

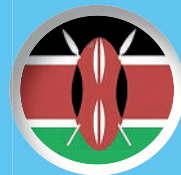


East African Community Common Higher Education Area

Quality Education for Development



2025





East African Community Common Higher Education Area



DECLARATION BY HEADS OF STATE OF THE EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY PARTNER STATES ON THE TRANSFORMATION OF THE EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY INTO A COMMON HIGHER EDUCATION AREA

We, the Heads of State of the East African Community Partner States, wishing to accomplish the objective of harmonization of higher education and training systems in the East African Community ("EAC") by establishing a common frame of reference to facilitate comparability, compatibility and mutual recognition of higher education and training systems and the qualifications attained within the EAC Partner States, based on shared views on quality, criteria, standards and learning outcomes, for promoting student and labour mobility in the EAC;

Recalling that the Treaty for the Establishment of the East African Community in Article 102 provides that the Partner States agree to undertake concerted measures to foster co-operation in education and training within the Community and among others to harmonise curricula, examination, certification and accreditation of education and training institutions in the Partner States through the joint action of their relevant national bodies charged with the preparation of such curricula;

Affirming the growing importance of knowledge as a key factor for social and human growth as alluded by the Dakar Declaration on Education for All, 2000, the United Nations Millennium Development Goals, 2000, the Commission on Social Dimensions of Globalization, 2004, of which the EAC Partner States are signatories;

Recognizing that higher education, including research, is the leading pillar in creating a knowledge society and knowledge driven economy; and **Having reviewed** the progress so far made towards that objective, in particular, the development and adoption by the national commissions/councils for university/higher education and higher education institutions in all the Partner States of:

- (a) Regional Quality Assurance Framework, based on four operational tools:
 - (i) A policy framework, titled Principles and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in Higher Education in East Africa;
 - (ii) Regional quality assurance instruments contained in the Handbook for Quality Assurance in Higher Education covering internal quality assurance at programme level, external quality assurance at programme level, institutional quality assurance, and implementation of a quality assurance system;
 - (iii) Benchmarks for academic programmes; and
 - (iv) East African Higher Education Quality Assurance Network, which promotes the development of quality culture in East Africa; and
- (b) East African Qualifications Framework for Higher Education (2015) as a human resources development instrument guiding the higher education and training systems, and as a reference tool in facilitating mutual recognition of qualifications attained in and outside the EAC Partner States;
- (c) Staff Mobility Framework (2014) to enhance sharing of the existing human resources in higher education within the Community and encouraging staff mobility; and
- (d) Students Mobility Policy (2015) to facilitate free movement of students within the Community; and

Noting that the achievements so far recorded require to be consolidated to ultimately evolve into a unified higher education system;

We hereby affirm our commitment and undertaking to accomplish that objective by transforming the EAC into a **Common Higher Education Area**.

WHEREFORE, we the Heads of State of the EAC Partner States **DO HEREBY DECLARE** the EAC a **Common Higher Education Area** whereby the national higher education and training systems shall operate and be guided by the common regional framework under which curricula, examinations and certification as well as academic and professional qualifications, and the quality of the educational and training output in higher education will be harmonised.

We proffer that the Common Higher Education Area will facilitate and enable the mobility of students and teachers and promote the free movement of labour, people and services as envisioned under the Treaty for the Establishment of the East African Community signed in 1999 and the Protocol on the Establishment of the East African Community Common Market in 2010.

We acknowledge and commend the good work so far done by the Inter University Council for East Africa (IUCEA), through the mandate given to it by its Act of 2009 (section 4 (2)) as a strategic institution of the EAC for the implementation of the objective to attain a fully harmonized and integrated higher education and training system in the EAC.

Consequently, we entrust and task the Council of Ministers with the responsibility of coordinating the operationalization of the Common Higher Education Area and IUCEA to provide the necessary technical support.

We hereby pledge to the people in the EAC our resolve as herein DECLARED at Dar es Salaam, the United Republic of Tanzania on this 20th day of May, in the year Two Thousand and Seventeen as duly attested by our respective signatures hereunder.

H.E. YOWERI KAGUTA MUSEVENI PRESIDENT	H.E. DR. JOHN POMBE MAGUFULI PRESIDENT	H.E. WILLIAM S. RUTO, EGH, EBS DEPUTY PRESIDENT	H.E. GASTON SINDIMWO 1 ST VICE PRESIDENT	HON. FRANCOIS KANIMBA MINISTER OF TRADE, INDUSTRY AND EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY AFFAIRS REPUBLIC OF RWANDA	HON. AGGREY TISA SABUNI ECONOMIC ADVISOR TO THE PRESIDENT
REPUBLIC OF UGANDA 	UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA 	REPUBLIC OF KENYA 	REPUBLIC OF BURUNDI 	REPUBLIC OF RWANDA 	REPUBLIC OF SOUTH SUDAN

EAC HEADS OF STATE



H E ÉVARISTE NDAYISHIMIYE
PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC
OF BURUNDI



**H E FÉLIX ANTOINE
TSHISEKEDI TSHILOMBO**
PRESIDENT OF THE DEMOCRATIC
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H E HASSAN SHEIKH MOHAMUD
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OF SOUTH SUDAN



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PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF
UGANDA



H E SAMIA SULUHU HASSAN
PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED REPUBLIC
OF TANZANIA





IUCEA, an institution of the East African Community (EAC), works to harmonize higher education systems and promote collaboration among universities in the region.



CONTENTS

Editorial - EAC Common Higher Education Area - A Pathway To Regional Integration	6
About IUCEA - IUCEA Strengthens Collaboration and Growth in EAC Higher Education	8
The Chairperson, IUCEA - The 16th IUCEA Annual Meeting and Conference In Kinshasa, DRC	12
The Executive Secretary, IUCEA - The EAC Partner States The Fee Structure Model For Higher Education Institutions	14
Prof. Michael Mawa - Harmonised Quality Higher Education Advances Regional Integration	17
Prof. Paul Muoki Nzioki - EAQAN President - Born From National Roots EAQAN Champions Higher Education Quality Assurance	19
Prof Mary J. N. Okwakol - Regional Conference; Uganda to Host East African Common Higher Education Area Ministers	24
Dr Robert Ayine - Qualifications Frameworks - The East African Higher Education Area Realism.	28
Prof. Mike Kuria - Work In Progress - Higher Education Integration Unlocks Regional Potential	33
Kenyatta University - The Giant Transforming Africa's Higher Education	36
Dickson Wanglobo - Unlocking East Africa's Future - The Strategic Impact of Africa Higher Education Centres of Excellence	40
Prof. Margaret J. Hutchinson - University of Nairobi - Higher Education Champions Regional Integration	41
Prof. Pauline Byakika-Kibwika, World Bank - funded Centre of Excellence - Mbarara University PHARMBIOTRAC	46
Prof. Robert Wamala - Makerere's EAC Integration - The Research and Innovation Drive	52



Prof. Eli Katunguka Rwakishaya - Kyambogo's IUCEA Academic Connections	58
Prof Joy Kwesiga - IUCEA's Mobility - Kabale University Reaps Big Dividends	62
Dr. Joseph Ssemakula - Uganda Martyrs University - Research, Innovation, Ethical Commercialisation, Regional Leadership	66
Dr. Edward Kadozi - Rwanda's Higher Education Council - Advancing Quality and Regional Integration	70
Prof. David Karungu Wangombe - University of Kigali - A Decade of Growth, Innovation, Sustainable Impact	73
Rwanda Tourism University - Regional Integration, Skills Development, Global Competences	79
University Of Rwanda - The EAC Research, Innovation Frontline	82
UNILAK - A Global Partnerships and Diversity Hub	86
Dr. Jude Ssebuwufu - Spotlight - The East African Common Higher Education Area	92
Prof Gaspard Banyankimbona - Regional Mobility - IUCEA Wants Expeditious Qualifications Equating	94
Education Without Borders - Harmonisation Is Shaping East Africa's Higher Learning	98
Dr. Cosam Joseph - Regional Labour Mobility - Boosting Harmonised Skills Assessment and Certification	101
Godwing Bonge Muhwezi - Staff, Students Exchange - Driving TVET Integration In East Africa	104
Unlocking Skills Without Borders - Regional Qualifications Framework Transforms East Africa's TVET	106
Beyond Borders - Embracing The Regional Mobility Power	109
Prof Mike Kuria - The East African Community Academic Integration	111
Prof. François Havyarimana - Burundi's NCHE - Quality Assurance, Regional Integration Commitment in Higher Education	115
Amb. Dr. Libérat Mfumukeko - Meeting Quality Standards - The Bujumbura International University	118
Prof. Charles D. Kihampa - The Tanzania Commission For Universities The Zanzibar University	120 124
Prof. Emeritus Constant Nkiama Ekis - DR Congo's ANAQ-ESU - Consolidating East Africa's Higher Education Quality Assurance	126
Prof. Dr. Kimenya Musailwa Deogracias - University of Kindu Students, Staff Mobility, Quality Assurance, Academic Excellence	128
H.E. Farah Sheikh Abdulkadir - The Somali National University	132
Dr. Abraham Matoc Dhal - The Unstoppable Growth - Dr John Garang Memorial University of Science and Technology.	136
Dr. Salome Guchu - University - Industry Collaboration - Shaping East Africa's Future.	140
Prof Meshack Obonyo - The Building Synergies - Unlock Common Higher Education Area for Development	142
The Power of Data - Unlocking East Africa's Higher Education Future	144
Prof Gaspard Banyakimbona: Pathway for Integration - The EAC Scholarship Programme	146
Prof. Idris Rai - From 3 to 130 IUCEA Members - Regional Integration In Higher Education Gains Ground	150



55



56



101



104



105



139





Gai P. Manyon

EAC Common Higher Education Area

A Pathway to Regional Integration

The East African Community (EAC) Common Higher Education Area is a landmark initiative with the potential to transform the region's education landscape and deepen regional integration.

Declared by the EAC Heads of State in March 2017 in Dar es Salaam, this framework seeks to harmonise higher education systems across partner states, enabling students, academic staff, and institutions to operate seamlessly within the region.

The EAC Common Higher Education Area is designed to promote academic mobility and cooperation. Standardised qualifications, recognition systems and quality assurance mechanisms eliminate bureaucratic and institutional barriers that restrict student and staff movement across borders.

An interconnected academic community enables universities to pool expertise, share resources, and undertake collaborative research projects to address the EAC's pressing socio-economic challenges.

Education is a powerful driver of unity, a principle the EAC Common Higher Education Area enhances by embedding integration into the academic experience. As students from different partner states study next to each other, they gain exposure to diverse cultures, perspectives and problem-solving approaches, fostering a collective East African identity and encouraging cooperation over competition.

An integrated education space helps align the region's workforce with its development goals. Harmonised curricula and mutual recognition of qualifications ensure that graduates can work anywhere in the EAC without the need for re-certification. It boosts employability and supports the free movement of labour, a pillar of the EAC Common Market.

The operationalisation of the EAC Common Higher Education Area requires institutions to adapt their academic and administrative systems to align with regional standards, while maintaining their unique strengths and identities.

Education is a powerful driver of unity, a principle the EAC Common Higher Education Area enhances by embedding integration into the academic experience. As students from different partner states study next to each other, they gain exposure to diverse cultures, perspectives and problem-solving approaches, fostering a collective East African identity and encouraging cooperation over competition.





Tanzania Commission For Universities (TCU) Chairperson, Professor Penina Mlama (left) presents a trophy to the Minister for Education, Science and Technology, Hon. Professor Adolf Mkenda as an appreciation for officiating the 18th Higher Education, Science and Technology Exhibitions at Mnazi Mmoja Grounds, Dar es salaam Tanzania on July 18, 2023.

The Ministries of Education, accreditation bodies, student associations and development partners must collaborate to ensure smooth implementation. Regular regional forums, joint research programs, and inter-university exchange schemes can help bring the vision to life.

However, political will at the national and EAC levels will be crucial, as will sustained investment in higher education infrastructure and ICT connectivity to facilitate cross-border learning.

Thus, the EAC and partner states should establish a clear roadmap with measurable milestones. Adequate funding, capacity building and consistent

monitoring will ensure that the initiative is on track and delivers tangible benefits to students, staff and societies across the region. The EAC Common Higher Education Area is a bold step toward building a cohesive, prosperous, and globally competitive East African Community.

With committed leadership, strong institutional partnerships and a shared vision of a united East Africa, the EAC Common Higher Education Area can be transformative for generations to come.

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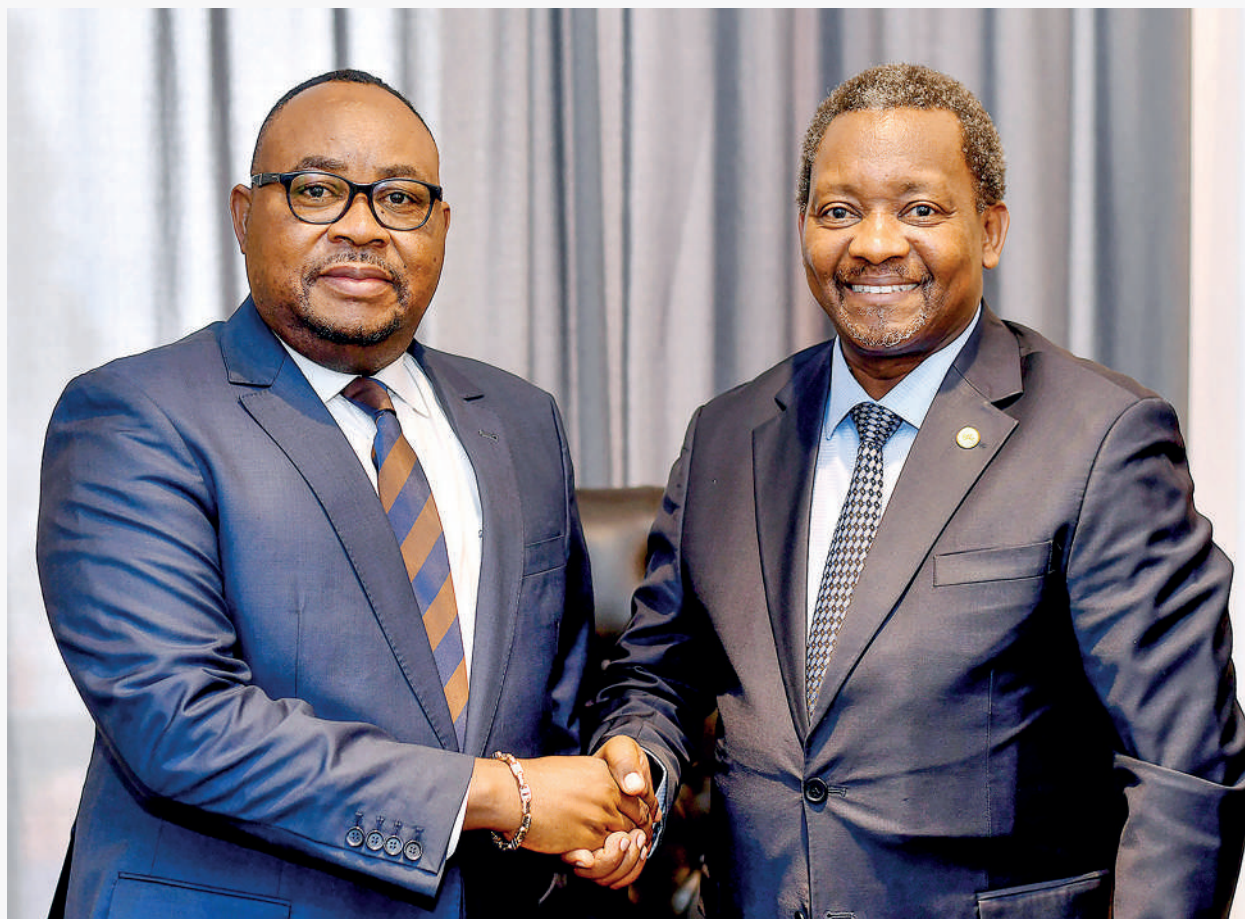




IUCEA Strengthens Collaboration and Growth in EAC Higher Education

The Inter-University Council for East Africa (IUCEA) is a key institution of the East African Community (EAC), established under the IUCEA Protocol of 2002 and the IUCEA Act of 2009. Its primary mandate is to advise the EAC Partner States on matters related to higher education and contribute to the region's strategic development of education and research. As a member-based institution, IUCEA facilitates networking among universities and degree-awarding institutions by providing a platform for discussions on various academic issues.

Historically, IUCEA began as the Inter-University Committee (IUC) following the collapse of the University of East Africa in 1970. Initially, it served only three national universities: IUC was established as a result of dissolution of the University of East Africa to form the three national Universities; Makerere University, the University of Nairobi, and the University of Dar es Salaam. Today, its membership base has grown, with all universities and degree-awarding institutions recognized by national higher education bodies in the EAC eligible to join.



IUCEA Executive Secretary, Prof Gaspard Banyankimbona (R) had an inspiring meeting with the Hon. Didier Mazenga Mukanzu, the Minister of Regional Integration of the Democratic Republic of the Congo.



As the EAC continues to expand, IUCEA is poised to become one of the largest higher education organizations in the region.

IUCEA's vision is to be the leading institution for a Common Higher Education Area in East Africa, fostering prosperity and sustainability. Its mission is to encourage mutually beneficial collaboration between member universities, governments and public and private organizations. The institution played a pivotal role in the transformation of the EAC into a Common Higher Education Area, a milestone declared by the EAC Heads of State on May 20, 2017. IUCEA has since developed various instruments to harmonize higher education systems across the region.

IUCEA operates under six strategic objectives:

1. Advocate for and foster the implementation of the EAC Common Higher Education Area.
2. Establish leadership training programs for university staff, particularly in postgraduate supervision, teaching, and learning.
3. Develop a regional information hub for integrated higher education.
4. Promote digital learning infrastructure to improve teaching and learning quality.
5. Build the capacity of universities and research centers for innovation and research in collaboration with industries and stakeholders.
6. Strengthen IUCEA's institutional capacity and governance for more effective service delivery.

In its effort to implement the Common Higher Education Area, IUCEA has prioritized several projects and programs:

- 1) **Quality Assurance and Regional Accreditation:** IUCEA has developed a regional accreditation framework and several benchmarks for bachelor's, master's, and PhD programs.
- 2) **Staff and Student Mobility:** IUCEA facilitates the mobility of university staff for teaching and research across the EAC Partner States and promotes student mobility through scholarships and supportive policies.
- 3) **Research Coordination:** IUCEA coordinates research projects that address socio-economic issues in the EAC region.
- 4) **Higher Education Information Sharing:** It has developed a Higher Education Information Management System and the East African Qualifications Register to operationalize the East African Qualifications Framework for Higher Education.
- 5) **Capacity Building:** IUCEA provides training for university faculty, particularly in postgraduate supervision.

IUCEA also supports East African students through various scholarship programs aimed at promoting regional integration. The EAC Scholarship Programme, funded by the German government, offers scholarships to students from EAC countries to study in universities within the region. The program encourages gender balance, with at least 30% of scholarships awarded to female students. So far, 180 master's students from six EAC countries have benefited from the program.

A second phase of the program, with additional funding, will expand the number of participating universities and study programs. Additionally, the IUCEA-Kyungdong University global Scholarship offers East African students the opportunity to study in South Korea.

IUCEA is also the Regional Facilitation Unit for two World Bank - financed projects.

EASTRIP improves technical and vocational education in East Africa

The East Africa Skills for Transformation and Regional Integration Project (EASTRIP), a five-year project funded by the World Bank and the Governments of Ethiopia, Kenya and Tanzania, has registered notable achievements in improving technical and vocational education in East Africa. The project, with funding worth USD 293 million, seeks to address skills shortages and enhance regional integration by increasing the access and improving quality and relevancy of TVET programs in selected Regional Flagship TVET Institutes.

The project has attained and exceeded its targets in enrolment of students, forming strategic partnerships with industry to develop demand-driven programmes, and improving employability of TVET graduates.

For more information, visit:
<https://www.eastrip.iucea.org/>



Funded by the World Bank and the Governments of Ethiopia, Kenya and Tanzania, The East Africa Skills for Transformation and Regional Integration Project (EASTRIP), is a five-year project, and has registered notable achievements in improving technical and vocational education in East Africa.



ACE II Project has developed human capital for Uganda

The Second Africa Higher Education Centers of Excellence (ACE II) project was launched by participating African countries, Inter-University Council for East Africa (IUCEA) and the World Bank in October 2016 to support selected universities in Eastern and Southern Africa to deliver quality postgraduate training and build collaborative research capacity in five priority sectors to address pressing regional development challenges.

Through broad consultations at both the regional and national levels, Agriculture, Industry, Health, Education and Applied Statistics were identified as the priority sectors for the region. The project, which is coordinated by IUCEA, supports 29 African Higher Education Centers of Excellence hosted at 18 universities to become specialized regional African Centers of Excellence.

The project has eight participating countries – Ethiopia, Kenya, Malawi, Mozambique, Rwanda,

Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia.

Over the last seven years, the centers have developed human resources, promoted education in STEM as a critical driver of the region's industrialisation, advanced research and innovation, commercialised research, strengthened collaborations, and contributed to economic growth and human development.

With credit from the World Bank, the government of Uganda invested USD 24 million in the four higher education Centers of Excellence to produce a critical mass of graduates in science and technology fields and increase skilled professionals aligned with the labour market demands.

A total of 1,000 Ugandan students have benefitted (i.e., 800 Master's and 200 PhD), close to 800 were enrolled at home and about 200 enrolled in ACEs outside Uganda.



A student at Pharm -Biotechnology & Traditional Medicine Centre (PHARMBIOTRAC) which trains in traditional medicine and bio-pharmaceuticals

Centers of Excellence in Uganda

- African Centre of Excellence in Agroecology and Livelihood Systems (ACALISE) at Uganda Martyrs University.
- Pharm-Biotechnology and Traditional Medicine Center (PHARMBIOTRAC) at Mbarara University of Science and Technology.
- Makerere University Regional Center for Crop Improvement (MaRCCI) at Makerere University.
- Africa Center of Excellence in Materials, Product Development and Nanotechnology (MAPRONA-NO) at Makerere University.

Achievements

- COVIDEX, a supportive treatment in the management of viral infections including COVID-19 was developed at PHARMBIOTRAC at Mbarara University of Science and Technology. This herbal medicine was widely used in Uganda and the neighboring countries to manage COVID-19.
- ACALISE spearheaded the drafting of the National Organic Farming Policy of Uganda. ACALISE has also developed a range of research-based innovations in organic farming and agroecology such as organic pesticides, bio-fertilisers, food tenderizer and turmeric ash that detoxifies field-applied chemicals in tomatoes, popularised affordable Black soldier fly Larvae for protein in animal feed, Foliar fertilizer and coffee ground fertilizers and vermicompost for soil regeneration, among others.

They have also extensively offered hands on agricultural and business training to the surrounding communities to enable them improve their incomes.

- MaRCCI has developed two varieties of cowpea that are due for commercial licensing. The center established a gene bank with over 7,000 local, regional, and international accession of cowpea and sorghum. The gene bank is a seed storage facility to preserve traditional plant varieties, ensuring they are not lost over time and remain available for future generations. The center has built an office and classroom block at Makerere University Agricultural Research Institute Kabanyolo and strengthened the teaching and research infrastructure with a tractor, a plough, a hauler, a planter, an automatic fertilizer and insecticide application machine to make mechanization and planting easier for the students.
- MAPRONANO established a partnership with Presidential Scientific Initiative on Epidemics (PRESIDE) for development of COVID-19 vaccine adjuvants (carrier molecules), COVID-19 saliva diagnostic kits and biomedical plastics.

