

## **Prof. Josephine Ahikire Hands Over CHUSS Leadership to Assoc. Prof. Hellen Nkabala**

“As outgoing Principal of the biggest college, the most vibrant college, the college with the power of the word, the college with the power of language, the college with the power of vibe, I hereby hand over to you Professor Hellen Nkabala Nabalirwa..”

“I extend my congratulations to Prof. Hellen Nkabala, the incoming Principal and I pledge full support in her new position, so at CHUSS, we remain on the move”.

That was Prof. Josephine Ahikire as she handed over the instruments of power to the newly elected Principal for the College of Humanities and Social Sciences (CHUSS) Assoc. Prof. Hellen Nabalirwa Nkabala on Friday 31<sup>st</sup> May 2024. Nkabala pledged participatory leadership and assured attendees that CHUSS will continue to excel.

The afternoon handover ceremony held in the College Smart room was witnessed by the University Secretary and Director Human Resources represented. Prof. Nkabala’s family (mother, uncle and sister, her spouse Mr. Nkabala) witnessed the occasion. The Principal College of Natural Sciences Prof. Ireeta Tumps, Head GAMSU Prof. Sylvia Nanyonga Tamusuza, staff from Makerere University staff tribunal, Prof. Amanda from CEDAT, also graced the occasion. Members of CHUSS management and staff including Deputy Principal Dr. Eric Awich, Deans, Heads of departments, coordinators, support and administrative staff attended the ceremony.

### **I have enjoyed my tenure says outgoing Prof Josephine Ahikire**

Prof. Josephine Ahikire said, CHUSS has created a cohort of leaders especially women to take it on.

“I have truly enjoyed my tenure as Principal and I send my appreciation to my Deputy Principal Assoc. Prof. Eric Awich, the Deans and heads. We delivered as a team right from the top to the last person”.

Now that public universities are being run as government departments Prof Ahikire called for collaborative spirit of all administrators, college and schools departments as a team to be able to deliver .

Ahikire paid special recognition to Makerere University top management for their unwavering support and for creating enabling environment for members of CHUSS to deliver what they pursue as their mantra, *CHUSS on the Move*.

“ I learnt one thing from the current Vice Chancellor that not all people need to line up to have a document signed. So, I removed some of those benches from the Principals corridor. Not all people have to sit and wait for a travel form to be signed”

She also extended gratitude to the donors who have supported the college especially those supposedly unmarketable fields around the humanities and social sciences. She noted that as the

rest of the donors pursue the marketable fields along the neoliberal agenda, the soul of humanity is falling apart. She pointed out the Mellon Foundation and the Gerda Henkel Stiftung for being at the fore front and whose funds have been used to create vibrancy at CHUSS.

Giving an over view of her hand over report, Ahikire said the role of Principal is guided by the law UOTIA and the College statute whose functions are stipulated in there. CHUSS, she said, is one of the biggest units of the university offering the oldest disciplines which provide the key for unlocking the human potential for development.

In the report the Professor highlighted human resources status comprising 11 prof. 26 associate professors 44 senior lecturers, 87 lecturers and 70 Assist lectures, 26 administrative staff and 52 support staff noting that, the college was still bottom heavy with more assistant lectures than lecturers.

The report also indicated the college assets in terms of office equipment, furniture and computers mostly acquired through projects, subvention development fund or furniture and fittings.

The report further highlighted the college wide projects in terms of how they operate through the Principals office, stores and assets register, the budget performance, ledger for each project, the project balances and the cohorts of PhD training.

### **Major accomplishments**

Prof. Ahikire reported that in the last two years the college made progress in terms of staff promotion and most were still in the process . “In the last three years, a total of 87 members have been promoted. Six professors, nine associates, 35 senior lecturers, and 37 lecturers”.

She said, the college has one of the biggest student population in the university adding that there has been improvement in terms of graduate output. .

“In the last graduation, we had 30 PhDs. I have put the graduation trends, especially for graduate programs, and the fact that we have really improved.

That means that supervision level has improved, the processing of examination has also improved, and the processing of results has also improved. And that is something that everybody in this room can actually own.”

Notably, she also reported that the college was able to pilot a students’ management system.

“When I came into office, you'd ask this student, what is the progress?and you'd never know how to track. So as of now, at the touch of a button, you can know that if this student submitted a thesis or a dissertation, this is where it has reached” she explained.

Among the challenges, Prof. Ahikire highlighted the limited teaching and office space, accreditation of courses, limited human and financial resources including grant and research

portfolio,

In terms of the issues to consider, Ahikire stressed the need to pursue the research-led agenda and graduate training and expressed the need for the academic board to be facilitated to serve as a driving force behind CHUSS research agenda.

