



**REPUBLIC OF KENYA**

**PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICERS AND TECHNICIANS COUNCIL**

**SPEECH BY:SIMON K. KIMANI**

**CHAIRMAN- PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICERS AND TECHNICIANS COUNCIL**

**ACCREDITATION CEREMONY FOR B.SC ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH  
PROGRAMME IN MOUNT KENYA UNIVERSITY, MAIN CAMPUS - THIKA  
FRIDAY, 26<sup>TH</sup> JULY 2019.**

The Chairman and founder of Mount Kenya University

The University Council members' representatives

The Vice Chancellor

Management and staff of Mount Kenya University

The Registrar and staff of the Public Health Officers and Technicians Council

Heads of academic and administrative units of the University

Distinguished guests

Students

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is gives me great pleasure to join you today on this historic occasion of granting programme accreditation to Mount Kenya University – Thika Main Campus.

As a Council, it has been our mandate and duty to offer technical and professional support towards full programme accreditation of all Public/Environmental Health programmes in all institutions of higher learning in Kenya. It is therefore a privilege to for me and the entire Council to come here and witness the first institution of higher learning being granted this accreditation. This accreditation for the B.Sc. Environmental Health programme in Mount Kenya University is indeed atestimony that partnership and meaningful collaboration yield positive results for the growth of the Public Health profession in our Country.

On behalf of all Council members, it is my belief that the accreditation of this programme only marks an initial step in the improvement of quality training for Public Health Officers and not an end in the enhancement and adherence to training standards.

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

As we celebrate this milestone today, the Council remain committed to the Government’s big four agenda particularly the attainment of Universal Health Coverage through production of quality Human Resources capital for Health in adequate numbers as a gateway to promoting accessible and affordable

quality health care services in Kenya. Towards this end, PHOTC in partnership with the Universities and Colleges will continue to implement minimum training standards to bridge the current shortage in health workforce particularly at the community level. Our country will be able to achieve Universal Health Coverage by supporting and empowering critical community health units through promoting public health preventive services thereby cutting the diseases burden at the primary health care level. This will translate to more resource savings in curative care services for the country, a healthy Kenyan population, more man hours used in building the Kenyan economy and therefore creation of more employment opportunities for our youth.

Currently in our country, the Public Health service delivery is experiencing great challenges than any other time before; the ever-increasing risk of adulterated food supplies, contaminated community water sources, extensive air pollution, poor waste management practices, risky health and safety work practices and a sudden increase in non-communicable diseases such as cancer in our county urgently calls for addressing the shortage of skilled and competent Public Health professionals to continuously carry out public health surveillance at the critical community level so as to sustain the gains made in disease prevention and control.

Current professional data indicate that there is a severe shortage of Public Health Officers and Technicians at all levels of service delivery. The country has 4000 registered public health officers against a population of approximately 45 million citizens, that means one officer is responsible for health and safety of eleven thousand two hundred and fifty (11250) citizens. This is an enormous task and hence the challenges the country in experiencing in monitoring public health delivery services. Records available at the PHOTC indicate acute shortage of a minimum of about 4,000 Public Health Officers and Technicians are urgently required to address the emerging Environmental Health challenges across the Country. This constitutes about 40 Public Health Officers and 46 Public Health Technicians per County to address the current disease burden arising from preventable causes.

This urgent need of PHOs and PHTs at the community level demands for a more concerted effort by the National Government, County Governments, the private sector and other players to accelerate the employment of public Health Officers and Technicians in order to provide community public health services through the promotion of good hygiene and sanitation practices, improved solid waste management, enhanced food safety surveillances and prevention of work-place injury.

In addition however, the increase in health workforce volume alone, Ladies and gentlemen, cannot guarantee value in health service delivery. This requires improved quality of professional training to produce competent skilled health workforce in adequate numbers and professionalism in service delivery as well adequate budgetary support to reduce the disease burden from preventable causes.

The accreditation of Public/Environmental Health programme in Mount Kenya University will therefore add to the skilled and competent workforce based at the community level to support the delivery of Universal Health coverage agenda and contribute to the highest attainable standards of health as guaranteed in our constitution.

Ladies and gentlemen, it my hope that the University will continue to improve standards of training in this approved Main campus but will also initiate the process of accreditation in all the campuses across the Country that offer programmes in Public/Environmental Health.

In conclusion, we hope that the University will continue to be open to continuous support supervision to help meet the ever-increasing need for

improvement of training standards for health professionals in Kenya. This may call for planned and impromptu visits, sharing of data and collaboration on all areas of training.

Finally, I wish to, once again, congratulate the entire University community and the Public Health Officers and Technicians Council for putting up a collaborative effort to deliver programme accreditation for B.Sc. Environmental Health in Mount Kenya University – Thika Main Campus.

Thank you and May God bless you all.