



UF Hosts Roundtable Meeting on Bolstering Partnerships, Resource Mobilisation

The Universities Fund provided scholarships to 575,315 students in the 2024/2025 financial year.

However, a KES 9 billion funding shortfall poses a significant threat to the full implementation of student scholarships nationwide.

This was revealed during a donor and partner roundtable held on May 20, 2025, aimed at forging strategic partnerships to support sustainable, inclusive, and equitable financing for higher education in Kenya.

“The pressure is quite high. Government resources are limited, leading to significant challenges in meeting the resource requirements. We need to mobilise resources from all our partners to fund our activities. Our resource gap exceeds KES 9 billion,” said acting Universities Fund Chief Executive Officer Dr Edwin Wanyonyi.

He said that UF provides scholarships to



299,389 students were supported through the DUC model, while 275,926 benefitted from the New Funding Model

Acting CEO, Dr Edwin Wanyonyi



Universities Fund acting Chief Executive Officer Dr Edwin Wanyonyi addresses partners during a roundtable event in Nairobi in May 2025.

students under the New Funding Model (NFM).

And for the model to be effective and equitable, he said, the Fund needs to mobilise resources to sustain it.

The roundtable came at a crucial moment, just weeks after the national roll-out of Competency-Based Education and Training (CBET), which is expected to substantially increase university enrolment and place further strain on an already burdened funding system.

In her address, Secretary for Higher Education and Research Dr Carol Hunja, underscored the urgency of closing the university funding gap and modernising both financial and structural systems in higher education.

“The reality is that some of our universities are already in debt. With CBET, student numbers will continue to rise. We must urgently find sustainable ways to bridge the university funding gap,” she said.

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Staff Receive Data Protection Awareness Training



Universities Fund acting Chief Executive Officer Dr Edwin Wanyonyi (front, centre) with other participants during a training held from May 26-30, 2025 in Nairobi.

The Universities Fund in partnership with the Kenya School of Government hosted a week-long training to enhance compliance with data protection laws and best practices.

The training ran from May 26 - 30, drawing internal staff and key stakeholders who deepened their understanding of the Data Protection Act, 2019.

The participants were engaged in sessions covering the principles and obligations of personal data protection that included rights of data subjects, obligations of data controllers and processors, data protection safeguards, exemptions and considerations, and enforcement and penalties.

The staff were also taken through the emerging issues in data protection and how to navigate them to ensure compliance and conformity. Issues ranging from cybersecurity, digital identities, and ethics of artificial intelligence to data analytics were covered.

“This training has equipped us with not only the legal and regulatory knowledge required but also practical tools to enhance compliance and ethical data management,” a participant said.

The capacity building exercise also incorporated session on life skills and action planning, which will help the staff navigate the demands of data protection laws and create actionable steps for applying the training in their day-to-day operations.

UF Acting Chief Executive Officer Dr Edwin Wanyonyi affirmed the organisation’s commitment to data privacy and institutional integrity.

As the data landscape continues to evolve, the Fund remains committed to ensuring robust, secure, and transparent data practices across all operations.

Universities Fund Hosts Zambian Delegation on Benchmarking Tour



Universities Fund acting Chief Executive Officer Dr Edwin Wanyonyi (front, centre) with other participants during a training held from May 26-30, 2025 in Nairobi.

The Universities Fund hosted a high-level delegation from Zambia’s Ministry of Education on a benchmarking tour.

The team, which comprised officials from the Higher Education Loans and Scholarships

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Nationwide Campaign to Address Data Accuracy

The Universities Fund mounted a comprehensive data validation exercise across local universities in a bid to improve data accuracy.

The initiative is a concrete effort towards ensuring integrity of student and institutional data, which are critical in facilitating effective decision-making and equitable allocation of funds.

The exercise is being spearheaded by the Grants Management team, which has so far visited more than 40 universities. Working collaboratively with institutional administrators and data officers, the team is reviewing, verifying, and harmonising records on student enrolment, academic programmes, and funding eligibility.

