MAKERERE UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES (CHUSS)

July - September 2026: Issue:3

THE MINE OF EXCELLENT MINDS

Operationalization of the Makerere University Radio



Word from the principal



Assoc. Prof. Helen Nambalirwa Nkabala - Principal

New leadership

Prof Eddy Walakira takes over as Deputy Principal



Word from the Principal



Helen Nambalirwa Nkabala (PhD)
Principal

As Principal, I am proud of the strides we have made and optimistic about the journey ahead. Let us continue to harness the power of the humanities and social sciences to illuminate pathways for Uganda, Africa, and the world.

As we reflect on the July–September quarter, I am filled with gratitude for the collective energy, resilience, and innovation that continue to define the College of Humanities and Social Sciences (CHUSS). This period has been marked by significant milestones that reaffirm our mission to advance scholarship, nurture talent, and strengthen our impact on society.

We welcomed Prof. Eddy Joshua Walakira as Deputy Principal, whose pledge to champion research, innovation, and partnerships resonates deeply with our strategic vision. His collaborative spirit and solution-oriented leadership will help us build on the strong foundations laid by his predecessor, Assoc. Prof. Eric Awich Ochen, whose tenure saw remarkable progress in teaching, programme development, and internationalisation. Together, we remain committed to fostering a culture of excellence and accountability across all our schools and departments.

Our College has also been at the forefront of global conversations on climate change, migration, and resilience. Through the Makerere–Cambridge project, we awarded seed grants to graduate students and refugee-community researchers, ensuring that those most affected by climate challenges are active participants in shaping knowledge and policy. The workshops and dialogues held this quarter underscored the importance of evidence-based interventions and community-driven solutions, reminding us that research must always serve humanity.

We further celebrated academic growth and internationalisation with the orientation of the Gerda Henkel PhD Fellows and the arrival of Erasmus+ students from 16 countries. These initiatives not only strengthen doctoral training and global partnerships but also enrich our intellectual community with diverse perspectives. In addition, the inaugural Critical Thinking and Social Intelligence short course demonstrated our responsibility to translate university knowledge into practical skills that empower professionals to confront misinformation, foster empathy, and engage constructively in society.

As Principal, I am proud of the strides we have made and optimistic about the journey ahead. Let us continue to harness the power of the humanities and social sciences to illuminate pathways for Uganda, Africa, and the world.

I extend my sincere appreciation to staff, students, partners and stakeholders for their continued support and dedication.

Editorial Team

Assoc. Prof Helen Nambalirwa Nkabala, Principal CHUSS
Ms. Jane Anyango, Principal Communication Officer
Atuhaire Onesmus, Journalism student.

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College Fact- file

1.We deliver on research:

- **USD 12m+ in Research funding across projects**
- **UGX 60m in Seed funding allocated for research groups**
- **200+ Publications: Staff output spans gender, archives, learning, governance and cultural heritage**

2. Out reach : 30+ outreach activities: Public lectures, media dialogue, language festivals, mental health and heritage engagement.

3. Staffing: 287

Staff distribution by rank

	Rank	Female	Male	Total
1	Professor	2	8	10
2	Associate Professor	6	9	15
3	Senior Lecturer	6	33	39
4	Lecturer	20	61	81
5	Assistant Lecturers	31	45	76
6	Administrative and support staff	43	23	66
	TOTAL	108	179	287

4. Student population : 3720

Student Number Distribution 2025/2026

	Female	Male	Total
Diploma	9	42	51
Undergraduate	1668	1135	2803
Postgraduate Diploma	28	29	57
Masters	436	306	742
Doctorate	35	32	67
TOTAL	2176	1544	3720

5.Courses offered: 10 Bachelors, 24 Masters, 2 Undergraduate Diplomas, 3PGD and 4 PhD programmes

We are on AIR: Mak Radio Operationalized



A third year student during the Mak Radio talk show at Makerere university

Makerere University under the Department of Journalism and Communication operationalised the Mak-Radio, an online radio station designed to strengthen public access to the University's research, innovations and academic expertise.

The initiative responds to a longstanding gap in communicating Makerere's research beyond academic audiences, which has limited research visibility, public engagement, knowledge transfer and practical training opportunities for students.

Accessible globally through the RadioBox app under the name Mak-Radio, the station is being developed as part of a broader vision to establish the Makerere University Broadcast Service.

The platform will provide a dedicated channel for researchers and academic units to communicate scientific discoveries, innovations and knowledge to the public in accessible formats. It is also expected to strengthen engagement between the University, communities, policymakers and other stakeholders who can apply research findings to address societal challenges.

The initiative is led by a project team from the department comprising Principal Investigator Dr. Aisha Sembatya Nakiwala, Dr. Fred Kakooza, Dr. John Baptist Imokola, Dr. William Tayeebwa and Mr. Wilson Kaija.

Beyond research dissemination, Mak-Radio is expected to create practical learning opportunities for students interested in broadcasting, journalism, communication and digital media.



A section of journalism and communication students in the Mak Radio studio in CTF 1

By establishing an online broadcasting platform, the project positions Makerere to extend its research and innovation beyond campus and reach audiences globally, while creating a new avenue for knowledge transfer, public engagement and student skills development

Prof. Walakira takes over as CHUSS Deputy Principal, pledges to strengthen research and partnerships

Prof. Eddy Joshua Walakira has taken over as Deputy Principal of Makerere University's College of Humanities and Social Sciences (CHUSS), pledging to build on the College's existing strengths while advancing research, innovation, partnerships and resource mobilisation.

Prof. Walakira officially assumed office on 14 September 2026, succeeding Associate Prof. Eric Awich Ochen, who completed his four-year tenure after taking office in April 2022. The handover ceremony, held at the CHUSS Smart Room, was attended by College Principal Associate Prof. Helen Nambalirwa Nkabala, deans, heads of departments, academic, administrative and support staff, and representatives from the Directorate of Internal Audit.



Prof. Eddy Joshua Walakira gets official documents from Assoc. Prof. Eric Awich Ochen

In his remarks, Prof. Walakira said he was taking over at a time when CHUSS had established a strong institutional foundation. He pledged to work closely with the Principal and staff to consolidate the College's achievements and identify opportunities for further growth.

"I'm coming in with a lot of hope, a lot of courage and a lot of optimism because the foundations are already in place and the structures are already in place," he said.

His immediate priority, Prof. Walakira said, will be to understand the research, innovation and partnership needs of CHUSS schools and departments. He plans to tour the College's academic units to identify existing capacities, gaps and opportunities that can inform practical interventions.

