

# Turn skills into business ventures, Youth minister urges students

By Denis Neubuga

With students clad in school uniform under tents, exhibition stalls and many adults walking about, the compound at Aga Khan High School, Kampala was a buzz with activity.

"This is a business model I believe in," remarked David Onyulo, 19, of Kallinabiri Secondary School to attentive visitors to his stall.

"I can make craft shoes anytime and I earn from it," added the Senior Six student, holding a pair of craft sandals.

Onyulo is the president of Delight of Educate! Club of Kallinabiri Secondary School, which exhibited various products and innovations at this year's national exhibition of the Educate! Student Business Club Competition recently.

The event attracted 27 clubs from schools countrywide.

It was presentations such as Onyulo's that anchored the speech of state minister for youth and children affairs, Florence Nakiwala, the chief guest at the event.

*"Let it not stop at acquiring those skills. Do something with them to improve your economic livelihood."*

Addressing students, teachers and guests shortly after touring the exhibition stalls, Nakiwala challenged students to gradually turn the innovations they exhibited into business ventures.

"Let it not stop at acquiring those skills. Do something with them to improve your economic livelihood," she said.

Nakiwala encouraged the students to move around their communities to identify challenges they can turn into enterprises.

The minister who also recognised the gap between the curriculum and skills needed for today's workforce. She commended the students for their work ethic and research through the exhibitions.

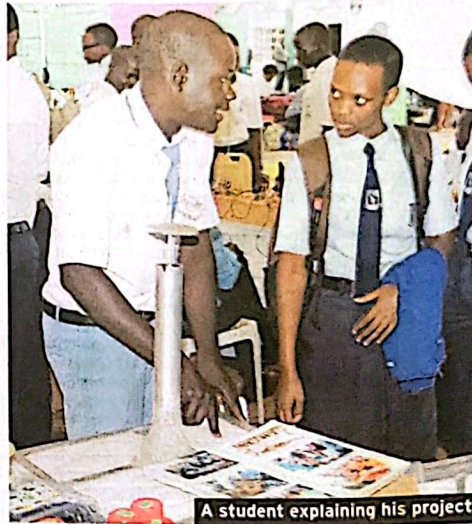
The annual event



A student of Luzira Secondary School presenting her project to Minister Nakiwala at the national exhibition of the Educate! Student business club competition at Aga Khan High School in Kampala recently



Craft making section



A student explaining his project

organised by Educate, a non-governmental organisation starts with training in entrepreneurship and leadership skills according to the Educate, programme manager, Emmanuel Kalyebi. At least 40 students in each school are mentored under the programme.

Students usually fundraise and start small businesses in schools.

The competition has been running since 2014, Kalyebi says, Educate! works in 700

secondary schools.

The outstanding ones from the regions or districts compete at the national level.

**Awards**

Of the 27 schools that made it to the national competition, Kijjabweni Secondary School, Masaka emerged overall winner, followed by the St. Charles Lwanga Secondary School, Bukeerere and Iganga secondary schools respectively.

Jonathan Kivumbi, one of

the judges, said the winners were selected on a criteria based on eight areas such as, innovation, team work, social impact, record keeping and financial management.

He added that Kijjabweni Secondary School had a good business model, their reports were well-kept and exhibited teamwork.

Bombo Secondary School students took the trophy for the social impact award.

The students make reusable sanitary pads which they

distribute to the community.

Edith Nakiyemba, the patron of PMM Girls School, Jinja which won the sustainable award, said the programme trained her students in various attributes, such as confidence and communication.

Kalyebi highlighted the importance of equipping secondary school youth with life skills.

"We want to give them the opportunity to practise, fail, learn and improve themselves. The business clubs work as

**Participants**

- Kijjabweni Secondary School, Masaka (Overall Winner)
- Katwe Noor Secondary school, Rubaga (Planning and finance award)
- PPM Girls School, Jinja (Sustainability award)
- Lira Town Council
- Iganga Secondary School, Iganga (Second runners-up)
- Gloryland Christian College, Jinja
- Kitqum High School
- Rock High School, Tororo
- St. Charles Lwanga Secondary School, Bukeerere (First runners-up)
- St. Mary's Ediofe Girls Secondary School, Arua
- St. Mary's College Gulu (Innovative award)
- St. Augustine's College, Wakiso
- Kitara SS, Hoima
- Acaba Secondary School, Oyam
- St. Stephen SSS Dandira, Mukono
- Light Secondary School, Soroti
- Kallinabiri Secondary School, Kawempe
- Nabumali High School, Mbale
- Buzaya Senior Secondary School, Kamuli
- Bombo Secondary School, Luwero (Community impact award)
- St. Joseph's College Ombachi, Arua
- Busia Secondary School, Busia
- Entebbe Secondary School
- John Paul Secondary School, Pallisa
- Savannah Highland College, Mayuge
- Luzira SS, Wakiso

incubation centres where students can practise real business in an insured environment with shared risk since they work in groups," he said.

Kalyebi said they encourage students to be innovative, through training them in critical thinking, communication, skills that are needed both in business and employment.

Nakiwala also lauded Vision Group for its focus on economic empowerment.