



Like never before; 'Mwalimu' new look

TODAY marks a new day in the history of *Mwalimu*. It is a new journey with greater opportunities and responsibility.

This re-design is not just about changing appearance. It is also about offering informative, authoritative, professional and engaging stories based on the community needs.

We are bringing you a new repertoire of stories that are easy to digest and richer in value. The pullout has also been re-designed to take visual storytelling to the next level through the use of more colour, photos and infographics.

Our pullout offers exciting news about the latest Government policies, experts and community people's views. We shall also be taking the lead in breaking stories in the

education sector.

A growing number of readers now use the social media to broaden their knowledge and we will endeavour to integrate our reporting with the social platforms.

Teachers you now have more space and say in the pullout. Parents our experts will also attend to you. We are Uganda's leading daily and we take that responsibility seriously. It is the same reason why we have to take a lead in reporting on education and career issues.

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We don't have universities, but teaching institutions



Prof. A B Kasozi

By Prof. A.B Kasozi

Many institutions award degrees but few qualify to be called universities

Although Uganda has many institutions calling themselves universities and many are proud to award certificates, diplomas, degrees and other terminal awards, few of them qualify to be called universities. Their best public show and performance often stops at elaborate graduation ceremonies. My view is that it will take many years for the 34 odd institutions we have licensed to be full universities.

With the exception of one or two public and two other private ones, none of Uganda's universities produces new knowledge through research, debate or observation. Most of them, like high schools, are teaching institutions using knowledge from sources external to their institutions. This is sad but true. To make our institutions standard universities, the country must spend at least 2% of its GDP on research and innovation. All university institutions should have access to these funds because research is the salt, the heart and core of a university institution.

Full universities must have three major characteristics integrated into one. First and foremost, they must be sites for knowledge creation, often through research, debate and observation. Secondly, the university must be a place where acquired knowledge is stored and used by learners.

The National Council for Higher Education (NCHE) was mandated to guide institutions in the production of knowledge through research. In the period between 2010 and 2012, NCHE managed the meagre funds allocated to research in public universities by the Ministry of Education. Currently, I am not sure whether the funds are still available or not. But we seem to focus on teaching as if the university sector is a high school sub-sector. As a result, we receive and teach foreign biased knowledge, which cannot resolve local issues.

Almost all major ranking of



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Makerere University has been repositioned into a research-led university so academic units have developed systems and strategies registering significant breakthroughs in research.

universities are based on research output. Global ranking of universities enhances this trend.

Teaching is a major component of university academic management, but research takes priority- and a more exalted one. The NCHE has constantly advised institutions to

focus on research. A number of indices show that Uganda and Africa as a whole, do not contribute to the knowledge given in its higher institutions of learning.

Most of the knowledge cited in Africa is produced elsewhere because Africa is peripheral to global knowledge production. Virtually all African scholars

agree on the need to have African-centered knowledge produced by scholars with knowledge and experience of the African condition. External conceptual models that are said to be applicable to all nations and transferred to Africa without scrutiny are believed to be one of the major causes of the slow development of Africa.

The agricultural experts we have are afraid of soiling their hands. If there is an area the NCHE has not done well, it is to convince the Government that universities are, first, research institutions and second, teaching entities. There seems to be more celebrations at graduation parties than on occasions for launching books and research papers! The Government and parents are happier to see their children graduate than the staff publishing researched materials.

Allocations to institutions of higher learning are based on students taken rather than knowledge produced by a given institution. The Government, as guard of society and therefore, economic innovation must reverse this upside-down attitude.

It is within this context, as well as the dearth of funding, that Ugandan low research output can be understood.

In Uganda, science-based and technology faculties of public universities are at Makerere University and Mbarara University of Science and Technology. Gulu and Kyambogo are building foundations for research, but have not yet taken off. MUBS has not broken deep ground in research except consultancy researches.

Most of these were at Makerere and Mbarara. Indeed, donor-supported research as well as institutional determination has helped Makerere get back on the platform of real universities.

Amongst private universities, Bishop Stuart University in Mbarara has produced impressive researches and publications. I am very proud of Bishop Stuart University.



Students celebrate their graduation