He also called for greater use of existing academic networks and partnerships to expand research collaboration, innovation and resource mobilisation. He encouraged departments facing persistent equipment challenges to explore sustainable, internally driven solutions.

Prof. Walakira pledged a leadership approach grounded in consultation, humility, collaboration and respect for University policies and structures.

"My pledge, first of all, is to be loyal and humble to my boss and, above all, to serve in the fear of the Most High and to respect the rules, the principles and the structures of the University," he said.

He further called for a collective vision among CHUSS staff, noting that the College has the human and institutional capacity to strengthen its position within Makerere University.

In his handover report, outgoing Deputy Principal Associate Prof. Eric Awich Ochen highlighted achievements registered during his four-year tenure in teaching and learning, academic programme development, research, internationalisation, staff capacity building and digitalisation.

Prof. Ochen, who assumed office in April 2022 in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic, served under two College Principals-Prof. Josephine Ahikire and Associate Prof. Helen Nambalirwa Nkabala.

He attributed the progress made during his tenure to the collective efforts of the College leadership, deans, heads of departments and staff.

"Whatever I did in the office of the Deputy Principal for the last four years has been in the best interest of the students. I tried to act in good faith," Prof. Ochen said.



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Assoc. Prof. Helen Nkabala and Assoc. Prof Eric Awich welcome Prof Walikra in the Deputy Principal's Seat

Makerere-Cambridge project awards €18,000 in seed grants to graduate students and refugee community researchers



Beneficiaries posing with their award letters during the ceremony

Makerere University's collaboration with the University of Cambridge is strengthening research and community participation on climate change, migration and displacement, with €18,000 in seed grants awarded to nine graduate students and refugee-community researchers.

The grants were awarded at the close of a three-day workshop on the histories of climate change and migration in Uganda held at Makerere University's College of Humanities and Social Sciences (CHUSS). Five CHUSS graduate students and four researchers from refugee communities and host organisations each received €2,000 to support research and educational activities.

The initiative, implemented under the Histories of Climate Change and Migration in Uganda project, is supported by the Mastercard Foundation Climate Resilience and Sustainability Research Fund in partnership with the Cambridge Africa Programme.

Beyond financial support, the project seeks to give emerging researchers and refugee communities a meaningful role in generating knowledge about climate change, migration, displacement and resilience.

The research is also attracting government attention. Davis Mwenyi, Commissioner for Relief, Disaster Preparedness and Management in the Office of the Prime Minister, called for Uganda to shift from reactive disaster relief towards preparedness, mitigation and anticipatory action.

Mwenyi urged researchers to translate evidence from affected communities into policy, noting that historical and community knowledge can help government design more effective responses to climate-related displacement.

He disclosed that although Cabinet allocated Shs56 billion for land acquisition for resettlement, only Shs14 billion had been spent because of difficulties in identifying suitable land.

Representing the Deputy Vice-Chancellor for Academic Affairs, Associate Professor Julius Kikooma said the project demonstrated the value of placing Uganda's history and community knowledge within global academic conversations.

He urged researchers to produce inclusive, evidence-based and policy-relevant histories, noting that understanding past patterns of environmental change and migration can help inform responses to contemporary challenges.

Project Co-Principal Investigator Dr Pamela Kanakwa said the initiative was "just the beginning," signalling continued collaboration between researchers, government and refugee communities

Bududa research exposes gaps in Uganda's disaster resettlement response

Research by Makerere University has exposed gaps in Uganda's response to disaster-induced displacement, showing how inadequate planning, delays and limited community engagement can undermine resettlement programmes.

Presenting her research at a workshop on the histories of climate change and migration in Uganda, Dr. Pamela Khanakwa examined the experiences of communities displaced by landslides in Bududa in 2010 and 2018 and subsequent government interventions.

Her study, "From Bududa to Kiryandongo and Bulambuli: Landslides, Displacement and Governance Intervention," found that although relocation offered some survivors an opportunity to rebuild their lives, others resisted moving because of concerns over land, livelihoods,



Dr. Pamela Khanakwa also Dean School of Liberal and Performing Arts presenting during the workshop

culture and environmental conditions.

Survivors relocated to Kiryandongo reported challenges including inadequate water supplies, limited access to schools and health facilities, poor shelter, food shortages and difficulties adapting to a different environment. Some eventually returned to Bududa and resumed farming on their former land.

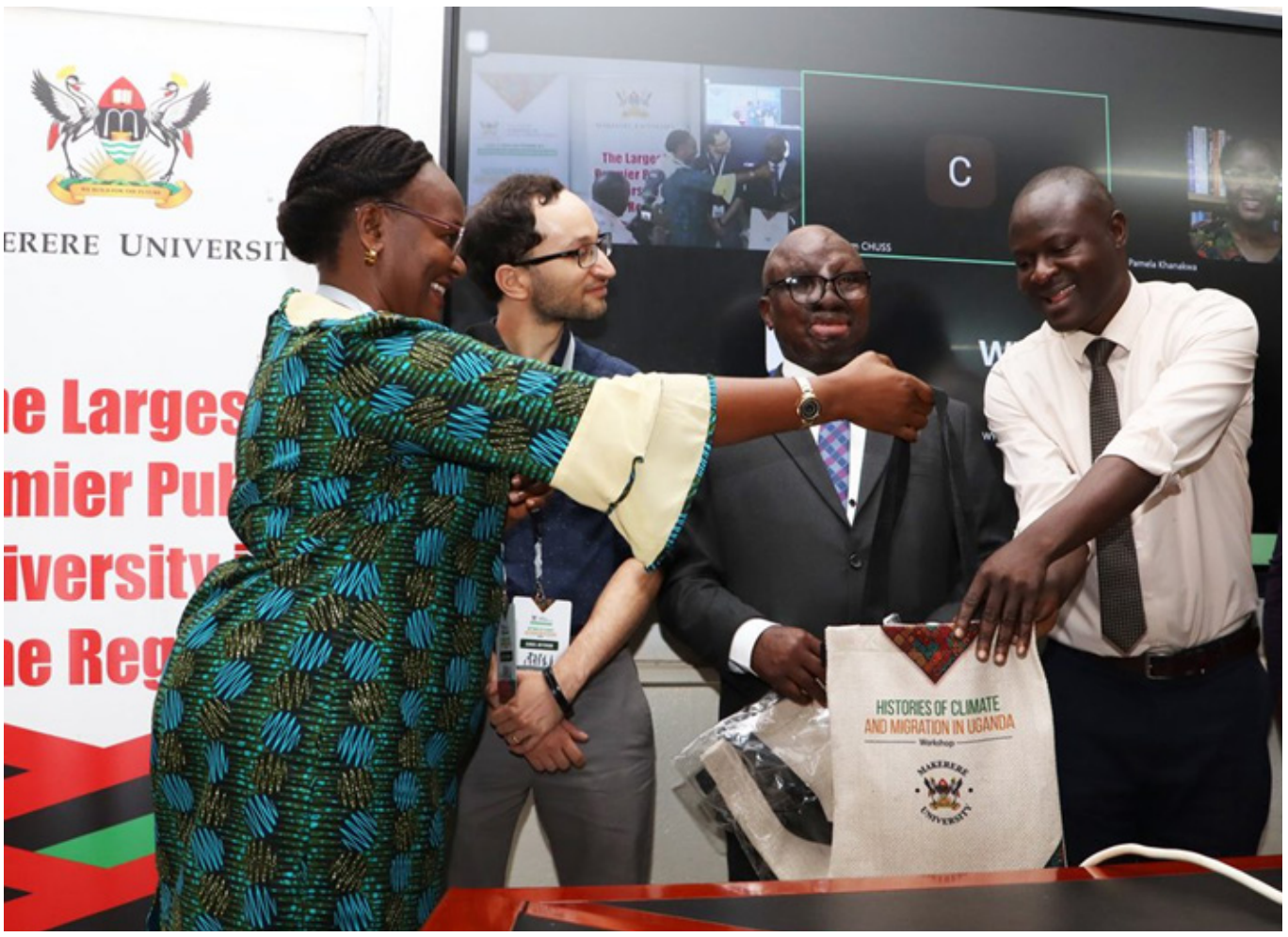
Khanakwa also identified concerns over beneficiary registration, with some people directly affected by the landslides reportedly excluded from relocation programmes while others were included despite not being directly affected.

