



Mathematics, science teachers begin 10-day training

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Mathematics and science teachers drawn from 12 upper basic and senior secondary schools respectively, recently began a 10-day capacity building programme organised at the Khamsy's Technologies in Bijilo, by the Ministry of Basic and Secondary Education, (MoBSE) in collaboration with the New Jersey Centre for Teaching and Learning (NJCTL). The training is expected to enhance the capacities of the teachers in these critical subjects in the academic circle.

Speaking at the opening ceremony, the minister of Basic and Secondary Education, Fatou Lamin Faye, said the government is creating the educational infrastructure, but was quick to lament that the problem has been the lack of manpower to make good use of the medium. She said the availability of the trained manpower would enable the country to retain money that is being lost to

foreign technical experts.

The Basic Education minister, while describing the vice chancellor of the University of The Gambia, Professor Kah as an example of a patriotic Gambian, equally thanked one Bob Goodman for the excitement and commitment he has shown in the project. She used the opportunity to report that the investments that have been made in the education sector to improve the teaching and learning of English have already started bearing fruit.

Speaking earlier, the director, Science and Technology at the Basic Education Ministry, Adama Jimba Jobe, thanked the participants for the turnout and expressed optimism that the project will be able to transform the teaching of maths and science in the country.

The manager, Project Coordinating Unit, MoBSE, Sheriff Yunus Hydara, commended all those that helped to bring the project into fruition. He also thanked Minister Fatou Lamin Faye and her permanent secretary, Baboucarr Bouy for being at the forefront of the crusade for the past years. Similarly, he extended his appreciation to the vice chancellor of the University of The Gambia, Professor Muhammadou Kah for spearheading the initiative.

Hydara also expressed his appreciation to development partners like the World Bank for financing the project to the amount of \$500, 000. 00. The aim of the project, he said is to prepare young Gambian science and mathematics students for a globalised world.

The permanent secretary, MoBSE, Baboucarr Bouy, said the initiation of the project came to him as a great joy. He said as a trained mathematics teacher, though no longer teaching, he always felt guilty whenever examination results are out. He said he was happy when Professor Kah came up with the initiative, because, as he puts it, mathematics and physics results are in most cases not encouraging. He said: "The problem has been going on for a while and there seems to be no solution."

PS Bouy then intimated that this training is part of the solutions they need to address the problems relating to science and mathematics. The project, the PS said was able to transform schools in New Jersey, USA; schools that were about to be closed due to low performance. He indicated his impression with the level of confidence the project was able to instil in students.

He went on to posit that it was realised that the teaching methodology of the science subjects especially physics was the problem, but noted with delight that the Centre was able to change this methodology at the benefit of a lot of students. He therefore warned participants that failure will not be tolerated, thus urging them to perform well as that will be used as a baseline to justify an expansion of the programme. Bouy asserted that there was need for some adjustments in the curricula to enable the programme to work, saying: "Teachers have to think outside the box and be committed as from today to ensuring the success of the project."

Also speaking at the occasion, the vice chancellor of the UTC, Professor Muhammadou O. Kah, lamented the fact

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ALSO speaking at the occasion, the vice chancellor of the UoG, Professor Muhammadou O. Kan, lamented the fact that many students are not enrolled into the sciences at the University of The Gambia; something he said will have adverse effects on the development of the country. He said: "In addition to being the first real step in the Year of Science and Technology, it is also the first real step towards uplifting the future of mathematics and science teachers."

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