By investing in people through quality higher education and innovative research, the government of Uganda, through the Ministry of Education and Sports, has developed human capital crucial for boosting economic growth, reducing poverty and creating more inclusive societies.

For more about ACE II, visit <https://ace2.iucea.org/>



The long-awaited day - Graduating Makerere University students

CHAIRPERSON, EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, IUCEA



Prof. Robert Mayom Deng
Chairperson Executive Committee
of IUCEA



The 16th IUCEA Annual Meeting and Conference in Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of the Congo

We thank the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) for its support of the 16th Inter-University Council for East Africa (IUCEA) conference. For many of us, it is our first time in Kinshasa, and we hope to go back with fond memories of our stay here. This Conference marks the first year of my tenure on the Executive Committee. It has been a privilege and exciting opportunity to lead the highest governing body of IUCEA, providing guidance and policy direction under the IUCEA Act 2009.

This Act delineates the roles and responsibilities of the Executive Committee; the oversight of IUCEA's strategic direction, monitoring the implementation of policies, and ensuring the Council fulfils its mandate of promoting collaboration and quality assurance in higher education among Member States.

It has been a rewarding experience so far. Allow me to thank the members of IUCEA and all the stakeholders for the support they have accorded us.

We need to grow our membership and collectively support our institution, IUCEA. It is particularly encouraging to note that in the last year alone, we have admitted more than twenty (20) new member universities, significantly expanded our network and reached within the region.

Under the theme "Reflections on Global Education Trends and Their Implications on Higher Education Landscape," this conference underscores the relevance of promoting quality and relevant education that is purposeful and impactful.

The coordinating institution, IUCEA, emphasises promoting quality higher education. Several capacity-building programmes for university leaders, programme leaders and assessors align with this strategy, which the Strategic Plan underlines.

As we champion this, we should address major concerns affecting our higher education institutions.

Challenges may range from low completion rates of students in postgraduate programmes, inadequate integration of new technologies, including Artificial Intelligence in teaching and learning, and the lack of representation in decision-making processes, among others.

The convention will examine the policy framework established to tackle the identified challenges, as well as the latest insights regarding leadership, corporate governance and responsibilities in higher education. I urge each one of us to reflect on how we can keep in tandem with the new developments and emerging trends in higher education.

It is my expectation, indeed, our shared expectation, that we will walk away with meaningful ideas and actionable strategies to strengthen our institutions and address the challenges currently facing higher education in our region.

This is particularly relevant, as the IUCEA will soon start developing its new strategic plan for the period from July 2026 to June 2031. All innovative ideas generated here should be carefully considered and incorporated into the plan where appropriate.

The Executive Committee is committed to fulfilling our mandate as outlined in the IUCEA Act 2009 and ensuring that IUCEA is a strong, dynamic, effective and respected voice for higher education in East Africa.

Together, we have an opportunity to build an education system that honours our heritage, while preparing our students for a rapidly evolving global economy.

The future of EAC higher education depends on our collective commitment to excellence, innovation and regional integration.

Prof. Robert Mayom Deng
Chairperson Executive Committee of IUCEA
Kinshasa, July 29, 2025

Under the theme "Reflections on Global Education Trends and Their Implications on Higher Education Landscape," this conference underscores the relevance of promoting quality and relevant education that is purposeful and impactful.



THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY, IUCEA



Prof Gaspard Banyankimbona says,
"Regional integration is forged through lecture
halls and laboratories."



When students move, ideas move; when ideas move, innovation follows; and when innovation follows, economies grow. Higher education must not be perceived as a cost but, rather, an investment in human capital, in regional cohesion and shared prosperity.

The EAC Partner States

The Fee Structure Model For Higher Education Institutions

Burundi has hosted a workshop that deliberated on the fee structure model for higher education institutions among the East African Community states. Prof. Gaspard Banyankimbona, the Inter-University Council for East Africa Executive Secretary, opened the deliberations of August 7, 2025. He hailed the workshop's embodiment of resilience, warmth, and regional solidarity, values "that resonate deeply with our shared mission: to strengthen higher education as a driving force for East African integration."

"The objective of this workshop is to reimagine the future of our region, where education is the engine of integration, knowledge flows freely across borders, and no East African student is denied opportunity on account of their place of birth or family wealth.

This workshop is a critical milestone in a journey that began with a clear mandate from the 14th Sectoral Council on Education, Science, Technology, Culture and Sports to develop a fair, transparent and regionally harmonised fee structure model for higher education in the EAC," Prof Banyankimbona observed.

Its importance

"Higher education is the bedrock of the regional integration agenda—the foundation for the free movement of students, skills and labour across our borders. True integration begins in classrooms, in research labs and in student hostels, where young minds from Dar es Salaam, Bujumbura, Kigali, Kampala, Nairobi, Kinshasa, Mogadishu and Juba learn side-by-side.

They challenge each other, innovate together, and build a shared East African identity. Yet, for too

Over the past two years, we have collected real institutional data, tested cost scenarios, and conducted national validation workshops in every Partner State. We have refined our approach and built consensus from the ground up. We are now validating the final regional model—to ensure it works in the diverse economic, institutional and policy realities across our region.

long, financial barriers have stood in the way. A student from Tanzania studying in Kenya, or vice versa, often pays fees double or even triple those of local students, sometimes in foreign currency. A bright young mind from South Sudan dreams of studying engineering in Uganda, but is turned away not by lack of talent, but by cost. In many countries, tuition fees are often set arbitrarily and are disconnected from the actual costs of institutions, which undermines both access to education and quality.

This is not sustainable; it is not equitable and falls far short of the vision laid out in the EAC Common Market Protocol and the Common Higher Education Area.

The Council of Ministers has directed that each East African student studying in another East African Partner State, rather than their home country, should be treated as a national student, charged the same fee and in local currency. IUCEA, in close collaboration with universities, ministries and technical experts from all eight partner states, has developed a Fee Structure Model grounded in real data, sound cost accounting, and regional solidarity. This model establishes uniform principles and common methodology to calculate the costs of delivering quality education, ensuring that fees are fair, predictable and reflective of value rather than determined by nationality or geography.

Over the past two years, we have collected real institutional data, tested cost scenarios, and conducted national validation workshops in every Partner State. We have refined our approach and built consensus from the ground up. We are now validating the final regional model—to ensure it works in the diverse economic, institutional and policy realities across our region.



Our objectives

Key objectives of the fee structure models are to:-

Test the model with real data, whether it works in a public university in Dar es Salaam, a private college in Nairobi, or a technical institute in Goma;

Refine it through expert input, because no model is perfect until it has been tested by those who will implement it; Agree on a clear roadmap for national and institutional adoption, because a brilliant model left on a shelf does not change anything; and Sign a regional resolution—a collective commitment to turn this model into action.

This is all about justice, mobility and fulfilling the promise of the EAC Student Mobility Scholarship Scheme (EAC-SMS), to enable a student who applies to study in another EAC country to be welcomed, and not priced out. IUCEA pledges to support the popularisation and implementation of this fee structure model.

It is open to recommendations, and will carefully consider feedback from these discussions, in preparation for a final document for the Governing

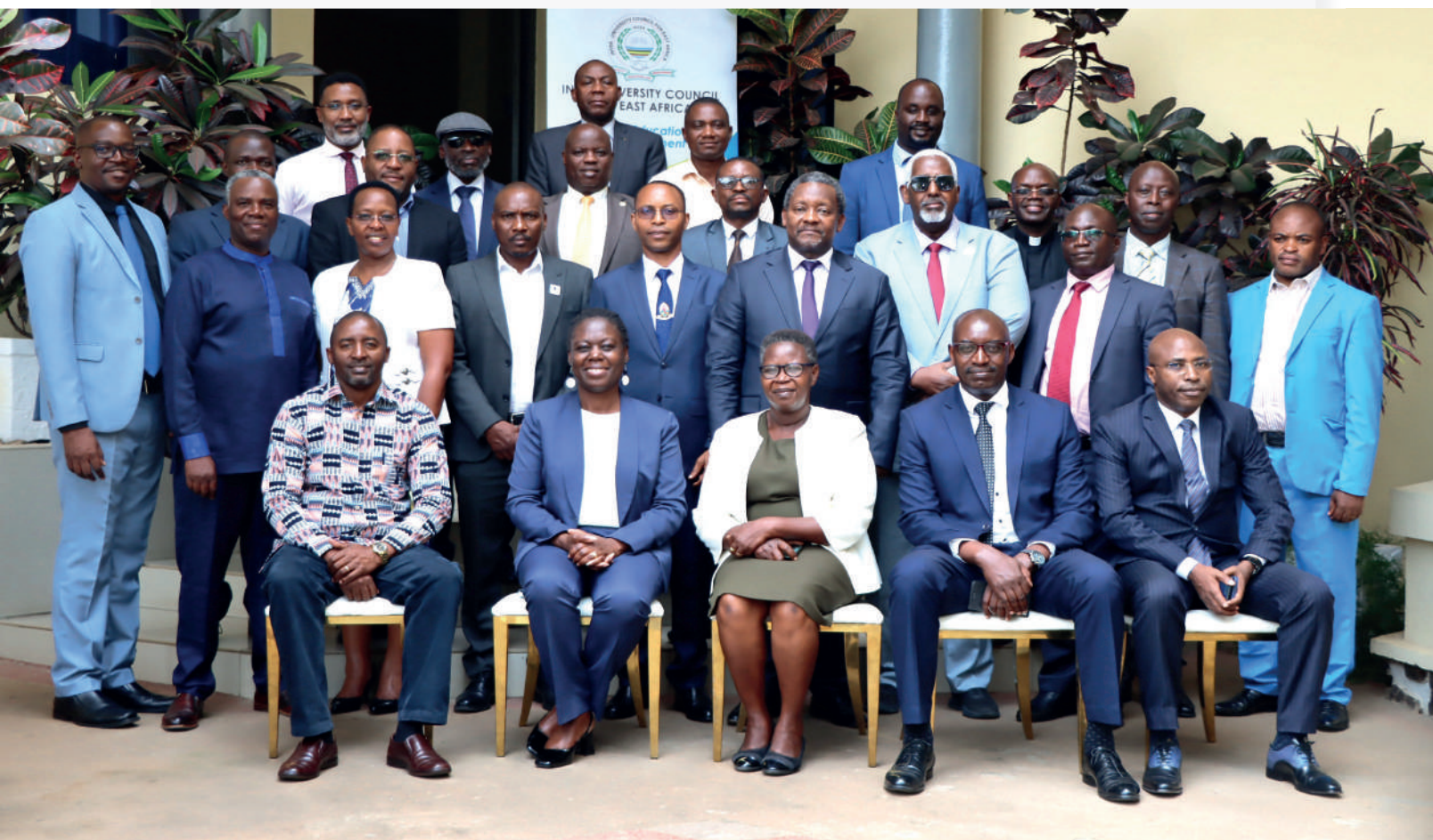
Board and ultimately, the Council of Ministers. The entire IUCEA fraternity is grateful to the Government and people of Burundi for hosting the conference. It also appreciates all EAC Partner States, the IUCEA member universities, and the development partners for their unwavering financial, technical and political support.

IUCEA is committed to playing its coordination role at the regional level, ensuring the delivery of its mandate and building a higher education system that is transparent, sustainable, and truly East African.” The participants included:

Permanent Secretaries and Senior Officials from Ministries of Education and East African Community Affairs, representatives of the EAC Secretariat, members of Higher Education Councils and Commissions, and university rectors.

Others were Vice-Chancellors, academic leaders, directors of Student Loan and Education Financing Boards, consultants and technical experts, and the IUCEA Secretariat staff.

Prof. Gaspard Banyankimbona,
Executive Secretary, IUCEA



EAC Partner States key stakeholders in Bujumbura, Burundi to validate the fee structure model for higher education institutions in the region, August 7, 2025.



Prof Michael Mawa
Senior Principal Quality Assurance and
Qualifications Framework at Inter-
University Council of East Africa (IUCEA)



East Africa has made progress in establishing a harmonised and high-quality higher education system. Through robust legal and policy frameworks, supportive institutions, ongoing capacity development, and stakeholder dialogue, the region is building an education system that improves quality and enhances regional integration. The work of IUCEA and its partners is a model for other regions on the continent and signifies a future for higher education in East Africa.

IUCEA's Prof Michael Mawa

Harmonised Quality Higher Education Advances Regional Integration

The Inter-University Council for East Africa (IUCEA) is developing a robust regional quality assurance system through deliberate and progressive measures. The IUCEA's Senior Principal and Quality Assurance and Qualifications Framework Officer, Prof Michael Mawa, says the measures have been defined by four critical pillars: the legal, policy and institutional frameworks, the continuous capacity building and dialogue.

Legal Framework

The foundation of harmonising higher education and training in East Africa is rooted in key legal instruments. Article 102 of the Treaty for the Establishment of the East African Community obliges partner states to harmonise their education and training systems and promote mobility. This directive emphasises the need for quality and consistency across borders to support regional integration. Article 11 of the 2010 EAC Common Market Protocol outlines the freedom of movement of persons, labour and services, for which the mutual recognition of qualifications and cross-border education systems are essential. This calls for a unified approach to quality assurance, ensuring that qualifications are trusted and transferable across the region. The IUCEA Act of 2009 reinforces these directives. Article 6(c) specifically mandates IUCEA to establish a regional quality assurance system, whose mechanisms include self-evaluation, curriculum assessment and quality benchmarks. They are all essential for standardising education.

Policy Framework

IUCEA has developed a comprehensive suite of policy instruments to guide harmonisation and quality assur-

With common standards and quality assurance measures in place, the public and private sectors easily evaluate the performance of educational institutions. This increased scrutiny creates a greater incentive for universities to maintain high standards, benefiting students, employers and governments alike.

ance. These include the Handbook for Quality Assurance in Higher Education, widely referred to as the "Roadmap to Quality", and guidelines addressing the quality of education, postgraduate training, and education for persons with disabilities.

Program benchmarks developed by experts in collaboration with national councils and commissions have been instrumental. They guide universities in curriculum development, support regulators in curriculum assessment, and help institutions review and improve their academic offerings. Whether assessing existing programs or developing new ones, these benchmarks are a reference point for the national and regional bodies. A significant development in this area is the Regional Accreditation Framework, which sets

standards, guidelines and procedures for accrediting programs across partner states. Programs first undergo national accreditation before being subjected to regional accreditation, raising the overall quality and creating shared standards across the region.

Institutional Framework

A specialised institution of the East African Community, IUCEA is central to coordinating higher education and research, by promoting harmonisation and ensuring quality in higher education. This work is carried out in close partnership with national regulatory bodies, the commissions and councils for higher or university education, in each partner state. While IUCEA's mandate is largely advisory, the national bodies have the authority to enforce regional policies and guidelines within their jurisdictions. They ensure that universities comply with agreed quality standards and





IUCEA Executive Committee Members in Bujumbura in 2025

are vital in implementing regional frameworks.

Capacity Building and Dialogue

IUCEA hosts regular training sessions for quality assurance officers and organises the annual East African Higher Education Quality Assurance Forum. This platform gathers higher education practitioners, regulators and professional bodies to discuss emerging issues and refine quality assurance practices. The East African Higher Education Quality Assurance Network (EAQAN), which champions quality assurance across the region, established national chapters; Uganda's UUQAF, Kenya's KUQAN, Burundi's FOBAQ, Somalia's SUQAN, Rwanda's RWAQAN and Tanzania's TUQAF. They organise training sessions, dialogue events, and mentorship programs for quality assurance officers, ensuring continuity and sustainability of quality practices.

Challenges

A significant challenge in systemic reform is the mismatch between the increasing number of partner states and higher education institutions, and the limited resources for capacity building. The expansion of the East African Community has not been matched by an equivalent increase in financial or technical resources. Further, because IUCEA lacks enforcement powers, implementation of regional instruments varies by country. Some partner states have fully integrated regional standards into their national policies, while others lag, resulting in uneven progress. Another challenge is that some higher education institutions resist change due to the implications of quality assurance reforms. Changes in curriculum, pedagogy, supervision and evaluation demand new ways of thinking, which is not always readily embraced. Continuous dialogue and awareness campaigns remain essential to overcome this inertia.

Opportunity Harmonisation

The harmonisation of higher education in East Africa offers significant opportunities for the region and

its graduates. One of the most prominent benefits is the increased mobility of students, academics and professionals across borders. Mobility allows students to pursue higher education in different partner states with the confidence that their qualifications will be recognised and respected. It also opens up the possibility for academic exchanges, research collaborations and joint programs across East African universities, enhancing the region's academic strength. Furthermore, the alignment of educational standards across the region promotes regional integration. As students, faculty and professionals move more freely within East Africa, they contribute to a deeper sense of unity and shared purpose. This mobility fosters a common identity among East Africans, facilitating smoother collaboration in various sectors beyond education, such as business, governance and healthcare.

The harmonised system also enhances transparency and accountability within higher education. With common standards and quality assurance measures in place, the public and private sectors easily evaluate the performance of educational institutions. This increased scrutiny creates a greater incentive for universities to maintain high standards, benefiting students, employers and governments alike. Finally, the harmonisation process helps build trust in the education system.

As countries collaborate to create a unified framework, they demonstrate a commitment to providing equitable opportunities for all learners. This trust has a ripple effect, attracting international partnerships, investments and recognition, positioning East Africa as a competitive hub for higher education in Africa and beyond. In summary, the harmonisation of higher education in East Africa is about aligning curricula, creating opportunities for greater mobility, integration and collaboration, all of which contribute to the region's broader development goals.

Prof Michael Mawa
Senior Principal Quality Assurance and Qualifications
Framework at Inter-University Council of East Africa (IUCEA)





Participants in the EAQAN 2024 convention in Nairobi, Kenya.

A core principle guiding EAQAN is its interconnectedness with national chapters. Nomination to the Executive Committee must come through national networks, ensuring that regional engagement is rooted in national ownership. One cannot be a member of EAQAN unless they are a member of a chapter. The chapters are what make up EAQAN.

Born From National Roots

EAQAN Champions Higher Education Quality Assurance

The East African Higher Education Quality Assurance Network (EAQAN) is an initiative dedicated to enhancing the quality of higher education. Formed in 2012, it is a registered network and regional umbrella for East Africa's quality assurance directors and practitioners.

The EAQAN was established to provide a structured platform for quality assurance professionals to share their experiences and collaboratively build capacity.

It resulted from a series of initiatives by the Inter-University Council for East Africa (IUCEA)

in 2007 and 2008, the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD), and the German Rectors Conference (HRK), in collaboration with East Africa's national Higher Education commissions and councils.

Over 45 quality assurance officers trained to strengthen internal quality assurance systems in universities, and later became peer mentors and key players in regional quality assurance activities, leading to the formal establishment of EAQAN in Entebbe, Uganda. While national quality assurance chapters operate as country-level networks, EAQAN plays a broader regional



Prof. Paul Muoki Nzioki
EAQAN President.



role. In some cases, the EAQAN's existence prompted the formation of national chapters, illustrating the network's influence in shaping quality assurance structures.

EAQAN has six national chapters: Ugandan Universities Quality Assurance Forum (UUQAF), Kenya Universities Quality Assurance Network (KuQAN), Tanzania Universities Quality Assurance Forum (TUQAF), Rwanda Higher Education Quality Assurance Network (RWAQAN), Forum Burundais d'Assurance Qualité (FOBAQ) and South Sudan University Quality Assurance Network (SSUQAN).

The Democratic Republic of the Congo and Somalia chapters are at advanced levels of formation.

Over 2,000 quality assurance practitioners have been trained, and positively impacted the quality of higher education within the region. The network has been instrumental in developing the national quality assurance chapters, especially in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Somalia, the new member states which heavily rely on EAQAN for capacity building.

By March 2011, the IUCEA Executive Committee approved proposals to create a regional quality assurance network and facilitate continuous professional development through forums and networking.

The EAQAN, with IUCEA and other strategic partners, the DAAD and HRK, has hosted thirteen (13) annual quality assurance forums, providing spaces for practitioners to learn from one another, address emerging regional challenges, and align quality systems with global standards.

EAQAN and IUCEA will host the 14th East Africa Higher Education Quality Assurance Forum and Conference in Kampala, Uganda, from 15th to 18th September, 2025.

Strengthening Quality Assurance

EAQAN has shaped the region's quality assurance culture by promoting mutual learning and the exchange of best practices. The annual forums, training sessions and conferences foster knowledge-sharing among the institutions, national bodies and quality assurance professionals.

Regional Collaboration

The establishment of EAQAN formally began with the 2010 evaluation of IUCEA's first quality assurance initiative, from the recognition of the need for a forum to maintain engagement and share good practices.



EAQAN is a vital platform for elevating the standards of higher education in East Africa.

Over 2,000 quality assurance practitioners have been trained, and positively impacted the quality of higher education within the region.

The network has been instrumental in developing the national quality assurance chapters, especially in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Somalia, the new member states which heavily rely on EAQAN for technical support and capacity building.

Many members at national and regional levels were trained through EAQAN-led initiatives, reinforcing the network's role as a central force in strengthening the quality assurance systems.

The National Chapters host annual national trainings to multiply and entrench the culture of quality assurance within universities and institutions of higher learning in the region.

EAQAN is a vital platform for elevating the standards of higher education in East Africa. Its influence is evident in the sustained enthusiasm and commitment of its members and partners.

With renewed efforts to institutionalise its Secretariat and deepen collaboration across the region, EAQAN is well-positioned to be a cornerstone of regional quality assurance and educational transformation.

09th - 11th SEP 2025
Munyonyo Kampala

The 1st Regional Ministerial Conference on the EAC Common Higher Education Area

H.E. Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, President of the Republic of Uganda : **Chief Guest**

H.E. Jakaya Kikwete, Former President of the United Republic of Tanzania. **Keynote Speaker**

H.E. Veronica M. Nduva, Secretary General of the East African Community (EAC) **Speaker - Remarks**

The First Lady and Minister of Education & Sports, Republic of Uganda, Hon. Janet Kataha Museveni: Convenor

Prof. Mary J. N. Okwakol, Chairperson, Forum of CEOs of Higher Education Councils/Commissions in EAC Partner States

KEYNOTE PRESENTATION | Enhancing the EAC Regional Integration through Harmonised Higher Education Systems' by H.E. Jakaya Kikwete, Former President of the United Republic of Tanzania.

For more, visit <https://www.eachea.iucea.org> @EACHEA2025

Regional Conference

Uganda to Host East African Common Higher Education Area Conference

Uganda is set to host the first Regional Ministerial Conference on the East African Common Higher Education Area (EACHEA) from September 9 to 11, 2025. This premier event will be held at Speke Resort Munyonyo - Kampala, under the theme ***“Enhancing the EAC Regional Integration Through Harmonised Higher Education Systems for Sustainable Development in East Africa”***.

It will be convened by Uganda’s First Lady and Minister of Education and Sports, Hon. Janet Kataaha Museveni. The conference targets higher education stakeholders in the eight countries of the EAC. They will discuss, among other things, the need to harmonise higher education systems, enhance academic mobility, and strengthen cooperation across the bloc. It is jointly organised by the EAC Forum for CEOs of Councils/Commissions for Higher Education and the Inter-University Council for East Africa.

According to Prof. Mary Okwakol, the Chairperson of the organising CEOs Forum and Executive Director of Uganda’s National Council for Higher Education (NCHE), the gathering will be a turning point in advancing higher education integration in the region.

“This conference will review the progress made since the 2017 declaration of the East African Common Higher Education Area. We are hopeful that it will strengthen regional cooperation by addressing policy gaps in higher education. Such gaps partially hinder the recognition of qualifications and academic mobility across partner states,” she said.

