hitches,” he said Mr Ogamba said during a press conference in Nairobi on July 1.

He added: “The seamless process is attributable to investments in technological upgrades that have ensured a smooth process.”

Mr Ogamba added that higher learning institutions have a collective capacity of 986,137 slots, enough to absorb all the students who sat the examination between years 2000 and 2024.

He announced that the Kenya Universities and Colleges Central Placement Service (KUCCPS) had adopted a phased placement approach that saw students enrol in Kenya Medical Training College (KMTTC), polytechnics and other public TVET institutions in the March and May 2025 intakes.



Education Cabinet Secretary Julius Ogamba releases placement results for 2024 KCSE cohort in Nairobi on July 1, 2025.

The exercise saw 93,207 applicants placed in government TVET institutions.

The second phase, he said, targeted placement of students in universities and teacher training colleges for the September 2025 intake.

KUCCPS has placed 310,502 students who completed Form Four last year and previous years to various programmes in universities and colleges.

“We also opened new teacher training colleges (TTCs) in northern Kenya. All these efforts are geared towards expanding students’ choices in higher education and training options,” he stated.

In the 2023 examination, 201,073 students scored a mean grade of C+ and above, and therefore qualified for enrolment in degree courses in public universities.

The remaining 694,231 were eligible for placement in TVET institutions, TTCs and KMTTC campuses.

He appealed to students to apply for placement, underscoring the government’s resolve to enhance access to quality education.

“The Kenya Kwanza administration is committed to expanding training opportunities so that the youth can acquire skills necessary for the realisation of BETA.”

CEO's Baraza: Open Forum Creates Opportunity for Staff to Reflect on Successes, Re-strategise

On 9th June 2025, Universities Fund staff convened for the CEO's Baraza, an open and engaging forum led by the acting Chief Executive Officer, Dr Edwin Wanyonyi.

The session provided an opportunity for the staff to reflect on the Fund's milestones, align strategic priorities, and reaffirm their shared commitment to driving change in higher education financing.

The meeting encouraged conversations, cross-departmental feedback, and strategic alignment as the Fund implements its mandate.

Staff shared insights, raised emerging issues, and explored collaborative approaches to improving service delivery and institutional impact.

One of the highlights of the meeting was the recognition of the Biennial Conference Organising Committee.

The committee members were awarded certificates of appreciation, acknowledging their contribution in delivering the successful

Second Biennial Universities Funding Conference held from February 26-27 this year.

The event, which brought together key stakeholders in higher education, was lauded for its impact, organisation, and relevance in shaping policy dialogue.

The meeting closed on a high note, with renewed energy across the team to advance the organisation's vision and uphold its values of service, excellence, and integrity.



UF acting CEO Dr Edwin Wanyonyi, on June 9, 2025, leads staff in reflecting on their progress in achieving the organisation's mandate.

Fund Conducts Fire Drill to Bolster Preparedness

The Universities Fund conducted a fire drill as part of its ongoing commitment to workplace safety and emergency preparedness.

The exercise - carried out on June 9 - was coordinated by the Human Resource and Information, Communication, and Technology teams.

The fire drill aimed to test and strengthen the Fund's emergency response protocols and ensure staff readiness during an emergency.

Immediately after the fire alarm was activated, staff left their workstations and proceeded to the designated exit points.

A roll call was taken before the final

evacuation, and all staff safely gathered at the official fire assembly point at Jeevanjee Gardens.

The drill demonstrated effective coordination, staff responsiveness, and adherence to evacuation procedures.

The exercise, which was a huge success, reinforced the importance of safety awareness, and highlighted the organisation's proactive approach to maintaining a secure working environment.

Fire drills help reduce panic and confusion during an evacuation, promote teamwork, and enable the organisations identify weaknesses and areas that need improvement in the emergency plan.

COLLABORATION

The **success** of our Strategic Plan relies on the collaboration of all stakeholders. We **invite partners** from various sectors to join us in shaping the future of higher education in Kenya!



Training on New Centralised Portal to Improve Student Data Management and Transparency

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faculties or between universities. This portal allows us to verify such changes quickly, eliminating tedious manual checks and unnecessary refund requests. It significantly reduces the cycle time for disbursements,” he explained.

Dr Richard Ngali, Head of Grants Management, underscored the transformative nature of the system, particularly in improving operational efficiency and accountability.

He said: “Receiving 79 Excel sheets every semester created massive inefficiencies, security concerns, and the risk of data errors.”

“The new portal is a secure, standardised platform that will eliminate these risks while enhancing accuracy in disbursing funds to the right students and universities,” he said.

He also highlighted the platform’s self-service capabilities:

“Universities will now be able to access payment schedules, student statements, and real-time funding updates directly from their dashboard. This one-stop-shop approach will drastically reduce the physical enquiries we receive, both from institutions and students.”

Ms Leah Miano, Head of Information and Communication Technology, spoke on the significance of this digital transition for both operational efficiency and compliance.

“Today marks a great day for us at Universities Fund, in line with our digital transformation agenda. The institutional portal automates the previously manual Excel-based process,” she said.

“This shift not only enhances data accuracy and reliability, but also aligns with the Data Protection Act, ensuring that the personal data of students is handled securely and responsibly.”

She added that the portal will support registrars and finance officers by offering a streamlined way to upload and manage student data, which directly informs funding decisions.

The workshop brought together stakeholders for hands-on training, portal testing, and direct engagement with the Fund’s technical team.

It followed earlier virtual trials with pilot universities, and marks a significant step forward in the Fund’s digital transformation journey.