Ahikire called upon staff to first have the research agenda, and then mobilize resources and have Graduate training as a pivotal aspect of research and to continuously upgrade the infrastructure.

### **Prof. Nkabala hails Predecessor for laying foundation. Assures that CHUSS will Continue to Excel**

Assoc. Prof. Nkabala appreciated the outgoing Principal for laying the ground.

“A very good afternoon, friends. It is with a lot of humility that I stand before you this afternoon, taking over what that is already done.

I would like thank my predecessor, who has just handed over, Principal Emeritus Professor Josephine Ahikire, Thank you for laying the ground, and thank you for handing over. Friends, I would like to start by acknowledging the core people who make what CHUSS is”.

Nkabala also recognized Deans, heads, administrative and all staff for leading CHUSS to where it is assuring them that college will remain on move.

“ I want to give you my assurance that while I know that change is difficult, I cannot lie to you that there is no change. We have changed and you have seen that. But CHUSS will continue to excel with your support. What we did as to change the driving seat, but you are the engine.

So it is up to us, me and you and Prof. Ahikire as one of the critical Professors and others. I want to pay allegiance and also assure you that for CHUSS to go forward, we are looking up to you to offer academic leadership. So when we come please accept us. You rightly noted that e are bottom heavy, I will continue from where you have stopped and do my best”. Nkabala promises adding:

“I will reach out to all the leaders and I want to assure all the staff in CHUSS, that I will reach each to every one of you. So, dear Deans present, Heads of Departments, I will request that we have an entry meeting in each and every school up to the final department. We are 16 and we shall talk together to see how we carry on this work that I start today”, she asserted.

Nkabala aslo called on the office of the university secretary for support.

“I was excited when I heard the US pledging total support, underline the word total support, because Professor Ahikire said, you give them funds for one course, yes, yet we have 37. So, when I knock on your door on Tuesday, because Monday is a public holiday, please receive me”

Stating that she hails from a very humble background, Nkabala requested staff to be friends to

work together and to see the continuity in a very peaceful way.

### **University Secretary Recognises Prof. Ahikire for exemplary leadership: Counsels on leadership qualities**

The representative of the Makerere University Secretary offered personal reflections on leadership dynamics during the handover ceremony

The Secretary began by acknowledging the universal truth that despite our religious teachings, we all stumble and make mistakes. Drawing a parallel between these human imperfections and the challenges of leadership, he emphasized the importance of continuous learning and growth.

He shared bits of wisdom collected from his own experiences. He spoke of the inevitability of conflict in leadership roles, urging leaders to approach conflicts with a positive mindset, viewing them as opportunities for resolution and growth

With a touch of vulnerability, he opened up about the loneliness that often accompanies leadership positions. "It's not easy," he admitted, "to make tough decisions and stand by them." But he offered reassurance that in the face of solitude, there lies an opportunity for leaders to make a positive impact through their actions.

The University Secretary spoke of failure as a natural part of the leadership journey, urging leaders to embrace setbacks as stepping stones to success. He reminded the audience that time is finite, urging leaders to make the most of their tenure by prioritizing effective time management and delegation.

The Secretary emphasized the importance of self-care and the acceptance of feedback in maintaining effective leadership. With genuine warmth, he expressed gratitude for the exemplary leadership of outgoing Principal Ahikire, promising continued support for CHUSS under its new leadership.

He expressed his confidence in the future of CHUSS, reaffirming the collective commitment to excellence and growth at the institution.

### **Director Human Resource Grateful for Ahikire's leadership says, Change is Inevitable,**

Represented by Makubuya Godfrey, the Director Human Resource Makerere University guided on the need to appreciate that change is inevitable.

"In a leadership, things happen for a cause. And once they do, then the leaders have to accept because God is in between whatever is happening, either for or against. So as this has happened, that change is coming and we are glad it's coming, you know, we know at a given time it will happen",

The Director appreciated Professor Ahikire for her service to the university.

“She has served us for quite some time. And we are very grateful for that leadership. You know, she served even before a deputy principal, acted as Principal and became principal.

We are grateful that God provided you that opportunity to offer yourself and the leaders at the time. So, an opportunity is now here that she has to hand over to another leader”.

As an outgoing principal, Makubuya believed many of the staff have interacted with Prof. Ahikire at different levels and shared a lot.

“ And, Professor Nkabala, we welcome you to this college. Of course, it's not new to you, but in leadership of the college. And it's our pledge that actually we will work with you to take the college and our university in the right direction”. He added

**Report by**

**Jane Anyango**

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