The national organising committee for this conference has representation from NCHE, Ministry of: Education & Sports, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Internal Affairs, Ministry of Defence & Veterans Affairs, Ministry of Health, the Uganda Police, Internal Security Organisation, Uganda Media Centre and the Inter-University Council for East Africa (IUCEA). This cross-sectoral approach underscores the importance of higher education to the country’s development agenda.

Conference Objectives

The conference, a platform for unity in education, has seven major objectives:

- Reviewing achievements in operationalising the EACHEA.
- Enhancing harmonisation of higher education systems.
- Facilitating the mutual recognition of academic qualifications and standards across partner states.
- Boosting the mobility of students, staff, and graduates.
- Addressing quality assurance challenges
- Aligning regional frameworks with continental ones, such as the African Continental Qualifications Framework.
- Encouraging greater investment and partnerships to support higher education.

Target Audience

In addition to ministers responsible for higher education in the regional bloc, the conference targets:

- Permanent Secretaries from Ministries responsible for higher education in the East Africa region.
- Senior officials from national higher education councils and commissions
- Vice Chancellors, Rectors, Deans and Directors of Research from universities across East Africa.
- Leaders of regional academic and research networks
- Development partners and donors
- Education attaches at the High Commissions/ Embassies of EAC partner states in Uganda
- Private sector representatives in the education space.
- Student and academic staff associations.
- Youth ambassadors, researchers and policy experts.



Expected Outcomes

This high-level ministerial engagement is expected to produce several outputs that will guide education policy for years to come:

- A joint ministerial communiqué committing to harmonised education systems and enhanced academic mobility in the region.
- A framework for mutual recognition of qualifications and a standardised credit transfer system across EAC universities and colleges.
- Partnership agreements between higher education institutions, regulators, the private sector and development partners to fund and strengthen education initiatives.
- An action plan linking higher education more closely to the EAC's socio-economic development goals.

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Prof. Okwakol has noted that the outcomes will not remain on paper, "We expect ministers to commit to clear implementation roadmaps with timelines, responsibilities and mechanisms for tracking progress."

Unlocking Student and Staff Mobility

One of the conference's critical priorities is to remove the barriers that impede the movement of students and academic staff across borders. The current differences in curricula, qualification recognition and visa requirements hinder seamless academic exchange. This conference will address such impediments through:

- Harmonisation of Higher Education Systems. This will be achieved through reinforcing the commitment to harmonise curricula, quality assurance and accreditation frameworks. Consequently, it will create trust among

Prof. Mary J. N. Okwakol

Executive Director of Uganda's National Council for Higher Education (NCHÉ) and chair of the organising committee



institutions and enable mutual recognition of academic qualifications, components essential for mobility.

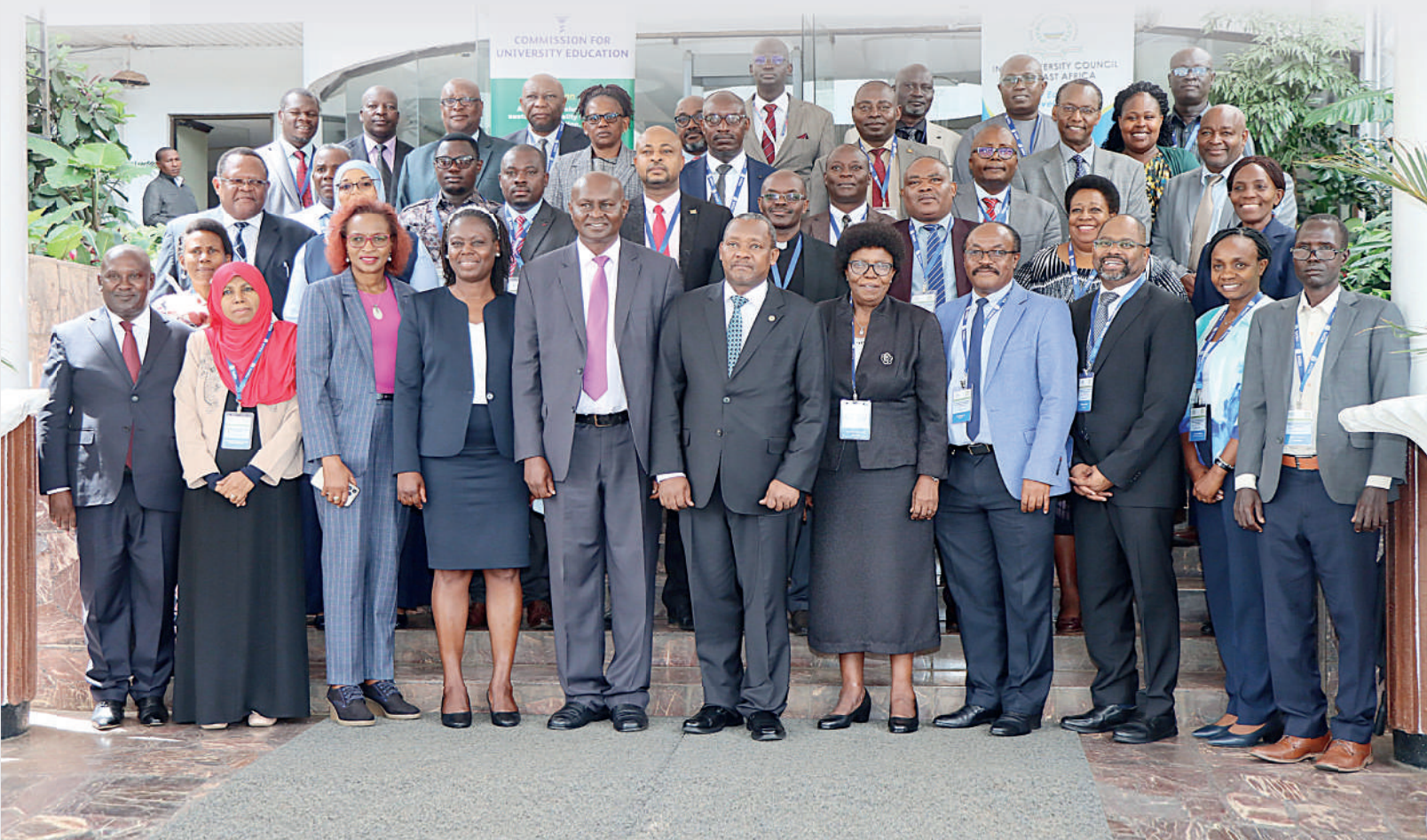
- Alignment of Higher Education Frameworks with the EAC Qualifications Framework (EACQFHE). This will facilitate the transfer of credit units and enable students to pursue further studies in any member state.
- Strengthening the Inter-University Council for East Africa (IUCEA) to enable Ministers to support IUCEA's coordination role in promoting joint academic programmes, staff exchanges, and regional research collaborations.
- Strengthening National Councils/Commissions for Higher Education in the respective EAC partner states. This will enhance their capacity to effectively contribute to regional integration through harmonised higher education systems.
- Policy commitments on Academic Mobility.

The ministerial conference is projected to issue a joint communiqué, committing member states to eliminate policy and administrative barriers such as visa restrictions and tuition disparities. These policy changes are essential for enabling student and staff mobility to become a practical reality.

- Enhancing digital and cross-border Learning. There is a need to endorse online and blended learning strategies to enable academic staff to deliver lectures across borders and students to enrol for the same, without physical relocation.
- Establishing Regional Centres of Excellence to promote specialisation and encourage students and staff to move to institutions recognised for leadership in specific fields (e.g., engineering and health sciences).

Academic Qualifications

Another key engagement for the conference is to make East African academic qualifications universally recognised.



Diverse key stakeholders dedicated to addressing the quality challenges at the intersection of basic and higher education, March 2025, Nairobi.

The ministers will review strategies for policy harmonisation and reaffirm the mutual recognition of Academic Qualifications agreements.

This will involve:

- Policy Harmonisation and Mutual Recognition by reaffirming and strengthening the commitment to implement the Mutual Recognition of Academic Qualifications (MRAQ) among partner states and also agree on shared standards, frameworks and benchmarks that make it easier to equate and recognise degrees, diplomas, and certificates.
- The conference will facilitate collaboration among national councils/commissions for higher education and quality assurance. It will further promote the interlinking of quality assurance systems and support consistent recognition of academic credentials.
- Digitalisation and Credential Verification through the adoption of a regional digital platform for verifying and authenticating academic qualifications. This will reduce fraud and speed up cross-border recognition and processing of academic documents.
- Commitment to joint programs and Credit Transfer. The ministerial dialogue is expected to result in agreements on joint degree programs and credit transfer mechanisms that rely on mutual qualification recognition. This will improve academic mobility and inter-university collaboration.
- Political Will and Implementation Roadmap. This Ministerial engagement will ensure high-level political backing, critical for the implementation and enforcement of regional recognition protocols. If adopted, it will allow for monitoring of progress and identification of bottlenecks in qualification recognition.

Uganda beyond the Ministerial Conference

Whereas hosting the Ministerial Conference is a major achievement for Uganda, the country's involvement will continue in the aftermath.

The NCHE has committed to:

- Work with other National Regulatory Agencies to implement mutual recognition of academic qualifications and participate in the East African Quality Assurance Framework (EAQAF) to standardise institutional assessments.
- Curriculum Harmonisation: Supporting the development and review of academic programs to ensure regional comparability.

This will involve encouraging universities in Uganda to adopt regionally harmonised curricula, making qualifications portable across member states.

- Facilitate the verification and authentication of qualifications from EAC member states to support student and labour mobility.
- Promotion of Student and Staff Mobility: Working to remove barriers for credit transfer, student exchange, and faculty movement. NCHE will encourage universities to join the East African Credit Accumulation and Transfer System (EACAT).
- Collaboration with Regional Bodies: Collaborate with regional bodies such as the Inter-University Council for East Africa (IUCEA) and sister agencies in the bloc. NCHE will participate in regional policy dialogues and the implementation of joint education programs.
- Capacity Building, coordinate training for institutional staff in areas such as Academic program development, Quality assurance procedures and Institutional self-assessment.

Why this conference matters for East Africa's future

The stakes for this conference are high for several reasons:

- A harmonised higher education space in East Africa would mean that a student who commences their undergraduate or postgraduate studies in one East African country will be in a position to complete the same while based in another regional state. This will be achieved without any academic setbacks.
- Employers will have greater trust in qualifications from any EAC country, since the mobility of academic staff to teach or conduct research across the region is enhanced.
- Universities will collaborate more in finding solutions for regional challenges such as climate change, public health, and digital innovations.

In the aftermath of the Munyonyo Conference, the real test will be how effectively the commitments made will translate into evident positive differences for students, staff and institutions across East Africa.

Realising the ambitions of this first ministerial conference will mark the beginning of a truly integrated higher education system for the region. One in which the physical borders do not impede learning, teaching, or innovation.



Introduced in 2015, this regional framework is a non-prescriptive guide to assist in the development and harmonisation of national qualifications frameworks across member states. It provides detailed descriptors for qualification levels, from certificate to PhD, outlining expected competencies, skills and knowledge at each stage.

Qualifications Frameworks

The East African Higher Education Area Realism

In an increasingly interconnected world, education must evolve beyond national borders.

One of the most transformative tools enabling this evolution in the East African Community (EAC) is the qualifications framework. It is a structured system that defines, classifies, and standardises the learning outcomes and qualification levels across various education sectors.

Robert Ayine is the Inter-University Council for East African (IUCEA) Senior Qualifications Framework Officer. He states that the qualifications framework enables countries to organise education systems into clear levels of achievement, allowing for easy comparability and recognition of academic and vocational qualifications.

At its core, Mr Ayine said, it spells out what a learner is expected to know, understand and be able to do at each level, from primary through to doctoral education. These levels help describe the progression of learning within a country, and the value and weight of learning outcomes across borders, a critical consideration in today's regional integration efforts.

"Essentially, every country should develop a national qualifications framework. What we have, though, are countries' qualification systems. In Uganda for example, it is seven years in primary, four years in lower secondary, two years in upper secondary, and a minimum of three years at university," Mr Ayine said. This is a description of a national qualifications framework.

If a Tanzanian student obtains a Bachelor of Medicine and wishes to pursue further training in Uganda, the education authority in Uganda will consult the Tanzanian database to verify the validity, level and content of the qualification. This process enhances trust among institutions and speeds up the recognition of credentials, which is crucial for student mobility and workforce integration.

Status of the Qualifications Frameworks in EAC Countries

While some countries in the region have qualification frameworks to guide their education system, some have not yet developed a qualifications framework as a structured description of the various qualifications. In East Africa, each country is at a different stage in developing and implementing its national qualifications framework. Kenya has made significant strides and boasts a fully developed National Qualifications Framework (KNQF), managed by the Kenya National Qualifications Authority (KNQA).

Rwanda also has a fully operational framework, while Tanzania is in the implementation phase.

Burundi has established its framework and is moving towards implementation, while Uganda is close to finalising a unified National Qualifications Framework that integrates development systems for higher and vocational education. Meanwhile, South Sudan and Somalia are still in the early stages of their frameworks development.

Importance of Qualifications Frameworks

At the heart of these efforts lies a shared objective, like promoting mutual recognition of qualifications, fostering academic and professional mobility, and creating a harmonised Common Higher Education Area. This regional goal is enshrined in the Common Market Protocol, which champions the free move-





Dr. Robert Ayine

Senior Qualifications Framework Officer, IUCEA



ment of students, skilled labour, goods and services within the East African Community (EAC).

Without comparability, mobility is hampered and opportunities are lost.

To achieve this vision, each national qualifications framework should align with those of partner states. If a student completed a Level Three qualification in Kenya and wished to continue their education or seek employment in another EAC state, the country must accurately interpret their qualification and determine the student's placement within its system.

If a student comes from one education system to another, it should be possible to transition and continue their studies or develop their career. If the education systems don't communicate with each other, this person will be misplaced.

EAC Qualifications Framework

The Inter-University Council for East Africa (IUCEA) has developed the East African Qualifications Framework for Higher Education (EAQFHE), which Ayine says can guide the countries' frameworks development.

Introduced in 2015, this regional framework is a non-prescriptive guide to assist in the development and harmonisation of national qualifications frameworks across member states. It provides detailed descriptors

for qualification levels from certificate to PhD, outlining expected competencies, skills and knowledge at each stage. It is anchored on a credit system, which assigns academic weight to various learning activities, making it easier to measure and transfer credits between institutions and countries.

Through this system, a student who begins a degree in Rwanda can seamlessly transfer their credits to a university in Tanzania, ensuring no duplication of coursework and preserving learning progression.

Equally important is the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) mechanism, which acknowledges learning acquired outside formal settings through work experience, informal training, or partial studies. RPL plays a vital role in enhancing access to higher education and facilitating academic progression.

For instance, a diploma holder in engineering may be allowed to start a bachelor's degree from the second year, based on previous learning and competence, commonly referred to as "exemptions" or "waivers."

A more recent innovation under the qualifications framework is the introduction of micro-credentials; short, focused learning experiences that certify specific skills or knowledge areas. These are particularly relevant in today's dynamic job market, where employers are increasingly seeking flexible, targeted skillsets alongside traditional qualifications.



Experts who met to validate TVET East African Qualifications Framework for – EASTRIP in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 27 May 2022



Kyambogo University students

To operationalise the framework and promote transparency, the IUCEA also advocates for the establishment of national qualifications databases. These would be centralised repositories where all accredited qualifications offered within a country are registered. Such databases allow easy verification of qualifications and facilitate recognition by institutions and employers, both locally and internationally.

If a Tanzanian student obtains a Bachelor of Medicine and wishes to pursue further training in Uganda, the education authority in Uganda will consult the Tanzanian database to verify the validity, level and content of the qualification. This process enhances trust among institutions and speeds up the recognition of credentials, which is crucial for student mobility and workforce integration.

Encountered Challenges

Full harmonisation requires political commitment, institutional capacity and sustained collaboration among member states. Varying stages of framework development, limited funding and differing national priorities often slow down the process. However, the IUCEA provides technical support, fostering dialogue, and promoting policy alignment. We closely work with the national councils and commissions for higher education in the respective countries, providing

technical support. In Uganda, we strongly supported the conversation on the national qualifications framework, Ayine asserted.

If IUCEA has the technical competencies within, they second a skilled person to the countries in the particular area that they are to develop. It also conducts training and workshops as an opportunity to develop capacity. The IUCEA framework, found on the organisation's website, can be freely used as a basis to develop their framework, much as it speaks more to higher education, the IUCEA mandate.

Ultimately, the qualifications frameworks are bridges enabling learners, educators and professionals to cross borders, share knowledge, and build a common future.

By harmonising education systems and ensuring that qualifications are understood and respected across East Africa, the region takes a significant step toward realising the aspirations of integration, development and prosperity for all.

The dream of a seamless higher education area where a student in Juba can earn credits in Nairobi, transfer to Kampala, and graduate in Kigali is fast becoming a reality. At the heart of this transformation is the Inter-University Council for East Africa, championing the vision of one region, one education space.



COMMISSION FOR UNIVERSITY EDUCATION



Prof. Mike Kuria

Chief Executive Officer, Commission
for University Education, Kenya

Recent data indicate a growing number of international students enrolling in Kenyan universities, especially in sought-after fields such as nursing and engineering. In addition, faculty exchanges and joint research initiatives are increasing, demonstrating a stronger cross-border collaboration between institutions.

Work In Progress

Higher Education Integration Unlocks Regional Potential

Despite years of effort and political goodwill, a fully integrated East African Higher Education space vision remains a work in progress.

For many students across the region, studying in neighbouring countries presents bureaucratic obstacles, including complex visa requirements, inconsistent tuition fees and unclear recognition of qualifications.

At the Commission for University Education (CUE), Kenya's regulator for public and private universities, under the Universities Act, Cap 210B, where students and faculty can move freely, institutions can collaborate easily, and qualifications are mutually recognised across East Africa.

Missed Opportunities

The East African region is home to some of Africa's fastest-growing universities. Yet, our systems remain fragmented. Differing education policies, quality assurance standards and immigration procedures have slowed the pace of regional integration.

Students often face challenges with visa renewals and high tuition disparities. Others encounter delays in recognition of qualifications, inhibiting smooth academic progression or employment. Meanwhile, the uptake of regional staff and student mobility is low, limiting cross-border research, knowledge exchange and innovation.

These challenges undermine academic advancement, regional economic growth and social cohesion.

CUE's Strategic Response

CUE is playing a convening role to bridge these gaps. It has organised national and regional forums gathering ministries, immigration departments, university leaders and development partners to resolve bottlenecks. In March 2025, CUE hosted a major national dialogue on internationalisation, addressing student visa complexities, streamlining student pass issuance, and improving support systems for international students. It sought to cultivate an inviting atmosphere and establish Kenya as a regional centre for education.

One of the key outcomes of these discussions is the development of a national policy framework for recruiting international students. This initiative, undertaken jointly with government ministries and immigration authorities, seeks to simplify admission processes and create a more enabling environment for learners from across Africa and beyond. International academic exchange organisations have pledged support to this effort, signalling strong momentum for change.

In a high-level workshop on internationalising university education, CUE emphasised the need for Kenyan institutions to engage more globally through joint research, exchange programmes and international partnerships. A key insight from the workshop was the importance of coordinated national branding to promote Kenya as an attractive study destination. CUE acknowledges IUCEA's vital role in fostering regional mobility and is dedicated to aligning

CUE is well-positioned to lead this transformation. Our collaborations with IUCEA, EAQAN and international academic bodies demonstrate our capacity to lead both domestically and regionally. We have taken bold steps—launching the Open University, strengthening accreditation processes, and increasing Kenya's international visibility.



Kenya's education system with international standards to enhance competitiveness.

Tangible Progress

Recent data indicates a growing number of international students enrolling in Kenyan universities, especially in sought-after fields such as nursing and engineering. In addition, faculty exchanges and joint research initiatives are increasing, demonstrating a stronger cross-border collaboration between institutions.

In May 2025, CUE met with representatives from the University of Girona, Panteion University, and regional institutions under the Global Tourism Resilience and Crisis Management Centre – East Africa (GTRCMC-EA). This EU-supported collaboration aims to enhance academic resilience, quality and cross-border partnerships.

CUE is proud to have championed the establishment of the Open University of Kenya, the first fully virtual university, which has attracted students from multiple African countries, demonstrating how technology can break down traditional barriers to access.

The Cornerstone, Quality Assurance

Kenya's quality assurance agency, CUE, is pivotal in aligning local education systems with regional and global standards. Through regular audits, curriculum reviews, infrastructure inspections and accreditation processes, we help ensure that degrees earned in Kenya are credible and respected worldwide.

At the East African Higher Education Quality Assurance Network (EAQAN) meeting in Nairobi in October 2024, CUE shared its regulatory expertise and reaffirmed its commitment to harmonising standards across the East African Community (EAC). The network fosters mutual learning and consistency in academic quality across borders. Furthermore, CUE's 2024–2028 Strategic Plan reflects this vision, focusing on four core pillars:

- Innovation in education systems
- Internationalisation
- Continuous quality improvement
- Alignment with Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

A Continental and Global Table Seat

CUE has established collaborations with national, regional and international partners to elevate Kenya's global presence.



Commission for University Education, Kenya



For this reason, CUE supported the Engineers Board of Kenya (EBK)'s application to become a signatory to global frameworks such as the Washington Accord.

This ensures that Kenyan engineering programmes meet international standards, a recognition empowering graduates to compete in global job markets and facilitate professional mobility. CUE is dedicated to working with sister organisations in the region to extend our influence beyond borders. At the upcoming IUCEA Meeting in Kinshasa, DRC (29–31 July 2025), CUE will contribute to key discussions on quality assurance and mutual recognition of qualifications.

We believe our participation will shape and strengthen the frameworks, enabling student and faculty movement across EAC nations and strengthening our regional education systems' credibility.

What Must Be Done

Despite progress, greater commitment from all stakeholders is needed to unlock the full potential of a unified East African Higher Education space. CUE proposes the following priority actions:

1. Streamline Visa and Registration Processes

Governments should adopt standardised, student-friendly visa systems to reduce delays and costs. All non-tariff barriers to education should be eliminated.

2. Mutual Recognition of Qualifications

Member states must establish clear, enforceable agreements for automatic recognition of degrees and certificates issued within their jurisdictions.

Additionally, universities need a system to seamlessly equate lower-level qualifications, enhancing mutual recognition to allow smooth admission processes that do not create barriers and unnecessary hurdles for applicants seeking admission elsewhere.

3. Harmonise Tuition and Payment Systems

Regional fee structure and local currency payment options would make education more accessible. The region needs to implement the already developed EAC fees structure model.

4. Expand Scholarships and Exchange Programmes

Enhanced funding for mobility programmes will promote cross-cultural learning and joint research. National higher education funding agencies should extend their support to their nationals to study outside their countries. This can serve as an opportunity to bolster regional integration through higher education.

5. Invest in Digital Infrastructure

Robust online platforms must support cross-border learning and virtual collaboration. Leveraging technology, universities might explore resource-sharing strategies that allow students to maximise available resources. For example, if feasible, a university's expertise could be shared with another where enrolment numbers permit, reducing redundancies and operational costs. Could joint subscriptions to e-resources be considered?

6. Strengthen Regional Quality Assurance Networks

Enhanced engagement among national regulators will promote consistency and shared best practices. It is encouraging that IUCEA has facilitated the establishment of a forum for CEOs of EAC national educational commissions and councils.

The progress made by the East African Higher Education Quality Assurance Networks and the growth of national chapters are also positive. These initiatives have CUE's full support.

Why CUE?

