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# Empowering Local Farmers: UNIVEN's Collaboration for Skill Transfer through Experimental Farming



At the University of Venda (UNIVEN), the Faculty of Science, Engineering, and Agriculture (FSEA) is committed to fostering collaborations with local farmers to enhance their skills through the university's experimental farm. On the 19th of March 2025, over 200 monogastric livestock farmers from the Collins Chabane, Musina, Makhado, and Thulamela municipalities within the Vhembe District Municipality came together for a full-day workshop. This event, organised by Ms Thifheli Kutama, the Experimental Farm Manager, and her team under the leadership of Executive Dean Prof Natasha Potgieter, aimed to equip farmers with essential skills and knowledge.

The primary objective of this workshop was to provide farmers with practical expertise in the care, management, and production of monogastric animals, specifically pigs and poultry. It also focused on promoting sustainable agricultural practices and fostering strong relationships between farmers, academics, and experts in agriculture. UNIVEN strives to collaborate with industry leaders and co-create solutions that support farmers and communities, ensuring they are equipped to compete globally.



Prof Natasha Potgieter Executive Dean FSEA

The workshop kicked off with an opening address by Prof Natasha Potgieter, the Executive Dean of the Faculty of Science, Engineering, and Agriculture. In her speech, Prof Potgieter expressed her commitment to advancing sustainable agricultural practices, emphasising the importance of tackling food insecurity. She referenced the Vhembe District Municipality's Local Economic Development Strategy (2020), highlighting the region's vital role in national food security and economic growth. The Vhembe district contributes 4.4% of South Africa's total agricultural output, 8.4% of the country's subtropical fruits, and 6.3% of its citrus production. Prof Potgieter also extended her gratitude to the guest speakers from the Agricultural Research Council (ARC), DANBRED AFRICA, and SAPPO for their valuable contributions, which helped empower farmers with relevant knowledge and skills. She encouraged farmers to engage in insightful discussions, share ideas, and learn from each other to create a brighter future for the farming sector in Vhembe.



Ms Thifheli Kutama Experimental Farm Manager

Ms Thifheli Kutama, the Experimental Farm Manager and organiser of the workshop,

outlined the goals of the event and set the stage for the day's activities. She explained that the workshop's main objective was to equip farmers with in-depth knowledge and practical skills related to monogastric animal production. In addition, it aimed to build strong relationships between farmers, academics, and agricultural experts. She encouraged farmers to actively participate in all sessions and emphasised that the livestock management techniques shared during the workshop would improve efficiency, productivity, animal welfare, and food security.



Dr Lutendo Mathomu, who is also a member of the organising team, adeptly directed the programme, ensuring a seamless flow of activities throughout the day.

Dr Lutendo Mathomu, a member of the organising team, effectively facilitated the programme, ensuring a smooth flow of events throughout the day. Several esteemed faculty members, including Dr Vhutshilo Nekhumbe, Dr Masiza Mikasi, and Dr Justice Netshipale, were present and contributed by introducing guest speakers and engaging with the attendees, creating a collaborative and inclusive atmosphere.

## Read inside

Empowering Local Farmers:  
UNIVEN's Collaboration for Skill Transfer through  
Experimental Farming 1

Adv Mojanku Gumbi  
has dedicated the past  
five years to serving the  
University of Venda with  
significant commitment 2

Bridging Science and  
Indigenous Knowledge  
as the University of Venda  
held a Consultative Forum  
on Human-Insect Wellbeing 3

UNIVEN makes a lasting  
impact on the Caribbean  
Higher Education  
Landscape through  
strategic engagements  
with the University of  
the West Indies and the  
University of Belize 4

Quality in Action: UNIVEN  
Welcomes CHE for HEQSF  
Records Management  
Workshop 5

DSTI visits UNIVEN to monitor  
and evaluate CoCEB  
projects 6

The University of Venda  
Unleashes Creativity as it  
Hosts Engaging Multimedia  
Workshop for Teaching and  
Learning 7

UNIVEN honours growth and  
embraces a bright future 8

A successful new Staff  
Induction empowers UNIVEN  
staff talent 9



## Empowering Local Farmers continued...

The workshop featured three distinguished guest speakers who shared valuable insights on various topics:



Mr Jan Swart from DANBRED AFRICA

Mr Jan Swart from DANBRED AFRICA presented the three-way breeding system, including Artificial Insemination, and later demonstrated its application at the piggery. He also highlighted the importance of vaccinations, proper administration, storage, and record-keeping. Other critical practices, such as tail docking and ear notching, were demonstrated during his session.



