

# Bank loans choke MAK lecturers - incoming VC



As Prof. Barnabas Nawangwe gears up to assume Makerere University's (MAK) top job beginning September 1 this year, he is optimistic that for Uganda to attain middle-income status by 2040, the input of the 95-year-old institution and other universities will be crucial, provided a few things are in place. **Cecilia Okoth and Sarah Mazirwe** caught up with the 61-year-old don for a question-and-answer session regarding his plans for the university as the incoming vice chancellor.

Prof. Barnabas Nawangwe wants students to be creative. Photo by Hajara Nalwadda

**Every vice-chancellor promises heaven on earth. How different is your strategy?**  
I have made my intentions clear. Many people say it is ambitious and not realistic, but that is what I intend to do. My priorities are:

**Human resource**  
I will start by harmonising the relationships among the different categories of staff and to enhance their welfare. This does not only include enhancing their salaries but other issues that affect their wellbeing. Medical insurance,

for example. Although this has been worked on for a long time, it has not materialised. But come the next academic year, it will be operational.

**Housing and loans**  
I will study the schemes being used in other universities in

the region where staff receive support for the construction of their houses.

Many of our staff are chocking on huge loans from banks and microfinances institutions. I encourage staff to join one of the several SACCOS in the university.

About a year ago, we started the Makerere University multipurpose scheme which a few people embraced. This SACCOS lends money to staff at 12% compared to 25% or 30% that banks and microfinance institutions offer.

We have addressed this problem and I believe the students are now comfortable since, for the first time, it was adopted with their input. Everybody is required to pay at least sh200,000 by the second week of each semester. It was developed with their input. Everybody is required to pay at least sh200,000 by the second week of each semester. It was developed with their input. Everybody is required to pay at least sh200,000 by the second week of each semester. It was developed with their input.

## TUITION POLICY

Regarding the University Hospital, council already approved that the College of Health Sciences takes over its management and resources have been set aside to renovate it.

**How will you ensure that the university is self-sustaining?**

This will be done through developing our underutilised or dormant land. We have prime land which is occupied by dilapidated staff houses.

My simple calculation is that if we developed such land by erecting hotels, apartments and modern hostels, we would double our current revenue. This will also help us reduce our dependence on the Government.

At the moment, 60% of our budget is funded by the Government. I want to reduce that component of expenditure within the next 10 years to about 30%, such that most of the university's money comes from our investments.

### Accommodation

Through the private-public partnerships, we shall build more modern hostels at the university campus that will in time revert to the university.

**Critics say Makerere teaching mode focuses on undergraduates while neglecting graduate training. What is your take on this?**  
Our 2008-2018 plan states that we intend to become a research-led university, meaning by 2018 we should have attained that status. A research-led university definition should have at least 30% of its student population as graduates. Whereas the ratio of graduate students was 9% in 2008, it is at 16% at the moment.

### BETWEEN THE LINES:

**I want students to become more creative and not just come here to get a degree. I want them to learn more life skills that will be useful to them.**

Some of the hindrances include the financing mechanism, where students are sponsored and the university has depended on interest generated revenue to roll out its programmes.

So in an attempt to ensure financial viability of the university, it has continued admitting a large number of undergraduate students, which increased but not at the same magnitude as that of graduate students.

However, with the continuous salary enhancement by the Government and its subsequent takes over the entire wage bill, there will be need for us to reduce the undergraduate numbers and increase the number of graduates.

The Government needs to begin funding graduate training because it is the graduate students that have the greatest impact on economic development as confirmed in developed countries such as China.

**How will you ensure that the long standing problems such as doctored marks and forged transcripts become history?**

The issue of changing students' marks was mainly done by staff in the academic registrar's department, especially among the information technology staff. Whereas some of the culprits are on suspension, we are going to make it extremely risky for anybody to doctored marks.

One of the ways will be to decentralise the management of marks and transcripts at the colleges and the academic registrar's role will be quality assurance. This means the transcripts will even be given out before the graduation day as soon as the graduates verified the results.

Whereas the awarding transcripts on graduation day had worked for about two years, we realised there was massive forgery as employees raised a red flag, asking us to verify documents.

## UROLOGY- KIDNEY DISEASES HEALTH CAMP

**Urinary system**

- Kidney
- Ureter
- Bladder
- Prostate
- Urethra

- Kidney Failure
- Kidney transplant Counseling
- Enlarged Prostate
- Prostate/Bladder cancer
- Painful Urination
- Kidney/Gall Bladder stones
- Fibroids
- Impotence
- Erectile Dysfunction

- Diode Laser Surgery for Enlarged prostate and Fibroids
- Shock wave Lithotripsy for kidney stones
- Advanced Laparoscopy surgeries

**Date: Sunday 9th July - Thursday 13th July 2017.**

The camp is in collaboration with visiting **UROLOGISTS & KIDNEY TRANSPLANT SURGEONS from INDIA.**

### Consultations on Appointment

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