



UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI

CENTRE FOR SELF SPONSORED PROGRAMMES (CESSP)

REPORT OF THE MERU ROAD SHOW HELD ON 8TH AND 9TH-APRIL 2016

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background

Meru is a town in formerly Eastern Province of Kenya. It is the headquarters of the Meru County, and the sixth largest urban centre in the country with a population of 250,000 residents. The town is the Commercial capital of Northern and Eastern Kenya. It hosts a Central Bank of Kenya's Currency Centre serving the North Eastern Half of Kenya and has 22 commercial banks branches. The town is the business and agricultural center for north-eastern Kenya.

Meru has an extramural center which has sub-centers in Embu and Isiolo towns. The University of Nairobi held the first Open Day in Meru town on 8th and 9th April 2016. The two-day event provided a platform for all UoN Colleges to meet some of the prospective students from the region while providing ample time for one-on-one discussions with prospective students and other interested parties.

The Open Day planning was done by the UoN Central Exhibition Committee, CESSP and the respective Extra Mural Centres.

1.2. Justification

The University of Nairobi has undertaken to diversify the promotion of self-sponsored programmes. Among the key avenues identified in this promotion is mounting regional open days in identified regions to attract students and also inform the public of the programmes available.

Meru town is strategically located to serve the region. Increased activities of county governments, local and multi-national companies and non-governmental organizations serving the region have made the town to be a beehive of activities with a large population who may want to study at reputable universities.

The Meru extramural centre has been improved and expanded with the increase in number of students and feasibility study carried out to determine the viability of mounting more programmes.

With the Kenya Certificate for Secondary Education examination being released in March, it has been observed that Open Days are more successful immediately after the release, with April being most ideal month.

The University also used this event to assess the level of demand for programmes not yet offered at extramural centers that are popular and attract many students in Nairobi, Kisumu and Mombasa Campuses

1.3. Objectives

The objective of regional exhibition is to promote the university outside Nairobi City and increase its visibility in the Eastern region as a promotional strategy for increasing student numbers. The specific objectives were;

- a) Provide a platform for interacting with prospective students and other parties who have an interest in University of Nairobi
- b) Display the programmes of the University of Nairobi
- c) Provide an opportunity for prospective students apply for courses.
- d) Assess the demand for University of Nairobi programme

2. PLANNING AND ORGANIZATION

2.1. Preparations

The planning of the Regional Open Day was carried out by a sub-committee of the UON Exhibition Committee. The sub-committee held two meetings and resolved to:

- a) Hold regional open days in three locations, namely Eldoret, Meru and Kisumu in April, 2016
- b) Set up a task force to handle the planning and execution of the Regional Open Day which was to:
 - i. Draft a budget for the regional open days
 - ii. Ensure participations of senior members of staff
 - iii. Organize an appropriate training for exhibitors

Preparation involved securing the approval from the Vice chancellor.

Once the exhibition was approved, the exhibition committee embarked on pre-event activities like working with county government of Meru to identify the

most appropriate venue. This was done by the staff at Meru Extramural center on behalf of the central committee.

The other activity was to identify and select the contractors who were to supply the tents and décor.

As part of preparations, the exhibitors were trained on key areas of university promotion to ensure uniformity in information disseminated to prospective student and parents.

2.2. Logistics

2.3. Staff involvement (central, Colleges, CESSP, EMC Staff)

The open day was facilitated by 17 staff as follows: -

1. Dr. Boniface Wambua - CHSS (Team Leader)
2. Tabitha M Kiarie - CAE (exhibitor)
3. Dr. Josiah Kinama - CAVS (exhibitor)
4. James O. Kaoga - CBPS (exhibitor)
5. Gikami Stephen M. - CHS (exhibitor)
6. Dr Naomi Mwangi - CEES (exhibitor)
7. Martin W. Ndungu - BPS (exhibitor)
8. George G. Komu - CESSP (exhibitor)
9. Salome K. Abuuru - Admissions (exhibitor)
10. Susan Kosgei - Admissions (exhibitor)
11. Catherine Maina - Admissions (exhibitor)
12. Bernard D. Njuguna - Registrar Planning (VC Rep)
13. Amos Gitonga - Meru EMC (exhibitor)
14. Paul Maina - Meru EMC (exhibitor)
15. Mercy Kawira - Meru EMC (exhibitor)
16. Samuel Ngugi - Driver
17. Isika Musili - Driver

3. EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

Key events and activities included

- Exhibition of courses using brochures
- Career guidance
- Official opening of the road show. The VC was represented by the Registrar Planning Mr. BD Njuguna
- Application of course. Prospective students were facilitated to make apply for their desired programmes on the online application system.

4. EXTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS

4.1. County government

The county government of Meru was involved by providing the venue at subsidized rate. The road show was officially opened by Mr. Joseph Kinyua, County Education officer, who represented the Meru County Governor, Peter Munya.

4.2. Bank

The University partnered with the Kenya Commercial Bank, Meru Branch. The bank also had an exhibition booth and the manager also graced the official opening and made some brief remarks

4.3. Kenya Police

The Kenya police provided security at the venue

5. OUTCOME/IMPACT

5.1. Number of visitors

The road show attracted many visitors drawn from Meru town and its environs

5.2. Feedback from the visitors

The road show gave useful feedback for the university to consider including;

- a) Increasing the number courses offered at Meru Extramural Centre
- b) Launching day-time classes at Meru EMC

6. FINANCIAL IMPACT

The following was the expenditure for the event

NO	DESCRIPTION	AMOUNT
1	Allowances for Nairobi based staff	369,950
2	Allowances for Meru EMC staff	70,000
3	Hiring of Grounds (paid to county government)	69,200
4	Other expenses	110,000
	Total	619,150

7. CHALLENGES AND LESSONS LEARNED

- a) The event was held when schools were closed. In future, it would be more useful to hold such event when the schools are open to allow the students to experience what is on offer at University of Nairobi
- b) For such events to be successful, everything must be planned well in advance to avoid instances like the one in Meru where the Public Address System was frantically sought when the function was ongoing.
- c) Invitations to key stakeholders, chief guests, should be done well in advance before the open day to allow the invited groups to prepare.
- d) Planning should involve the extramural centers. They proved to be very efficient in handling matters with local authorities and other stakeholders in their areas.
- e) To attract bigger crowds, the planning committee could consider having a road show truck crisscrossing the town and its environs to inform the residents on the presence of UoN in their locality
- f) The event should be promoted in the media well in advance. This should include having adverts in vernacular FM stations that are popular in the targeted town.

8. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Meru Open day was successful with respect to the objectives of the event.

8.1. Programmes Display

All academic programmes offered at the University of Nairobi were well displayed and this was achieved through the set up by Colleges and had brochures from all Faculties, Schools and Institutes. All Colleges banners were also displayed.

8.2. Applications

Most applicants were interested in the September 2016 intake and were duly assisted to make applications

8.3. Programmes Enquiries

The three most enquired programmes offered in the University of Nairobi but not mounted in Meru were Bachelor of Commerce (B.Com), Master of Business Administration (MBA) and Bachelor of Law (LLB).