



Investing for future: Kotebe Metropolitan University

BY YARED GEBREMEDEN

Centuries have already elapsed since science and technology have enabled peoples of the world do the impossible things possible and started to change the features of our globe. Due to science and technology, activities which were once impossible and totally unthinkable, have now become day to day activities.

Science and technology, further than easing the day to day activities of human beings, and humans become more dependent on them in their every single aspect; are taken as means to foster sustainable socio-economic growth for countries.

Thus, countries are giving due emphasis for science and technology in each and every of their development agendas. As a result, many of the countries have inspired positive changes and improve the living standards of their people.

With this same purpose, Ethiopia is shifting towards giving focus to science and technology even if many

claim that the nation is too late to implement various programs this in a robust manner to tap from the sectors potential. The Growth and Development Plan (GTP) of the nation gives focus to transform the economy of the nation from agriculture led to Industry led economy by shifting the traditional small holder farming and rain fed agriculture into mechanization and industrialization. And this demands advancement in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics.

In fact, the government, in partnership with various stakeholders, has been performing various activities and expands multifaceted infrastructures to establish successful industries and advance this transformation.

In the same tune, higher educational institutions, universities and colleges are also giving focus in response to government's quest and nation's demand. That is why the educational system of the nation has

given due attention to science more than social science streams.

It is with this rationale that Kotebe Metropolitan University is giving focus to improving the lives of its residents by employing and designing development oriented Science and Technology education, taking into consideration the experiences of various developed nations like Israel-Himda's Science experience.

Legal Service Director and University's President Special Advisor Dr. Tesfaye Baye told *The Ethiopian Herald* that the University is targeting at improving the lives of the city's residents by giving focus to better education that would support development aspirations of the nation.

"Understanding the fact that many of the nation's development ambitions will be realized through better science and technology education, Kotebe Metropolitan University has been given responsibility by the government to lead a special science program beginning from pre-university students," he further said.

According to him, since the past three years the University has started offering special science and technology education in its separate science shared Campus for high school students at Arat Kilo Science Shared Campus for selected best and high scoring students to make them the future scientists of the nation.

The Program has already been started with the assistance and support from international stakeholders like STEM Synergy and other local pertinent bodies including education bureau and development associations.

But now, he further added "We are planning to lead the program by ourselves to ensure its sustainability as it is crucial to the development of the nation."

Edlavit Awoke is a grade 11 student in the Science Shared Campus which is working under Kotebe Metropolitan University where the campus has been moved this year to Arat Killo. She said the world is advanced through science and Technology. Adding she said "The

intentions to build science culture in the nation by the University and the support given by various non-governmental stakes like STEM Synergy needs to be appreciated at this point."

As she stated science and technology streams are her passions. Thus, she strives hard to register remarkable grade and be part of the success stories of the stream in the future. She also underscored the importance of special education to other students in other schools as well.

As the development dynamics of the world is moving faster through science and technology, Ethiopia should compile other nations' experience and initiatives working in the area of science and technology. In this regard, STEM Synergy is among the notable ones which is getting higher acceptance in Ethiopia for making a real difference in building science and technology culture across the nation with the aim of supporting government's program and nations development.

Kaizen: Changing the way Ethiopian industries work

BY BETELHEM BEDLU

Japanese translate Kaizen as continuous improvement. The philosophy has enabled, not only Japan, but also those countries that have implemented Kaizen to register remarkable achievements. Among them, producing competitive products in global market in terms of both quality and quantity, and winning their customers' expectations. In this regard, among the many global leading companies which witnessed changes, the Japanese company Toyota is one.

The Kaizen philosophy was first implemented in Toyota before it spread throughout the world. Now, it has become not only a means to success for many global companies, but also for countries as well. In the philosophy, the first 5S approaches, Sorting, Setting in order, Shining, Standardizing, Sustaining, are implemented sequentially.

This globally approved change and reform tool has been implemented in some of Ethiopia's industries in recent years, and has brought about tangible improvements. The Kaizen Institute was established five years ago, and 38 factories selected by the Ministry of

Industry are practicing it. Since the philosophy has become practical in some of Ethiopia's industries, it is enabled them to save resources and be efficient and to the tune of 2.5 billion birr.

The industries are said to be exporters, import substituting companies, and have high degree of inefficiency. Though irregularities are witnessed in the implementation process, but evaluating their progress, remarkable changes have been registered.

Asnake Gudissa, Kaizen Transfer and Development Director of Food and Beverage Industries with the Ethiopian Kaizen Institute Manufacturing Sector, said that since the past one year, 38 selected industries, including industries such as meat and dairy, metals and engineering, chemicals, leather and textile are implementing Kaizen.

As to him, the industries have improved efficiency and benefited a lot as a result of the implementation of this approach. "While efficiency is improved and productivity increased, waste is minimized. Concurrently, raw materials wastage and injuries in work places have reduced. Overall, favorable working environment is created where things are done in a manner that saves time and energy." Employees have

become more passionate about the work they do, he added.

In the past six months alone, 13 million birr was managed to be saved from the sale of unnecessary items, and reuse of existing ones. Hence, the practical application of the philosophy is helping industries witness improvements.

For instance, from garment and textile industries, Addis Garment and Adama spinning factories, from meat and dairy factories Shola and Luna Export have witnessed constant improvements, the Director remarked.

While mentioning the challenges the industries face in the practical implementation of Kaizen, Asnake said that lack of support from the sides of the management have limited the successful realization of it.

The core tenet of Kaizen is not securing money. Rather, it focuses on establishing a culture of continuous change and improvement within institutions. Thus, institutions should strive hard to realize quality and quantity and create conducive work environment to yield continuous change, instead of contented with insignificant successes they may achieve, Asnake remarked. Especially to realize Kaizen effectively, the management and employees should

work hand in glove, he furthered.

According to Asnake, in Kaizen, it is always pivotal to sustain quality and increase employees' motivation and customers' satisfaction by minimizing hustles and bustles that causes waste and costs.

For instance, at work place, if work materials are kept here and there in disorganized manner, production time would be lost as it takes time to identify them easily. On the contrary, if they are kept in accordance to the Kaizen's standard (based on their type, importance and order) efficiency improves, waste reduces, production, increases and it saves time and resources.

As to the Director, Kaizen is about continuous improvement, and it is not just a one-time fashion. The proper practical applications of it are great. Therefore, Industries should implement the basic principles persistently to survive, be effective, and competitive globally. Thus, it is vital to provide the required support and follow-up for industries and employees. Equally, it is important to design a mechanism for companies to evaluate the system and give recognition for best performers.

Sharing Asnake's idea, Kaizen Office Coordinator at Adama Spinning

Factory Yehualaeshet Tsegaye said that Kaizen has multifaceted advantages for industries. For instance, since his factory started implementing Kaizen, it has enabled him to secure items that were exposed to wastage, but valued hundred thousand birr within a six month time.

The philosophy when applied properly can set significant change in factories' productivity and product quality. It is possible to have well organized workplace, and thereby waste would be minimized, efficiency will soar, and customers' satisfaction increases.

Industry State Minister Ayana Zewdie for his part said Kaizen has greater contribution for most of Asian countries' growth. The philosophy has also created successful industries that are capable enough to produce competitive products in the international market.

"What is more, it has assisted them to develop strong work culture. Thus, Ethiopian industries need to follow this path to produce quality products and have competitive success in the world market place." To this effect, the government is committed to provide the necessary support for industries, the State Minister underscored.