Government efforts to secure alternative land in Bulambuli were further complicated by land disputes and delays, with the 2018 landslides occurring before communities in high-risk areas had been fully relocated.

The findings underscore the need for more inclusive and evidence-based resettlement planning. "Successful resettlement must take into account the economic, social, cultural and environmental conditions that sustain communities," Khanakwa said.

She called for stronger engagement with affected communities and greater use of research to inform displacement policies, noting that understanding people's experiences is essential to designing resettlement programmes that are sustainable and responsive to their needs.

Uganda urged to shift from disaster relief to climate-migration preparedness



Dr. Pamela Khanakwa gifting a bag to Davis Mwenyi and a colleague he came with

Uganda needs to shift from responding to climate-related disasters after they occur to strengthening preparedness, mitigation and anticipatory action, the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM) has said.

Commissioner for Relief, Disaster Preparedness and Management Davis Mwenyi made the call on 9 September 2026 during a Makerere University workshop examining the histories of climate change and migration in Uganda.

Mwenyi said the increasing frequency of climate-related disasters, population growth and pressure on land require government to rethink how it prepares communities, manages displacement and supports resettlement.

"For many years disaster management meant responding, giving people food, and giving them tarpaulins. But that is not lasting," he said, calling for credible information to help communities anticipate risks and act before disasters occur.

Mwenyi disclosed that Cabinet had allocated Shs56 billion for land acquisition to resettle people living in high-risk areas, but only Shs14 billion had been spent because of difficulties in identifying suitable land.

He called for stronger collaboration between government and universities to ensure that climate-migration and disaster-management policies are grounded in research and community knowledge. He also urged researchers to share their findings with government to inform policy.

Research presented by Dr. Pamela Khanakwa on communities displaced by landslides in Bududa reinforced the need for more effective resettlement planning. Her study found that some survivors relocated to Kiryandongo and Bulambuli faced challenges involving land, livelihoods, water, health services, education and cultural ties, with some eventually returning to Bududa.

The workshop, organised by Makerere's Department of History, Archaeology and Heritage Studies, brought together academics, government officials, development partners, refugees and host communities.

The discussions highlighted the need to treat climate-induced migration as a long-term development and governance challenge, with research, community participation, reliable data and anticipatory action informing Uganda's response.

Probing Climate Change–Migration links: CHUSS conference calls for protective policies for vulnerable communities



Dr. Anthony Mugeere, the key note speaker poses with university officials with copies of his publication

Makerere University researchers and partners examined how climate change has shaped migration and displacement in Uganda, with a focus on generating evidence to inform policies that protect vulnerable communities.

A three-day workshop held from 8–10 September 2026 at Makerere brought together academics, government officials, postgraduate students and representatives of refugee and host communities to examine the historical and contemporary links between climate change, migration and resilience.

Organised by the Department of History, Archaeology and Heritage Studies under the College of Humanities and Social Sciences (CHUSS), the workshop is part of a joint Makerere-Cambridge project supported by the Mastercard Foundation's Climate Resilience and Sustainability Research Fund in partnership with the Cambridge Africa Programme.

The £49,800 project is examining how environmental and climate factors have influenced human mobility in Uganda, drawing on 32 research papers, keynote presentations, roundtable discussions and a field visit to the Uganda National Archives.

Delivering a keynote address, Dr. Anthony Mugeere said climate-related migration should not be viewed solely as a crisis, but also as a potential adaptation strategy.

"Climate change does not simply change Uganda's climate. It changes the geography of opportunity, risk, and human mobility," he said, calling for proactive policies that address both migrants and host communities.

Mugeere noted that environmental pressures including drought, floods, landslides, livestock losses and rising water levels can influence migration, while some vulnerable households may lack the resources to move.

The project is also incorporating community perspectives. Project Co-Principal Investigator Dr. Pamela Khanakwa said graduate students and refugee-community researchers are receiving seed funding to undertake historical research.

Cambridge Principal Investigator Dr. Samuel Meyerson welcomed participants from Nakivale Refugee Settlement, emphasising the importance of their experiences to the research.

The initiative seeks to translate historical and community knowledge into evidence that can strengthen policies on climate adaptation, migration, displacement and community resilience.

The 2026 Gerda Henkel PhD fellows oriented: Three-year PhD completion target emphasized



Makerere University's College of Humanities and Social Sciences (CHUSS) has oriented 10 new Gerda Henkel Foundation PhD fellows, urging them to maximise the competitive scholarship and complete their doctoral studies within 36 months.

The 2026 cohort was oriented on 7 September 2026 at the CHUSS Smart Room in an event attended by College management, deans, heads of departments, graduate coordinators and fellows from previous cohorts.

CHUSS Gerda Henkel Project Coordinator Dr. Levis Mugumya said the fellows were selected from more than 200 applicants. He urged them to begin their research immediately, maintain close contact with supervisors and meet key programme milestones.

