

Young Scientists seek out projects in Dar schools

By Correspondent Crispin

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AT LEAST 200 secondary students from across the country are expected to showcase their scientific projects in Dar es Salaam at an exhibition focusing on improving the level of science performance in the country.

Speaking to reporters this week in Dar es Salaam, the executive director and co-founder for Young Scientists Tanzania (YST) Dr Gosbert Kamugisha said that the exhibition expected to kick-off on August is meant to encourage young students to

present their innovative and scientific projects.

"Young scientists who will participate in the YST 2018 exhibition are currently working on projects in various areas of science such as chemical, physical and mathematical sciences, biological and ecological sciences, social and behavioural sciences, and technology," said Dr Kamugisha.

The Young Scientists Tanzania (YST), a non-governmental organization

has opened a room for secondary students to submit their innovative and scientific projects which they think are the best in order to compete with each other.

"We are doing this in order to tackle the existing challenge of poor performance of science in secondary schools attributed by a poor teaching and learning environment," he explained.

The NGO is eager to improve the level of science performance in secondary schools by adopting a practical ap-

proach rather than theoretical emphasis that doesn't produce innovative scientists.

The majority of the projects are geared towards finding practical solutions to development challenges in health, agriculture and food security, communications and transportation safety, energy, education, environment and climate change.

"We are confident that the schools outreach programme and exhibition will provide an opportunity to our young people to research and

experience the power of science in addressing socio-economic problems facing Tanzania today," he explained.

"The exhibition and the schools outreach programme are facilitated by the continued generous support of the main sponsors Shell Exploration and Production Tanzania Limited (Shell) and Karimjee Jivanjee Foundation (KJF)," he said.

Karimjee Jivanjee Foundation (KJF) manager Devotha Rubana said the institution is concerned with minimal per-

formance of science among secondary school students and decided to double their sponsorship for the next five years.

"The institution will provide financial support amounting to 226 million/- annually to fund the project. We believe that investing in young education will assist to nurture young students to be competent in science and technology so as to be able to take part in the field," she said.

KJF is keen to see the teaching methodology and learning

practices changed to suit existing demand in the education sector.

In 2017 KJF spent a total of 700 million/- in education for Tanzanian students together with six students to study M. Sc. in conservation management of the African ecosystem.

Rubana said that the institution has been providing scholarships to Tanzania since 2012, whereby in 2018 KJF and they have decided to expand their support to YST for the coming five years.

For her part external rela-

tions manager for Shell (Exploration and Production) Tanzania Ltd, Patricia Mhondo said that the YST model for promoting science used by YST is good as it helps students to learn and practice science rather than a theory learning approach.

They have decided to sponsor YST in order to get young experts who will be trained and recruited for the future as part of a strategy to reduce the cost of importing experts.

"So far Shell (T) has spent total of \$1million to fund the project that seeks to lift up the scientific talents of the younger generation," she added.



Young Scientists Tanzania co-founder Joseph Clowry (2nd-L) briefs journalists in Dar es Salaam yesterday on a YST exhibition to be held in the city on August 1. With him (from-L) are Shell public relations manager Patricia Mhondo, YST co-founder Gozbert Kamugisha (3rd-L) and Karimjee Jivanjee Foundation director Yusuf Karimjee. Photo: Selemani Mpochi