

### 3<sup>RD</sup> MUAST GRADUATION CEREMONY



Marondera University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology (MUAST) held its 3<sup>rd</sup> Graduation Ceremony on 27 November 2024 at the Marondera Campus. This milestone event celebrated the university's first cohort of four Doctor of Philosophy (DPhil) graduates. This 3<sup>rd</sup> Graduation Ceremony also marked the graduation of the first cohort of 34 students from Kushinga Phikelela Agricultural College, an associate of MUAST.

Out of the 103 graduates, there were 71 undergraduates, 27 MSc, 1 MPhil, and 4 DPhils, showcasing the university's upward trajectory. Notably, two of the DPhil graduates conducted research on the physiology and genetics of two African Indigenous Vegetables: Cleome Gynandra (nyevhe) and Amaranthus (mowa/bonongwe).

Professor Justice Nyamangara expressed gratitude to His Excellency and Chancellor for appointing Professor Nomalanga Mpofu-Hamadziripi as the Pro-Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, Research, and Administration, and Ms. Sheila Ndlovu as the substantive Librarian.

In his speech, Prof. Nyamangara highlighted that seven research grants had been awarded to various teams within the university. These grants address issues such as Tamarind, greenhouse gas emissions, rebuilding communities affected by Cyclone Idai through psychosocial health support, gender equality and social inclusion, climate change, and sustainable agriculture. "All these research projects, spread across the country, aim to tackle the challenges facing our communities," said Prof. Nyamangara. "As part of community engagement, the Muchekeranwa Outgrower Irrigation Scheme has continued to thrive," Prof. Nyamangara noted. He mentioned that the Muchekeranwa Community cultivated 30 hectares (Ha) of wheat and 30Ha of maize last season, ensuring food security within the community. There were mooted plans with the parent ministry to expand the scheme to 90Ha.

Prof. Nyamangara also highlighted the increase in crop diversity at the Agro-Industrial Park, including seed-potato and tobacco. He mentioned the university's participation in the Presidential Innovation Fair, where it received two awards: one for the African Indigenous Vegetable programme and another for Manutro Innovation.

In his closing remarks, the Vice Chancellor expressed his gratitude to the Chancellor for the Dr Emmerson Dambudzo Mnangagwa Chancellor's awards, which reflect the Chancellor's passion for education and recognition of academic excellence.