The fellowship provides tuition, medical insurance, stipends and research-related support. Fellows are expected to complete their research proposals within six months and submit their theses for examination within 36 months.

Acting CHUSS Deputy Principal Associate Professor Eric Awich Ochen described the fellowship as a prestigious programme that has contributed to improvements in doctoral training at Makerere through its cohort-based approach. He said three-year completion was achievable and encouraged fellows to aim for timely, or earlier, completion while prioritising their wellbeing.

CHUSS Bursar Michael Mbaine explained that tuition would be paid annually and stipends quarterly, while College Registrar Vincent Abigaba emphasised the importance of registration and adherence to academic integrity requirements.

Closing the orientation, Dean of the School of Liberal and Performing Arts Dr. Pamela Khanakwa urged fellows to seek support when facing academic or personal challenges. She also encouraged the 2025 cohort to mentor the new scholars.

"Team Cohort 25, please hold the hands of the incoming group and support them," Khanakwa said. Khanakwa also encouraged the new cohort to familiarise themselves with the university's graduate handbook, academic procedures and their new environment as they begin their doctoral journey.

17 Erasmus+ students from 16 countries in Humanitarian Response programme hosted



Makerere University has welcomed 17 students from 16 countries to the Erasmus+ funded Master of Humanitarian Response, Health and Displacement (Human Response) programme, strengthening the University's international and multidisciplinary approach to addressing humanitarian crises.

The students were officially welcomed on 7 September 2026 during an orientation at the School of Social Sciences Smart Room. The cohort includes students from Africa, Asia, Europe, North America and South America, with academic backgrounds spanning social sciences, medicine, nursing, management, engineering, architecture and design.

Hosted by the Institute of Gender and Development Studies and the Department of Social Work and Social Administration under the College of Humanities and Social Sciences (CHUSS), the programme is funded by the European Union through Erasmus+ and implemented by seven universities in Europe and Africa.

Representing the Deputy Vice Chancellor, Academic Affairs, Professor Ruth Nsibirano urged the students to translate their international exposure and academic knowledge into practical solutions for communities affected by humanitarian crises.



Associate Professor Julius Kikooma, Director of the Directorate of Graduate Research and Training, said the diverse cohort contributes to Makerere's internationalisation agenda and encouraged students to take advantage of the University's academic heritage and Uganda's cultural diversity.

Acting CHUSS Principal Associate Professor Eric Awich Ochen said the students could become links between Makerere and institutions in their home countries, creating opportunities for research partnerships and grants.

Humanitarian partners, including ALIGHT Uganda and Uganda Red Cross Society, highlighted opportunities for practical learning in refugee protection, livelihoods, disaster preparedness, health, mental health and community resilience.

The programme combines classroom teaching, field placements, internships, summer schools and research, preparing professionals to respond to complex challenges arising from conflict, displacement, climate-related disasters, disease outbreaks and other emergencies.

Kasaija Apuuli's inaugural lecture highlights Africa's role in global peace-building

Makerere University has celebrated Professor Philip Kasaija Apuuli's academic career and contribution to international relations, with his inaugural professorial lecture highlighting Africa's role in global peace and security.

The lecture brought together University leaders, scholars, national leaders, former classmates and students. Vice-Chancellor Professor Barnabas Nawangwe described inaugural lectures as an important platform for scholars to share knowledge with the public and inspire future generations.

Prime Minister Emeritus Rt. Hon. Amama Mbabazi commended Prof. Kasaija Apuuli's expertise in foreign and security policy and his contribution to placing African perspectives within global debates.

In his lecture, Prof. Kasaija Apuuli examined the 2023 African Peace Mission to Russia and Ukraine, focusing on African agency, geopolitics and mediation. The mission involved Egypt, South Africa, Zambia, Uganda, the Republic of Congo and Senegal and proposed dialogue, de-escalation, security guarantees, prisonerexchangesandreconstruction.

While recognising the mission's significance, he identified challenges including limited leverage, its timing and the absence of a sufficiently detailed peace proposal.

"You cannot resolve a conflict if the belligerents still think that they can win on the battlefield," he said.

Prof. Kasaija Apuuli also questioned whether six countries could represent the entire continent without formal African Union backing, while maintaining that the initiative demonstrated Africa's legitimate interest and voice in international peace and security.



University leaders and scholars commended his research, mentorship and contributions to conflict prevention, peacebuilding and policy. Prof. Gilbert Khadiagala of the University of the Witwatersrand said the lecture contributes to scholarship on African agency, mediation and international peacebuilding.



Prof. Sarah Ssali congratulating Prof. Kasaija together with his classmates

Africa urged to build strong institutions, Not depend on individual leaders



Africa should prioritize building strong, durable institutions capable of surviving political transitions rather than relying on individual leaders, Professor Gilbert Khadiagala of the University of the Witwatersrand has said.

Speaking at a public lecture organized by Makerere University's Great Lakes Center for the Study of the United States and the U.S. Mission in Kampala on 19 August 2026, Prof. Khadiagala said Africa could draw lessons from the United States' 250-year history of institution-building without copying its model.

"We should avoid copying, but we should not be afraid of learning," he said, urging African countries to examine why post-independence ideas such as nation-building and Pan-Africanism have not always translated into durable institutions.

He identified education, infrastructure, governance, research and innovation as key areas requiring sustained investment to support Africa's development and growing population.

The lecture, held to mark the 250th anniversary of U.S. independence, also explored opportunities to strengthen Africa-U.S. academic partnerships. U.S. Embassy Attaché Mikael Cleverley called for greater mutual understanding, while Makerere Deputy Vice-Chancellor for Academic Affairs Professor Sarah Ssali advocated stronger collaboration in competence-based education, curriculum development, research and academic exchanges.

CHUSS Principal Professor Helen Nambalirwa Nkabala called for increased support for the Great Lakes Center to expand its scholarship and public engagement.

Panelists stressed that Africa's challenge is not a shortage of development plans but weak implementation, accountability and institutional capacity. Professor Philip Kasaija urged better use of Africa's human capital and research institutions, while Dr Julius Niyiringimana called for adapting borrowed institutions to African realities.

The discussion underscored the need for durable institutions, accountable governance, research and innovation to advance Africa's long-term development.



First critical thinking and social intelligence cohort graduates



Makerere University has graduated the inaugural cohort of its three-week Critical Thinking and Social Intelligence short course, equipping professionals and academics with skills to assess information, challenge assumptions and respond constructively to complex social issues.