Mr Rolivhuwa Mavhetha from SAPPO

Mr Rolivhuwa Mavhetha from SAPPO shared essential information on the "golden rules" of pig production, covering aspects such as marketing, breeding, housing, feeding and nutrition, health, biosecurity, and record-keeping. His presentation provided farmers with a comprehensive understanding of the key components to ensure successful pig farming operations.



Dr Lethogonolo Selaledi from the Agricultural Research Council in Pretoria

Dr Lethogonolo Selaledi from the Agricultural Research Council in Pretoria focused on the innovative use of insects as poultry feed. He explained the nutritional value of insects as a source of protein, fat, and minerals, and highlighted insects like yellow mealworms, black soldier fly larvae, termites, and mopane worms as valuable feed options. Dr Selaledi concluded by emphasising the direct impact of feed quality on the meat quality of chickens.



Dr Mpho Tshikororo, Head of the Department of Agricultural Economics

Dr Mpho Tshikororo, an agricultural economist from the Faculty of Science, Engineering, and Agriculture, reminded farmers that farming is ultimately a business. He stressed the importance of bookkeeping, budgeting, record-keeping, and financial literacy, offering farmers practical tools to make informed decisions and optimise their operations for greater profitability.



Mr Khangwelo Selapane from Experimental Farm

A key highlight of the workshop was the hands-on demonstration at the UNIVEN Experimental Farm's piggery, led by Mr Selapane and his team in collaboration with Mr. Swart from DANBRED. This practical session provided farmers with valuable insights into optimising productivity, ensuring animal welfare, and maintaining environmental sustainability in monogastric livestock operations.



Dr Justice Netshipale

As the workshop came to a close, Dr Justice Netshipale delivered the closing remarks, expressing gratitude to all participants, including the farmers, students, staff members, and the organising team. He acknowledged the success of the event, which was the result of the collective efforts of everyone involved.

This workshop underscores UNIVEN's dedication to supporting the development of local farmers, ensuring they have the tools and knowledge to succeed in an evolving agricultural landscape. By fostering collaboration between academia and industry, the university continues to make a significant contribution to the region's agricultural sector and its long-term sustainability.



## Adv Mojanku Gumbi has dedicated the past five years to serving the University of Venda with significant commitment



connected the University with various companies and led fundraising efforts that have brought tangible benefits to the institution. Through her generosity, she has also supported the University's top-performing graduates by donating valuable items. Her visionary leadership has strengthened stakeholder engagement, contributing to the University's growing reputation for excellence.

Looking ahead, Adv. Gumbi will continue to play a crucial role in shaping UNIVEN's future, focusing on advancing the University's mission of transforming lives through education, research, and community engagement.

The University of Venda (UNIVEN) is pleased to announce the reappointment of Advocate Mojanku Gumbi as Chancellor. At its ordinary meeting on Friday, 28 March 2025, the University of Venda Council unanimously reappointed Adv. Mojanku Gumbi for another five-year term, beginning in January 2025 and ending on 31 December 2029.

This decision follows the successful completion of her first term, which began in January 2020, and reflects the University's continued confidence in her leadership and vision. This reappointment underscores the University's recognition of her outstanding leadership and tireless dedication over the past five years.

During her first term, Adv. Gumbi demonstrated exceptional commitment to advancing the University's strategic objectives. Her leadership fostered a culture of academic excellence and strengthened key partnerships within the higher education sector, as well as expanding the institution's global presence.

Adv. Gumbi's contributions have been instrumental in driving significant advancements at UNIVEN. She has actively

The Vice-Chancellor and Principal of the University of Venda, Prof Bernard Nthambeleni stated, "The reappointment of Adv. Gumbi is a testament to her remarkable contributions and her positive impact on the University community. We are confident that her continued leadership will elevate UNIVEN's status and drive future success. We are confident that Adv. Gumbi's extensive legal expertise, governance experience, and commitment to social justice will continue to inspire the entire UNIVEN community as we strive to become a leading institution of higher learning. We look forward to working with Adv. Gumbi in the years ahead to ensure the continued success and growth of the University of Venda. On behalf of the University Council, I extend heartfelt congratulations to Adv. Gumbi and look forward to another five years of her exemplary service."

