



# THE OASIS NEWSLETTER

A Publication from the Office of the Vice-Chancellor

## ADMINISTRATION BLOCK



*Project members pose for a group photo alongside staff and student representatives.*

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## PEELING BACK THE MASK OF GAMBLING HARMS IN KENYAN UNIVERSITIES



*Mr. Gregory Juma, the Project Principal Investigator makes a presentation.*

**G**ambling is a reality in many societies across the globe, Kenya included. In a bid to address the often-overlooked issue of gambling harms among vulnerable populations in Kenyan public universities, a team of researchers from the School of Education, Humanities and Social Sciences (SEHSS), led by Mr. Gregory Jumah, has recently secured a significant research grant towards their project entitled “Identification of and Intervention in Gambling Effects Among Vulnerable Groups in

Public Universities in Kenya (GEPU)” from the esteemed Bristol Hub for Gambling Harms Research domiciled in Bristol University, United Kingdom (UK).

The research team, together with a host of stakeholders, convened for an inception workshop on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of February, 2024 in the EACII. This gathering served as a platform for brainstorming, strategizing, and laying the groundwork for the research ahead. Against a backdrop of palpating anticipation and determination, Mr.

Jumah and his colleagues outlined, blow by blow, the objectives and methodological constructs of their envisioned investigative journey.

At the core of the GEPU project is identifying and understanding the vulnerabilities that predispose certain groups to harmful gambling behaviors. Persons with Disabilities, lower grade university employees, and students from disadvantaged socioeconomic backgrounds have been pinpointed as particularly at risk. By delving into the motivational

factors driving these individuals into harmful gambling, the researchers aim to uncover the root causes of the practice.

Utilizing a comprehensive approach, the study will administer a variety of research tools including questionnaires, Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), and interview schedules in their collection of both qualitative and quantitative data which, it is hoped, will provide a nuanced understanding of the impact of gambling harms on vulnerable groups within Kenyan universities.

Over and above mere identification, the GEPU

project seeks to demonstrate the gravity of gambling harms among students and staff within public universities in Kenya. . Armed with empirical evidence, the researchers aim to advocate for the establishment of counseling sessions tailored specifically for affected students, staff, and parents/guardians. These sessions will serve as vital support systems, offering guidance and assistance to those grappling with adverse effects of gambling. In addition, one of the earmarked research outcomes is to develop a policy paper on gambling. Such a move bears the potential of integrating gambling education in the

university curriculum to forestall gambling harms.

As the project unfolds, collaboration will be key. Mr. Jumah and his team are poised to work closely with stakeholders within the university community, including administrators, counselors, and student representatives. By fostering partnerships and engaging in dialogue, they hope to foster a culture of awareness, prevention, and intervention surrounding gambling harms. As they embark on this transformative journey, they carry with them the hope of building a safer and more inclusive academic environment for all.



*Project members Prof. Joseph Bosire(left), Dr. Ruth Otienoh and Prof. Charles Omoke listen in during the session.*

# BEYOND THE TRY LINE: EXPLORING THE HEART OF RUGBY AT JARAMOGI OGINGA ODINGA UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

By Beckon Wafula, Student SIIS



*JOOUST RFC tackle Siaya RFC*

**R**ugby as a game may have its cradle in Rugby, Warwickshire, England in the mid-1840s but today, at JOOUST, rugby isn't just a sport; it's a way of life. Captain Dohald Omondi and his assistant, Shitote Ezra, both embody the spirit of determination and camaraderie that typifies the university's rugby team's indefatigable spirit. Leading from the front, Captain Omondi's strategic prowess

on the field and Shitote's unwavering support have become the driving force behind the team's success.

As the university participates in the Nationwide Rugby League, the Jaramogi Warriors showcase their tenacity against formidable opponents. The league becomes a stage where the team's skills are put to test, and the dedication to the sport becomes more than just a game. Each match is

a testament to the hours of training, teamwork, and the unyielding spirit spelt by the mantra 'if it doesn't challenge you, it won't change you' which defines JOOUST's rugby culture.