The programme was developed by the Department of Philosophy in the School of Liberal and Performing Arts under the College of Humanities and Social Sciences (CHUSS), with support from Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung (KAS) and UNESCO. It covered critical thinking, disinformation, manipulation, propaganda, argumentation, empathy, emotional regulation and relationship management.

Presiding over the certificate presentation, Deputy Vice-Chancellor for Academic Affairs Professor Sarah Ssali said critical thinking is essential across disciplines because it enables professionals to evaluate evidence, identify misinformation and make ethical, informed decisions.

CHUSS Principal Associate Professor Helen Nambalirwa Nkabala said the programme demonstrates the College's role in translating academic knowledge into practical skills for addressing societal challenges. She urged graduates to apply and share their knowledge in workplaces, families and communities.

Head of the Department of Philosophy Dr. Dickson Kanakulya challenged participants to move beyond theoretical knowledge and apply critical thinking to problem-solving and constructive engagement.

Programme Coordinator Dr. Jim Spire Ssentongo said the course was introduced in response to growing concerns about misinformation, manipulation and hostile public debate, particularly on social media.

He said the long-term goal is to mainstream critical thinking and social intelligence in Uganda's education system and expand access through online and blended learning.

KAS representative Bernard Mukhone pledged continued support and proposed developing learning materials for wider audiences. The programme signals CHUSS's growing role in translating humanities scholarship into practical skills that can strengthen informed decision-making and social engagement.

Management retreat aligns leadership, strategy and workplace practices with Makerere's 2025–2030 plan



CHUSS top management has held a two-day retreat at Kalanoga Resort to strengthen leadership, strategic planning and workplace practices in line with Makerere University's 2025–2030 Strategic Plan.

The retreat emphasised leadership grounded in trust, integrity, accountability and positive influence. Facilitator Mrs. Aidah Nkwanzi Mwebaze urged managers to build high-performing teams, develop staff, manage emotions and lead by example.

Dr. Christine Amito from the Directorate of Planning challenged CHUSS management to position the College for greater impact over the next five, 10 and 20 years. She highlighted the contribution of humanities and social sciences to addressing complex national and global challenges alongside science and technology.

Amito urged the College to set measurable targets in areas including PhD completion, accredited academic programmes, indexed publications, graduate employability, staff recruitment, academic mobility and international partnerships. She also called for stronger interdisciplinary research and policy engagement in areas such as climate governance, migration, gender and social development.

The retreat also addressed changes arising from Uganda's amended Employment Act, 2026. Chief Human Resource Officer Mr. Deus Tayari Mujuni said Makerere is reviewing its Human Resource Manual to align with the new provisions.

He highlighted strengthened protections against sexual harassment and pregnancy-based discrimination, alongside changes affecting casual employment, probation, sick leave, disciplinary processes and termination.

Mujuni urged managers to document employment decisions carefully, monitor probation periods and seek guidance from Human Resources and Legal departments when necessary.

University Secretary Mr. Yusuf Kiranda told the managers that Makerere University is in advanced stages of procuring biometric attendance machines for lecture rooms to strengthen accountability and provide verifiable information on staff and student participation in teaching and learning. He said the system follows reports of lecturers recording attendance at the University without proceeding to teach, alongside counter-accusations between staff and students over non-attendance.

Kiranda, however, cautioned that attendance monitoring should not become the ultimate measure of performance, arguing that productivity and measurable outputs should remain central to accountability. He said the University is also digitising processes to improve transparency, clarify responsibility and reduce delays, while encouraging stronger collaboration between academic and administrative staff to support effective teaching, research and student services.

The retreat concluded with team-building activities focused on trust, collaboration and effective leadership, reinforcing the College's commitment to strategic growth, accountable management and a supportive workplace.

Freshers urged to defend the Humanities



CHUSS challenged newly admitted graduate and undergraduate freshers to demonstrate the relevance of the humanities through academic excellence, research, innovation, leadership and responsible citizenship.

Speaking during the 2026/2027 freshers' orientations, CHUSS Principal Associate Professor Helen Nambalirwa Nkabala urged students to become ambassadors of the humanities and social sciences by applying their knowledge to real-world challenges. She challenged graduate students to join research groups, build professional networks and produce research that demonstrates the disciplines' contribution to society.

Nkabala said the humanities remain essential to communication, governance, innovation and human development, urging students to challenge perceptions that science and technology alone drive development.

For graduate students, she emphasized timely completion, noting that strengthened supervision should support completion of master's programmes within one and a half years and PhDs within two and a half years. School leaders encouraged students to manage their time, remain focused and take responsibility for their academic progress.

Undergraduate freshers were similarly urged to develop critical-thinking, research and communication skills while embracing discipline and leadership. Deputy Principal Associate Professor Eric Awich Ochen described CHUSS as "a university within a university" because of its contribution to producing human capital for national transformation.

The orientations also covered academic regulations, digital services, examinations, financial procedures, cybersecurity, student welfare and responsible use of university freedom. Registrar Vincent Abigaba cautioned students against plagiarism, examination malpractice and other forms of academic dishonesty.

Administrators trained to boost professionalism and responsible AI use



Secretaries, stenographers, copy typists and administrative staff at Makerere University's College of Humanities and Social Sciences (CHUSS) have been trained in professionalism, administrative efficiency and responsible use of artificial intelligence (AI) to strengthen service delivery.

The training, held on 5 August 2026 under the theme "The Modern Administrator," was opened by CHUSS Principal Associate Professor Helen Nambalirwa Nkabala, who commended staff for their contribution to the College and urged them to uphold its reputation as "The Mine of Excellent Minds."

Facilitators Ms. Zainab Kobuyonjo and Ms. Robinah Nabakooza challenged administrators to move beyond routine clerical duties and become proactive partners in institutional management. They emphasized professionalism, confidentiality, punctuality, teamwork, customer care, accurate record-keeping and continuous skills development.

Kobuyonjo described administrative staff as the backbone of university operations, noting that their interactions with students, staff, visitors and partners shape the institution's image. Nabakooza urged participants to document work outputs, develop databases, strengthen digital skills and share knowledge to ensure continuity of services.

The training also addressed the opportunities and risks associated with AI in university administration. Staff were encouraged to use digital tools to improve efficiency while maintaining appropriate records and preparing for disruptions such as internet outages.

Kobuyonjo cautioned staff against uploading confidential university documents, student and staff records or Senate papers onto AI platforms. She urged them to verify AI-generated information, protect institutional data and disclose AI use in official work where appropriate.

The training underscored the need for professional, digitally competent and ethically responsible administrators capable of supporting efficient CHUSS operations in a changing workplace.

