

Education stakeholders warn that unless infrastructure and staffing challenges are addressed urgently, Busitema University's growth and competitiveness will be compromised. They have reechoed the urgent need for government to increase on the resource envelope in order to address the issue of accommodation facilities and rehabilitate existing structures.

BY MUDANGHA KOLYANGHA

Busitema University's ambition to transform into a leading centre of excellence of learning is being constrained by inadequate infrastructure, low staffing gaps, challenges that continue to affect academic delivery, student welfare and institutional development.

Despite a steady rise in student enrolment over the years, physical facilities in University's campuses have not expanded at the same pace and lecture rooms are over stretched.

Prof Willian Bazeyo, the university council chairperson said the University faces some key challenges, including inadequate infrastructure and staff shortages.

"There is an urgent need for institutional development to improve academic excellence," Prof Bazeyo said, adding that, "Most of these campuses are located in rural areas compounded with lack of accommodation for students and staff who may wish to rent out."

During a familiarisation tour of all university campuses of Namasagali, Pallisa, Mbale and Arapai, officials headed by Prof Eng Badru Kiggundu and Paul Wako, the vice chancellor, sought to understand the progress and

Poor infrastructure, staffing gaps stifle Busitema varsity



Busitema University main entrance. PHOTO/COURTESY

challenges.

Prof Eng Badru Kiggundu was installed as Busitema's University Chancellor late last year.

Prof Bazeyo challenged government to provide more resources towards the development of the institutions to fast-track its growth and enable it to compete favorably with other universities.

He also appealed to private investors to establish or construct accommodation facilities that both staff and students can rent in order to address the challenge of accommodation.

"As a university, we are happy that communities are benefiting from the establishment of different campuses. More scholarships are being given out in each district," he said.

He also explained that the university has created partnerships which will support its growth.

Prof Bazeyo noted that current staffing stands between 10-12 percent, which is quite low compared to the number of students. For instance, at Pal-

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Statistics.

Pallisa Campus currently has 26 academic staff, out of which, 16 are full time, whereas 17 are part-time lecturers. More lecture rooms, a university library and a computer laboratory are projects that need to be worked on.

lisa campus, the university has a total of 600 students, with only 26 staff.

Prof Eng Badru Kiggundu said the biggest challenge that the new administration faces is the issue of inadequate infrastructure and low staffing.

"The infrastructure needs to match with student enrolment. There is need to rehabilitate the existing structures," Eng Kiggundu said.

He also reechoed the urgent need for

government to increase on the resource envelope in order to address these challenges.

"We are aware that Busitema may not be the only University in dire need of support. But it needs urgent and special attention. If better facilities are in place, it will be easier to increase student numbers," he said.

Eng Kiggundu was also concerned about the lengthy and bureaucratic procurement process that slows down some of the construction projects at the university.

"For instance, Pallisa campus received funding of Shs1.2bn from government in October 2025, but it hasn't been used because of procedural issues."

He says the university has to get clearance from the Solicitor General and the Attorney General, which processes take time and delay construction.

He applauded the Pallisa District donating the land and allowing the university to establish a campus, which currently accommodates the faculty of Management Sciences.

"The people of Pallisa through this donation, gave us a debt to transform the community by providing unique and relevant courses," he said.

Mr Abbey Kalenzi, the faculty dean, said Pallisa campus was established in 2014 with few students, but the enrolment has reached 600 with students pursuing different courses.

He said the university has 26 academic staff, out of which, 16 are full time, whereas 17 are part-time lecturers.

The university has registered some progress including increased academic programmes, more student numbers and research and publications.

He, however, noted that more lecture rooms, a university library and a computer laboratory were projects that needed to be worked on urgently.

He also cited limited skills and capacity of faculty staff, minimal funding and resource limitation, as well as inadequate staffing level saying that currently the university relies on graduate fellows, part time staff and visiting lecturers.

"We conduct regular staff interviews based on workload, implement policies that encourage staff retention, lobby for wage increase from the government," Mr Kalenzi said.

He outlined plans in the pipeline such as increasing the number of programmes and strengthen research and innovation activities.

The university also intends to increase student enrolment by 40 percent in the next five years and also increase academic staff and focus on PhDs.

The vice chancellor, Mr Paul Wako said several departments operate with fewer lecturers than required by the law who take on heavy workloads.

The university management has acknowledged the constraints, attributing them largely to limited funding and delays in government disbursement.

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