The University of Venda, located in Thohoyandou, Limpopo Province, is a leading institution of higher learning committed to providing quality education, conducting innovative research, and contributing to regional and global community development.



# Bridging Science and Indigenous Knowledge as the University of Venda held a Consultative Forum on Human-Insect Wellbeing



The Faculty of Science, Engineering, and Agriculture (FSEA) at the University of Venda hosted a groundbreaking consultative forum on Monday, 10 March 2025 at the UNIVEN Research Conference Centre themed "Transdisciplinary evidence to sustain the balance between human- and insect health and wellbeing: A consultative forum to contemplate a participatory study to integrate indigenous- and scientific knowledge", to explore the delicate balance between human and insect health and wellbeing. This transdisciplinary event aimed to integrate indigenous wisdom with modern scientific approaches, paving the way for innovative, sustainable solutions to pressing ecological challenges.

The forum, chaired by the FSEA Deputy Dean: Research and Postgraduate studies, Prof Lutendo Murulana, followed a structured programme that includes presentations from experts, engaging group discussions, and insightful reflections facilitated by Prof Swanepoel.

By fostering collaboration between academia, indigenous knowledge holders, and practitioners, this initiative aligns with UNIVEN commitment to meaningful, community-driven research. As participants gathered at the Research Conference Centre, the dialogue initiated is expected to shape future policies and practices that harmonise scientific advancements with traditional ecological insights.



*Prof Lourens Swanepoel*

With a prestigious lineup of local and international scholars, the forum promises to be a hub of knowledge exchange. The event features Prof Lourens Swanepoel, an esteemed Zoologist and NRF/DSI SARCHI Chair in Biodiversity Value and Change at UNIVEN, whose research delves into ecosystem stability, predator-prey interactions, and the vital role of bats and small carnivores in pest control.

The session also welcomed distinguished guests, including Prof Margaret Funke Omidire from the University of Pretoria, whose work in linguistic diversity and

education informs interdisciplinary research. Prof Karen Murphy from Pennsylvania State University, USA, who brings her expertise in critical thinking and text-based discussions, particularly in underprivileged rural communities. Additionally, Prof Liesel Ebersöhn, a resilience scholar, and Dr Marisa Leask, a literacy and intervention specialist, contribute valuable perspectives on sustainable education and wellbeing.



*Paige Alexander*

A key highlight of the event is Paige Alexander, a PhD student from Penn State University, whose research in tick-host dynamics adds a critical entomological dimension to discussions on human-insect interactions.

**"Integrating indigenous wisdom with modern science is key to balancing human and insect health—fostering sustainable solutions for ecological challenges."**



# UNIVEN makes a lasting impact on the Caribbean Higher Education Landscape through strategic engagements with the University of the West Indies and the University of Belize



Prof Vhonani Netshandama delivering a keynote address at the CERC conference in Barbados

UNIVEN's active participation in the CERC conference focused on "Maximising Resilience through Education, Innovation, Sustainability, Inclusion, and Impact." Prof Vhonani Netshandama delivered a keynote address on community engagement as a transformative force in higher education, sharing UNIVEN's long history of community-centered scholarship and its alignment with national policies and global sustainability goals.

Keynote speakers and panellists, including Prof. Takalani Mashau and Mr Rudzani Mamphweli, discussed various critical issues, from South African education policies to the impact of community engagement initiatives like UNIVEN's Skills for the Future Programme, which equips students with digital skills and entrepreneurial mindsets.

A significant highlight of UNIVEN's recent collaboration was a visit to the University of Belize, where both institutions shared insights on enhancing education and addressing global challenges. This partnership focuses on joint international programmes, research initiatives, and community-based learning, with potential collaborations in agriculture, nursing education, social work, Indigenous knowledge systems, and more.

The visit also emphasised the importance of cultural tourism, Indigenous knowledge, and inclusive innovation. The delegation engaged with local communities, learning from their experiences in preserving cultural heritage, which aligns with UNIVEN's commitment to community engagement and transformative education.

The University of Belize's collaboration visit, from 16 to 21 March 2025, aimed to strengthen partnerships formed in August 2024 at the University of Venda. President of UB, Dr. Vincent Palacio emphasised the importance of meaningful connections and highlighted the university's role in serving over 5,000 students. He stressed the need for higher education institutions to remain relevant and impactful, especially considering changing global dynamics, and urged increased medical student intake to meet Belize's development needs. He also noted that as young universities, UB, CUT, and UNIVEN have a unique opportunity to develop beneficial programmes together.