2nd Academic Town Hall highlights staff welfare, research and academic excellence



CHUSS academic staff in the town hall conversations at St. Francis students center

Makerere University's College of Humanities and Social Sciences (CHUSS) has reaffirmed its commitment to staff welfare, research productivity and improved teaching and learning during its second Academic Town Hall held on 5 August 2026 at St. Francis Students' Centre.

CHUSS Principal Associate Professor Helen Nambalirwa Nkabala said the town hall provides a platform for open dialogue and collaboration, allowing management and staff to address institutional priorities. She reported progress in improving work environments, smart teaching technologies, digital systems, research support and staff welfare.

Nkabala said CHUSS produced 175 publications in the previous academic year, recovered Shs300 million in previously lost funding for research and graduate training, and established new research centres, including the World Bank Centre for Environment and Social Sustainability. She urged staff to join research groups, mentor junior academics and support curriculum reforms.

Deputy Principal Associate Professor Eric Awich Ochen reported 100 per cent completion of teaching timetables and course syllabi, while noting that the College had requested 25 stop-gap academic staff to address teaching needs.

The town hall also addressed staff well-being, sexual harassment prevention and compliance with teaching and assessment policies. Dr. Euzobia Baine urged staff to uphold zero tolerance for sexual harassment, while clinical psychologist Dr. Rosco Kasujja cautioned against chronic stress and overwork.

Staff raised concerns about biometric attendance, workload, graduate supervision, promotion, infrastructure and curriculum development. They called for academic performance to be assessed through teaching, research, supervision and community engagement rather than physical attendance alone.

Nkabala said CHUSS would develop proposals for a performance framework incorporating measurable Key Performance Indicators and reporting on academic responsibilities.

The engagement reinforced CHUSS's commitment to evidence-based management, staff wellbeing, research growth and improved academic performance.

Staff equipped with practical skills in grant searching and post-award management

The capacity-building seminar, held on 8 July 2026 at the CHUSS Smart Room, was organized by the College's Grants, Research and Graduate Training Unit. It brought together academic and administrative staff and focused on grant searching, application preparation and post-award management, including timesheet administration.

Unit Coordinator Dr. Rita Nakanjako said the training was intended to improve staff understanding of the entire grant cycle, from identifying suitable funding opportunities to managing awards. CHUSS Principal Associate Professor Helen Nambalirwa Nkabala urged participants to actively engage in the training and apply the skills acquired.

Prof. Sylvia Antonia Nakimera Nannyonga-Tamusuza of the Grants Administration



The college strengthened staff capacity to identify funding opportunities, prepare competitive grant applications and manage awarded funds responsibly.

and Management Support Unit (GAMSU) advised researchers to treat grants as formal institutional commitments. She urged staff to understand funder requirements, eligibility criteria, priorities, deadlines and budgets before submitting applications.

She also encouraged researchers to diversify funding sources, strengthen research networks, collaborate across disciplines and remain persistent despite unsuccessful applications. Participants were introduced to funding platforms including Grant Forward, while GAMSU support in opportunity identification, funder-fit assessment and proposal review was highlighted.

Prof. Charles Masembe, who led the post-award session, emphasized that securing a grant marks the beginning of implementation and accountability obligations. He guided participants on grant agreements, budget monitoring, reporting, documentation and timesheet management.

The training is expected to strengthen CHUSS's ability to mobilize research resources, improve grant compliance and expand the College's capacity to secure and manage competitive funding.

The Makerere Tree that unveils celebrities

For generations of artists at Makerere University, an old mango tree near the former Department of Music, Dance and Drama, now the School of Performing Arts and Film, served as an open-air classroom, rehearsal space and stage. Dr. Mabingo recalls how students practiced music, dance and drama under the trees, interacted with one another and performed before passers-by, developing confidence, visibility and professional networks. The space became associated with generations of artists and cultural figures, including the late Alex Mukulu, Prof. Patrick Mangeni, Bobi Wine, Mariam Ndagire, Sylver Kyagulanyi, Hillary Kiyaga (Dr. Hilderman), Hope Azeda and others.



Beyond providing a physical space for artistic practice, the trees fostered collaboration among musicians, dancers and theatre practitioners. Students exchanged information about performance opportunities, assembled groups for weddings and other events, and built relationships that extended beyond Makerere. Dr. Mabingo describes the trees as "not only places" but a mindset that encouraged students to practice consistently, interact with audiences and develop resilience in an unpredictable creative industry. He also connects the open-air environment to African traditions of communal artistic expression, where music and dance are closely linked to the earth, community and shared spaces.

Although Makerere's artistic environment has evolved through modern buildings, digital platforms and emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence, Dr. Mabingo argues that the fundamentals of artistic training remain important. He advocates blending modern studios and theatres with open spaces that allow students to practice, collaborate and remain visible. For generations of performers, the mango tree has become a living archive of artistic memories and achievement - a classroom without walls, a stage without curtains and a meeting place where students developed their skills, relationships and confidence to face the wider creative world.



Students of performing arts practicing under the celebrity maker tree.



Mak RIF-Funded study urges stronger health systems for Non-Communicable Disease management

A research team led by Principal Investigator Stanley Babalanda has called for increased investment in health system preparedness and resilience to strengthen the management of non-communicable diseases (NCDs) in Uganda.

The call follows a series of dissemination workshops held in Kibuku and Tororo districts to share findings from the research project, "Evaluating the Health Systems Preparedness and Resilience in the Management of Non-Communicable Diseases." The study was funded by the Makerere University Research and Innovations Fund (Mak RIF).

The workshops brought together district leaders, members of District Health Teams, cultural and religious leaders, and other stakeholders to discuss the status of health systems and interventions aimed at addressing NCDs such as diabetes, hypertension, cancer and cardiovascular diseases.

According to the research team, the dissemination exercise was intended to present key findings, generate stakeholder feedback and identify practical recommendations for strengthening health systems at community, institutional and district levels. Participants emphasized the need for coordinated efforts to improve prevention, early diagnosis and long-term management of NCDs.

The study is expected to inform district-level planning and national policy discussions on health systems strengthening. One of its major outputs was a policy brief titled "Uganda's Preparedness and Resilience of Health Systems in NCDs Management," which provides recommendations for improving the country's response to the growing burden of non-communicable diseases.



Some of the participants during the dissemination in Tororo district



Kibuuku District Resident Commissioner addressing the participants during the dissemination



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Mr. Stanley Babalanda presenting the study overview to the participants in Tororo district during the dissemination.

