



KARATINA UNIVERSITY

Weekly Dispatch 8, 2025

Monday 30th June – 4th July, 2025

KARATINA UNIVERSITY CELEBRATES HISTORIC WAFW GRADUATION

July 1st 2025, Karatina University held a momentous graduation ceremony for the inaugural cohort one of the World Academy for the Future of Women. This was a milestone for the World Academy for the Future of Women's first graduation not only in Kenya but Africa, following the program's launch at Karatina University in August 2024. The ceremony was held at the University's Library grounds and brought together key stakeholders including the Kenya Commercial Bank, Africa Leadership Transformation Foundation, and the WAFW facilitators represented by Ms. Sandra Perez, and the founder of the WAFW who joined online alongside other facilitators and parents.

During the ceremony Miss Emma Wangari, one of the pioneer graduates, delivered a heartfelt speech reflecting on her journey in the program. "This program has taught me that there is more to life," she said, emphasizing the importance of sustaining the WAFW legacy. As part of their leadership development, participants in Cohort 1 attended weekly open forums addressing key topics. These included:

- **Enhancing Self-Esteem** – Jecinta Kabucho
- **Living a Fully Expressed Life** – Jerrie Ueberle
- **The Love Triangle** – Jecinta Kabucho
- **Toxic Relationships** – Jecinta Kabucho
- **Making a Difference: Mental Health and Substance Abuse** – Sr. Stellamaris
- **Interest-Based Negotiation: Getting to Yes** – Silvia Rodriguez
- **Ways of Achieving Financial Freedom** – Henry Roinei Kaorri
- **Enhancing Job Seeking Skills** – Dr. Anne Kariuki
- **The Human Rights Think Tank** – Dr. Nina Corder
- **Universal Declaration of Human Rights** – Dr. Nina Corder

- **Five Stages of Change** – Dr. Saundra Rhode
- **The Power of Persuasion** – Dr. Saundra Rhode
- **Turning Conflict into Calm** – Dr. Saundra Rhode
- **Life Map** – Zoe Song
- **Giving a Powerful Presentation at the UN** – Zoe Song
- **Understanding Your Wellbeing in Mental Health** – Dr. Saundra Rhode
- **Cross-Cultural Communication** – Tianwen Wang
- **Getting Hired and Getting Ahead** – Sebastian Knaeur
- **Discovering Leadership Resources in Your Own Backyard** – Whitney Waceke & Dorothy Vihenda
- **Money and Personal Finances** – Sebastian Knaeur
- **A Countryman's Journey: Studying Abroad** – John Roy Akumu
- **Bold Steps: Navigating Tech, Leadership & Self-Discovery** – Hazel Gachoka

These sessions played a vital role in shaping the graduates' outlook, personal growth, and leadership journey.



A section of the graduates attentively follows the speeches during the WAFW Cohort 1 Graduation Ceremony

The strong partnership with KCB Foundation was recognized, with representatives from the Karatina branch applauding the University's commitment to nurturing leadership among young women. On the other hand, Dr. Daniel Kamanga from the Africa Leadership Transformational Network (ALT) praised the University's leadership and encouraged the graduates to apply their knowledge for the betterment of society.

Speaking during the ceremony, the Deputy Vice Chancellor Academic Research and Student Affairs, Prof. Franklin Wabwoba, representing the Vice Chancellor, delivered the official remarks and extended warm congratulations to the graduates. He conveyed the Vice Chancellor's pride in the program and appreciation for all the partnerships that made the success of this first cohort possible. He further noted that the university is committed to continue supporting the World Academy for the Future of Women cohorts.



The DVC ARSA Prof. Franklin Wabwoba addressing the WAFW graduates.

Jerrie Ueberle, the founder of WAFW who had joined virtually, congratulated the graduates and addressed them before they took an oath of leadership, pledging to uphold the values of the program. Ms. Sandra, WAFW Facilitator, commended the passion of the cohort and thanked both the University and parents for their support. The graduates shared their experiences and testimonies highlighting how the program transformed them and helped them unlock their potential.

The graduation of these 43 young women marks a transformational moment in Karatina University's leadership journey and a bold step forward in empowering future leaders across Africa.



The graduates proudly pose for a group photo following the historic WAFW Cohort 1 Graduation Ceremony at Karatina University – a celebration of



KARATINA UNIVERSITY HOSTS RE-SEARCH COMMERCIALIZATION WORK-SHOP TO EMPOWER ACADEMIC STAFF

In a bid to strengthen the impact of academic research and align with the University's 2024–2025 performance contract, Karatina University, through the Directorate of Research, Innovation, and Extension, successfully hosted a two-day training workshop on the *Commercialization of Research Outputs*. The workshop was held on 31st June and 1st July 2025 at RCH 6.

