

A NEW PATH WITH THE NEW VICE CHANCELLOR

Kyambogo University is this week holding its 14th graduation ceremony. **Billy Rwothungeyo** interviewed Prof Eli Katunguka, the Vice Chancellor of Kyambogo University on his vision for the university.

1) Congratulations on your appointment as substantive Vice Chancellor of Kyambogo University. What is your vision for the university?

I assumed office of the Vice Chancellor on May 15th, 2017 having been in the office in acting capacity since February 2014. So I know the university quite well.

My vision for this university is to transform it into a truly international institution which is research active, with sufficient infrastructure both physical and ICT and sufficient human resource and funds to run the university.

I want this university to produce graduates who are relevant to the job market.

2) How is Kyambogo University positioning itself to be a centre of innovation and knowledge creation in Uganda?

When this university was formed in 2003, research was not one of the pre-existing institutions, Uganda Polytechnic was producing technicians, Institute of Teacher Education, Kyambogo (ITEK) was producing teachers, and Uganda National Institute of Special Education (UNISE) was producing materials for help people with disabilities to access education.

After formation of the university, it was given a mandate to research and create knowledge. We have been building this capacity through in-house workshops, sending staff to conferences and supporting research through our own internally generated funds.

We are going to provide sh2b as a competitive research fund. In addition, we are creating an innovation hub in Kyambogo University, in partnership with a university in Germany; we are trying to create a cadre of innovative



Prof. Eli Katunguka, Vice Chancellor

people, especially in the field of entrepreneurship. Many of our students are already innovative, they have small projects, through this programme, and they will be mentored. We also have a business incubation centre created with the support of the ADB. In this centre, we are focusing mainly on food science.

3) How is Kyambogo University developing its institutional capacity? What systems are in place to propel the university to greater heights?

When you talk about institutional capacity, three things come to my mind; the human resource, funding and

policies to govern the university.

The university has developed a human resource manual which stipulates a requirement for training of people at different levels. Now for you to be a lecturer at Kyambogo, you must have a PhD. That is the minimum qualification as required by the National Council of Higher Education. We are recruiting many senior lectures, although we still lack professors. Within the country, we do not have enough professors to go around the public universities. We have a budget to train our staff to attain PhDs.

For funding, the university is working on a resource mobilization and investment policy. We are looking at how to make money from our own assets. Kyambogo has land that we want to develop, in partnership with private sector players. We want to develop hostels; we want to develop shopping malls. We also have land in Mukono that we want to develop.

For policies, we have already made headway. Before I came here, the university was in total chaos. Government wanted to close it permanently. We did not even have policies, which we now have.

4) The physical infrastructure at the university is being transformed. Where do you see Kyambogo in the next five years in terms of infrastructure?

The physical infrastructure at the university is being transformed through funding of the ADB and Government of Uganda. Already, we have four new structures completed and handed over, these buildings are the central teaching facility, the virtual library, the technical teacher education complex and the multi-purpose science complex. What we are waiting for is the furniture and the equipment in these facilities, which will be installed soon.

In addition to this, we have the new engineering laboratories complex which is being constructed. We are going to construct a new complex for architecture. With our own funds, we are constructing a new sh15b central lecture block, we are about to finish phase one with two floors and start on phase two which will start next year.

5) How is the university marketing itself to the outside world?

We have not been good with marketing the university. We are going to recruit a senior public relations officer and a public relations officer. Once this office is filled, we shall embark on marketing the university to the world.