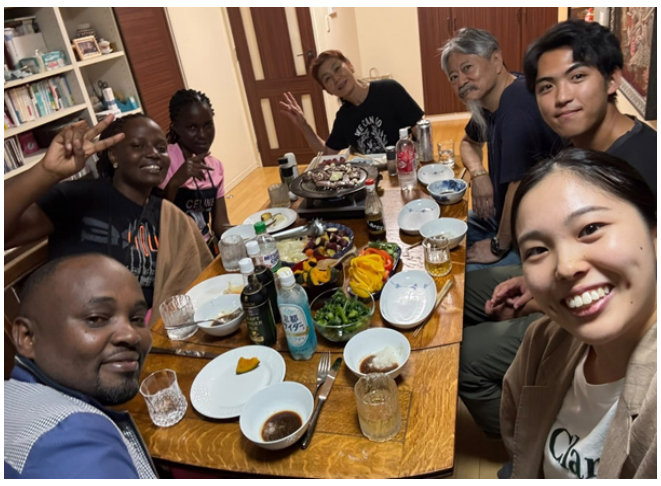
Students arrive in Japan for Six-Month Exchange Programme

Three students from Makerere University on Sept 26 safely arrived in Kobe, Japan, where they will undertake a six-month academic exchange programme. The students were received upon arrival at Kansai International Airport (KIX) before proceeding to Kobe, where they will be based during their stay in Japan. According to Prof. Helen Nkabala, the students arrived safely and were welcomed as they begin their international academic experience.

"We received three students from Makerere at KIX Airport, Japan. They have safely arrived in Kobe where they will study for six months on exchange," Nkabala said.

She added that the students were





hosted to a welcome dinner following their arrival, providing an opportunity for orientation and interaction ahead of the start of their studies.

The exchange programme is expected to expose the students to new academic environments, cultures and research opportunities, further strengthening international collaboration and student mobility between Makerere University and its Japanese partners.

The students are expected to spend the next six months pursuing their studies and engaging in cultural exchange activities before returning to Uganda.

Nyatiflix App targets Uganda's film distribution gap

A new digital streaming platform, Nyatiflix, is being developed to address film distribution challenges facing Uganda's emerging film industry and expand access to locally produced content.

The platform, currently undergoing testing, will allow users to stream Ugandan and African films through Android devices via the Google Play Store and through its web platform. The service is expected to launch within two weeks.

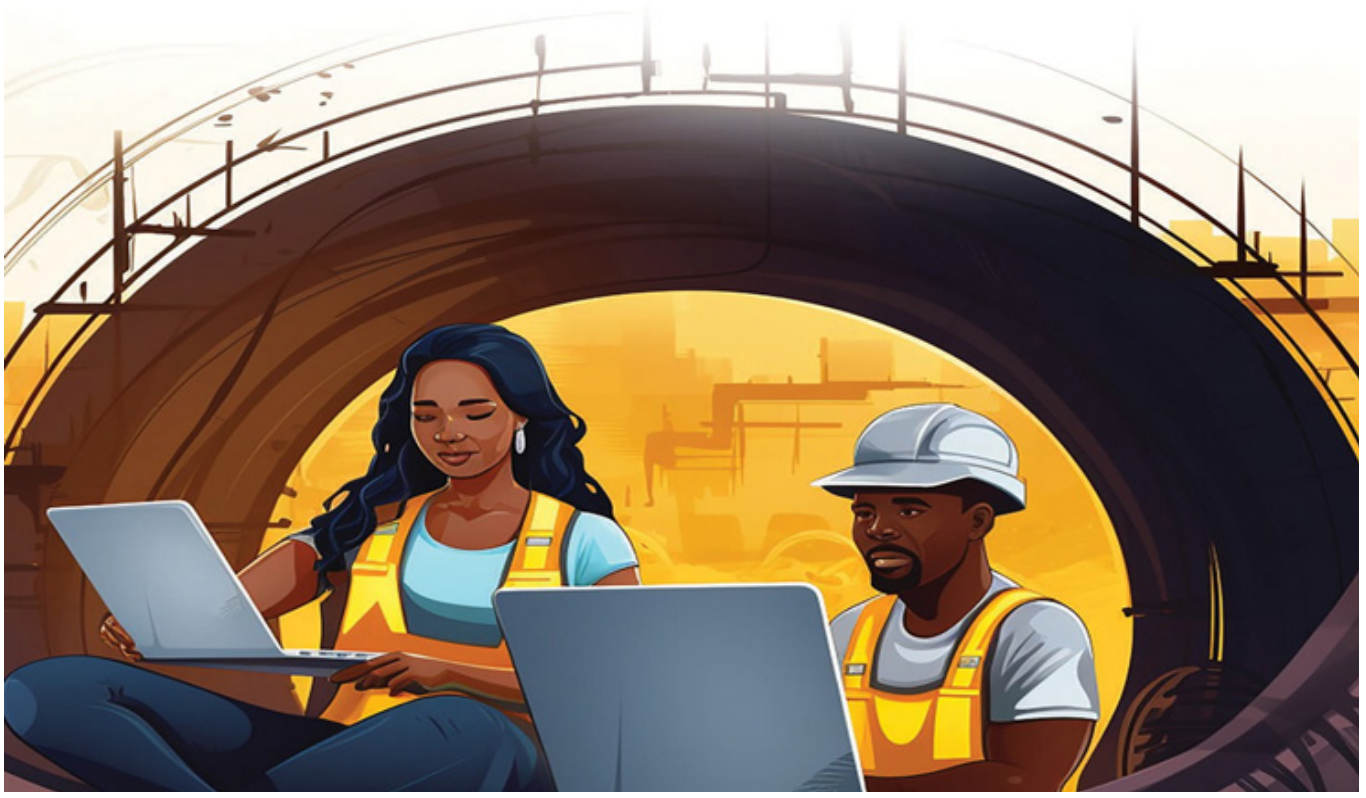
Nyatiflix seeks to provide filmmakers with a dedicated digital channel through which locally produced films can reach audiences beyond traditional distribution networks. By targeting Ugandan and African audiences, the platform aims to increase the visibility and accessibility of African film content while creating opportunities for filmmakers to reach wider markets.

The developers envision Nyatiflix growing into a major film-streaming platform in East Africa, competing with established international streaming services. Its commercialization potential, however, will depend partly on building a strong user base and sustained awareness among its target audience.

The platform is therefore seeking increased marketing and promotional support to generate visibility, attract subscribers and build market traction following its launch.

With the continued growth of digital content consumption, Nyatiflix represents an emerging innovation that could contribute to strengthening Uganda's film distribution ecosystem, expanding audiences for local productions and creating new commercial opportunities for the creative industry.