The ongoing exercise is part of the Fund's broader commitment to promoting transparency and accountability in the implementation of the New Higher Education Funding Model.

By strengthening data systems and closing information gaps, the exercise enhances the reliability of funding decisions and the overall efficiency of grants management.

Beyond validation, the engagement also provides an opportunity for continuous learning and constructive feedback from institutions, reinforcing the Fund's approach to partnership and continuous improvement in service delivery.

The activity will continue for several weeks, and a report will be developed to inform funding interventions and policy refinements.



Daystar University Vice-Chancellor Prof, Laban Ayiro with Mercy Gikonyo from Universities Fund during a data validation exercise in May this year.

Bolstering Enterprise Risk Governance Capacity

A section of Universities Fund staff was trained on Enterprise Risk Management (ERM) capacity to help them align institutional practices with international standards.

The retooling took place from 12-16 May in Machakos and targeted members of the risk champions department, enabling them understand how to comply with the demands of global risk standards such as ISO 31000:2018 and COSO ERM framework.

The training followed a similar session held for the Risk Management Committee (RMC) from 6 -8 May, which focused on strengthening oversight and strategic risk leadership at the

governance level.

The staff took part in interactive sessions and hands-on exercises on risk identification, assessment, reporting, and integration of Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) considerations into planning.

By the end of the training, each risk champion was expected to submit updated departmental risk registers, demonstrate residual risk monitoring, and serve as departmental liaison for risk awareness and mitigation.

The training is part of the Fund's strategy of fostering accountability, proactive risk management.

Promoting National Cohesion Top UF Priority

The Universities Fund Committee on National Cohesion participated in a five-day training workshop aimed at promoting the reporting of national cohesion and values and principles of governance as outlined in the Constitution.

The event was organised by the Directorate of National Cohesion and Values under the Executive Office of the President. It took place from May 26-30.

The sessions covered vital areas such as performance contracting on national values, strategies for mainstreaming cohesion in institutional practices, and drafting of the '2024/2025 Annual President's Report on National Values'.

The workshop also provided space for validating key targets and commitments to strengthen the Fund's alignment with the national cohesion agenda.

Universities Fund Hosts Zambian Delegation on Benchmarking Tour

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Fund (HELSEF), were benchmarking on ways of strengthening higher education financing mechanisms and administrative best practices.

Universities Fund acting Chief Executive Officer Dr Edwin Wanyonyi welcomed the team and reaffirmed Kenya's commitment to regional collaboration in advancing sustainable higher education.

The teams shared strategic insights across several areas, including implementation of DUC model, NFM, and ongoing reforms to improve access to education.

They also discussed challenges and innovative approaches to student financing, governance structures, and public-sector coordination.

The two agencies expressed interest in setting up a structure for mutual collaboration, capacity-building, and data-driven policy formulation.

Fund Hosts Roundtable on Resource Mobilisation

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Dr Hunja addressed the limitations of the existing funding model, where the government is expected to contribute 80% and parents or sponsors cover the remaining 20%.

"We need to be fair. While we advocate for affordable university education, the reality is that sustaining a student on the KES 16,000 annual fee under DUC is no longer viable under today's economic circumstances," Dr Hunja.

She reiterated that while NFM is viable, its sustainability depends on consistent and strategic resource mobilisation without disproportionately burdening families or the state.

Dr. Hunja also spoke to the transformative

impact of CBET on higher education and the need for institutions to evolve in tandem.

"A medical degree cannot be costed the same as a Bachelor of Arts. Funding should be based on actual operational costs, what it takes to deliver a programme, provide services, and maintain academic quality."

She called for innovation, collaboration, and a shared commitment to building a financially stable and forward-looking sector.

The stakeholders included African Development Fund, British Council, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), KNATCOM, and (NETFUND).