

# Multitech: The pillar for CPA in Uganda

By Jacky Achan

**I**f you talk about the professional Certified Public Accounts course (CPA), one institution that stands out in teaching this course is Multitech Business School in Kampala.

The institution, established in 1989, started teaching professional accounting courses, including the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants, CPA Kenya that far back, according to the deputy principal, Joseph Ssengendo.

"We were the only institution providing professional accounting courses at the time, until the establishment of the Institute of Certified Public Accounts in Uganda (ICPAU)," he says.

He says the school's directors were behind the formation of ICPAU, having experienced the pains of having to qualify as a professional accountant with no local institution offering the professional courses.

"We decided to start our own institution, Multitech Business School and we held our first graduation in 2000," Ssengendo says.

About 40% to 50% of the professional accountants in Uganda have trained at our school," he adds.

### School makes gains

Ssengendo says in 2000, they were contracted by the finance ministry to



Multitech Business School is one of the first institutions to offer the CPA course in Uganda

train all district chief finance officers and other officials. "We did a great job imparting accounting knowledge and today, we can confidently say that all districts chief finance officers are Multitech-trained," he says.

But Ssengendo says Uganda stills trails in East Africa when it comes to accounting professionalism.

The World Bank recommends a minimum 8,000 accountants for a country to develop.

"Kenya and Tanzania have the numbers but for Uganda, we are just getting to 3,000, which is not

favourable for our economy," he says. "But if we continue to train more professional accountants, we shall be able to move from a peasant economy to a middle or first class economy," he adds.

### Dedication to the programme

According to Ssengendo, it is not about the money, but promoting professionalism.

"We enjoy imparting knowledge because of our desire to grow the profession. It is also part of our corporate social responsibility

as professional accountants," he explains. Ssengendo brushes aside claims that the CPA course is hard, saying it is simple to pass.

"The challenge is that some of those who enrol for CPA do not appreciate the fact that it is easy. They come with a bias that is it difficult, based on reviews received from friends. But for me, I would want to think the job market is too big for accountants and many, if not all, are working and commit little time for the CPA programme," he explains.

Ssengendo adds that some of the students, who today stand at over 400 for just the CPA course, look at only passing and not learning, which is a challenge. "You need to learn and apply this knowledge, which makes the course passable," he says.

### One step ahead

Ssengendo explains that at Multitech, they have mastered the art of training professional accountants, having been the first institution to do so, starting in 1989.

He says it is not about passing exams, but imparting knowledge, competence and professionalism.

Ssengendo says they have sessions where students interface with professionals to understand accountancy from a practical angle.

Students engage in debates with the accounting community and talk from an accounting angle to share knowledge.

In addition, students are taught how to use accounting software, such as Tally, QuickBooks and Vision. But, above all, the students are prepped and take on mock examinations in preparation for the final exams.

Ssengendo says the school's unique services, including large study space, availability of learning materials and a library, large lecture theatres, Internet, electricity and free parking, makes it easy for students to enrol at Multitech and learn in comfort.