Social Enterprise and Digital Labour Migration Platform



A multidisciplinary team from Makerere University has developed a digital labour migration platform designed to connect prospective migrant workers with verified recruitment agencies and government-approved information on jobs abroad.

The innovation, "Social Enterprise and Digital Labour Migration Platform" responds to gaps in communication between government agencies regulating external labour migration and communities where prospective migrant workers are recruited. Limited access to reliable information and lack of transparency in recruitment processes can expose young Ugandans to exploitation, human rights abuses and trafficking.

The government-verifiable platform will provide prospective migrants with access to legitimate foreign job opportunities, licensed recruitment agencies and trusted migration information. By creating a direct information channel between authorized recruiters and communities, the platform seeks to help potential migrants verify employment opportunities before travelling.

The project team comprises Dr. Aisha Sembatya Nakiwala of the College of Humanities and Social Sciences (CHUSS), Jonathan Buyinza of the College of Natural Sciences (CONAS), Arafat Mugabi of the College of Engineering, Design, Art and Technology (CEDAT), Kiswa Kevin and Abdul Ssekyanzi of the College of Computing and Information Sciences (CoCIS), and Sulaiman Kakaire of the Makerere Institute for Social Research (MISR/CHUSS).

The platform is intended to strengthen transparency in labour recruitment while enabling government to reach potential migrants with verified information at community level.

By linking government verification, licensed recruiters and prospective workers, the innovation offers a technology-based approach to reducing unsafe migration, exploitation and human trafficking while supporting Ugandans seeking legitimate employment opportunities abroad.

Enhancing school retention through community social labs and problem-based field work

A Makerere University social innovation project led by Assoc. Prof. Eric Awich Ochen has developed a community-based model for tackling school dropout and improving learner retention through locally driven solutions.

The Community Social Labs initiative brings together university students, communities, schools, local governments and other stakeholders to identify causes of school dropout and develop practical responses. It combines problem-based student field placements with community-led research, experimentation and action planning.

The model was piloted over six years in Gulu, Luuka and Kanungu districts under the NORHED II RESILIENT Project, with additional support from Makerere's Research and Innovation Fund (RIF). Interventions developed through the project include mentorship clubs, school gardens, education savings groups, child-protection initiatives and menstrual-hygiene support.

Initial qualitative findings indicate improvements in school enrolment and retention, community participation in school programmes, action against child labour and support for girls' menstrual hygiene.

The project is now ready for scale-up and institutionalization, but requires funding, a standardized implementation toolkit, digital monitoring tools and government support to integrate the model into university field placements and local government education services.

The innovation also has potential for wider adoption by universities, schools, local governments, civil society organizations and development partners. Possible sustainability models include training and certification, licensing implementation toolkits and partnerships to deliver school-retention programmes.

By combining community knowledge, university expertise and practical fieldwork, the model provides a replicable approach to addressing school retention while strengthening university-community engagement and practice-based learning.

Integrated Performing Arts Mathematics Teaching Learning (IPAMTeL) model of teaching mathematics in secondary education system using music

Makerere University researchers have developed a music-based teaching model designed to make mathematics more interactive and accessible to secondary school learners.

Led by Professor Sylvia A. N. Nannyonga-Tamusuza, the Integrated Performing Arts-Mathematics Teaching Learning (IPAMTeL) model uses music and performing arts to support the teaching and learning of mathematical concepts.

The innovation includes the Edu Tech MusickingMaths App, an interactive digital platform that connects learners with knowledge facilitators and enables students to create songs based on mathematical concepts they have learned.

The model seeks to provide an alternative approach to conventional mathematics instruction by combining creative expression with academic content. Through composing and performing songs about mathematical concepts, learners can actively engage with subject matter while developing creative and collaborative skills.

The digital platform is intended to support teachers and learners in integrating technology, music and mathematics within the classroom. It also provides a practical tool through which learners can participate in creating educational content rather than remaining passive recipients of information.

The innovation demonstrates how performing arts and digital technology can be integrated into teaching to support learning across disciplines. Its developers expect the model to contribute to more engaging mathematics education in secondary schools while providing educators with an additional teaching resource.

The IPAMTeL initiative positions Makerere's research and innovation capacity toward developing practical, technology-enabled approaches to improve mathematics teaching and learner engagement

A communication model that leverages the power of the arts to mobilize critical action of communities aimed at supporting sustainable environment

Makerere University's Department of Performing Arts has developed an arts-based communication model designed to mobilize communities to take action on environmental challenges and promote sustainable practices.

Led by Dr. Lawrence Branco Sekalegga, the model uses the power of performing arts to strengthen communication, community participation and locally driven responses to environmental problems.

The approach is grounded in community-based co-creation and co-communication, enabling local communities to participate in identifying environmental challenges, shaping messages and developing appropriate interventions. Rather than treating communities as passive recipients of environmental information, the model gives them greater agency in determining the actions needed within their own settings.



By integrating artistic expression with community engagement, the innovation seeks to make environmental communication more accessible, participatory and relevant to local realities. It provides communities with an avenue to use their own knowledge, experiences and creative practices in addressing sustainability challenges.

The model also has potential to support environmental organizations, local governments and development partners seeking participatory approaches to community mobilization and environmental awareness.

Its emphasis on local ownership means interventions can be tailored to specific environmental problems rather than relying on uniform approaches across different communities.

The innovation demonstrates how the arts can extend beyond entertainment to serve as a practical communication and mobilization tool for environmental sustainability, strengthening community participation and supporting locally led action on environmental challenges.

An innovative leadership training model that uses the arts to foster leadership and positive social change competences among the youth

Makerere University's Department of Performing Arts and Film has developed an innovative leadership training model that uses the arts to strengthen leadership and social change competencies among young people.

Led by Dr. Alfdaniels Mabingo, the model draws on skills and practices developed through performing and creating the arts and applies them to leadership, governance and community engagement.

The approach identifies social agency, relationality, an embodied ethic of care and creative agility as key competencies that can be transferred from artistic practice to leadership. Through participation in performing arts, young people are encouraged to develop the ability to take initiative, work collaboratively, understand different perspectives, respond creatively to challenges and engage responsibly with their communities.

The model positions the arts not only as a form of creative expression but also as a practical training environment where young people can develop competencies relevant to leadership and positive social change.

By connecting artistic practice with leadership development, the innovation provides an alternative approach to preparing young people to participate constructively in governance and community development.

The model could be adapted for use by youth organizations, educational institutions, community programmes and other organizations seeking to strengthen leadership competencies among young people.

The innovation demonstrates the potential of performing arts to contribute to youth leadership development, social agency and responsible community engagement, while creating pathways through which creative skills can be applied beyond the arts sector





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