

**ONLINE MEETING TO REVIEW THE RESERVATION OF THE WORLD BANK CONCERNING THE
PROPOSED CANDIDATE FOR THE POSITIONS OF HEADS OF DEPARTMENT FOR STEE**

Meeting 1: Friday 3rd March, 2023

Agenda:

1. Review of the Comments shared by the World Bank in relation to the appointment of Heads of Department
 - a. Review of the appointment of the Head of Department for Mechanical Engineering
 - b. Discuss Re-launching of the positions of Heads of Department for Civil Engineering and Electrical/Electronic Engineering

In attendance:

Professor Sam Ofori – University Consultant/Administrator-USET
Mr. Edward Mansal – Director General/Centre Leader, STEE - USET
Mr. Samba Sow – Focal Point, ACE Impact Project, MoHERST
Mr. Ebou Gaye – Construction Programme Manager, PCU - MOBSE
Mr. Momodou Jannah – Head of HR/USET
Mr. Sarane Hydera – Civil Engineer/Chair of Council Appointment Committee
Mr. Omar Ousman Jobe, Project Manager, STEE - USET

Panel Member Absent but Provided an Opinion on the Issue:
Dr. Momodou Lamin Tarro – Registrar, University of The Gambia

Panel members who could not be reached:
Dr. Gibril Jaw - CEO NAQAA
Professor Francis Sarr – University of The Gambia

1. Sequel to the comments shared by the World Bank after the submission of the interview report for the recruitment of the **Head of Department for Mechanical Engineering** and the monthly meeting between STEE and the Bank, the interview panel re-convened to deliberate on the comments and the No Objection issued by the Bank with reservations.

2. The panel noted that the WB was not satisfied with the candidate that emerged as the winner of the interview owing to the fact that he is not a Mechanical Engineer but an Agricultural Engineer. However, in the panel's considered view, the outcome of the interview should be seen within the context of the questions that were asked during the interview. The panel members admitted that the questions were leaning more towards general knowledge of education and management rather than core mechanical engineering knowledge. Consequently, the results were skewed towards the candidate that performed better in terms of general knowledge. However, the candidate who was more convincing to majority of the panel members turned out to be an Agricultural Engineer with interest, experience and publications in food processing and post-harvest technology. The panel was, therefore, sensitive to the opinion offered by the Bank and by the University Consultant, Professor Ofori and the evaluations must be revisited.

3. The Panel members agreed that in hindsight, Professor Ofori who is a **Mechanical Engineer** and who observed the interview remotely could have been invited to share his thoughts with the panel after listening to all the candidates. Admitting that to have been an oversight in the recruitment process, the panel invited Professor Ofori to share his thoughts on the comments that emanated from the Bank, and he submitted as follows:

The Mechanical Engineering Programme needs someone who has experience to:

- I. Manage and lead mechanical engineering lecturers, technicians, and students.
- II. Develop the mechanical engineering programme and continuously improve the curriculum.
- III. Teach across the mechanical engineering curriculum, especially at this early stage of the programme as lecturers and technicians are being recruited.
- IV. Determine the staffing needs (thermal, energy, fluid machinery, machine design, production engineering, engineering mechanics) at various stages of the curriculum.
- V. Prepare the necessary documents and lead the department through the accreditation process.

In other words, the experience and adequacy for the position are of utmost importance to USET at this formative stage of its development. Admittedly, the HOD should be someone who will not come to learn of the job but should have deep-seated knowledge of the subject matter to effectively exercise his leadership role.

4. Having heard Professor Ofori and the individual panel members, the general consensus was that the panel should reconvene on Monday, the 7th March, 2023 at 12 Noon for further discussion. It was also agreed that an independent Mechanical Engineer should be consulted and invited to share his/her thoughts on the top three candidates with respect to the TOR and the experience and adequacy for the position.

Meeting 2 – Monday, 7th March 2023

In attendance were:

Professor Sam Ofori – University Consultant/ Administrator-USET
Mr. Samba Sowé – Focal Point, ACE Impact Project, MOHERST

Mr. Ebou Gaye – Construction Manager, PCU - MOBSE

Mr. Momodou Jannah – Head of HR/USET

Mr. Sarane Hydara – Civil Engineer/Chair of USET Council Appointments Committee

Mr. Omar Ousman Jobe, Project Manager, STEE –USET

Mr. Tijan Bahoum – Mechanical Engineer and Manager, Kotu Power Station - NAWEC

Absent but provided an Opinion on the Issue:

Dr. Momodou Lamin Tarro – Registrar, University of The Gambia

Panel members who could not be reached:

Dr. Gibril Jaw - CEO NAQAA

Professor Francis Sarr – University of The Gambia

1. Mr. Tijan Bahoum, The Station Manager of the Kotu Power Station of the National Water and Electricity Company (NAWEC) was provided with the CVs and Applications Materials of Prof. Ogunsinu, Prof. Sunnu and Prof. Oppon for review on March 5th along with the TOR for the position. He was asked to review the information and to provide his opinion regarding the selecting of the three candidates for the March 6th meeting. Mr. Bahoum was invited to participate in the Panel discussion.

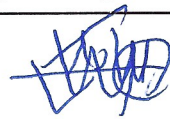
2. Introducing himself, Mr. Bahoum informed the Panel that he is a mechanical Engineer and he is currently the Station Manager of NAWEC's Kotu Power Station and that he has a Bachelors and a Masters' degree from the University of Sierra Leone and Maastricht respectively. Mr. Bahoum has 25 years' experience in mechanical engineering.

3. Mr. Bahoum subsequently submitted his remarks which are summarized as follows:

There were two (2) CVs of candidates with a Ph.D. in Mechanical Engineering and one CV with PhD in Agricultural Engineering. The TOR implies that the primary desired degree is mechanical engineering. Agricultural Engineering is, however, a related field and secondary to the desired degree. The Agricultural Engineering would be the least desired candidate. Both mechanical engineers have adequate teaching experience and have enough publications, which are requirements for the position. Also, they have both taught core courses in Mechanical Engineering, unlike the third candidate who is specialized in Agricultural Engineering. Professor Oppon has indicated that he would be available for only one year. Professor Sunnu has some degree of advantage over all the others in terms of qualifications, experiences, knowledge of the curriculum, availability, research experience, etc. "When all is put together", Professor Sunnu would add more value to the work of USFT at this point.

4. Each member of the panel members who were on board concurred with Mr. Bahoum's analysis and views. Members present agreed to endorse the appointment of Professor Sunnu as the Head of the Department of Mechanical Engineering and the offer should be extended to him. It is worth to note that Professor Sunnu was the second most favorable candidate based solely on the interview process.

Submitted by:



Mr. Omar Ousman Jobe, STEE Project Manager-USFT

Date:

9th March 2023