

## ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE AT KYAMBOGO UNIVERSITY

The students graduating from Kyambogo University's 14 graduation ceremony this week are experiencing something their predecessors never experienced before. For the first time in the history of the university, graduates will be able to go home both with transcript and certificate.

This is one of the major turnarounds happening at the university on the academic front. Under the tutelage of Prof. Eli Katunguka, the now substantive vice chancellor of the university, Kyambogo is experiencing a remarkable renaissance.

### Building capacity

Kyambogo University was formed after three institutions; the Uganda Polytechnic Kyambogo (UPK), the Institute of Teacher Education, Kyambogo (ITEK), and the Uganda National Institute of Special Education (UNISE) were merged.

The rich history of the institutions that led to the formation of Kyambogo University has set a perfect pedestal for growth of the institution. UPK started in 1928 as a small technical school on the Makerere Hill before being transferred to Kyambogo Hill in 1958 as Kampala Technical Institute. It later became the Uganda Technical College and finally UPK.

ITEK on the other hand, started as a Government Teacher Training College in 1948 in Nyakasura, Fort Portal and transferred to Ruharo and then Ntare Hill all in Mbarara, western Uganda. It transformed into a National Teachers College and later ITEK. UNISE started out as Department of Special Education at ITEK in 1988 before becoming autonomous later on.

Prof. Eli Katunguka, the vice chancellor of Kyambogo University says the institution is ready to continue with the history of transformation as evidenced by the preceding institutions.

Katunguka wants to transform Kyambogo University into a world class university that is big on research.

"We are going to review the structure of the university. When the university was formed in 2003, there were about 6000 students. We now have close to 24,000 students on campus and another 35,000 in the National Teachers' Colleges, Primary Teachers' Colleges and Early Childhood Development training institutions," he says. We are developing off-campus learning centres, one

in the east, and another in the west and the north so that we can handle the numbers. To do this, we have developed our ICT capacity significantly; most of our processes are now online."

Katunguka is banking on an excellent teaching staff to transform Kyambogo University into a top tier university. He wants all lecturers at the university to have Doctor of Philosophy (PhD), and some are getting help to achieve this qualification. Sixteen Academic Staff have in the recent past received financial support to get PhDs.

Dr. Cyprian Ben Adupa, acting dean and senior lecturer at the faculty of arts and social sciences says as the numbers of students grow, it is a good thing that the university is considering opening centres upcountry.

"The university is thinking of opening centres up country to accommodate the big numbers that we have."

Several new programmes have also been introduced this year to meet the changing needs of the job market.

Faculty of Vocational studies has three new undergraduate programmes; Bachelors of Computer Graphic Design, Bachelor of Interior and Landscape Design and Bachelor of Textiles and Apparel Design from the department of Art and Industrial Design.

The Department of Food Processing Technology has started the Postgraduate Diploma in Food Safety Management was launched and Master of Science in Food Safety Management and is waiting accreditation by National Council for Higher Education.

The Faculty of Education has incorporated two additional areas of specialisation (Curriculum Studies and Educational Psychology) into the Multi-Disciplinary PhD in Education programme. This new addition has been approved by National Council for Higher Education (NCHE).

### New approaches by faculties

The faculties are looking at new approaches to boost learning of students. Adupa says the university is looking to building partnerships to enhance learning of students at Kyambogo University.

"For instance, the music department has entered a partnership with New York University. We have even



*Dr. Cyprian Ben Adupa, Ag Dean, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences*

agreed on conferences every year in January. We are trying to bring music closer to the community through this partnership," he said.

The department of Sociology and Social Administration under the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences has established a memorandum of understanding with South Dakota State University by which a joint Masters degree will ultimately be launched. Talks have also been held with universities in Oslo and Arkansas.

The Faculty of Vocational Studies has established linkages with with Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture (RUFORUM), Art and Design with NORHED and Learning Network on Sustainable Energy systems (Lenses) where it will

collaborate with other eight other universities around the world.

Arrangements are underway to finalise a Memorandum of Understanding between the School of Management and Entrepreneurship and the University of Arizona's McGuire Center for Entrepreneurship to support social entrepreneurship in Kyambogo University. Two members of the University have visited the University of Arizona to negotiate for the Memorandum of Understanding.

The School is also working with the University of Mainz in Germany to develop a Master's degree in International Business.