With a clear legal mandate, extensive regulatory experience and strategic vision, CUE is well-positioned to lead this transformation.

Our collaborations with IUCEA, EAQAN and international academic bodies demonstrate our capacity to lead both domestically and regionally. We have taken bold steps—launching the Open University, strengthening accreditation processes, and increasing Kenya's international visibility. These achievements are part of building a regional academic ecosystem where quality, innovation and mobility are standard.

Shaping the Future Together

The ambition of creating an integrated East African Higher Education Area is achievable. With collective effort, streamlined systems and ongoing dialogue, we can build a region where learners and scholars thrive beyond national borders.

CUE is committed to leading, guiding and collaborating to develop a higher education space that is competitive, inclusive and future-ready.

Let's break down barriers, strengthen partnerships, and unlock the vast potential of our region's talent and institutions.

*By Prof. Mike Kuria, PhD – CEO,
Commission for University Education
(CUE), Kenya*





Kenyatta University's academic excellence, research leadership and regional integration track record attract students, scholars and partners from the African continent and beyond. With forward-looking policies and robust infrastructure, KU is well-positioned to continue shaping the future of higher education in Kenya, Africa and beyond.

Kenyatta University

The Giant Transforming Africa's Higher Education

At a time when higher education institutions (HEIs) are under increasing pressure to deliver relevant, accessible and quality impactful education, Kenyatta University (KU) continues to lead through innovation, inclusivity and academic excellence.

As one of East Africa's premier universities, the university's position as a leader in higher education is reflected in its growing presence in global rankings. It was ranked first in Kenya by the Times Higher Education in 2024 and has retained this position in 2025. In the World University Rankings 2025, KU was placed in the 1501+ band globally, with notable performance in international outlook (56.1), industry engagement (17.2), and research quality (27.2).

These indicators highlight KU's growing impact and recognition in quality teaching, research and global reach. Decentralised campuses broaden Kenyatta University's presence, including Nairobi (Main, City and Parklands), Mombasa, Nakuru and Kitui, demonstrating its commitment to expanding educational access.

These campuses are strategically positioned to serve diverse regions while maintaining uniform academic standards. The recent approval to admit Kenya Universities and Colleges Central Placement Services (KUCCPS) - sponsored students into programmes like Coastal and Marine Resource Management and Hospitality at the Mombasa Campus reflects KU's responsiveness to localised development priorities.

Academic Excellence across Disciplines

Kenyatta University operates nine schools; seven of them offer academic programmes across certificate, diploma, degree, master's and doctoral levels. The Digital School of Virtual and Open Learning (DSVOL) supports e-learning, and the Graduate School coordinates postgraduate education. Programmes are developed in consultation with industry and regulatory stakeholders, ensuring market relevance and academic integrity.

The Schools

School of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences – Offering programmes in areas such as Agricultural Economics, Environmental Studies, Animal Science, and Community Development.

School of Business, Economics and Tourism – Home to departments like Business Administration, Finance, Applied Economics, and Hospitality Management.

School of Education and Lifelong Learning – Covering Early Childhood, Special Needs Education, Curriculum Studies, and Educational Psychology.

School of Engineering and Architecture – Providing programmes in Civil, Mechanical, Electrical, Petroleum, and Environmental Engineering, as well as Architecture and Spatial Planning.

School of Health Sciences – Encompassing 24 departments, including Medicine, Nursing, Pharmacy, Public Health, and Medical Laboratory Science.

School of Law, Arts and Social Sciences – Combining legal education with disciplines such as Psychology, Media Studies, Gender and Development and Political Science.

School of Pure and Applied Sciences – Focused on Biochemistry, Chemistry, Physics, Mathematics, Zoology, Plant Sciences, and Computing.

Research, Innovation and Centres of Excellence

Kenyatta University has invested in applied research and innovation to address societal challenges and drive sustainable development.

Some of the flagship projects and centres of excellence include:

National Phytotherapeutics Research Centre: Pioneering research in herbal and alternative medicine.

Chandaria Business Innovation and Incubation Centre: Supporting student-led entrepreneurship and start-ups.

Women Economic Empowerment Hub: Fostering inclusive economic growth and gender-responsive policy research.

INCiTIS – Food Triple Action: Focused on enhancing food security through urban-agriculture innovation.

Global Tourism Resilience and Crisis Management Centre – Eastern Africa Hub: Supporting the tourism sector's resilience to shocks.

These initiatives are anchored on partnerships with the government, the private sector and international donors, enabling knowledge transfer and high-impact outputs. Guided by the Strategic and Vision Plan 2023–2027, Kenya Vision 2030, the East African Community Vision 2050, African Union's Agenda 2063, and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the University's research agenda addresses critical societal problems.

The School of Business, Department of Management Science students at an information literacy session at Kenyatta University Post Modern Library.



Initiatives Supporting Research at KU

UPLIFT in Agriculture (EU funded): Enhancing agricultural education across Africa and Europe.

Inclusive Digital Education for Migrant Communities: Promoting employability among displaced populations.

Global Entrepreneurial Talent Management 4 (GETM4) Project: Exploring alignment between employer and employee expectations.

East Africa Bio Design Lab: Innovating health solutions for underserved populations.

Additional institutional strengths include, but are not limited to:

Research Commercialisation: Through the Directorate of Intellectual Property Management and University–Industry Liaison, KU supports patenting and market-readiness.

Graduate Research Support: Grants, workshops and mentoring bolster postgraduate capacity.

KU maintains a vibrant international community, with students from over 50 countries and about 400 active collaborations. It partners with global institutions such as Erasmus+, Fulbright, DAAD and USAID to facilitate academic exchange, research collaboration and capacity building.

Research Infrastructure: Including biosafety labs, digital archives and specialized centres.

Open Access Repository: Facilitating global visibility of KU's scholarly outputs.

Research-Led Curriculum: Findings inform content and delivery across disciplines.


These efforts, anchored in strategic partnerships and cross-disciplinary collaboration, reaffirm KU's leadership in shaping Africa's knowledge economies.

Student Life and Co-Curricular Engagement

With a student population of over 74,000, KU places strong emphasis on holistic development.

The University offers the following:

A modern Students' Computer Centre:- A 4,500-seat amphitheatre for events and creative arts, career mentorship, chaplaincy and disability support services. Co-curricular life includes participation in sports, clubs,



An electrical engineering student is hands on.



Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology (JKUAT) is located in Juja, Kenya.

music, and student governance. In 2025, KU was awarded the YES! Award for Most Active University Partner at the Youth Energy Summit in Cape Town, South Africa, acknowledging its contribution to global youth leadership in clean energy.

Support for Regional and International Students

KU maintains a vibrant international community, with students from over 50 countries and about 400 active collaborations. It partners with global institutions such as Erasmus+, Fulbright, DAAD and USAID to facilitate academic exchange, research collaboration and capacity building.

The Centre for International Programmes and Collaborations (CIPC) onboards international students, coordinating linkages and expanding KU's global footprint. The Executive Deans are the implementers of their respective school collaborations, which cascade to departments to become more specified (and evolve to Memorandums of Agreements [MOAs]).

Admissions Flexibility for Regional and Foreign Applicants

Kenyatta University is deeply committed to creating an inclusive and accessible academic environment for students from across Africa and beyond. To this end, the University implements several flexible measures to support foreign and regional applicants:

1. A uniform fee structure for East African students.
2. Dedicated support services through CIPC for foreign applicants pre- and post-enrolment.
3. Guaranteed on-campus accommodation for international students.
4. Online recognition of foreign qualifications via the Kenya National Qualifications Authority (KNQA) and the Commission for University Education (CUE).
5. Digital access to programme information and institutional resources via the KU website.
6. Fully online application processes for all programmes.

7. Various study modes: full-time, part-time, online and blended, tailored to diverse learner needs.
8. An institutional repository in the Post-Modern Library that preserves and disseminates KU's academic output.

These measures are designed to eliminate procedural barriers, accommodate several educational systems, and create equitable access to higher learning.

Strategic Infrastructure for 21st Century

Learning Kenyatta University continues to invest in modern infrastructure to support its academic and innovation agenda.

The Key Facilities.

Post-Modern Library: A state-of-the-art knowledge hub with 6,000-seat capacity and inclusive digital access. (The largest in the East African region.)

Chandaria Business Innovation and Incubation Centre: A space for start-ups, incubation and enterprise development, serving both the University and wider community.

UniCity Mall: A multipurpose complex housing essential student services, retail and conference spaces.

Amphitheatre: An ambient venue for academic and cultural events with a seating capacity of 4,500.

Student Halls of Residence and Dining Facilities: Supporting the welfare of on-campus learners.

All campuses are fully Wi-Fi-enabled and designed to support students with disabilities. KU hosts the largest population of PWDs, both staff and students.

As a regional leader in higher education, Kenyatta University remains steadfast in its mission to transform society through knowledge, innovation and service.



Unlocking East Africa's Future

The Strategic Impact of Africa Higher Education Centres of Excellence

The East African Community (EAC) possesses a significant demographic advantage: a vibrant and youthful population.

To turn this potential into a competitive economic force, the EAC has a clear strategic vision: the Common Higher Education Area (CHEA). Inspired by Europe's successful Bologna Process, this initiative aims to establish a unified, high-quality academic space across the region. At the centre of this vision is the Africa Higher Education Centres of Excellence (ACEs) programme. This flagship partnership between the World Bank and participating governments (Kenya, Tanzania, Rwanda and Uganda) has established 15 ACEs across nine universities, including Makerere, Sokoine, the University of Rwanda, and Egerton, among others.

The ACEs are more than individual institutions; they serve as a pioneering model for the CHEA, illustrating how a regional approach to higher education can produce tangible results. The ACEs model is effective in three key areas that are essential for the success of the CHEA.



Dickson Wanglobo

Fostering Regional Integration

By attracting students and staff from across the EAC, the ACEs are cultivating a new generation of professionals who work seamlessly across borders. This mobility is a direct and vital step towards realising the EAC's Common Market Protocol.

Building a Unified Standard of Quality

The ACEs' dedication to international accreditation and global partnerships enhances academic standards. So far, 17 educational programmes have gained international accreditation, including eight at the University of Rwanda. This guarantees that a qualification from an ACE is recognised and valued across the region and beyond, aligning with a core principle of the CHEA.

Driving Innovation for a Shared Future

The centres are engines of innovation, producing research and products that address our most pressing regional challenges. By early this year, 3,051 MSc and 998 PhD students had graduated, significantly strengthening our research capacity. Furthermore, a \$1 million investment in seed grants has led to 37 start-ups and the commercialisation of 60 new products, such as COVIDEX and the Etemo dryer, directly benefiting the region's economy. By investing in ACEs, we are laying the foundation for a prosperous, integrated and globally competitive East Africa. The ACEs are the living proof that our CHEA vision is achievable; and with continued support, we can secure a bright future for all our citizens.

*Dickson Wanglobo,
Deputy Project Coordinator for African
Centres of Excellence at Inter-University
Council for East Africa (IUCEA), Kampala,
Uganda.*



Communication expert Ann Gichuhi guides Prof. Rogerio Chiulele and Ernesto Nhantumbo plan for their Africa Center of Excellence at a communication training for ACEs in Dar es Salaam.



Higher Education Champions Regional Integration

The University of Nairobi (UoN) traces its roots to 1956, when it was established as one of the three constituent colleges of the University of East Africa, alongside Makerere University in Uganda and the University of Dar es Salaam in Tanzania. In 1970, it became independent and has since grown into Kenya's premier university, renowned for academic excellence, research, innovation and public service.

The Acting Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Margaret J. Hutchinson, has said that as a regional leader in higher education. UoN is firmly committed to the East African Protocol on Higher Education "We are proud to admit students from across the region without discrimination or additional tuition cost beyond that paid by Kenyan students.

We are proud to admit students from across the region without discrimination or additional tuition cost beyond that paid by Kenyan students.

"This commitment to equitable access reflects our founding ideals and Pan-African spirit."

This commitment to equitable access reflects our founding ideals and Pan-African spirit." The University comprises ten diverse faculties, each excelling in areas aligned to Kenya's national goals and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs):

Faculty of Agriculture

Offers undergraduate, master's and PhD programmes in Agricultural Economics; Food Science, Nutrition & Technology; Land Resource Management & Agricultural Technology; Plant Science & Crop Protection departments. Partnered with Emory University to generate evidence for targeted interventions on antimicrobial resistance (AMR) pathogens in informal food markets.



Prof. Margaret J. Hutchinson,
Acting Vice-Chancellor and
Full Professor of Horticulture
of the University of Nairobi.



Faculty of Veterinary Medicine

Facilitates multidisciplinary education across all levels in Public Health, Pharmacology and Toxicology; Veterinary Anatomy and Physiology; Animal Production; Clinical Studies; Veterinary Pathology, Microbiology and Parasitology. Launched a state-of-the-art Agri-tech Lab to drive innovation in animal health, food safety and biotechnology.

Faculty of Law

Accredited to confer degrees at undergraduate, master's and doctoral levels in LLM. Earned top honours at the 34th Christof Heyns African Human Rights Moot Court in 2024/2025, showcasing excellence in advocacy and regional legal discourse.

Faculty of Built Environment and Design

Offers a tiered structure of academic qualifications, including bachelor's, master's, and doctoral programmes in Art and Design; Architecture; Real Estate, Construction Management and Quantity Surveying; Urban and Regional Planning, spearheading urban regeneration through the Sustainable Nairobi Project, with real-world student-led planning initiatives.

Faculty of Engineering

Supports academic excellence through diverse programmes spanning undergraduate to doctoral studies in Mechanical Engineering, Civil and Construction Engineering, Electrical and Information Engineering, Environmental and Biosystems Engineering, Geospatial and Space Technology.

Developed a prototype solar-powered irrigation system that has been adopted in semi-arid counties to enhance food security.

Faculty of Health Sciences

Hosts a full academic spectrum from undergraduate to doctoral studies in Dental Sciences, Nursing Sciences, Public and Global Health, Surgery, Human Anatomy and Physiology, Clinical Medicine and Therapeutics, Paediatrics and Child Health, Obstetrics and Gynaecology, Ophthalmology, Human Pathology, Psychiatry, Diagnostic Imaging and Radiation Medicine, Medical Microbiology and Immunology, Pharmacy Partnered with the CDC and WHO on public health surveillance and capacity-building programs, including a leadership track for pandemic response.

Faculty of Business and Management Sciences

Equips students with comprehensive academic training, from undergraduate to PhD, in Business Administration, Finance and Accounting, Management Science and Project Planning. Launched a Climate Finance and Sustainability Lab to equip students with skills in Environmental Social and Governance (ESG) investing and green entrepreneurship.

Faculty of Education

Provides a continuum of higher education — undergraduate, master's, and PhD — in Educational Management, Policy and Curriculum Studies; Educational Communication and Pedagogical Studies; Physical Education and Sport; Educational Foundations; Educational and Distance Studies. Expanded digital teacher training programs to rural counties, supporting Kenya's Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC) rollout.

Faculty of Science and Technology

Where scholars thrive from their first degree to the highest academic level in Chemistry, Computing and Informatics, Mathematics, Physics, Biology, Earth and Climate Sciences, and Biochemistry. Developed affordable diagnostic kits in collaboration with local startups, improving healthcare access in underserved areas.



Night view of University of Nairobi, which uniRank has placed in position 7 in the 2020 African University Rankings.



Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences

Provides training in the departments of Linguistics and Languages; Philosophy and Religious Studies; Library and Information Science; History and Archaeology; Economics and Development Studies; Sociology, Social Work and African Women Studies; Political Science and Public Administration; Anthropology, Gender and African Studies; Journalism and Mass Communication; Diplomacy and International Studies; Literature; Kiswahili; Geography, Population and Environmental Studies; Psychology. Hosted the African Languages and Digital Futures Colloquium, promoting indigenous languages in AI and digital platforms.

These achievements and programmes speak to our unrelenting focus on academic rigor, impactful research and community-centred innovation. Through our summer schools and global partnerships, we continue to internationalise our programs and offer diverse learning experiences for all. We invite students, scholars and partners across Africa and the world to join us in this exciting journey of transformation.

Quality Assurance at the University of Nairobi

The University of Nairobi (UoN) maintains a structured quality assurance system rooted in its operating statute. This system is upheld by key bodies such as the Senate, Deans' Committee, Faculty Academic Committees and other academic subcommittees. Initially, these structures focused on ensuring internal compliance with academic standards. However, changing global and local demands on higher education have expanded the definition of quality to include external benchmarks and a culture of continuous improvement.

In response, UoN has institutionalised a robust Quality Infrastructure to foster a university-wide quality culture, guided by top leadership.

Central to this is the Quality Assurance (QA) Unit, which comprises two sections:



Director, Quality Assurance (Second from the Right, front row) attends Joint University of Nairobi-ISTVS Quality Control Workshop on BSc. DEAM Programme May 30-31, 2022 Naivasha, Kenya

Quality Assurance Administration; and Curricula and Programmes. Together, they work to uphold internal academic standards while also aligning with national and international expectations.

Milestone on East Africa's Higher Education Common Areas

The University of Nairobi has significantly benefited from enhanced staff and student mobility within the East African region, in line with its commitment to the East African Higher Education Common Area protocol. Seventy per cent of our 1,600 international students hail from East Africa, reflecting a strong regional presence and collaboration.

Academic partnerships have also flourished through intra-regional mobility of staff and students, enhanced co-supervision arrangements with institutions like Makerere University and a robust pool of external examiners drawn from across the region. The University's annual Research Week 2023 also received support from the Inter-University Council for East Africa (IUCEA), further strengthening our regional academic footprint.

Internationalisation and Summer Schools

The University of Nairobi (UoN) expands its global footprint through a strong internationalisation agenda, welcoming students from across East Africa and beyond. A unique aspect of this policy is the commitment to equitable access: students from the region pay the same fees as Kenyan students, removing financial barriers to higher education and promoting regional integration.

Through strategic collaborations and global networks, UoN has cultivated a vibrant international academic environment, hosting scholars and students from Africa, Europe, Asia and North America. The University's focus on internationalisation enhances academic mobility,

research partnerships and the exchange of ideas, positioning it as a continental hub of knowledge production.

One of the most dynamic outcomes of this international vision is the University's suite of summer school programs, which blend academic training, cultural immersion and collaborative research. These intensive, one or two-week programmes span a wide range of disciplines and partner institutions:

- EASY-ML (African School for Young Researchers on Advanced Machine Learning)
- The African Summer School on Climate Change and Adaptation



- The Afretec Summer School on Healthcare
- The DAAD Summer School
- The IPPA Summer School
- The Geospatial Sciences Summer School
- The One Health Summer School
- The School of Business Summer School

These programs exemplify UoN's commitment to global engagement, enhancing learning outcomes while reinforcing the University's role as a regional and international leader in higher education.

Centres of Excellence

Our centres of excellence continue to serve as regional hubs for research, innovation and capacity building:

- EAKI (East African Kidney Institute) leads in kidney care and nephrology training, funded by the East African Community (EAC) to provide leadership in research and training of both doctors and nurses in renal care and nephrology training from East Africa.
- KAVI (Kenya AIDS Vaccine Initiative) Institute of Clinical Research focuses on HIV/AIDS vaccine development, clinical trials and immunology research, contributing significantly to global vaccine efforts. There has been significant research in other infections, such as the Ebola virus, as well.
- UNITID (University of Nairobi Institute of Tropical and Infectious Diseases) provides postgraduate training and advanced research in infectious and tropical diseases, addressing regional health challenges. The Institute also runs a two-year post-master's HIV Capacity Building Fellowship, funded by the U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) through the Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

- CEMA (Centre for Epidemiological Modelling and Analysis) supports data-driven responses to public health emergencies by developing models for disease outbreaks and healthcare planning. CEMA is involved in a range of clinical research projects with several partners, aiming to generate local data that informs clinical practice and policy.
- WMI (Wangari Maathai Institute) for Peace and Environmental Studies, named after Nobel Prize Laureate Prof. Wangari Maathai, the institute advances research and education in environmental governance, sustainability and peacebuilding. WMI's distinctiveness and comparative advantage is in its acknowledgement of the interlinking between conflict resolution, environmental degradation and democratisation. Few, if any, other institutions, focus directly on this interrelationship.
- NMR (Nuclear Magnetic Resonance) Centre: The NMR Centre is equipped with advanced instrumentation for molecular and material structure analysis, supporting drug development, chemistry, and materials science research. The Centre provides services by analysing samples using NMR spectrometers for researchers and postgraduate students from various universities and research institutions. NMR is the single most important analytical tool for the identification of unknown compounds.

These efforts underscore UoN's pivotal role in harmonising academic standards, fostering research collaboration, and shaping a unified East African higher education space.

Upcoming Events

University of Nairobi Research and Innovation Week 2025

October 21–24 | 9th Edition

Theme: Advancing Research and Innovation from Discovery to Impact in a Dynamic Global Landscape.

UoN invites stakeholders to its 9th Research and Innovation Week—where academia, industry and policy converge. The event will spotlight impactful research, foster collaboration and feature keynote speakers from public and private sectors.

Youth Month 2025 – AIESEC in UoN Edition

November 5–6

Theme: Eco Revolution.

Building on the success of Youth Month 2024, which featured 700+ attendees and 15+ speakers including LSK President Faith Odhiambo—this year's edition, themed 'Eco-revolution', will fo-



The University of Nairobi's Department of Nursing Sciences and Columbia University exchange program beneficiaries.



cus on sustainability, innovation and advocacy through panels, workshops and youth-led sessions. Follow @aiesecinUoN on all social media platforms for updates.

Association of Commonwealth Universities (ACU) Congress 2025

November 26–28

Theme: Connected and Resilient: Commonwealth Universities Charting Global Change.

The University of Nairobi is proud to partner in the ACU Congress 2025. This global forum brings together vice-chancellors and university leaders to explore innovation, resilience and sustainable development.

The event will feature keynote addresses, panel discussions and closed-door roundtables guided by the Chatham House Rule. As a strategic partner, UoN is excited to help shape the future of higher education across the Commonwealth. Open to non-members.

For any enquiries: kathryn.jack@acu.ac.ke / events@acu.ac.ke / pr@uonbi.ac.ke

Scholarships Open to UoN Students

The University of Nairobi is non-discriminatory in its admission of students. At UoN, we believe everyone deserves a chance to pursue quality education; sometimes, financial barriers make that difficult. In line with that, here are some scholarships available at UoN:

University of Nairobi Masters Scholarship - 2025/2026 Academic Year

Deadline: 1st August, 2025.

Master of Business Research (MBR) Scholarship

Opportunities may be available exclusively for applicants who have already received the university admission and have started classes in October 2025.

Master of Science in Sustainable Management and Operations (SuMO)

Opportunities may be available exclusively for applicants who have already received the university admission and have started classes in September 2025.

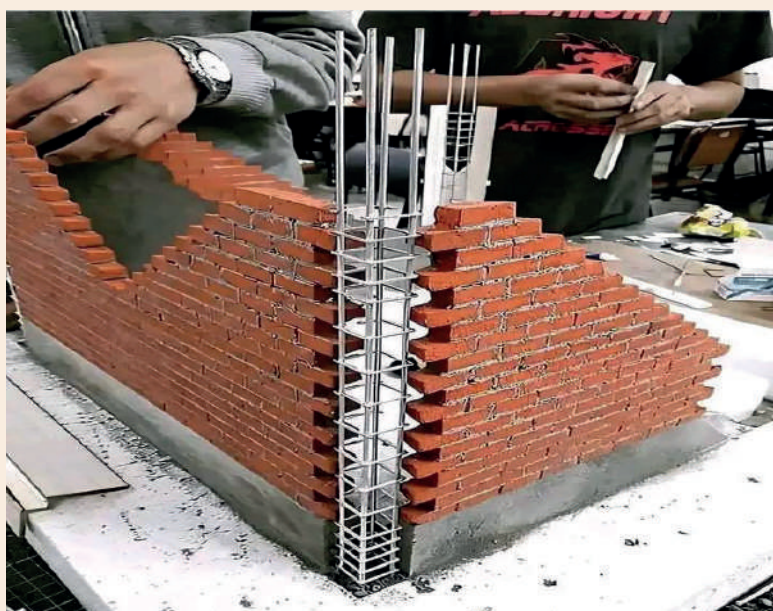
Gandhi Smarak Nidhi Fund Masters Scholarship - 2025/2026 Academic Year

Deadline: 29th August, 2025

Available for: Graduates

Gandhi Smarak Nidhi Fund PhD Scholarship - 2025/2026 Academic Year

Deadline: 29th August, 2025



Physical modelling helps students better understand structural engineering concepts in undergraduate classes.

