

MAKERERE

P .O. Box 7062
Kampala, Uganda
Cables: MAKUNIKA



UNIVERSITY

Tel: 256-414-531261
E-mail: principal@chuss.mak.ac.ug
Web: <http://chuss.mak.ac.ug>

COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES Office of the Principal

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PRESS RELEASE

School Of Psychology Develops Tool to Measure Integrity

The School of Psychology in the College of Humanities and Social Sciences at Makerere University has developed a tool that will be used to assess and identify people with acceptable levels of ethics and integrity to take up positions of responsibility in public and private sectors.

The tool codenamed Uganda's Standardized Ethics and Integrity Scale has over 100 items that have been modified and piloted to effectively carry out the function.

The scale has three parts. Part A measures individual standards of conduct and focuses on a number of components that include corruption, nepotism, confidentiality, time management, abuse of office and conflict resolution.

Part B measures the moral standards of individuals with specific focus on self control against forgeries and fraud as well as sexual conduct whereas Part C measures personal values, value orientations and social acceptance.

The tool takes a maximum of 30 minutes to respond to all the 100 items in the scale. One mark point is earned for every correct score for each of the items. Likewise a zero is earned for each of the wrong responses given on the scale. The maximum score is 100 points and the higher the score, the higher the level of integrity.

It has been gradually tested on various personalities in the country since 1999 to establish its effectiveness. "It will further be tested on two categories of respondents to establish its validity and reliability. One category will comprise priests in seminaries and convents as well as Theological colleges, who are assumed to be of higher integrity. The other category will comprise of public officers employed by at least 14 district administrations of Uganda and they shall be randomly selected," said Professor Peter Baguma, Dean, School of Psychology.

The tool, that is expected to be ready for use in six months time, will be instrumental in curbing corruption and improving service delivery in Uganda's public and private sectors.

A 2009 report by Transparency International on the overview of corruption in Uganda indicates that corruption is still widespread and endemic at all levels of society.

Global Integrity's 2006 report on Uganda estimates that more than half of the government's annual budget is lost to corruption each year.

Corruption scandals involving personalities close to those in power periodically hit the headlines. In 2007, the government circumvented official procurement guidelines to contract an unknown company, Kenlloyd Logistics, to replenish Uganda's fuel reserves. The company was being run by the son-in-law of the foreign minister, who is himself related to the president.

For details please contact;

1. Mr. Steven Ssenyonga

*Psychology Consultant, School of Psychology
Mobile number - +256-712-297429*

2. Professor Peter Baguma

*Dean – School of Psychology
Mobile number -+256-772-551804
Email: kpbaguma@muip.mak.ac.ug*

3. Hasifa Kabejja

*Communication Officer – College of Humanities and Social Sciences
Mobile: - +256-776-312076
Email: pr@chuss.mak.ac.ug/hkabejja@chuss.mak.ac.ug*