Mr Thabo Dikgale, Manager International Relations and Partnerships handing a token of appreciation to UB President Dr V. Palacio

Dr. Segun Obadire, Director of International Relations and Partnerships, also highlighted some flagship academic and research programmes, including niche areas in African Heritage and Indigenous Knowledge Systems and One Health, with supporting themes in Transformative Education, Digital Transformation, and Sustainable Development. A campus tour and parallel small-group discussions followed the introductory session. Both universities are excited about developing concrete projects and faculty exchanges to create lasting educational impacts across the Global South.



Prof Takalani Mashau presenting a paper at the CERC conference, Barbados



UNIVEN delegation with the founder of Che'il Mayana chocolate products.



UNIVEN and CUT delegates at the University of Belize Central Farm Campus.

## Lessons in IKS, inclusive innovation, cultural tourism, and identity scholarship

The visit was enriched by cultural experiences that underscored the warmth and hospitality of Belize and offered profound insights into the role of Indigenous knowledge systems (IKS), inclusive innovation, and resilience in driving socio-economic transformation.

A highlight was the tour of the Maya H'men Herbal Garden—a serene space where traditional medicinal practices are preserved and celebrated. The garden vividly demonstrated how IKS can be integrated into modern academic and community initiatives

to promote sustainable practices and cultural continuity.

Equally inspiring was a visit to Che'il Mayan Chocolate. Here, every guest was treated like royalty, reflecting Belize's deep-rooted values of dignity, respect, and inclusion.

The owner, CEO, and founder, who is physically challenged, shared his remarkable journey of inclusive innovation and entrepreneurship. His personal story underscored how embracing diversity and overcoming physical challenges can drive creative solutions and inspire sustainable business practices.



UNIVEN Delegation with UB senior management team



# Quality in Action: UNIVEN Welcomes CHE for HEQSF Records Management Workshop



UNIVEN/CHE workshop attendees

On 17 March 2025, the Directorate of Institutional Planning and Quality Assurance (IPQA) at the University of Venda (UNIVEN), through its Quality Assurance (QA) Unit, successfully hosted a workshop with representatives from the Council on Higher Education (CHE). This event focused on the Management of Higher Education Qualification Sub-framework (HEQSF) records.

The CHE delegation was led by Dr Phumzile Dlamini, Director of the M-HEQSF Directorate, and Ms Robin Naude, Manager of Accreditation. The physical visit followed up on a workshop held in Mpumalanga on 30-31 July 2024, which primarily aimed to discuss the CHE and the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) Communique 2 of 2024. This document provided guidelines on the criteria for registering qualifications and part-qualifications on the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) and the key requirements for implementing the Higher Education Qualifications Sub-framework.

The workshop addressed various issues concerning UNIVEN's academic programme records. It provided an opportunity to share knowledge about the implementation of HEQSF policies, including recognition of prior learning (RPL), credit accumulation and transfer (CAT), and data preparation for the Higher Education Management Information System (HEMIS).

The event was graced by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (DVC) for Teaching and Learning, Prof Eucebious (Sebi) Lekalakala-Mokgele, who emphasised the importance of quality assurance in higher education. She encouraged all attendees to actively engage in the discussions, underscoring that quality assurance is central to the institution's mission. Prof Lekalakala-Mokgele also expressed her gratitude to the CHE for its collaborative approach, offering support to the university rather than focusing on punitive measures for ensuring quality.

**Quality assurance is not just about compliance—it is central to our mission of delivering excellence in higher education**



The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (DVC) for Teaching and Learning, Prof Eucebious (Sebi) Lekalakala-Mokgele, during her Opening remarks



Dr Phumzile Dlamini during the engagement.

Dr Dlamini assured UNIVEN of CHE's ongoing support in aligning HEQSF records. She stressed the importance of aligning the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) approval records, Higher Education Quality Committee (HEQC) Accreditation/HEQSF alignment records, and SAQA registration records to avoid future challenges for students.

During the workshop, Dr Dlamini highlighted specific guidelines regarding the implementation of RPL and CAT policies. She reminded the university that RPL should adhere to the 10% threshold, while the CAT policy emphasises a 50% transfer threshold.