The training was organized in collaboration with the Kenya Industrial Property Institute (KIPI) and facilitated by Mr. Fred Otswong'o, a certified KIPI agent and expert in patenting and commercialization. The aim of the workshop was to equip academic staff with the knowledge and practical skills required to transform research outputs into viable products, services, or technologies.

The workshop was officially opened by Prof. Franklin Wabwoba, the Deputy Vice Chancellor for Academics, Research, and Student Affairs, on behalf of the Vice Chancellor, Prof. Linus Gitonga. The DVC underscored the role of research commercialization in individual and institutional growth and announced plans by the University to establish

a Technology Transfer Office to drive innovation and commercialization efforts.



A section of the participants keenly following the

Speaking during the workshop, Prof. Michael Lokuruka, Director of Research, Innovation, and Extension, officially welcomed participants, facilitators, and guests to the event. In his remarks, he emphasized the importance of such engagements in building the University's research ecosystem. Over the two days, the participants were trained on key aspects such as Intellectual Property (IP) systems, commercialization options, business pitching, and patent licensing negotiations. The interactive sessions included mock pitching exercises and plenary discussions, allowing staff to apply concepts in real-time and enhance their entrepreneurial thinking.

A post-training survey indicated a high satisfaction rate, with 96% of participants affirming that the workshop met their expectations. Areas most appreciated included IP commercialization options, techniques for successful pitching, and tips on licensing negotiation. Participants also proposed the need for extended sessions, practical exercises, more frequent workshops, and broader inclusion of disciplines outside science and technology.

The event marked a significant milestone in the University's drive to translate research into impactful innovations and commercial ventures.



Participants pose for a group photo after the conclusion of the Research Commercialization Workshop



KARATINA UNIVERSITY HOSTS STAKEHOLDERS' MEETING WITH LANDLORDS AND HOSTEL OWNERS

Karatina University convened a key stakeholders' meeting with landlords and hostel owners on 30th June 2025 to strengthen partnerships that support the welfare, safety, and holistic development of students residing off-campus. The forum was part of the University's continued efforts to improve relations with stakeholders and the broader community. The meeting brought together members of the University Management, student representatives, and local landlords for open dialogue aimed at charting the way forward on shared concerns.

In his remarks, the Vice Chancellor, Prof. Linus M. Gitonga, emphasized on the need for close collaboration between the University and the community in creating a safe and conducive environment for students. He noted the rapid increase in student population, with over 10,000 students currently residing off-campus and the numbers expected to rise in the coming academic years.

He further, encouraged further investment in student housing to meet growing demand and called on landlords to prioritize safety and responsible property management.

"This place is yours – you own it," Prof. Gitonga told the landlords. "Let's walk together to build a supportive environment for our students. We must prepare for the future and treat every student as we would our own child."

On the other hand, Prof. Franklin Wabwoba, the Deputy Vice Chancellor Academic and Student Affairs, commended landlords for their continued support and emphasized that the university allows for year-round tenancy and mutual benefit. He also encouraged landlords to show compassion, especially to students facing financial or emotional challenges, and urged them to report any cases of concern such as drug use or mental health struggles early.



A section of landlords and hostel owners attentively follow proceedings during the stakeholder engagement forum at Karatina University.

Local leaders, including the area chief and village elders, acknowledged the uniqueness of today's youth and the challenges they face. They encouraged landlords to take a proactive approach in identifying struggling students and offer guidance, particularly on sensitive issues like drug use, suicide, and cohabitation.

Key discussions and resolutions included:

- Encouragement for landlords to adopt basic fire-fighting equipment, ensure professional wiring, and consider property insurance.
- Calls to strengthen student safety and security, including proposals for a local police post and increased lighting.
- Emphasis on respectful and lawful conflict resolution regarding rent arrears and safeguarding of students' property.
- Suggestions for a University emergency hotline and a formal grievance-handling mechanism for land-

lords.

- Plans to establish a physical office for landlord engagement and orientation on hostel registration processes.
- Acknowledgment of the need for mental health sensitization days and better tracking of students' movement in and out of hostels.

Student leaders thanked the University and landlords for their continued collaboration and emphasized the need for early intervention in cases of drug use and behavioral concerns. They also encouraged the protection of student property during breaks and fair treatment in rent disputes.



The Vice Chancellor, Prof. Linus M. Gitonga, gesticulates passionately as he addresses landlords and hostel owners during the stakeholder engagement forum, emphasizing shared responsibility in creating a safe and supportive environment for students.

In his closing remarks, the VC encouraged landlords to work with the University to build a stronger academic town. He expressed willingness to lobby for support from the County Government, including the possibility of a police patrol vehicle, social workers, and collaborative town infrastructure development.

"Let us continue walking together. I told you we will build this University until people are shaken. God willing, that day is coming. Let's build for our children." – **Prof. Linus M. Gitonga**