Rattansi Education Fund

Available For: Undergraduates

The Rockefeller Foundation Scholarships

Available for: Undergraduates & Graduates

PROF. MURIUKI SCHOLARSHIP

Available for: Continuing Module I Undergraduates

DAAD SCHOLARSHIPS

Available for: Graduates

Commonwealth Climate Resilience Challenge Grants

Expiry Date: Sun, 05/06/2029 - 09:15

Chinese Ambassador Scholarship Programme

Available for; Undergraduates

Aga Khan Foundation Scholarships

Available for; Undergraduate and postgraduate students

Chandaria Education Scholarships

Available For: Undergraduate Module 1 students.

Rotary Club Scholarships

Available for: Undergraduate Module 1 students.

CARTA Scholarships

There are various CARTA scholarships, internships for international students.

University of Nairobi Scholarships

The University of Nairobi awards over a hundred scholarships to the best-performing students each year. Recommendation for the award is done by a joint Graduate School/Deans/Directors committee.

For more information on this, E-mail FAO@uonbi.ac.ke





Prof. Pauline Byakika- Kibwika, Vice Chancellor of MUST Specialist Physician, Internist, Epidemiologist, Academic and Researcher.

Through alignment with the East African Community Higher Education Area (EACHEA), PHARMBIOTRAC at Mbarara University has attracted continental scholars, supported start-ups, and influenced health policy. In this interaction, Dr. Casim Umba Tolo, Director of PHARMBIOTRAC, talks about the Centre's growth, its regional impact, and the vital roles of EACHEA and IUCEA in driving its success.

World Bank-funded Centre of Excellence

Mbarara University PHARMBIOTRAC

One of the 24 World Bank-funded Africa Centres of Excellence (ACE II) since 2017, the Pharm-Biotechnology and Traditional Medicine Centre (PHARMBIOTRAC) at Mbarara University of Science and Technology (MUST) is a dynamo of visibility,

innovation, and academic excellence. Supported by a \$6 million funding from the World Bank through the Government of Uganda, the University is a regional leader in postgraduate education, scientific research, and the integration of traditional medicine with

modern pharmaceutical biotechnology. Its recognition as a Centre of Excellence under the East African Common Higher Education Area (EACHEA) has enhanced its academic and research visibility across the region.

PHARMBIOTRAC has expanded the University's academic portfolio from two to five degree programs in just a few years, including internationally accredited master's degrees in Pharmacology, Clinical Pharmacy, Pharmacognosy and Natural Medicine Science. These programs attract students and researchers from across the continent, reflecting a growing culture of internationalisation and pan-African collaboration.

The Centre's commitment to applied research and product development is equally impressive. Its innovation ecosystem has yielded more than 30 medical-related products, including the highly publicised Covidex, a locally developed herbal remedy for COVID-19 that captured national attention and earned international acclaim. These breakthroughs, along with global recognitions received by PHARMBIOTRAC faculty and researchers, have significantly raised MUST's profile on the regional and global academic stage.

Our integration of the East African Community Higher Education Area (EACHEA) framework has further cemented the centre's reputation. By aligning its programs with harmonised regional standards, the Centre is a model for quality and consistency in pharmaceutical

Its innovation ecosystem has yielded more than 30 medical-related products, including the highly publicised Covidex, a locally developed herbal remedy for COVID-19 that captured national attention and earned international acclaim.

biotechnology and traditional medicine education. It is a shining example of how African institutions can lead, innovate, and collaborate to meet the continent's healthcare needs.

How has the Inter-University Council of East Africa (IUCEA) supported PHARMBIOTRAC's development?

As the coordinating body for higher education in the East African Community, IUCEA has been a key architect in shaping PHARMBIOTRAC's journey from a promising academic initiative to a recognised regional Centre of Excellence in pharmaceutical biotechnology and traditional medicine. IUCEA has tirelessly advocated for funding under the World Bank's Africa Centres of Excellence (ACE II) project.

Through strategic engagement with the World Bank and the African Development Bank (AfDB), IUCEA helped secure the \$6 million grant that laid the foundation for PHARMBIOTRAC's infrastructure, research capabilities, and postgraduate programs.

Further, by facilitating scholarships for East African students, IUCEA ensured that PHARMBIOTRAC could attract diverse talent from the region, creating a multi-cultural learning environment that encourages cross-pollination of ideas and fosters a strong sense of regional identity. Through its academic mobility programs, students and faculty have the opportunity to study, teach, and conduct research across borders, further deepening regional integration and collaboration.

Faculty of Computing and Informatics building at Kihumuro Campus.



Equally transformative is IUCEA's role in building bridges between PHARMBIOTRAC and other Centres of Excellence, within Africa and internationally.

By connecting the Centre to peer institutions and global research networks, IUCEA helps to catalyse collaborative research, joint grant applications, and the exchange of knowledge, best practices and innovation. In essence, IUCEA is a funder and facilitator—a true strategic partner in PHARMBIOTRAC's mission to develop African-led solutions to African health challenges.

How does the East African Community Higher Education Area (EACHEA) framework support the creation of a shared academic ecosystem that fosters

cross-border research, joint degrees and long-term East African professional networks among graduates?

The East African Community Higher Education Area (EACHEA) has been pivotal in transforming PHARMBIOTRAC into a truly regional centre of academic excellence. By adopting this framework, the Centre has successfully harmonised its postgraduate training programs with East Africa's standardised academic benchmarks. This alignment has enabled easier student mobility, cross-institutional collaboration, and the mutual recognition of academic qualifications among partner states. As a result, PHARMBIOTRAC is a magnet for students and researchers from across the continent, offering an inclusive learning environment where ideas and



Dr. Casim Umba Tolo,
Director of PHARMBIOTRAC





Prof. Jacques Nkengurutse of the Biology Department, Burundi University, on an exchange programme of the East African Mobility under the PHARMBIOTRAC Project and Faculty of Science.

innovations cross borders as freely as the people behind them.

Students enrolled in PHARMBIOTRAC's programs benefit from an academic structure that facilitates joint degrees, research exchanges and seamless credit transfers with other institutions in the region. Many of PHARMBIOTRAC's alumni have advanced into high-impact roles across Africa, taking up leadership positions such as university deans, senior government officials and directors of national research institutes. Their success reflects the quality of education offered and the strength of a shared academic ecosystem built on collaboration, trust and regional integration.

These alumni contribute to the Centre's mission through sustained collaboration on regionally funded research projects, mentorship and policy development. Their ongoing engagement demonstrates the long-term value of academic networks built on the EACHEA foundation—networks that drive innovation, shape health policy, and build scientific capacity across the continent.

In essence, the EACHEA framework has enabled PHARMBIOTRAC to transcend national boundaries and become a unifying force in East Africa's push for higher education harmonisation, scientific leadership, and locally led development in pharmaceutical biotechnology and traditional medicine.

How have these achievements shaped the Centre's growth and regional impact?

Since its establishment, PHARMBIOTRAC has exceeded its original goals, setting a new standard for excellence in pharmaceutical biotechnology and traditional medicine education in Africa.

The Centre has enrolled 122 Master of Science students, more than double its initial target of 60, and welcomed 35 PhD candidates, surpassing its goal of 30 doctoral students. The Centre's pan-African reach enables over 35% of students to come from diverse countries across the continent.

Beyond formal degree programs, PHARMBIOTRAC has invested heavily in community engagement and capacity building, training over 5,000 traditional medicine practitioners. This outreach highlights the Centre's commitment to integrating indigenous knowledge systems with modern scientific approaches, thereby strengthening healthcare delivery at the grassroots level.

The Centre has produced more than 220 peer-reviewed publications, a dramatic leap from just eight recorded at its inception. Among our academic offerings, the Master of Pharmacy in Clinical Pharmacy program is the most popular, reflecting strong demand and its relevance in the region.

How does PHARMBIOTRAC bridge the gap between academic research and industry needs, particularly in transforming innovative pharmaceutical and traditional medicine discoveries into viable, market-ready products?

PHARMBIOTRAC connects academic research with real-world industry demands by fostering robust collabo-



Students in the Epicentre Research Center Laboratory.

rations, driving product development, and supporting the commercialisation of health innovations.

Our multifaceted approach ensures that scientific breakthroughs evolve into accessible solutions that address pressing healthcare needs.

Our Innovation Incubation Hub has provided practical training to over 30 small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), researchers and students. These programs cover essential topics: drug development processes, regulatory compliance, intellectual property management, business planning, and commercialisation strategies, equipping innovators with the skills they need to succeed beyond the lab bench.

The centre boasts advanced laboratory facilities and pilot-scale manufacturing units, a critical bridge between research and production. These resources enable incubated start-ups and SMEs to prototype, test and refine products efficiently, accelerating their journey from concept to market launch.

We also guide innovators through the complexities of Uganda’s regulatory landscape, working closely with

the Uganda Registration Services Bureau (URSB), National Drug Authority (NDA), and Uganda National Bureau of Standards (UNBS).

The Centre connects entrepreneurs to funding sources and business incubation services, ensuring they have the financial and strategic support necessary to thrive in competitive markets.

How can the East African Community Higher Education Area (EACHEA) be strategically leveraged to amplify PHARMBIOTRAC’s achievements and strengthen Africa’s self-reliance in health innovation and pharmaceutical development?

The East African Community Higher Education Area (EACHEA) is a powerful catalyst for scaling Centres of Excellence, like PHARMBIOTRAC, unlocking opportunities for regional collaboration, innovation, and sustainable development in health sciences.

To enable seamless academic mobility, EACHEA must facilitate mutual recognition of degrees and academic credits across member states. Creating joint PhD programmes that span multiple institutions in the region will encourage cross-border knowledge



exchange and develop a pool of highly skilled researchers equipped to address continent-wide health challenges.

Establishing a regional pharmaceutical biotechnology research network will foster joint, multi-country research projects supported by pooled funding from EACHEA, the African Medicines Agency (AMA), and the African Union Pharmaceutical Manufacturing Plan for Africa (AU-PMPA). Such coordinated efforts can drive breakthroughs that benefit the entire region while optimising resource use.

Besides, creating a regional intellectual property (IP) and licensing hub will streamline the process of protecting innovations and enable spin-offs and start-ups to access support from innovation incubators across East Africa.

This networked approach accelerates the movement of ideas from lab to market, helping to build vibrant

biotech ecosystems. Pursuing mutual recognition of drug approvals through harmonised regulatory frameworks will reduce barriers to market entry, allowing new medicines and health products developed within the region to reach patients efficiently.

Leveraging EACHEA as a platform for policy dialogue and advocacy can help secure increased national and regional investments in research and development. Prioritising traditional medicine and biotechnology in the national health agendas and the African Union's strategic plans will ensure sustained political and financial commitment.

With sustained support and strategic coordination through EACHEA, PHARMBIOTRAC has the potential to evolve into a regional powerhouse for drug development, a leading incubator of biotech talent, and a bonfire of South-South collaboration in health innovation.



Visiting Malawian Professors Victoria Ndolo Uchizi and Maoni Margaret Thokozani at the PHARMBIOTRAC production laboratory and Quality Assurance Laboratory (March 2024)

Makerere University hosts several Centres of Excellence for advanced research, innovation and capacity building in vital sectors crucial for regional and continental development. They advance academic excellence and foster cross-border collaboration in line with the IUCEA goals.

Makerere's EAC Integration

The Research and Innovation Drive

Makerere University, Uganda's premier institution of higher learning, is a beacon of academic excellence in the East African region and beyond. Established in 1922 as a humble technical school, it is rated among Africa's most respected universities, consistently ranked among the top on the continent.

A proud member of the Inter-University Council for East Africa (IUCEA), Makerere is central in advancing regional integration in higher education and fostering academic collaboration among member institutions. The Director of Research and Innovation, Prof Robert Wamala, states that one of Makerere's key drivers is its diverse and lively student community, from Kenya, Tanzania, Rwanda, South Sudan and Burundi, which feels at home at Makerere. The university has inclusive policies and supportive structures, highlighted by its reputation and supportive academic environment.

Programmes Profiles

With over 300 undergraduate and postgraduate programmes, the university provides training in various disciplines, health sciences, engineering, agriculture, education, natural sciences, humanities, law, business, computing, and information sciences. It is particularly known for its strong programmes in Public Health, Veterinary Medicine, Agriculture, and Engineering, which have earned international recognition for their quality and relevance. The College of Health Sciences is a regional leader in training health professionals and conducting research that informs national and continental health policies. Similarly, the College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences is widely reputed for its contribution to food security

The Artificial Intelligence and Data Science Research Centre is a leading research and innovation hub, especially in the application of AI for the social good, public health surveillance, and climate adaptation. Others are Makerere University Centre for Climate Change Research and Innovations (MUCCRI), Makerere University Agricultural Research Institute-Kabanyolo (MUARIK), the Food Technology and Business....

and climate resilience through research and community engagement.

In technology and innovation, the College of Computing and Information Sciences (CoCIS) offers cutting-edge programmes in software engineering, data science and artificial intelligence, positioning Makerere as East Africa's digital transformation hub. The university also offers unique interdisciplinary programmes: Peace and Conflict Studies, Gender and Women Studies, and Petroleum Geosciences, which address emerging socio-economic challenges in the region.

Makerere has adopted a blended learning model, integrating online and face-to-face teaching, and increased access and flexibility. Many programmes are accredited and aligned with regional qualification frameworks under the IUCEA, ensuring mobility and recognition of qualifications across East Africa.

The university reviews and restructures its curriculum to align with the labour market, the dynamic needs and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Emphasising research, innovation and community impact, Makerere University's academic programmes are competitive and relevant to Africa's workforce future.

Centres of Excellence

Prof Wamala notes that Makerere has 67 research centres of excellence and institutes at its various colleges, which enable interaction among the facilities, scholars, students and industry. They enhance research opportunities, academic excellence, real-world problem-solving and knowledge creation and dissemination. The Regional Centre for Crop Improve-





MAKERERE UNIVERSITY



Prof. Robert Wamala

Director for Research and Innovations
at Makerere University



ment (MaRCCI) trains plant breeders at the post-graduate level and conducts advanced research to develop climate-resilient and high-yield crop varieties for sub-Saharan Africa. It is supported by the World Bank and the African Centres of Excellence (ACE II) initiative.

The Centre of Excellence in Public Health and Nutrition (ACEPHAN) focuses on strengthening health systems, professional training and addressing Africa's double burden of malnutrition and non-communicable diseases. It collaborates with institutions across the region to build capacity in public health and nutrition. Hosted by the College of Veterinary Medicine, Animal Resources and Biosecurity (CoVAB), the Centre for Biosecurity and Infectious Disease Surveillance is vital in disease surveillance and control, particularly zoonotic diseases. It supports research and regional capacity building in its "One Health" approach.

The Artificial Intelligence and Data Science Research Centre is a leading research and innovation hub, especially in the application of AI for the social good, public health surveillance and climate adaptation. Others are Makerere University Centre for Climate Change Research and Innovations (MUCCRI), Makerere University Agricultural Research Institute-Kabanyolo (MUARIK), the Food Technology and Business Incubation Centre (FTBIC), Makerere University

Centre for Soybean Improvement and Development (MakCSID) and Makerere University Biological Field Station (MUBFS). Along with the Infectious Diseases Institute (IDI) and Resilient Africa Network (RAN), the centres position Makerere as a key driver of knowledge generation, problem-solving and sustainable development in Africa.

Research and Innovation

Makerere University is a widely recognised research-intensive institution, pivotal in generating knowledge and innovations that address national, regional and global development challenges. Through its colleges and research centres, it has significantly contributed to health, agriculture, climate change mitigation, education, engineering and information technology.

Makerere has led ground-breaking research on infectious diseases, including HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, and most recently COVID-19. The Infectious Diseases Institute (IDI) is a continental leader in clinical research and capacity building; its researchers are key contributors to Uganda's COVID-19 response through vaccine trials, data modelling and policy advisory.

In agriculture, Makerere's scientists have developed improved crop varieties, livestock breeds and sustainable farming techniques.



Makerere College of Engineering, Design, Art and Technology (CEDAT) students test their electronics ideas.





The Makerere University AI Health Lab is a pioneering research institution harnessing artificial intelligence (AI) to transform healthcare across Africa.



How it is done; CoVAB students are hands-on vaccinating a dog against rabies.

The Regional Centre for Crop Improvement (MaRCCI) and the Centre for Soybean Improvement and Development produce climate-resilient and high-yielding seeds.

The Food Technology Innovations and Business Incubation Centre supports agro-processing and value addition for farmers and small-scale industries.

In technology, Makerere is advancing artificial intelligence, robotics and data science. The AI researchers have developed the tools for disease surveillance, language processing, and agricultural diagnostics. The Makerere AI and Data Science Research Centre is a regional hub for innovation in digital technologies. Makerere promotes interdisciplinary research under its Research and Innovations Fund (Mak-RIF) grants, a

government-funded program that has supported over 700 projects since its launch in 2019. The projects span thematic areas such as governance, urbanisation, environment and education, providing evidence-based solutions to real-world challenges.

Through strategic partnerships and international collaborations, Makerere is cementing its leadership in Africa's knowledge generation, innovation and development impact. The Ugandan government funds the research projects, with partner support of IUCEA, the European Union and the World Bank, among others.

Prof Wamala says the university is a beneficiary of the East African Community scholarship programmes, an initiative of the EAC and the Federal Republic of Germany.



Students at a practical session in the Food Technology and Business Incubation Centre (FTBIC), College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences (CAES).





Soybean breeders share experiences at Makerere University Centre for Soybean Improvement and Development (MAKCSID) and University of Illinois Innovation Lab.

The programme, established in April 2018, is implemented by the IUCEA and Adroit Consult International in partnership with the German Development Bank. Besides the African Community scholarships to graduate students, the programme provides funding for staff exchange among universities in the community. Scholarships are offered to students from various universities in the EAC and distributed across the universities in the region.

Non-Ugandan Students Support

To ensure that all undergraduate and graduate students are fully supported at Makerere, the university's regulations and guidelines are outlined in a comprehensive student handbook for the available services, key contacts, and steps to take for academ-

ic and social support. A dedicated International Students' Office, under the guidance of a fully-fledged official, supports students from the East African region and other parts of the world. It guides on the application process, visa requirements, university registration, access to accommodation, and general orientation. It ensures international students quickly settle in for a fruitful experience at Makerere. Makerere University has a dedicated hall of residence for international students, the Mugenyi Flats, within the university premises. These residences are allocated on a first-come, first-served basis and are designed to offer comfort, security and proximity to lecture halls.

Uniform Tuition Structure

Annually, Makerere University attracts over 1,000 international students. The majority hails from



Makerere University CEDAT students demonstrate surveyors and Geographic Information System (GIS) professionals' training equipment.



The Ocular Team (students) interact with a professor at an exhibition that showcased how to leverage AI for microscopy diagnosis of malaria and TB in Uganda.



Eastern, Central and Southern Africa, including South Sudan, Somalia, Tanzania, and Kenya, while some are from Europe, Asia, North America and the Western Pacific. The South Sudanese and Kenyan students form a significant part of the international student community, which is predominantly male and mostly enrolled in bachelor's and master's degree programmes. The tuition policy allows students from EAC member states to pay tuition fees, which are consistent with what Ugandans pay.

The harmonised tuition structure is guided by regional agreements under the EAC Common Higher Education Area framework, enabling student mobility and promoting cross-border access to quality education. The university continuously reviews and harmonises its academic programmes to match regional standards and labour market needs, ensuring the graduates' employability within the region. To ensure quality, local and international curriculum experts are involved in the review process.

Credit Transfers

Makerere's credit transfer system enables students who have undertaken studies elsewhere to continue their academic journey seamlessly. The institution from which a student is transferring must be recognised by Uganda's National Council for Higher Education (NCHE) or an equivalent body in the case of foreign universities. Credit transfers are permitted for core and elective courses, but not for final-year research

or internship components. Students must submit their academic transcripts, course outlines and a letter of recommendation from their former institution. Makerere's credit transfer system aligns closely with the objectives of the Inter-University Council for East Africa (IUCEA), particularly in promoting regional integration, harmonised academic standards and student mobility within the East African Community (EAC). It facilitates regional academic mobility, attracting students from neighbouring countries.

Makerere University Joint Awards

Makerere University's implementation of joint academic awards with other recognised institutions ensures that collaboration is only established with credible institutions. They must possess the necessary expertise to manage, teach, supervise, examine and conduct research. All ethical considerations related to the award must be jointly agreed upon, and the staff and students must be informed of the procedures involved.

A formal agreement justifies the partnership and outlines the responsibilities, while the funding mechanisms support the program, and intellectual property rights are shared between the partner universities based on mutually agreed terms.

This policy demonstrates Makerere's commitment to academic collaboration, quality, and regional and global integration.

Graduates from the College of Engineering, Design, Art, and Technology (February 2024).



Graduates from Kyambogo's engineering programmes are knowledgeable and skilled to function seamlessly from anywhere within the EAC. This is driven by the university's robust Quality Assurance Directorate, which has ensured that teaching methods, assessment approaches and learning outcomes are aligned with IUCEA benchmarks.

Kyambogo's IUCEA Academic Connections

By Damali Mukhaye

Kyambogo University (KyU)'s academic and institutional frameworks align with the Inter-University Council for East Africa (IUCEA)'s vision of a high-quality, unified East African education system. Through a series of deliberate reforms, the university adopted the standards of the 300-member IUCEA to improve academic excellence. It also encourages regional collaboration and ensures that its graduates are competitive in Uganda and throughout the East African Community (EAC). The efforts span programme reviews, staff and student mobility, and strengthened quality assurance systems.

The Kyambogo University Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Eli Katunguka-Rwakishaya, says the university has revised most of its academic programmes and developed new ones in response to emerging global trends and labour market demands. "The guidelines provided by IUCEA have critically contributed to standardising our curriculum, ensuring that Kyambogo's academic offerings are compatible with those of other institutions across East Africa," Prof. Katunguka said.

Prof. Katunguka explained that the content taught in Kyambogo's engineering programmes closely mirrors that offered by other accredited institutions in the region, and there is harmonisation in the engineering programmes, one of the key areas. Graduates from Kyambogo's engineering programmes are knowledgeable and skilled to function seamlessly from anywhere within the EAC.

This is driven by the university's robust Quality Assurance Directorate, which has ensured that teaching methods, assessment approaches and learning outcomes are aligned with IUCEA benchmarks.

Staff, Student Mobility

As East African universities embrace the harmonisation of education systems, Kyambogo University exemplifies regional cooperation in higher education, fostering cross-border innovation, mobility and socio-economic transformation.

Kyambogo's participation in staff and student mobility programmes facilitated by the Inter-University Council for East Africa (IUCEA), the European Union, DAAD and RUFORUM has enhanced cross-cultural academic exchange and collaboration.