Mr Lufuno Netshifhehe, Head of Quality Assurance Unit, facilitating engagements with the participants

**Aligning HEQSF records is essential to safeguarding students' academic futures and ensuring institutional credibility**

Mr Lufuno Netshifhehe, Head of Quality Assurance, facilitated the discussion. The QA team engaged with the CHE on the process of re-registering programmes in the NQF and agreed to work together to ensure that programme content for registration purposes is submitted and included in the HEQC agenda promptly.

The session also covered Addendum A, B, and C, which list qualifications in various re-registration stages. Addendum A includes qualifications that meet the SAQA registration requirements, while Addendum B contains programmes awaiting content submission but provisionally re-registered until 30 June 2027. Addendum C outlines HEQSF-aligned qualifications previously recorded as learning programmes. The CHE and SAQA have agreed on the process of delinking these qualifications from their parent qualifications, with institutions required to submit additional content as needed.

In closing, Mr Tebello Mofokeng, Head of Management Information Systems, reinforced the importance of the discussions held during the workshop. He highlighted the potential risks of neglecting quality assurance processes, such as reputational damage and the loss of programme accreditation. Mr Mofokeng encouraged the CHE to continue organising awareness workshops to ensure all stakeholders understand their role in maintaining the university's quality standards.

This successful workshop marks a crucial step in strengthening the alignment of UNIVEN's academic records with statutory bodies and improving overall quality assurance processes.

**Neglecting quality assurance can lead to reputational damage and accreditation loss—proactive engagement is key**



# DSTI visits UNIVEN to monitor and evaluate CoCEB projects



Dr Siyavuya Bulani and Dr Rofhiwa Mulaudzi from the Department of Science Technology and Innovation

In a series of site visits, the Department of Science Technology and Innovation's (DSTI) Industry and Environment Directorate visited four universities forming part of the Consortium of the Centre of Competence in Environmental Biotechnology (CoCEB). As part of monitoring and evaluation, the DSTI visited the University of Venda (UNIVEN) to inspect the research work that they have been supporting under the Technology Innovation Agency (TIA). The CoCEB Consortium was initiated by Professor Tonderayi Matambo from the University of South Africa who collaborated with the University of Fort Hare, the University of Zululand, and the University of Venda.

Dr Siyavuya Bulani and Dr Rofhiwa Mulaudzi from the Department of Science Technology and Innovation who are from the Directorate of Industry and Environment's purpose for the visit was to discuss the monitoring of the finances managed at TIA and the budget revisions. The issues around the monitoring and evaluation of the project were discussed and additionally, the DSTI team was keen to support the students with their studies and laboratory equipment. There was deliberation on the extension of the project by one academic year as there was a delay in the start of the project.



Professor David Tinarwo



Dr Vhutshilo Nekhubvi

Dr Vhutshilo Nekhubvi and Professor David Tinarwo from UNIVEN's Department of Physics and Science Foundation, respectively contributed to the discussion on the development of research in biogas and maintenance of biodigesters. During the discussions, it was clear that there is still a lot of research work that needs to be done on waste-to-energy in the areas of physics, biochemistry, and microbiology, including the production of clean gas and other materials for use in the biogas digesters. As part of the DSTI team monitoring and evaluation, the team also visited the biogas digesters at the University Farm to understand gas production through the biogas digesters.



Professor Eric Maluta

Professor Eric Maluta further emphasised the importance of supporting students in rural universities financially so that they do not leave to other institutions that have better funding opportunities. The DSTI team agreed that indeed students need to be trained at rural universities so that they can conduct research that is community-based and provide solutions to the livelihoods of the communities. They also mentioned that both staff and students should perform their tasks toward the same goal.



Dr Lutendo Mathomu

Dr Lutendo Mathomu from Department of Biochemistry and Microbiology gave a breakdown of the UNIVEN student cohort progress and the financial reporting regarding the project. He mentioned that the project has already graduated four honours students, and two master's students have submitted their dissertation for May 2025 Graduation. Dr Mathomu further expressed that he aims to increase the number of graduates from honors, masters, and a PhD by 2026. He mentioned that the team hopes that there will be several research papers and prototypes will come out of the research.



Dr Mlungiseleli Ganto

Dr Mlungiseleli Ganto from the UNIVEN Office of Technology Transfer (OTT) offered words of support to both the funder DSTI, students, and the researchers. He encouraged the researchers to work on research that responds to the community needs and that is also industrially applicable so that the University could generate third income stream. He further indicated that the OTT doors are open to researchers who need assistance with intellectual property related matters.

