DREAMS project launched in Oshikoto Region

The official launch of the Determined, Resilient, Empowered, AIDS-free, Mentored, and Safe (DREAMS) project took place last week in the Oshikoto Region. The project focuses on averting new HIV infections amongst Adolescent Girls and Young Women (AGYW).

The five-year project is funded by the United States President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), through the USAID and implemented by Project Hope Namibia. DREAMS interventions are currently being implemented at selected schools, based on HIV prevalence and other risk factors affecting females between 10 to 24 years of age. One of the sub-awardees is NUST, whose role is to promote Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) education amongst the target group.

This is an area that enhances critical thinking, increases science literacy and systematically promotes innovation. In 2019, NUST’s Faculty of Health and Applied Sciences conducted a needs assessment amongst selected schools in the region. The main objectives were to assess the number of teachers in the STEM subject areas and to investigate the areas that need training and capacity development.

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It is evident that the low number of female students in the STEM field subjects needs to be addressed as a matter of urgency. It is against this backdrop, that NUST has adopted two approaches under this project. The ‘train-the-trainer’ approach, which will enhance the capacity of teachers, and tutoring for the AGYW,” said Dr Andrew Nkondo, NUST Deputy Vice Chancellor, Academic Affairs.

He added that the University will avail scholarships to selected top performing underprivileged learners to study at NUST. There are approximately 4,780 AGYW in the 9 schools targeted for this project in the Oshikoto Region.

Although the official launch of the STEM component of the project took place recently, the NUST team along with its various partners, has already trained about 40 teachers in the Tsumeb district and 50 in the Oshindjua and Onandjokwe districts.

The Smart coffee machine invented at NUST

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