These initiatives enable students from across East Africa to pursue studies and research at Kyambogo, while staff members engage in regional training and collaborative projects.

A committed member of the East African Research and Innovation Management Association (EARIMA), the university supports regional integration through knowledge sharing and academic partnerships. Kyambogo has benefited from six IUCEA-supported training opportunities, which culminated in the graduation of three students with MSc degrees in Physics and three in Conservation and Natural Resources Management. Their research contributed to three peer-reviewed publications, one in material science and two in renewable energy.

The programmes often include shared teaching responsibilities, joint research, and student mobility among the partner universities. They are more common at the postgraduate level, supported by initiatives like the Africa Centres of Excellence (ACE), a World Bank-funded programme administered through IUCEA.





Prof. Eli Katunguka-Rwakishaya
Kyambogo University Vice Chancellor -
Kampala Uganda.





Kyambogo University signed a memorandum of understanding with EACOP for realization of the National Content Capacity Building initiatives.

The concepts of credit transfer, double degree, and shared or joint degree programmes are part of a broader harmonisation of higher education across the region, mainly coordinated by the Inter-University Council for East Africa (IUCEA) under the East African Community (EAC) framework. Credit transfer allows students to transfer from one university to another within the region and have their academic credits recognised.

The East African Qualifications Framework for Higher Education (EAQFHE) and the East African Credit Accumulation and Transfer System (EACATS) help standardise the academic credit measures and transfer process.

To facilitate this, universities enter mutual recognition agreements, acknowledging the equivalence of course content and workload. However, the variations in curricula, grading systems, and the limited implementation of regional guidelines by some institutions are a challenge. Double-degree programmes are academic arrangements in which a student earns two separate degrees from two collaborating institutions, typically one local and another regional or international.

The programmes require students to study at both institutions and meet the graduation requirements for each degree (double degrees), are governed by agreements between institutions and must comply with accreditation standards in each participating country. Shared or joint-degree programmes, on the other hand, involve the universities' collaborative design and a single academic programme delivery, leading to a joint qualification endorsed by all

participating institutions.

The programmes often include shared teaching responsibilities, joint research and student mobility among the partner universities. They are more common at the postgraduate level, supported by initiatives like the Africa Centres of Excellence (ACE), a World Bank-funded programme administered through IUCEA. These efforts aim to enhance academic mobility, improve the quality of higher education, and foster regional integration through collaborative learning and research. Katunguka notes that once their policies are in place, they will enable the above components to ensure that when a University of Nairobi student transfers to Kyambogo, they will continue their study programmes from where they left off at their previous university.

Regional Tuition Parity

Kyambogo University implements tuition fee parity for students from EAC member states; Kenya, Tanzania, Rwanda, Burundi, South Sudan and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. They pay similar tuition fees to those of Ugandan nationals. Makerere and Nairobi universities implement this policy, attracting most foreign students to the Science, Education and Business programmes.

The arrangement is based on the EAC Protocol on the Establishment of the East African Common Market, which promotes the free movement of persons, labour and services, and the right of establishment and residence among partner states. Under this policy, Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania, Rwanda, Burundi, South Sudan and the Democratic Republic of the Congo are expected to charge students from other EAC countries



the same tuition fees as their nationals. This removes the higher fees typically applied to international students, making education more affordable and fostering a sense of regional unity. It is part of the Inter-University Council for East Africa (IUCEA)'s broader strategy to enhance student mobility, promote academic collaboration, and build a harmonised higher education area. However, while tuition parity is implemented, complementary policies, like credit transfer, joint degrees and double degrees, are under development or unevenly implemented across universities, which limits the full potential of regional academic integration.

Institutional Strengthening

Under the IUCEA, Kyambogo has invested in institutional capacity building through the East African Higher Education Quality Assurance Network (EAQAN). Between 2018 and 2025, over 13 staff members participated in regional quality assurance workshops and conferences in Rwanda, Uganda and Kenya.

These engagements equipped the university's academic and administrative leadership with critical skills in quality assurance, teaching and learning, and institutional management. In March 2025, a KyU representative attended an IUCEA workshop in Nairobi aimed at addressing quality challenges between basic and higher education. Additionally, three university staff were recently trained under the Skills EA project, focusing on enhancing digital skills within EAC universities.

Capacity-Building

Three Kyambogo University staff members attended the East African Higher Education Quality Assurance Network (EAQAN) Training Workshop / EAQAN Annual Conference from May 3 to 7, 2018, in Kigali, Rwanda. Eight (8) staff members attended a similar workshop from May 5 – 10, 2019, at Imperial Royale Hotel, Entebbe – Uganda; one from May 3 – 9, 2020, in Nairobi, Kenya and another one from September 9 – 13, 2024, also in Nairobi.

Another staff member attended a "Stakeholders' Engagement Workshop to Address Quality Challenges Between Basic Education and Higher Education" from March 19 – 20, 2025, still in Nairobi. Digital Skills Training for EAC University Staff was part of the Skills EA project, in which three staff members were trained.

Research, Innovation Partnerships

Kyambogo University is deeply embedded in a web of research partnerships with other EAC universities. Under the Erasmus+ Programme, staff and students participate in collaborative research and mobility initiatives, and staff members work with researchers from other East African universities. They are the UKRI - Collaborative Research Physics at Maseno University,

the University of Rwanda, and Busitema University, three Erasmus+ capacity-building projects in Occupational Safety, Health and Environment, Textile Engineering and Leatherworking. The staff have developed several innovations, including bio-degradable packaging bags and the staff's solar physics project. They are expected to develop and improve programmes under the arrangements, and when they start running, students from master's and PhD programmes are placed. Jointly with other universities in EA, the University has applied for funding from the EU for students' capacity building and mobility.

Strategic Presence

The involvement of Kyambogo's top leadership, including the Vice Chancellor, Deputy Vice Chancellors, Academic Registrar, and the Director of Quality Assurance in regional Vice Chancellors Forums attests to the university's strategic engagement at national and regional levels. IUCEA's support has significantly strengthened KyU's institutional frameworks and improved the quality of teaching, learning and administration.

The East African Vice Chancellors Forum convenes vice-chancellors and university leaders across the region to foster collaboration, share best practices, and address common challenges faced by higher education institutions. It promotes regional cooperation in education policy and research, encouraging the exchange of academic ideas and resources, strengthening institutional capacity and leadership, and advocating for the development of higher education at the regional level. This membership has granted Kyambogo University access to regional networks, expert knowledge, collaborative research opportunities and joint programs. The sharing of innovative teaching and management practices strengthens the university's visibility and influence within the East African community. It supports policy advocacy and funding opportunities, ultimately helping Kyambogo University to improve its academic standards, build strategic partnerships, and contribute to the regional advancement of higher education.

Outlook

While Kyambogo makes great strides, the non-alignment of some institutional policies with regional standards is a challenge, which the university addresses through systematic policy reviews. It is committed to joint capacity building, collaborative research, quality assurance enhancement and sustained staff and student mobility.

Through its partnership with IUCEA, Kyambogo University is building a future-ready institution and actively shaping the higher education landscape across the East African region.



From professors of business and governance to lecturers in linguistics, information technology, law and psychology, the programme has embraced a wide range of disciplines. Language studies have had slight dominance, but the spread across fields demonstrates a healthy academic balance. Even ranks vary from lecturers to professors, proving that the programme is inclusive in structure and rich in participation.

IUCEA's Mobility

Kabale University Reaps Big Dividends

Situated in the misty hills of Southwestern Uganda, Kabale University is a remarkable example of academic exchange that transforms the individual and the institution.

By actively participating in the Inter-University Council for East Africa (IUCEA) Staff Mobility Programme, the university has gained tangible and intangible benefits, establishing itself as a dynamic contributor to East Africa's expanding higher education community. Kabale University, a rural-set public institution, has consistently participated in the IUCEA Staff Mobility Programme since 2018, with 15 successful staff exchanges. It is fully immersed in the spirit of regional academic integration by sending its academic staff to partner institutions across East Africa and graciously hosting visiting scholars from the region.

The IUCEA Staff Mobility Programme allows academic staff from universities in the East African Community (EAC) to undertake residential or online engagements for a period of up to four months at a host university. IUCEA facilitates the process by providing travel tickets, a monthly stipend based on academic rank, and other allowances.

The objective is clear: to build regional capacity, promote harmonisation of academic standards, and foster cross-cultural exchange within the region.

Kabale University Benefited

In an interview with the Vice Chancellor of Kabale University, Prof Joy

Kwesiga, the university's mobility record speaks volumes, revealing that staff from Kabale have visited institutions such as Kibabii University in Kenya, the University of Technology and Arts of Byumba (UTAB), South Eastern Kenya University, and the University of Dar es Salaam in Tanzania.

On its part, Kabale has hosted equally impressive academic talent from Maasai Mara University, the University of Burundi, the University of Dodoma, and Kenyatta University, among others.

From professors of business and governance to lecturers in linguistics, information technology, law and psychology, the programme has embraced a wide range of disciplines. Language studies have had slight dominance, but the spread across fields demonstrates a healthy academic balance. Even ranks vary from lecturers to professors, proving that the programme is inclusive in structure and rich in participation.

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Exchanged Visits

Between 2022 and 2024, several academic staff members from Kabale University participated in academic exchange programs with universities in East Africa.

Dr. Constance Tukwasibwe, a Senior Lecturer in Linguistics and English Language Studies, visited Kibabii University in Kenya from 15th June to 15th October 2022.

Prof. Siraje Kaaya, a Professor of Business and Management, was hosted by the University of Technology and Arts of Byumba, Rwanda, from February 10 to June 17, 2022.



Prof. Joy Kwesiga
Kabale University Vice Chancellor



Dr. David Majaliwa, a Lecturer in Linguistics and Kiswahili, visited South Eastern

Kenya University from March 1 to June 20, 2023.

Dr. Mesharch Katusiimeh, an Associate Professor of Governance, was hosted by the University of Dar es Salaam, Mukwawa Campus in Iringa, Tanzania, from November 22, 2022 to February 30, 2023.

Additionally, Dr. Julius Chama, a Lecturer in Governance, was hosted by the University of Technology and Arts of Byumba, Rwanda, from May 1 to August 30, 2022.

Dr. Phelix Businge Mbabazi, an Associate Professor of Information Technology, participated in an online exchange with the same Rwandan university from February 7 to June 6, 2022.

Dr. Charlotte Kabaseke, a Lecturer in Law, visited Ruaha Catholic University in Iringa, Tanzania, from 1st November 2023 to 28th February 2024, and

Dr. Edward Bantu, an Associate Professor of Psychol-

ogy, was hosted by Kenya Methodist University from January 14 to May 14, 2024.

Kabale University Hosts

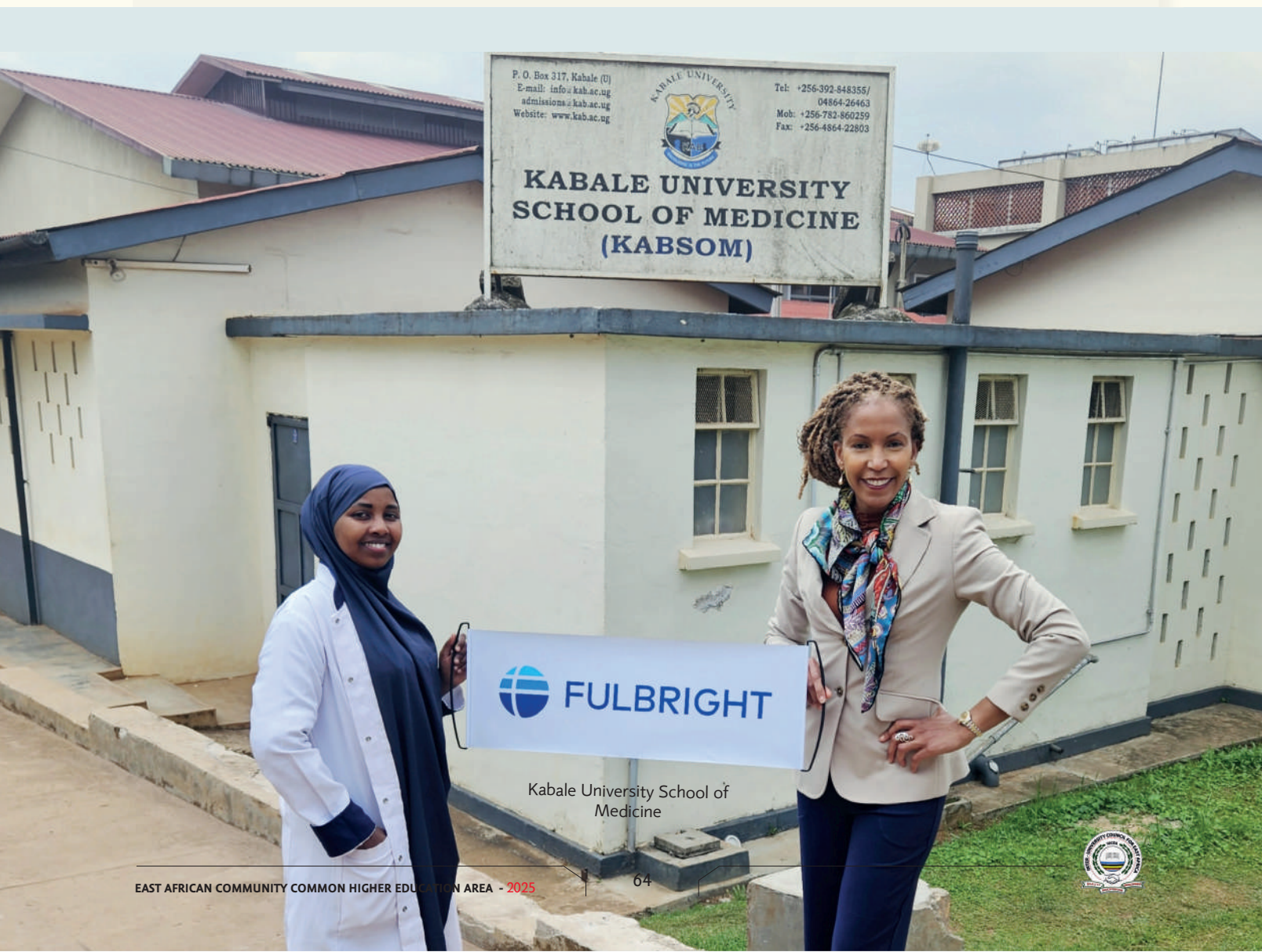
Over the years, Kabale University has hosted scholars from universities across East Africa as part of academic exchange and collaboration.

Dr. Newton Mukolwe, a Lecturer in Education from Maasai Mara University, Kenya, in 2018.

Dr. Eliezer Niyonzima, a Senior Lecturer in Education from the University of Technology and Arts of Byumba, Rwanda, from February 1 to May 30, 2022.

From 1st September 2022 to 24th January 2024, Dr. Jonathan Mbaazi, a Lecturer in Economics and Business Studies from the same Rwandan institution, participated in a long-term exchange at Kabale University.

Dr. Hilaire Nkuzimana, a Senior Lecturer in Computing and Information Technology from the University of Burundi, 6th March and 6th July 2022.



Dr. Chacha Mwita, a Professor of Kiswahili Language Studies from Kenyatta University, Kenya, from August to November 2019.

Dr. Egara Kibaji is a Professor in the Department of English Studies, Literature and Communication from Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology, Kenya.

Kabale Has Gained

The benefits of this exchange are multi-layered. The gains have been in curriculum development, research collaboration, publication, academic mentoring and service delivery.

Exchange staff have co-taught specific course units up to examinations and assessments, supervised postgraduate students (some of whom continued mentorship after the exchange), and participated in departmental meetings, curriculum reviews and strategic plan development.

The partnerships have sparked collaborative research projects, co-publications, journal article reviews, and fresh perspectives in how institutional journals are managed.

For instance, Prof. Egara Kibaji influenced improvements in the Journalism programme, while Dr. Neema Julius Luhwago contributed insights to shaping Kabale's new PhD programme in Linguistics.

The visiting scholars also provide editorial support, bring in fresh energy, and contribute to improving service quality across departments. Some visits have resulted in signing of Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) extending the impact of the exchange beyond the classroom.

In 2025, the University hosted two East African staff, from Kenya, and three of their staff visited South Sudan, Tanzania and Burundi.

Good Practices, New Norms

Through interaction with partner institutions, Kabale University has adopted several good practices, many of which are being adopted; management of e-learning platforms, the integration of cross-cutting themes, gender, HIV/AIDS and environment in the curriculum, and strategies to support students with disabilities.

Other lessons are enhanced data collection monitoring during research, the formalisation of regular research seminars, clear structures in quality assurance units, and the establishment of strong faculty-management links through routine engagement.

Support for teaching assistants has also improved, creating a pipeline for nurturing future academics.

The staff who participated reported better work ethics, improved time management, stronger hospitality practices and positive competitiveness. They gained new cultural perspectives, made lifelong friends, visited historical sites such as Zanzibar and, Kalenga, and above all, discovered new academic horizons.

And yes, the stipend helped too.

Vice Chancellor's Vision

According to Prof Kwesiga, much of Kabale's strong engagement with IUCEA's mobility programme is the result of deliberate leadership. "The spark came from my own experience with various academic exchanges, including IUCEA's predecessor, the Inter-University Committee and my Fulbright fellowship. I understood mobility's importance, especially to a young rural university."

Prof. Kwesiga championed the programme internally, lobbying the Senate and Deans' Committees, encouraging staff to apply, and ensuring workloads were covered in the absence of participating staff.

The effort paid off. Many Kabale staff joined the programme after observing the success of early adopters, prompting a ripple effect, leading to a culture of openness to regional learning and development.

The Gaps

Prof. Kwesiga acknowledges there are gaps in the programme design. Some staff reported delays in receiving stipends, and others noted inconvenience in obtaining visas, even within EAC member states. Further, there are calls for IUCEA to improve communication. Many applicants only learned of the programme after interacting with visiting staff.

Integration

The Kabale experience highlights how academic mobility can promote more than individual or institutional gains; it can foster regional integration.

"This is a non-political, non-economic but sustainable channel for East African integration beyond the academic to build friendships, cultural appreciation and professional respect across borders," Prof. Kwesiga said.





Dr. Joseph Ssemakula

**Principal Investigator, African Center for Agroecology and
Livelihood Systems, Uganda Martyrs University.**



The designation as a Centre of Excellence has significantly elevated Uganda Martyrs University's institutional profile, positioning it as a regional thought leader in ethical agricultural research and innovation. It has enhanced UMU's policy influence, with its faculty regularly invited to national and regional forums on education, climate resilience and innovation. It has attracted benchmarking visits from peer institutions across the region and earned recognition from key government agencies. Most notably, the Ministry of Agriculture has identified UMU as a leading producer of highly skilled agricultural extension workers.

Uganda Martyrs University

Research, Innovation, Ethical Commercialisation, Regional Leadership

By Manifesto Publications

Uganda Martyrs University (UMU) is redefining the purpose and potential of higher education in East Africa by transforming research outputs into practical, socially relevant innovations.

Dr. Joseph Ssemakula is the principal investigator at the African Centre for Agroecology and Livelihood Systems, Uganda Martyrs University. He says Uganda has placed equal emphasis on knowledge generation, ethical responsibility and community empowerment, adopting a value-chain approach to research and commercialisation.

This integrated model ensures that academic innovations are not confined to lecture halls or research journals but are systematically developed, tested, validated, and deployed to benefit society. From ideation and prototyping to piloting, market engagement and policy influence, UMU is bridging the gap between academic knowledge and societal need.

UMU's approach prioritises ethical application, sustainability and inclusive development, positioning the university as a hub of knowledge and a trusted development partner in national and regional transformation efforts.

"Innovation is only meaningful when it transforms lives and drives sustainable de-

velopment. Our goal is to ensure that what we create is ethically commercialised, grounded in integrity, guided by scientific validation, and deeply connected to the communities' needs," he said.

Dr. Ssemakula says, the East African Common Higher Education Area (EACHEA) has profoundly impacted academic alignment at UMU. The university's curricula, assessment practices and quality assurance mechanisms reflect regional benchmarks to meet cross-border mobility needs. Programs, from undergraduate degrees to PhDs, are designed to meet harmonised academic standards, allowing for greater student and faculty mobility across East Africa. UMU has participated in curriculum reviews and quality assurance audits guided by regional accreditation frameworks, improving the relevance and competitiveness of its academic offerings. "The regional framework has helped the university to raise its game. We are not only educating for Uganda, but preparing students to serve anywhere in East Africa and beyond," he said.

UMU has directly benefited from mutual recognition agreements by admitting and training students from the region; Kenya, Tanzania, Rwanda, Burundi and Ethiopia. The harmonised qualifications framework ensures that UMU degree awards are recognised by employers, academic institutions and regulatory bodies throughout East Africa.

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ACALISE Postgraduate Hostel built under the ACE II World Bank Project at Uganda Martyrs University Nkozi

Additionally, cross-border research collaboration has become easier, as researchers jointly supervise postgraduate students, share facilities, and co-publish under aligned standards. The university's programs in Agriculture and Food Systems, Agroecology, Bioethics, and Development Studies are particularly popular among international students. Some, among them, have secured scholarships and grants based on the recognition of UMU's academic credibility.

Dr. Ssemakula notes, "Uganda Martyrs University has evolved into a dynamic hub where policymakers, researchers and practitioners collaborate to co-create solutions that shape the future of sustainable agriculture and ethical innovation.

We are a collaborative platform that bridges academia with real-world practice, ensuring that research is rigorous and responsive to the urgent challenges facing communities, ecosystems and economies across the region."

The Centre of Excellence status is a powerful catalyst for research partnerships and resource mobilisation at UMU, through which the university has forged collaborations with institutions in Norway, Israel, Kenya and Mauritius. The collaborations focus on areas such as climate-smart agriculture, organic farming and bio-innovation.

The university attracts international students and visiting faculty, sharing an interest in applied research and sustainable development. UMU has secured grants and technical support from organisations including the World Bank, the Private Sector Foundation Uganda, and various regional agricultural development programs.

Alongside other designated Centres of Excellence in Uganda, UMU is lobbying for a bridging fund of UGX 1 billion to sustain the momentum of its research and innovation initiatives. This funding is intended to support the continuity of critical activities: field-based research, community training, equipment maintenance and commercialisation of innovations.

Dr. Ssemakula explains that the bridging fund is essential to prevent disruptions in promising projects and ensure that the gains in ethical innovation, community engagement and sustainable development are preserved and scaled for broader national and regional impact.

The university is a regional leader in several strategic disciplines, including agroecology and organic agriculture, where it has pioneered applied research on sustainable inputs such as the Black Soldier Fly, vermicomposting and fertilisers derived from coffee waste.



"We are at the forefront of ethical commercialisation of innovation, crafting frameworks that align intellectual property protection with the public good. In the fields of bioethics and development studies, we provide a critical moral lens for guiding research application and policy development," The Uganda Martyrs University principal investigator, African Centre for Agroecology and Livelihood Systems, Dr. Ssemakula, says.

The university plays a key role in advancing climate-smart agriculture and resilient food systems, contributing to regional food security through ecologically sustainable and economically viable innovations.

The Radio

Uganda Martyrs University operates a fully licensed university radio station, an achievement that sets it apart from most East African universities. It is a vital platform for amplifying community engagement, providing agricultural education, and fostering social dialogue.

Through tailored programming, the station connects the university's research and expertise directly with local farmers, community members and stakeholders, facilitating real-time knowledge exchange and empowering listeners with practical information on sustainable farming practices, health and environmental stewardship.