The CoCEB UNIVEN team appreciates the support from the Office of Technology Transfer, under the Directorate of Community Engagement, Entrepreneurship, Inclusive Innovation and Commercialisation (CEEIIC), the Faculty of Science Engineering and Agriculture. Prof Eric Maluta mentioned that UNIVEN's strength on this project is driven by students, Ms Takalani Nethavhanani, and Ms Lucia Tsoetsi who have enrolled for PhD and MSc in this project, respectively.

**Supporting students in rural universities is crucial to fostering community-based research and real-world solutions**



Photos taken during the discussion between DSTI and UNIVEN Staff and student



UNIVEN staff and students posing with Dr Siyavuya Bulani and Dr Rofhiwa Bridget Mulaudzi from the DSTI



# The University of Venda Unleashes Creativity as it Hosts Engaging Multimedia Workshop for Teaching and Learning



Participants of the Multimedia Workshop

The University of Venda hosted an intensive Multimedia for Teaching and Learning Workshop at the Premier Hotel from 17 to 20 March 2025. This workshop, which was coordinated by Dr Leonard Tshikota, WIL and Teaching Practice Coordinator, Department of Professional and Curriculum Studies in the Faculty of Humanities, Social Sciences and Education, was designed to equip staff and professionals with the latest digital media tools and techniques for enhancing teaching and learning experiences.



Dr Leonard Tshikota

Facilitated by Mr André David Daniels, a Digital Media coordinator from the University of the Western Cape and Mr Naweed Mohamed Sadick, a renowned material developer from the University of Western Cape, the workshop promised an enriching experience for all participants.

**Digital storytelling merges traditional narratives with modern technology, transforming education through video, images, text, and sound**



Mr André Daniels, Digital Media Coordinator, University of the Western Cape

The presentation on Digital Storytelling and an overview and a brief history by André Daniels provided a comprehensive introduction to digital storytelling (DST). He defined DST as a participatory media process that merges traditional storytelling with modern technology, incorporating video, images, text, and sound. His presentation traces its origins to Dana Atchley in the 1980s and the Berkeley-based Centre for Digital Storytelling (CDS), highlighting its use in various social causes, such as HIV/AIDS awareness. André further outlined the storytelling process, emphasising key elements like emotional content, point of view, pacing, and the use of meaningful audio. As he concluded his presentation, he also discussed essential software and hardware tools for creating DST projects and included practical exercises to help individuals develop their own digital stories.

**Integrating multimedia into teaching enhances engagement, making learning more interactive and impactful**



Mr Naweed Mohamed Sadick, Material Developer, University of Western Cape

The workshop included a diverse range of interactive sessions aimed at enhancing multimedia integration in education. Some of the key topics covered include Data, Light, and Rich Media; Understanding the Role of Multimedia in Teaching; Digital Recordings in Teaching: Techniques for creating high-quality digital learning materials; Image Editing Basics: Learning how to enhance visuals effectively; Audio Editing and Podcasting: Exploring the power of sound in education; PowerPoint Coaching and Storyboarding; Crafting impactful presentations for better engagement.

The workshop was structured to provide both theoretical insights and practical application. Participants engaged in interactive demonstrations, hands-on editing exercises, and peer collaborations to enhance their digital content creation skills.

As the digital landscape continues to evolve, the University of Venda remains committed to empowering its staff with the skills necessary to integrate technology into teaching. This workshop is a significant step toward building a tech-savvy academic community that fosters innovative learning methods for all.

With a line-up of expert-led sessions and practical engagement, the Multimedia for Teaching and Learning Workshop is set to leave a lasting impact on participants, equipping them with essential skills for the future of education.

**Empowering educators with digital media skills is key to fostering innovative and tech-savvy learning environments**



# UNIVEN honours growth and embraces a bright future



Recipients who received their certificate for completion of Internship and Work Integrated Learning

In a heartfelt celebration of dedication and achievement, interns and Work Integrated Learning (WIL) learners gathered at the Student Parliament on 27 March 2025 for their Farewell and Certificate Handing-over Ceremony. This momentous occasion marked the culmination of months of hard work, learning, and professional development for the staff of the University.

The ceremony opened with a warm welcome and a reflection on the purpose of the day by Mr Kenneth Mphaphuli. Those who were in attendance include the HR team, Ms Mkhohlwa SETA Representative, Representative from Bavelile Skills Development and Training, representatives from UNIVEN Continuing Education and UNIVEN Community Engagement Entrepreneurship Inclusive Innovation and Commercialization (CEEIIC), Mr Rudzani Mamphweli who shared inspiring remarks, highlighting the invaluable contributions of the interns and the vital role of mentorship in shaping future professionals.