Beyond the try line, the university's rugby program extends its impact into the community. Through outreach initiatives and rugby clinics, BONDORUGBY COMMUNITY RUGBY,



*Mbale RFC on the pitch with JOOUST RFC*

the players connect with aspiring athletes, fostering a love for the game and imparting valuable life skills. JOOUST rugby team doesn't just play for themselves; they play to inspire the next generation of rugby enthusiasts and community.

The rugby field becomes a canvas where friendships are forged, challenges are collectively faced head-on, and victories are celebrated with gusto and relish. The team's unity transcends the boundaries of the pitch, creating a tight-knit community within the university. Their collective passion for rugby becomes a source of pride for Jaramogi Oginga Odinga University of Science and Technology fraternity.

Behind the scenes, the coaching staff, led by the soft spoken coach, Zachariah Rono, plays a pivotal role in nurturing every budding talent and instilling discipline as one of rugby's core values. With a keen focus on player

development, Coach Rono ensures that the values of sportsmanship and resilience are tightly woven into the fabric of JOOUST rugby program.

In essence, "Beyond the Try Line" encapsulates not just the athletic prowess of the JOOUST Warriors, but also the heart and soul of rugby at Jaramogi Oginga Odinga University of Science and Technology. It is a story of passion, perseverance, and the enduring legacy of a team that goes beyond the boundaries and like Albert Einstein quipped, "life is like riding a bicycle, to keep your balance, you must keep moving."



*Bondo Community Rugby team players*

## JOOUST IN COLLABORATION WITH ALLIES TO PROPEL EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT



*The team holds discussions at the University's Boardroom*

**I**n a bid to enhance Early Childhood Development (ECD), Jaramogi Oginga Odinga University of Science and Technology (JOOUST) has forged a strategic partnership with such esteemed organizations as the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation, Lake Region Economic Bloc, Kisumu Medical & Education Trust (KMET), and PATH International whose aim is to bolster nurturing care for Early Childhood Development (ECD).

The partnership recently took a substantial forward leap when JOOUST

welcomed representatives from these organizations for a comprehensive status update on their collective efforts. The dual-purpose meeting, held on 26<sup>th</sup> January, 2024 both reviewed the progress on nurturing care for ECD and assessing JOOUST's readiness and capability to train various stakeholders crucial to this initiative. These stakeholders include county officials, directors, health volunteers, parents, and caregivers.

At the heart of this collaboration lies JOOUST's commitment to crafting a curriculum tailored

to nurturing care and delivering short courses on the subject. These courses will comprehensively cover the five essential components of nurturing care; good health, adequate nutrition, safety and security, responsive caregiving and opportunities for early learning. These will ensure that participants gain a deep understanding of its significance and implementation strategies. Furthermore, JOOUST plans to disseminate its findings through workshops, conferences, and publications, thereby amplifying the impact of their research and initiatives

in the field of ECD.

Central to the partnership's objectives is the Smart Start Initiative, which aims to provide children with the best possible beginning in life through holistic nurturing care. Through training and advocacy efforts, JOOUST and its partners seek to promote awareness and understanding of the Smart Start Initiative, ultimately fostering environments conducive to early childhood development.

A key milestone in this journey is the imminent launch of the curriculum which is scheduled to coincide with the International Day for the Girl Child in June, 2024. The launch will mark as a pivotal moment in the linkage, heralding a collective commitment to prioritizing and advancing the cause of early childhood development.

By bringing together academic institutions, philanthropic organizations, and grassroots initiatives, JOOUST and its partners are harnessing their collective expertise and resources to effect meaningful change. This ought to be a clarion call to all members of the

society to embrace such initiatives tailored towards the betterment of the next generation. Indeed, as Franklin Roosevelt put it, “we cannot always build

the future for our youth, but we can build our youth for the future.”



*Prof. Odongo shares the proposed roadmap with the team*



*Participants pose for a group photo outside the Administration Block*

# *The Oasis*

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**JARAMOGI OGINGA ODINGA UNIVERSITY  
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