By bridging the gap between academia and the community, UMU's radio station is crucial in enhancing public awareness, encouraging participatory development, and strengthening the university's mission of socially responsive education and outreach.

The university actively pursues several strategic priorities to enhance its impact and regional leadership, including a one-stop Innovation and Training Hub to streamline research dissemination, commercialisation and community capacity building. It plans to expand data systems and boost institutional visibility to address persistent gaps in knowledge sharing and stakeholder engagement, and strengthen collaboration with the private sector for its innovations to transition sustainably from the laboratory to the marketplace.

Leveraging its prestigious designation as a Centre of Excellence and its strategic alignment with the objectives of the East African Common Higher Education Area (EACHEA), UMU exemplifies a forward-thinking institution that addresses the complex challenges of the 21st century.

Through pioneering research and applied solutions in agriculture, environmental sustainability and inclusive development, the university advances knowledge, contributing to regional integration and economic empowerment, as Africa's leading model for transformative higher education.



Inside Uganda Martyrs University Radio Studio

Rwanda's Higher Education Council

Advancing Quality and Regional Integration

The Higher Education Council (HEC) of Rwanda is a key institution championing academic excellence and regional integration in East Africa.

Mandated to enhance the quality of education within Rwanda's higher learning institutions (HLIs), the HEC ensures robust domestic education standards, while aligning them with regional goals under the East African Community (EAC) framework.

Dr Edward Kadozi, the Director General of the Higher Education Council, emphasises that the mission is to improve the quality and delivery methods in higher institutions of learning. The Council ensures that graduates from such institutions are knowledgeable for the betterment of the Rwandan residents' welfare and the development of Rwanda.

Quality Assurance Key Responsibilities

- Approving curricula and academic programs of Higher Learning Institutions (HLIs).
- Conducting regular institutional audits to assess the quality and effectiveness of internal Quality Assurance systems. These audits help HLIs identify strengths and areas of improvement in governance, academic standards, infrastructure and student support services.
- Monitoring the quality of research in HLIs. HEC monitors the quality and impact of research activities in HLIs by encouraging the integration of research into teaching and learning, and aligning research agendas with national and regional development goals.
- Monitoring the implementation of standards in higher learning institutions. HEC supports universities in building robust internal quality assurance mechanisms.

It provides training, technical assistance, and policy guidance to institutional leaders, quality assurance officers, and academic staff.

It thus contributes to regional harmonisation of higher education under the EAC framework. The Rwanda Higher Education Council (HEC) is playing a pivotal role in aligning the country's higher education system with the broader goals of the East African Community (EAC).

Rwanda's HEC has aligned national policies with regional goals and proactively contributed to shaping the EAC's higher education space, from participating in policymaking to strengthening quality assurance, facilitating student mobility, and embracing shared standards. The Higher Education Council's contributions help build a better, integrated and competitive regional education system.

- Adoption and Implementation of the EAC Qualifications Framework: The Rwanda Higher Education Council has been actively involved in implementing the East African Qualifications Framework for Higher Education (EAQFHE).

The Rwanda Higher Education Council (HEC) is playing a pivotal role in aligning the country's higher education system with the broader goals of the East African Community (EAC).

The Higher Education Council's contributions help build a better, integrated and competitive regional education system.

- Participation in Regional Policy Development: Rwanda's HEC has consistently taken part in technical working groups, policy discussions and expert meetings organised by the Inter-University Council for East Africa (IUCEA) and the EAC Secretariat.
- Promotion of Credit Transfer and Student/Staff Mobilities across EAC.
- Quality Assurance and Accreditation Strengthening the Internal Quality assurance Mechanisms in Rwanda's Higher Learning Institutions. HEC has aligned these mechanisms with regional standards developed by the IUCEA.

It also conducts peer reviews and cross-border evaluations, fostering mutual trust and contributing to the standardisation of quality assurance across the EAC, including health-related programmes.





Dr. Edward Kadozi
Director General of Rwanda
Higher Education Council (HEC)





At the Eastern Africa University in Rwanda, Nyagatare District, equivalence applications receive personalized support to meet their needs.

Support for Regional Centres of Excellence

- Recognition of Academic and Professional Qualifications.
- Digitisation and Regional Data Sharing are key reforms implemented by HEC

Revision of Education Law, Norms and Standards, Qualifications Framework
 Promotion of blended learning within Higher Learning Institutions, standardisation and harmonisation of education-related programs by establishing benchmarks and guidelines for education-related programs.
 Standardisation and Harmonisation of Benchmarks and Guidelines for Business-related programs.

Increased access to Higher Education by accreditation of new public and private HEIs and branch campuses for International Universities.

Opportunities

- Harmonisation of Quality Standards for EAC HLIs, this allows for mutual recognition of academic credentials; therefore, enabling student and academic staff mobility.
- Regional Talent Development: Cross-border education allows students to access specialised academic programs, advanced research facilities, and diverse learning environments not available in their home countries; to further foster innovation and help bridge critical skills gaps across the region.
- Partnerships among universities and industry—through joint research, staff exchanges and co-development of curricula—are growing stronger. These collaborations are improving the relevance of

academic programs and making them more responsive to regional development priorities such as agriculture, health, energy, ICT and climate resilience.

Challenges

- Unequal funding, infrastructure, facilities and academic capacity across universities limit the ability of some institutions to participate in regional academic exchange programs.
- Despite efforts to harmonise frameworks, differences in immigration policies, tuition structures and accreditation procedures still hinder mobility.
- Lack of a clear collaboration framework between academia and industry hinders effective engagement and contribution of the private sector in the delivery of academic programs.

Further collaborations through IUCEA

Accelerate full operationalisation of the East African Qualifications Framework for Higher Education (EAQFHE) across all member states.

- Implement the East Africa Credit Accumulation and Transfer System to allow students to move between institutions without losing academic progress, encouraging regional academic flexibility.
- Create a Regional Academic Exchange Framework that supports faculty sabbaticals, joint teaching and collaborative research through IUCEA.
- Promote Joint Programs and Dual Degrees: Incentivise and co-fund collaborative academic programs between institutions in different countries (e.g., joint master's research fellowships) and establish a legal partnership framework to foster collaboration between Higher Learning Institutions and the private sector.



The University of Kigali is positioning itself as a model of modern African higher education—one that is locally rooted and globally engaged. With its eyes on the future, UoK is preparing the next generation of leaders in finance, governance, digital innovation and education. Above all, UoK is committed to its core mission: to educate, to innovate and to transform.

University of Kigali

A Decade of Growth, Innovation, Sustainable Impact



Founded in 2013, the University of Kigali (UoK) is Rwanda's premier private university, redefining the landscape of higher education in East Africa through the commitment to academic excellence, research innovation, inclusive learning, and sustainability. In a decade, UoK has become a pan-African hub of academic excellence, with students and faculty

from over 33 countries and partnerships spanning four continents. With a progressive vision, bold leadership, and a focus on regional and global relevance, University of Kigali is nurturing future-ready graduates, contributing to national development, EAC integration, and Africa's transformation.



Academic Programmes, Centres of Excellence, Flagship Projects

The University offers a dynamic mix of undergraduate, postgraduate and professional programmes delivered through its academic and professional schools.

Academic Schools:

- School of Business Management and Economics (SBME)
- School of Computing and Information Technology (SCIT)
- School of Education (SoE)
- School of Law (SoL)
- Graduate School
- Professional School
- School of Professional and Executive Programmes (SPEP)



Prof. David Karungu Wangombe
PhD, MBA, CPA(K),
Vice Chancellor of the University of Kigali.

This structure ensures a comprehensive academic offering that combines theoretical rigour with practical, market-driven skills for today's evolving workforce.

Centres of Excellence Addressing Priority Areas

The Centre for Equity & Inclusiveness (CEI) promotes accessibility and equity in higher education, supporting students with disabilities and those from underrepresented backgrounds. CEI offers a suite of specialised certificate programs in inclusive education and related fields aimed at building national and regional capacity. The Centre for Modern Languages strengthens communication skills in English, French, Kinyarwanda and other key languages, critical for academic and professional success in today's globalised world.

The Centre for Economic Governance and Leadership (CEGL) connects academia, policy and the private sector through leadership training and policy engagement. It also hosts the Enterprise Business Centre (EBC), which promotes youth and women's economic empowerment through entrepreneurship.

The Centre for Logistics and Supply Chain Excellence (CLSCE), established in 2024, responds to regional and continental needs for professional capacity in transport, logistics, trade facilitation and supply chain innovation.

The Centre provides specialised training, industry certifications, applied research and advisory services aligned with the goals of AfCFTA and Africa's transport and logistics transformation.

These centres drive UoK's commitment to problem-solving education, institutional capacity-building, and the production of graduates equipped to lead in dynamic, interconnected sectors.

UoK has produced over 25% of Rwanda's Certified Public Accountants (CPAs) and is a trusted partner in delivering executive education and consultancy services across Africa.

Conferences, Public Lectures, Thought Leadership

UoK is a distinguished convener of high-level intellectual engagement through a range of conferences, forums and speaker series that promote research, dialogue and collaboration.





Empowering Year 3 students with essential skills and job opportunities to thrive, through the Employability Program and Recruitment Drive.

KEY INITIATIVES

Just Lead International Legal Conference (July 18–19, 2025). Organised by the University of Kigali Law Students' Association, this conference gathers legal scholars, youth lawyers and justice advocates to explore leadership in the legal profession and emerging issues in Rwandan and regional law.

International Conference on Green and Sustainable Development (March 10–12, 2025). Co-organised with the University of Fort Hare and North West University, this landmark conference convened policymakers, academics and industry experts at Serena Hotel in Kigali to address pressing sustainability challenges in alignment with SDGs, Agenda 2063 and Rwanda's Vision 2050.

HIGHLIGHTS INCLUDED:

Keynotes by Ambassador Prof. Peter Ngure (Kenya's UNESCO Ambassador), Dr. Thierry Kalisa (Chief Economist, BNR) and Prof. Gabriele Schäfer (Germany).

A prominent Innovation Showcase hosted by NWU Business School, featuring ground-breaking prototypes: from AI-powered smart walking sticks to smart incubators and AI/IoT-enabled soil-health systems.

The winning prototype enabled real-time soil monitoring to improve farming outcomes.

The University's Green Research Initiative is one of its most transformative efforts. Aligned with Rwanda's digital economy agenda and the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), UoK is embedding sustainability and innovation at the core of its research and curriculum.

All innovations were evaluated on impact, SDG alignment and green sustainability.

The event was notable for its academic and policy contributions and its practical technology demonstrations, positioning UoK as a regional nexus for green innovation and sustainable development.

Africa Research Group (ARG) International Conference (August 27–29, 2023).

Hosted by UoK in collaboration with the Africa Research Group and the University of Nottingham, this conference explored "Contemporary Developments in the Management of Organisations in Africa," tapping into indigenous knowledge for organisational transformation across Africa.

Data Science and Analytics Symposium:

Hosted by the School of Computing and Information Technology, this annual forum showcases student-led research and fosters industry-academic collaboration.

Business and Entrepreneurship Forums: Organised in partnership with industry leaders, these forums focus on African innovation, digital transformation and enterprise development.

Distinguished Public Lecture Series: Featuring renowned speakers from academia, government and international organisations, these lectures explore critical issues such as governance, climate action and youth empowerment.





University of Kigali graduation day, June 3, 2024 - reflecting on a day filled with joy, pride and endless possibilities.

Such platforms have positioned UoK as a thought leader in East Africa, committed to generating and sharing knowledge that advances both policy and practice.

Advancing the EAC Higher Education Common Area:

University of Kigali (UoK) is a strong advocate for regional academic harmonisation, fully aligned with the East African Community's vision of a unified higher education space.

Through a series of strategic actions, UoK is helping shape a more integrated, mobile and quality-assured academic ecosystem across the region.

Curriculum Alignment: UoK aligns its academic programmes with the standards set by Rwanda's Higher Education Council (HEC), which are themselves harmonised with the East African Qualifications Framework for Higher Education (EAQFHE). This alignment ensures the regional recognition and comparability of qualifications.

Credit and Qualification Recognition: UoK recognises academic credits and qualifications from accredited

institutions within the EAC, enabling seamless student transfers and academic progression across borders.

Flexible Admissions for Regional Students: In support of inclusive education, the University offers flexible admissions pathways for students from EAC member states and beyond, promoting access, diversity and regional integration. Through these initiatives, UoK plays an active role in building an interoperable, high-quality, and learner-centred higher education area that aligns with the EAC's long-term development agenda.

Research and Innovation Highlights

At UoK, research is a driver of development and innovation. The institution prioritises applied, interdisciplinary research in:

- Sustainable development
- Digital transformation
- Entrepreneurship and economic resilience
- Public policy and governance

The University's Green Research Initiative is one of its most transformative efforts. Aligned with Rwanda's digital



economy agenda and the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), UoK is embedding sustainability and innovation at the core of its research and curriculum. With plans to integrate AI, Fintech, Cybersecurity, and Blockchain into business and finance education, UoK is producing graduates ready to lead in a complex and tech-driven world.

UoK's research profile continues to gain international recognition. In the AD Scientific Index, the University is prominently represented, with top-ranking researchers in fields such as Social Sciences and Humanities, Technology, and Business and Management.

These achievements reflect not only the quality of research being conducted but also the growing influence of UoK in global academic circles. This progress affirms UoK's status as a research-oriented institution, where the faculty and students contribute to regional development, expanding the University's academic footprint on the global stage.

Student and Faculty Achievements

UoK has grown from a founding class of 35 students in 2013 to over 8,500 students in 2025, including 657 international students from across Africa, Asia and Europe. The University has hosted eight graduation ceremonies, producing more than 9,400 graduates, comprising:

- Over 5,700 undergraduates.
- Over 1,600 master's degree holders.
- Nearly 2,000 postgraduate diploma recipients.

The academic workforce at the University of Kigali includes a strong local foundation, complemented by a growing cohort of internationally experienced professors and visiting scholars. Faculty and students have received academic awards, contributed to peer-reviewed publications, and engaged in international academic exchange programmes such as Erasmus+, reinforcing UoK's position as a globally connected institution.

Community Outreach and Impact

Community engagement is central to the University of Kigali's mission to drive inclusive development and social transformation. The University leads a wide range of outreach programmes designed to uplift communities and build capacity across sectors.

These include:

- Youth entrepreneurship and financial literacy programmes to promote innovation and job creation.
- Teacher training and rural capacity-building initiatives, particularly in underserved communities.
- Legal aid clinics, where law students and faculty provide pro bono legal services.

- Technology bootcamps and digital skills training, equipping youth with tools for the digital economy.
- Environmental awareness and climate action campaigns, aligned with Rwanda's green agenda.

At the heart of UoK's inclusive agenda is the Centre for Equity and Inclusiveness (CEI) - Rwanda's only university-based centre dedicated to disability-inclusive education. CEI is a regional model for integrating students with disabilities into higher education, advancing equity through support services, training programmes, policy advocacy and international collaboration.

The Centre offers psychosocial support, assistive technologies and adaptive learning tools, ensuring meaningful participation for students of all abilities. Its specialised certificate programmes in Sign Language Interpretation, Autism Studies, Dyslexia, Psychological Counselling, Leadership and Inclusive Education Management equip educators, counsellors and professionals to serve diverse learners.

CEI drives institutional reform and public engagement. It hosted the 2025 "Breaking Barriers in Education: Inclusive Rehabilitation and Technology (BERT)" workshops, CEI and works with partners, including a Finnish delegation, to expand access for deaf and visually impaired learners. CEI's contributions align with SDG 4 and SDG 10, reinforcing UoK's leadership in equity-focused transformation. The clear message is "Let us not leave anyone behind - inclusion is not optional."

A standout part of this ecosystem is the Enterprise Business Centre Innovation Hub (EBCI), UoK's platform for entrepreneurial learning and SME support. The centre delivers tailored training, mentorship, coaching and business incubation aimed at strengthening productivity and competitiveness across the Rwandan SME sector.

EBCI has recently launched a 2025 cohort in collaboration with Queen's University (Toronto), through a programme involving eight months of online entrepreneur training for emerging leaders. This initiative is designed to cultivate business acumen, leadership, market strategy and innovation among students and early-career entrepreneurs in Rwanda.

Together, UoK's outreach platforms, including CEI's inclusive education leadership and EBCI's entrepreneurship and SME support, demonstrate the University's commitment not just to producing graduates, but to nurturing change-makers equipped to drive meaningful impact across communities, the region and beyond.

Institutional Milestones and Strategic Priorities

UoK's recent milestones include:

1. Celebrating 10+ years of institutional growth, launching a Green University Strategy.





University of Kigali International Legal Conference, July 18, 2025.



Award winners at University of Kigali 7th graduation.

2. Commencing construction of a new state-of-the-art eco-conscious campus in Kimihurura, designed to house 12,000 students with sustainable features such as solar energy, water-harvesting systems and green landscaping.

The University's six strategic development pillars are:

1. Green University Ambition.
2. World-Class Innovative Education.
3. Research and Innovation Excellence.
4. Inclusive Community Engagement.
5. Strategic Internationalisation and Partnerships.
6. Financial Sustainability and Staff Capacity Building.

Internationalisation and Student Support

The University of Kigali's international footprint is steadily expanding, reinforcing its status as a globally engaged and pan-African institution. Through strategic partnerships with universities and institutions in Nigeria, Ghana, Kenya, South Africa, Germany, Poland, Italy, the Czech Republic, India, Canada, Malaysia and Denmark, UoK promotes academic exchange, joint research and cross-cultural collaboration.

To support its growing international community, the University has established a dedicated International Office, which provides end-to-end support to regional and international students, including:

- Visa and immigration assistance.
- Accommodation facilitation.
- Orientation programmes.
- Cultural integration support.

In March 2025, the University hosted a Workshop for International Students under the theme *"Thriving Together: Navigating Academic and Cultural Transitions."* The workshop gathered international students, staff and representatives from RIB, Rwanda Immigration Services, and other key agencies for a day of interactive sessions on academic success strategies, cultural intelligence, wellness support and networking opportunities.

Facilitated by faculty and student leaders, it helped strengthen the international student experience and promoted a deeper sense of belonging. These efforts reflect UoK's strong commitment to inclusive global engagement, ensuring that international students are not only welcomed but are well-guided, integrated, and empowered throughout their academic journey.

Admissions Flexibility for Regional Students

The University of Kigali recognises that equitable access to higher education is fundamental to regional integration and sustainable development. In this regard, UoK has implemented flexible, transparent, and inclusive admissions policies that accommodate students from across the East African Community (EAC) and beyond.

Key features of UoK's admissions framework include:

- Recognition of prior learning and alternative qualifications from accredited institutions within and outside the region.
- Multiple entry points throughout the academic year, allowing students to begin their studies at a time that suits their personal or professional circumstances.
- Equivalence assessment for international academic credentials, ensuring fair access regardless of country of origin.
- Dedicated admissions support for international and regional applicants through the International Office.

Notably, in line with the principles of regional equity, students from EAC partner states pay the same tuition fees as Rwandan nationals. This policy removes financial barriers and reinforces UoK's commitment to academic mobility, affordability and inclusion within the East African higher education space.

Through these measures, UoK is enabling a more diverse, accessible and regionally integrated student body, contributing to the goals of the EAC Common Higher Education Area.



Rwanda Tourism University Building in Kigali

Rwanda's University of Tourism, Technology and Business Studies (UTB) presents a unique opportunity to empower young graduates with the skills, experience and global perspective needed to thrive in the international hospitality industry. By leveraging strategic partnerships, innovative training methodologies, and a commitment to excellence, the program has the potential to make a meaningful contribution to youth empowerment, economic development, poverty reduction and cultural exchange on a global scale.

Rwanda Tourism University

Regional Integration, Skills Development, Global Competences

The University of Tourism, Technology and Business Studies (UTB) in Rwanda demonstrates that institutions can provide relevant, market-aligned education, promote regional mobility, enhance international competitiveness, and drive economic transformation.

Established in 2006, UTB leads in hospitality transformation and business education in Rwanda and across East Africa. It is the country's first institution to introduce degree-level Hospitality and Tourism

courses. It later expanded into Business, Information Technology, Engineering, and Social Sciences, all vital pillars for regional economic development and integration.

Background

Initially, a vocational training institute specialising in Food and Beverage Service and Culinary Arts, it began offering degree programmes in Hospitality and Tourism in 2008, and was provisionally licensed by Rwanda's Ministry of Education.



The Faculty of Business and Information Technology was established in 2009, followed by the introduction of Airport Operations courses, such as those provided by the International Air Transport Association (IATA).

The IATA programme supports aviation with global standards for airline safety, security, efficiency and sustainability. To foster Rwanda's hospitality industry growth, UTB opened the Rubavu Campus in 2010. Dedicated to excellence in hospitality, UTB was granted definitive Licence and Degree Awarding Powers in 2012, enabling it to graduate students in pioneer degree programmes.

In 2013, the university's name was changed from Rwanda Tourism University College (RTUC) to the University of Tourism, Technology and Business Studies (UTB), reflecting its expanded scope. That year also saw the introduction of new Business, Arts and Social Science programmes. The infrastructure of the Rubavu campus was fully completed in 2020, and in 2024, a modern Kigali campus was inaugurated on Rebero Hill. Its design and location aim to create an optimal learning environment for students in hospitality, tourism and management, aligning with UTB's mission and vision.

Tailoring to Jobs

To enhance student experiences through industry-experienced educators, UTB offers a diverse range of bachelor's degrees and certificate programmes: Travel and Tourism Management, Business and Information Technology, Computer Engineering, and Transport and Logistics Management.

Established in 2006, UTB leads in hospitality transformation and business education in Rwanda and across East Africa. It is the country's first institution to introduce degree-level Hospitality and Tourism courses. It later expanded into Business, Information Technology, Engineering, and Social Sciences, all vital pillars for regional economic development and integration.

The curriculum includes Hotel and Restaurant Management, addressing the evolving demands of the modern world. UTB takes pride in its affiliation with the International Air Transport Association (IATA), providing students with the opportunity to excel in the global aviation industry. From 2022 onwards, UTB has emphasised international exposure for its students. Recognised as Rwanda's leading university for international experience, UTB is transforming the lives of Rwandan youth through an international job placement programme. Over 300 Rwandan youth have secured prestigious positions within luxury hotels and resorts in Qatar and the United Arab Emirates.

Institutional Milestones

UTB's tuition fees are aligned with the EAC directive, with identical fees in local currency for students from EAC partner states. International students pay in Rwf, comparable to their Rwandan peers. UTB participates in the student and staff mobility programmes offered by IUCEA, including hosting academic staff from a university in Uganda. It adheres to IUCEA benchmarks; for instance, the benchmarks for ICT-related academic programmes influenced the development of UTB's Bachelor of Information Technology degree, alongside quality assurance measures.

The university utilises the IUCEA-developed Handbook for audits and internal self-assessment, and its staff and management regularly participate in IUCEA training, conferences and EAQAN forums. UTB leadership has contributed to IUCEA governance and has chaired the IUCEA Board of Governors. The International Jobs and Internship Placement programme (IJIP) has also



Some students and staff of the UTB





Rwanda Tourism University students

been developed. UTB conducted a SWOT analysis of this programme and identified target markets with a critical shortage of skilled hospitality professionals, notably in Qatar, United Arab Emirates, and the wider Middle East.

UTB's six-to-nine-month hospitality programmes are aligned with Qatar and UAE's National Tourism Sector Strategy, which aims to establish these countries as leading global destinations. By training young graduates for employment in Qatar's burgeoning hospitality sector, UTB supports the vision of both Qatar and the UAE as premier tourism destinations and economic diversification.

The international placement programme also stimulates economic growth by creating employment opportunities and increasing demand for goods and services within the local and international hospitality supply chains.

