

By Geoffrey Mutegeki

When Prof. Barnabas Nawangwe, was admitted at Makerere University as a student in 1977, he only did one term.

He got caught up in what was then risky university politics, which forced him into exile, after the government started hunting for him and others for protesting against the ills and mistreatments of the Idi Amin government.

"It was 1977 and we were protesting against a situation that most of us saw as hopeless," Nawangwe explains on his website.

Fearing for his safety, Nawangwe ran to Russia to continue his studies.

"I had always been involved in fine art, so one day a lecturer of the Russian language found me making some drawings and advised me to switch from civil engineering to architecture. I had never even heard of the subject," he recalls.

Since that day Nawangwe decided to change to architecture, he has never looked back. The subject took over his imagination and he went on to acquire a PhD before returning to Uganda in 1987.

He is currently a full professor of architecture and the only full professor of architecture in Africa.

In 1987, Nawangwe returned to Makerere University as a

Nawangwe studied at Makerere for one term



President Yoweri Museveni congratulates Nawangwe

teaching assistant on contract, but little did he know that 30 years later, he would be holding the highest office at one of Africa's most prestigious institutions of higher learning.

His first major assignment when he joined in 1987 was to operationalise the architecture department. He executed it well.

On September 11 after 30

years of commitment and hard work, Nawangwe was installed as Makerere University's vice-chancellor. He replaces John Ddumba Ssentamu, whose term of office ended in August.

As vice-chancellor, he is responsible for the academic, administrative and financial affairs of the University.

Nawangwe's rise

Two years after serving as teaching assistant. Upon appointment, he was tasked with operationalising the architecture department, which had been established in 1983.

In 1989 architecture as a course was introduced in Makerere with Nawangwe as the head.

Before he returned to Makerere University in 1989, architects were trained abroad, but currently majority of the architects that Uganda

has probably went through Nawangwe's tutelage.

"At the time, there were only 20 architects in the country and the construction sector was in chaos. We have since trained 300 architects in this time, which is my contribution to the sector," says Nawangwe.

He remained at the rank of lecturer until 1996 when he was promoted to the rank of senior lecturer.

He headed the department of architecture from 1987 to 2002.

From 2000 to 2002 he served as associate dean at the Faculty of Technology and in 2003 he became the dean of the faculty of education, a position he held for seven years up to 2010.

Nawangwe continued to rise in ranks and in 2011 was appointed acting principal, at the College of Engineering, Design, Art and Technology (CEDAT) a position he held up to 2013.

Between January 2011 and July 2017, he served as deputy vice-chancellor for finance and administration, responsible for the planning, budgeting and development of the university.

Nawangwe is also the chairperson of Makerere University Senate, Makerere University Management, and member of Makerere University Council.

As deputy vice-chancellor, he embarked on the university's rehabilitation and development work which is still on going. The bulk of the rehabilitation and development which includes, pathways, university roads, the perimeter fence and the main gate is attributed to him.

He is also renowned for chairing the University research, administrative and financial reforms committee that recommended the transformation of Makerere University into a collegiate

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