Ms Sandra Shishonga

Adding to the occasion's significance, two interns that have been permanently employed by the University transitioning into full-time roles, Mr Tsundzuka Hakamela and Ms Sandra Shishonga left words of encouragement and reinforced the importance of resilience and continuous learning. Their dedication, hard work, and commitment during their internship period have demonstrated their value to the team, and we look forward to their continued contributions in their new permanent positions



Mr Tsundzuka Hakamela



Mrs Uanda Ndou, Director Human Resources

When addressing attendees of this ceremony, Director Human Resources, Mrs Uanda Ndou highlighted the importance of attitude, respect, and professionalism in the workplace. She further highlighted that, while qualifications and skills matter, a bad attitude can hinder career growth. Mrs Ndou advised attendees that, respecting all colleagues, from executives to cleaners, is essential, as no one remains "fresh" forever. She continued to advise all learners and interns to network strategically, understand workplace policies, and maintain discipline by setting clear career goals and focusing on productivity rather than mere busyness.

Mrs Ndou also warned against office politics, encouraging interns to remain neutral, avoid unnecessary conflicts, and

to prioritise their professional journey. She stressed the importance of results over effort, urging them to be impactful rather than just active. By planning with the end in mind, aligning with company protocols, and continuously growing their skills, they can ensure long-term career success. Ultimately, she encouraged humility, collaboration, and a strong work ethic above all to thrive in any workplace environment.

The much-anticipated Certificate Handing-over Ceremony, led by Mrs Ndou was a proud moment for all, recognising the interns' dedication and growth.

As the event concluded with closing remarks from Mrs Valencia Maupye, Head of the newly established Transformation Office, she encouraged interns to view the end of their internship as the beginning of their professional journey, emphasising the importance of maintaining an updated LinkedIn presence and CVs to seize future opportunities. She advised them to seek HR support for interview preparation and extended gratitude to the HR director, HR team, and internal stakeholders for making the project impactful, particularly in transforming the lives of black children. She further urged interns to stay proactive, embrace available opportunities, and continue making a difference wherever they go. The atmosphere was filled with gratitude, celebration, and anticipation for the future.

**"While qualifications and skills matter, a bad attitude can hinder career growth. Respect everyone –from executives to cleaners– because no one remains 'fresh' forever. Plan with the end in mind, focus on results over effort, and embrace every opportunity for growth."**

Mrs Uanda Ndou





# A successful new Staff Induction empowers UNIVEN staff talent



Newly appointed staff members

On 25 and 26 March 2025, the University of Venda (UNIVEN) hosted its quarterly new staff induction sessions, reaffirming its commitment to fostering an inclusive and dynamic work environment. These sessions that took place at UNIVEN Student Parliament play a vital role in equipping new employees with the knowledge and support necessary to integrate seamlessly into the institution's vibrant community.

The event was graced by esteemed leaders, including Vice-Chancellor and Principal Prof Bernard Nthambeleni, and Prof Sebi Lekalakala-Mokgele, Deputy Vice-Chancellor Teaching and Learning. Their presence underscored the institution's dedication to ensuring new staff members feel valued and empowered from the outset of their journey. In addition to the leadership addresses, various departments took the stage to present their services, providing a holistic overview of the institution's operations and strategic direction.

The induction sessions were designed to offer invaluable insights into the university's culture, values, policies, and long-term objectives. By familiarising new employees with these crucial aspects, the institution set



Prof Bernard Nthambeleni, UNIVEN Vice-Chancellor and Principal

the stage for a smooth transition, fostering confidence and enthusiasm among the latest additions to the team.

Beyond the informational aspect, the induction aimed to create a warm and welcoming atmosphere. Ensuring that new staff members feel supported from day one is a priority, reinforcing the institution's reputation as a place where talent is



Prof Sebi Lekalakala, Deputy Vice-Chancellor Teaching and Learning

nurtured, collaboration is encouraged, and professional growth is celebrated.

As UNIVEN embraces these new colleagues into the fold, the whole university community eagerly anticipate the fresh perspectives and innovations they will bring. Their contributions will undoubtedly enhance the institution's success, further strengthening legacy of excellence.

## We would like to hear from you!

Nendila is your communication channel.

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