

UDEC offers free introductory business counselling services

By Vedastus Kilivata

THE University of Dar es Salaam Entrepreneurship Centre (UDEC) started offering free business counseling services to operators of micro, small & medium enterprises (MSME) in Tanzania last week. The services are provided under UDEC's Local Entrepreneurship Action Development Project (LEAD).

Speaking to Business Times in the city recently, the UDEC-LEAD project manager, Ms. Katherine Fulgence, said the services would be offered on Wednesday afternoons when clients can access counselors at their Offices from 2:00pm to 4:00pm.

The overall objective of the counseling services, she said, is to enable client business operators analyze the status of their business with a view to identifying available opportunities, diagnosing problems, determining strategies and taking decisions using their own recourses.

"The services will be offered free of charge to begin with, being offered by competent UDEC Business Counselors. The free services will end on February 15, 2006, after which business operators would start paying for them," the project manager revealed.

Ms. Katherine noted that the Project already has bookings that go beyond October this year. "We are still receiving people who want the service," she said.

UDEC was established initially within the Faculty of Commerce and Management (FCM) in 1999. It became a University-wide Centre in 2001.

The Centre aims to be an effective catalyst for job creation, economic development and poverty alleviation through research, consultancy and policy advocacy in the area of enterprises development, a key factor in the upward mobility of micro and small sized enterprises in Tanzania.

In another development, dozens of participants, including about 60 experts in Information Technologies, are expected to pursue a six-months course under the Cisco Networking Academy Programme beginning early next month.

The course, which has been organized by the University Computing Centre Ltd (UCC), will be held at the Company premises at the University of Dar es Salaam (UDSM).

Petro Mugandila, the UCC Training Services Manager, said at the weekend that the course objective is to teach participants how to design, build and maintain computer networks using Cisco Networking Technology.

He said the end of the course, the participants would have acquired the academic requirements needed to sit the Cisco Certified Networking Associate professional examination (CCNA). The course will follow the approved Cisco Networking Academy Programme.

Noting that computer networks are emerging as a revolutionary force in our lives, redefining the way we communicate, work and play, Mugandila revealed that there would be three sessions a day, each with at least 20 participants.

"Most companies and other organizations in Tanzania today are moving heaven and earth to find people with the right skills to address the demand," the manager explained.

UCC is a limited liability company that provides services in Information & Communication Technologies (ICTs), Internet Services, Web Site Designing, Hosting & Management, Software Development and Systems Integration.

It also deals in Network Design, Installation and Management, as well as ICT Consultancy.