

Bunyoro demands university

HOIMA

By Robert Atuhairwe

Bunyoro kingdom officials have asked the Government to grant Bunyoro a university since the region has no public university. They want Gulu University Hoima campus to be granted independent university status.

On December 11, 2014, a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was signed between Gulu University main campus and Bunyoro kingdom to run a branch of the university in Hoima. The MOU expires in nine months.

On December 20 last year, the university management instituted an ad hoc committee to assess the viability and prospects of an independent university.

The committee is mandated to examine management of academic, financial, governance and administrative issues at the campus and make an assessment of the overall viability of the university.

Bunyoro king Solomon

Gafabusa Iguru donated buildings (kingdom supreme council) located a few metres from his palace in Hoima town, where the Hoima campus is currently being accommodated.

The MOU stipulates that the kingdom shall provide funds for running the university and pay all the staff.

However, the 94 lecturers have never been paid since the university opened its doors.

The committee on Friday met Gulu University, Hoima campus administration, Bunyoro kingdom officials and other education stakeholders to get their views about the institution.

During the meeting held in the kingdom's Rukurato hall, Resty Timbigamba, the former Hoima schools inspector and Hoima campus board member, said lecturers working that long without any pay means people want the university to stay.

"Do your best to nurture us so that the Government grants us a fully-fledged university," she added.

Dr Sarah Ntiro, the first

Dr. Sarah Ntiro, the first woman university graduate in East and Central Africa speaking during a meeting at Gulu University, Hoima campus on Friday.
Photo by Robert Atuhairwe



woman university Graduate in East and Central Africa, said a university should be established in Bunyoro to help address the gender disparities that exist in the region.

The committee had earlier in the day met Omukama Iguru.

Dr Felix Kaducu, the

BETWEEN THE LINES:

■ Iguru said his subjects should save the money they spend travelling long distances to other universities.

chairman of the committee from Gulu University, said they are assessing the progress of Gulu University Hoima campus after three years of existence and will recommend whether it can be allowed to run independently.

Kaducu, who is also the

dean of faculty of medicine at Gulu University main campus, said they will make a recommendation to the governing council for consideration.

He said although the university is steadily progressing, it faces challenges such as inadequate library materials, gender gaps in staffing and accommodation.

Primo Adoye, the academic registrar, said the assessment will guide them on the performance as an institution.

Adoye said the university faces financial challenges, giving an example that they needed sh2.7b to run for the first year, an amount the kingdom could not raise.

He said the Hoima campus, with an enrolment of 230 students, collects a paltry sh230m annually, which cannot keep the main campus going for even a month.

Fr. Boney Kyaligonza, the Hoima campus director, said the Government's promise to transform Kiryandongo district-based Kigumba Petroleum Institute into a university has dragged on.