Over 300 graduates have been trained and upgraded to a level that enabled them to secure employment in Qatar and internships in United Arab Emirates (UAE).

Analysis shows that 77% of Rwandan graduates placed in UAE's luxury five-star hotels retained their jobs and received contracts. Interns also show promising employment potential.

UTB ensures the security and safety of individuals placed through strategic collaborations with local governments and embassies, and by organising visits by UTB staff to workplaces.

Making a Difference

Guided by its motto, "Making the Difference," UTB has sponsored over 400 students in bachelor's and short course programmes, including orphans and students with financial difficulties, through the Zulfat Foundation initiative.

UTB has placed 72% of its graduates in jobs and internships in Qatar and the UAE, with the remainder employed locally. This has improved students' living standards and equipped them with valuable, transferable skills in hospitality management and other fields.

In the past five years, UTB's achievements include collaborative projects with partners such as DAAD/NMT, EPRN, STEM, and numerous awards, including the AWIEF Empowerment Award 2023 and the Best Cuisine Award 2024.



UTB tourism students in traditional garb.

The University of Rwanda was ranked 6th among universities in Sub-Saharan Africa in the Times Higher Education 2024 rankings. This achievement marks UR's first appearance in these prestigious rankings, a powerful testament to the university's ongoing academic progress and growth in key areas, teaching, research and societal impact. Since 2017, the University has overseen 349 projects, involving a total of 3,114 staff.

University of Rwanda

The EAC Research, Innovation Frontline

Formed in 2013 through the merger of several public higher education institutions, the University of Rwanda (UR) was created to unify and strengthen Rwanda's tertiary education landscape. It is the country's largest and most comprehensive public institution of higher learning, advancing quality education, cutting-edge research and community engagement.

It is central in training the next generation of leaders, researchers and professionals to drive national and regional development. UR is strongly focused on science, technology, innovation and inclusivity, and is becoming a regional centre of academic excellence while promoting the development goals of the East African Community.



University of Rwanda new building at the Nyarugenge campus, commonly known as Camp Kigali



Profiles

The University of Rwanda operates a collegiate model. It is led by a Vice-Chancellor, supported by three Deputy Vice-Chancellors. It is comprised of seven Colleges, each headed by a principal, and within each college are schools, research and academic centres, and departments. The seven colleges are distributed across the country, each offering specialised courses: Arts and Social Sciences; Agriculture, Forestry and Food Sciences; Business and Economics; Education; Medicine and Health Sciences; Science and Technology; and Veterinary Medicine and Animal Sciences. Overall, the colleges offer a total of 203 undergraduate programs and 194 postgraduate programs.

The University has an enrolment of 31,122 students, of whom 87.9% are undergraduate and 12.1% are post-graduate. National students make up 98.5% of the population; international students account for 1.5%; 75.5% of them in post-graduate programs. Overall, female students represent 38.5% of the total student body. The University has nine Centres of Excellence that reinforce its flagship pillars of research and innovation.

They empower the University to lead transformative solutions in public health, climate change, education, business and technology. They also reflect UR's strong commitment to advancing knowledge and promoting sustainable development.

Centres of Excellence

They include:

- African COE in Data Science
- African COE in Energy for Sustainable Development
- African COE in Internet of Things
- African COE in Innovative Teaching and Learning Mathematics and Science
- African COE for Sustainable Cooling and Cold Chain
- ICTP – East African Institute for Fundamental Research
- Centre of Excellence in Biodiversity and Natural Resources Management
- Regional Centre of Excellence in Biomedical Engineering and eHealth
- EAC Regional Center of Excellence for Vaccines, Immunization and Health Supply Chain Management

The University of Rwanda has competitively secured four World Bank-funded Centres of Excellence (Data Science, Energy for Sustainable Development, Internet of Things, and Innovative Teaching and Learning Mathematics and Science). The centres are dedicated to postgraduate training and applied research, focusing on regional development priorities such as STEM, agriculture, health, environment and education.

To date, the centres have enrolled 298 PhD and 1,161 master's students, with 86 PhD and 607 master's graduates. Currently, 176 PhD and 457 master's students are pursuing their studies. Other achievements are the establishment of an AI IoT Incubation Hub, construction of a new Resource Centre to host regional students and guests, and installation of High-Performance Computing facilities for Big Data storage and analysis.

Others include the development of High E-Tech Smart Grid Laboratories (featuring Wind, Hydropower, and PV Solar systems) and the launch of the Grid Innovation and Incubation Hub (GIIH) to support the commercialisation of research outputs.

East African Community Regional Centre of Excellence for Vaccines, Immunisation and Health Supply Chain Management (EAC RCE-VIHSCM).

- The Centre offers four (4) academic programs delivered using a blended learning approach over two years to cater for in-service professionals:
- Master's in Health Supply Chain Management (MHSCM) – launched in 2017.
- Master of Science in Pharmaceutical Analysis and Quality Assurance (MPAQA) – launched in 2023.
- Master of Science in Vaccinology (MVAX) – launching in the 2025-2026 academic year.
- Master of Science in Medical Products Regulatory Affairs (MPRA) – launching in the 2025-2026 academic year.

- Since 2017, the EAC RCE-VIHSCM has graduated four (4) cohorts consisting of 135 graduates from EAC partner states. The 5th cohort of 41 candidates will graduate late 2025.

The University of Rwanda is ranked 6th among universities in Sub-Saharan Africa in the Times Higher Education 2024 rankings. This achievement marks UR's first appearance in these prestigious rankings, a powerful testament to the university's ongoing academic progress and growth in key areas, teaching, research, and societal impact.

KEY PROGRAMS

Mastercard Foundation Program

The Mastercard Foundation Scholars Program at UR is a 10-year, \$55 million partnership launched in 2021. It aims to support 1,200 young Africans in accessing higher education at the University of Rwanda, with a strong focus on women in STEM, individuals with disabilities, refugees and displaced youth, as well as other underprivileged but academically talented individuals.

The program has contributed to the University of Rwanda's broader mission of internationalisation and inclu-



sivity. Currently, Mastercard Foundation Scholars represent seven nationalities in addition to Rwandans; namely, Malawi, South Sudan, Kenya, Burundi, Eritrea, Zimbabwe and Sudan.

As of now, the program has 490 Scholars onboard, including 430 undergraduates and 60 postgraduates. Among them are 25 international students and 53 refugees. The first cohort of 18 undergraduate and 24 postgraduate Scholars is expected to graduate this year, 2025.

UR-Sweden Program

The UR-Sweden Program is a bilateral research cooperation initiative funded by Sida since 2002. It represents a long-term, multimillion-dollar support program to the University of Rwanda; the country's main public and comprehensive university, aimed at building research capacity, advancing graduate education, and strengthening overall institutional capacity. This program is the largest contributor to the development of a critical mass of researchers at the University, having produced 101 PhD graduates; most of whom studied at universities in Sweden.

The initiative has supported the establishment of five PhD programs at UR. Fifty-nine students are pursuing PhD studies, with 34 enrolled at Swedish universities and 25 at the University of Rwanda.

Harmonization and Quality Assurance

The University of Rwanda has reshaped its undergraduate programs over the past two years

to align with the demands of the 21st-century labour market. This comprehensive review was guided by key principles, including IUCEA program benchmarking, national and regional accreditation standards, the Mutual Recognition Agreement, credit transfer mechanisms, industry involvement and a learner-centred approach. As a result, the revised undergraduate programmes are now more attractive to national, regional and international students, with a particular emphasis on facilitating credit transfer.

Research and innovation Highlights

The University has established research clusters to unite researchers from various disciplines, focusing on specific areas of study to tackle complex societal challenges. These clusters foster interdisciplinary collaboration, knowledge sharing and the development of innovative research projects, contributing to both academic advancement and real-world impact.

Research Clusters

- Agricultural Transformation and Food Security
- Social Economic Transformation and Sustainable Development
- Environment, Natural Resources Management and Climate Change
- Inclusive Governance, Peace and Security
- Urbanisation, Green Cities and Human Settlements
- Transformative ICT and Knowledge Management
- Health and Wellbeing for All
- Sustainable Energy and Manufacturing
- Transformative Education, Culture and Creative Arts

Transport and Logistics

UR is now the second most influential university in East Africa, in terms of the impact of its publications, as measured by the Normalised Citation Impact (Clarivate Analytics, 2016), with total publications at 308,404, an increase of 31%, while publication in WoS is at 50,185, an increase of 270%.

UR's research is aligned with national and sectoral priorities, including Capacity Development, Employment Services, and Rwanda's Vision 2050, as well as the East African Community Vision 2050 and the SDGs.



University of Rwanda



Milestones and Strategic Priorities

The University of Rwanda was ranked 6th among universities in Sub-Saharan Africa in the Times Higher Education 2024 rankings. This achievement marks UR's first appearance in these prestigious rankings, a powerful testament to the university's ongoing academic progress and growth in key areas; teaching, research and societal impact. Since 2017, the University has overseen 349 projects, involving a total of 3,114 staff.

For seven years, 2,496 students have benefited from sponsorships funded through these projects, which have significantly enhanced their academic and professional prospects.

Projects play a catalytic role in enabling the University to achieve its strategic mandate as a hub of knowledge and a driver of societal transformation.

Through these projects, UR not only advances research and innovation but also contributes to addressing national and regional development challenges

Internationalisation

The University has signed Memoranda of Understanding with various foreign institutions to facilitate student mobility into Rwanda, like the agreement with the National Scholarship Agency of Gabon, which has sent over 50 undergraduate students. Programs such as the Mastercard Foundation Scholars Program are designed to support international students pursuing studies in Rwanda. The University's Centres of Excellence have created opportunities for international students to enrol in master's and PhD programs.

Admissions Flexibility

Regional students pay the same tuition fees as local students and are provided with affordable accommodation if they prefer to live in university hostels. International students are supported in obtaining degree equivalence, which is a requirement for enrolment in Rwandan universities. They are also supported in acquiring passports to ensure their smooth integration into the country and academic environment.



Kids Operation Room is used to ensure access to high quality surgical care and to train Rwanda's future paediatric surgeons and anaesthesiologists.

A Global Partnerships and Diversity Hub

The Federation of Adventist Parents Associations created the University of Lay Adventists of Kigali (UNILAK) for the Development of Education in Rwanda (FAPADER), which is an association of several Lay Seventh-day Adventist proprietorship of secondary school associations. It is a member of the Inter-University Council for East Africa (IUCEA) and ORIPES (Rwandan Organisation of Private Higher Learning Institutions). UNILAK collaborates with a variety of public, private and international organisations, which help conduct community outreach activities and research projects.

The associations include:

- APACE
- APADE
- APADEK
- APADENYA
- APAER
- APARPE
- APARUDE
- ASPEJ
- UMWUNGERI
- APADEM



UNILAK was approved through Convention No. 001 of 3 February 1997, which was signed between the Government of the Republic of Rwanda and FAPADER. The University obtained legal identity as a nonprofit association under Rwandan law through the Ministerial Decree No. 89/11 of 02 July 2004, and it was fully accredited by the government of Rwanda through the Ministerial Order No. 002/09 of 09/04/2009. The University's headquarters are located in the city of Kigali, Gasabo District, Remera Sector.

UNILAK has also expanded its activities in the Southern province (Nyanza) and Eastern Province (Rwamagana), and the two campuses operate with a competitive modern boarding facility. UNILAK's Data Universal Numbering System (D-U-N-S) Number is 561227536, which shows UNILAK's credibility at the global level.

The University obtained legal identity as a non-profit association under Rwandan law through the Ministerial Decree No. 89/11 of 02 July 2004, and it was fully accredited by the government of Rwanda through the Ministerial Order No. 002/09 of 09/04/2009. The University's headquarters are located in the city of Kigali, Gasabo District, Remera Sector.

Vision

To become a leading university in Africa, grounded in Christian values, we strive for excellence in education, research and community service.

Mission

To promote integral education, scientific and technological research, community service and any other thing that may directly or indirectly contribute to the real development of Rwanda.

Motto

Knowledge and Wisdom.

Academic Programmes

UNILAK has five faculties. Four of them are offered both at the undergraduate and master's levels:

Post-Graduate Studies

- Master of Business Administration (MBA) with specialisations in: Accounting, Finance, Marketing, Project Management, Human Resource Management and Entrepreneurship
- Master of International Criminal Law
- Master of International Environment and Land Use Law
- Master of Science in Information Technology
- Master of Science in Management Information Systems
- Master of Science in International Development Studies
- Master of Science in Environmental Information Systems
- Master of Science in Environmental Economics and Natural Resource Management

Under-Graduate Studies

- Faculty of Law
- Faculty of Economic Sciences and Management with departments of: Accounting, Finance, Human Resources Management, Marketing, Economics, Cooperative Management Accounting.
- Faculty of Environmental Studies with departments of: Emergency and Disaster Management, Rural Development, Environment Management and Conservation.
- Faculty of Computing and Information Sciences with departments of: Information Systems and Management, Information Technology, Software Engineering, Networking and Multimedia.
- Faculty of Education with departments of Education in Mathematics and Economics, Education in Mathematics and Computer Science, Education in Mathematics and Geography, Education in Economics and Entrepreneurship.

UNILAK Research Overview

The University of Lay Adventists of Kigali (UNILAK) actively fosters a dynamic research culture supported by motivated researchers across its various faculties. This commitment is reinforced through substantial facilitation measures and modern infrastructure.

They include:

- Water, Soil, and Microbiology Analysis Laboratories
- Geographic Information System (GIS) Laboratory

Beyond laboratory facilities, UNILAK has established a dedicated Incubation Centre designed to attract researchers, support innovation, and promote applied research initiatives. It is a hub for nurturing academic and industry-driven projects, strengthening the university's research sector.

To ensure broad visibility and dissemination of research outputs, UNILAK publishes several peer-reviewed academic journals:

- *East African Journal of Science and Technology* (EAJST) <https://ejst.unilak.ac.rw/journal/>
- *Journal of Applied Socio-Economic and Innovation* (JASEBI) <https://jasebi.unilak.ac.rw/journal/>
- *Journal of Computing and Communication Innovation* (JOCCL) <https://jocci.unilak.ac.rw/journal/>

These platforms enable faculty, students, and external collaborators to share research findings regionally and internationally, contributing to knowledge transfer and evidence-based policy development.





UNILAK Research Publication Profile and Their Indexes: https://www.adscientificindex.com/h-index-rankings/?con=Africa&country_code=rw&q=University+of+Lay+Adventist+of+Kigali
 UNILAK is also well-known for organising international conferences annually, including:

Conferences

- International Conference on Environment, Energy and Development (ICEED): Organised each year since 2012 by the Faculty of Environmental Studies in partnership with the Xinjiang Institute of Ecology and Geography (XIEG), Chinese Academy of Sciences.
- International Conference on Business Management and Innovation (ICBMI): Hosted by the Faculty of Economic Sciences and Management, organised in collaboration with Land O'Lakes, the Rwanda Institute of Cooperative Entrepreneurship and Microfinance (RICEM), the Rwanda Cooperative Agency (RCA), the National Cooperative Confederation of Rwanda (NCCR), Association of Microfinance Institutions in Rwanda (AMIR), Cordaid, and AFRI-COOP.

For 2025, UNILAK is expanding its conference program with two major international events:

- International Conference on Business Management and Innovation (ICBMI 2025). Scheduled for September 24–25, 2025, organised by the Faculty of Economic Sciences and Management.
- International Conference on Computing, Information Sciences and Technology (ICCIST 2025).

Scheduled for November 11–12, 2025, organised by the Faculty of Computer Science, further strengthening UNILAK's role in fostering dialogue and innovation in technology-related fields. Through these activities, UNILAK continues to position itself as a key player in regional and international academic collaboration, research dissemination, and professional networking.

Joint Research Projects

Some of the research projects conducted jointly:

- Examining success factors for sustainable rural development through the integrated cooperative model (MAKERERE UNIVERSITY, MOSHI UNIVERSITY, UNILAK, Canadian Cooperative Alliance [CCA]).
- Joint Environmental and Natural Research Centre (UNILAK-XIEG).
- Rice farming and sustainable rural development in the Eastern Province of Rwanda.
- Study of soil and water conservation and high-yielding, efficient agriculture for mountain and hilly areas in the upper reaches of the Nile. (UNILAK and Xian University).
- Examining the role of agricultural cooperatives in achieving sustainable rural development, (UNILAK and Land O'Lakes).

Some of the MoUs are:

- Since 2012, UNILAK has been in partnership with Xinjiang Institute of Geography and Ecology, the Chinese Academy of Sciences (XIEG) <http://english.egi.cas.cn/>



- At the heart of the partnership between UNILAK and Xinjiang Institute of Ecology and Geography (XIEG) is the environment. This partnership has enabled the establishment of a GIS and Remote Sensing Lab at UNILAK and a Natural Resources and Environment Research Centre in East Africa, which is based at UNILAK.
- In June 2016, UNILAK signed an MoU with the National Cooperative Confederation of Rwanda (NCCR).
- In 2017, UNILAK signed different memoranda of understanding with:
 - The Institute of Soil and Water Conservation, Chinese Academy of Sciences <http://english.iswc.cas.cn/> as well as the Institute of Water and Conservation, Northwest A&F University <https://en.nwsuaf.edu.cn/index.htm>, located in YANGLING, SHAANXI Province.
 - XIAN University of Technology <https://en.xust.edu.cn/>, located in XIAN SHAANXI Province.

In 2023, UNILAK entered several MoUs

- Canterbury Christ Church University <https://www.canterbury.ac.uk/> Interested in dual programmes- Located in Kent, UK.
- The University of British Columbia <https://www.ubc.ca/>, interested in staff mentoring and help in curriculum review and exchange.
- University of Tennessee <https://www.utk.edu>. Interested in projects and collaborations. They are interested in the Law Department and the School of Business.
- Arden University, located in the UK <https://arden.ac.uk>. Interested in collaborating and offering their degree programs.
- La Universidad Austral <https://www.austarl.edu.ar/en>. Interested in staff and student exchange. Located in Argentina.
- The National University of Quilmes [\[unq.edu.ar/\]\(http://unq.edu.ar/\). Interested in Projects to secure funds from their government and staff exchange. Located in Argentina.](https://www.

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- Clark Atlanta University <https://www.gsu.edu/> is interested in exchange of staff and students and mentorship programs for our staff. Located in Georgia, USA
- University of St. John, Macao <https://www.usj.edu.mo>. It is a leading multicultural Catholic University of Macao. They are interested in student and staff exchange
- University of Texas at Austin <https://www.utexas.edu> is interested in student and staff exchange. Located in Texas, USA.
- Cyprus West University (Cyprus) – <https://cwu.edu.tr/>
- The University of Texas at Austin – <https://www.utexas.edu/>
- Dayananda Sagar University, Bangalore, India – <https://www.dsu.edu.in/>
- Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, India– <https://www.jnu.ac.in/>
- Article 26-<https://www.article26.org>
- Yonsei University, South Korea-<https://www.yonsei.ac.kr/>
- La Trobe University-<https://www.latrobe.edu.au/>
- University of Coruña - https://www.udc.es/en/ori-conoce_la_udc/
- Erasmus+ -<https://erasmus-plus.ec.europa.eu/>
- Avenay-Val-d'Or- <https://avenay-val-d-or.fr/>

In 2024, UNILAK signed MoUs with:

Institut Supérieur Européen <https://ise.paris/>: The agreement will focus on developing training programs and certifications, as well as exchanging trainers.
Nigeria High Commission in Kigali <https://kigali.foreignaffairs.gov.ng/>: Interested in areas of education.

In 2025, UNILAK signed MoUs with:

- Association of Microfinance Institutions in Rwanda (AMIR) <https://www.amir.org.rw>. This MoU boosts Rwanda's Cooperative sector through enhanced co-operation.



- Alexandre Moisiu University Durrës (AMU) <https://uamd.edu.al/en> in Albania. This strategic partnership will focus on collaborative research, joint academic programs, faculty and student exchanges, and the organisation of international conferences and workshops.
- Luthien & Cornerstone Advisory Ltd <https://cla-rw.com> to offer professional certification courses including CPA, ACCA, CIPS and PMP.



International Students, the Exchange Program

Since 2019, UNILAK has steadily grown into a hub of international academic diversity, welcoming a large number of students from across Africa.

Today, the university proudly hosts around 1,000 international students representing over 35 African countries.

In addition to attracting students from the continent, UNILAK has also taken significant strides in promoting student mobility. Since 2024, the university has been sending its students abroad through exchange programs.

Three students have participated in the prestigious Erasmus program in Spain.

Furthermore, several international partnerships have been established, opening new opportunities for future exchange programs that will benefit both UNILAK students and incoming students from partner institutions worldwide.



Visiting Professors

UNILAK is currently collaborating with several visiting professors from various countries as part of its commitment to academic excellence and internationalisation. They bring a wealth of knowledge, diverse experiences, and global perspectives, significantly enriching teaching, research and mentorship across different faculties.

Here is the list of some of our visiting professors:

- Professor Phooko Retselisitsoe: Visiting Professor of Law/ South Africa
- Professor Marius Potgieter: Visiting Professor of Marketing in the Faculty of Economic Sciences and Management
- Professor Symphorien Ntibagirirwa: Visiting Professor of Economics/Nigeria
- Professor Christopher Behan: Visiting Professor of Law/ USA
- Professor Muath Sabha: Visiting Professor of Computing/ Jordan
- Professor Gabriele Schäfer: A Visiting Professor of Economic Sciences and Management | Germany
- Professor Wael Kortam: Visiting Professor of Marketing / Egypt
- Prof. Jerome Obo Ihuma: Professor of Ecosystem Management (Forest Biology and Ecology)
- Dr. Haphsat Ibrahim Modibbo: Doctor of Management
- Prof. Uche Augustus Nnawulezi: Associate Professor of International Humanitarian Law/ Human Rights Law
- Prof. Edigbonya Thompson Faraday: Associate Professor of Environmental Chemistry
- Dr. Moradeke Grace Adewumi: Doctor of Computer Science
- Dr. Isaac Olajide AREO: Doctor of Environmental Resource Management

- Dr. Najafi Auwalu Ibrahim: Doctor of Entrepreneurship and Strategic Management
- Prof. OYELEYE Christopher Akinwale: Professor of Computer Science (Artificial Intelligence)
- Dr. Yusuf Hammed Agboola: Doctor of International Economics
- Dr. Taiwo Olufisayo ADIGUN: Doctor of Computer Science



Community Outreach

UNILAK actively engages in various community outreach activities aimed at empowering and uplifting local communities. Among these initiatives, the Faculty of Law runs a legal clinic where citizens receive education and guidance on important legal concepts and procedures, enhancing their awareness and access to justice.

Additionally, the university has conducted capacity-building programs for school leaders in Nyanza District, equipping them with essential skills to improve educational management. Furthermore, cooperative leaders in Rwamagana District have been trained

in critical areas such as accounting and leadership, strengthening their ability to manage and grow their cooperatives effectively. Through these efforts, UNILAK demonstrates its commitment to community development and social responsibility.

Prospects

As part of its commitment to academic excellence and impactful research, UNILAK intends to introduce a PhD program, marking a significant step in its evolution as a centre for advanced learning and innovation. This initiative aims to nurture a new generation of researchers and thought leaders who will contribute to national and global development.



To promote cross-border collaboration, Staff and Student Mobility Frameworks enable lecturers, researchers and students to move freely between universities and benefit from diverse academic environments.

Spotlight

The East African Common Higher Education Area

The Heads of State of the East African Community (EAC) signed a declaration on May 20, 2017, to establish the East African Common Higher Education Area (EACHEA), thereby endorsing a regional policy aimed at transforming the region's education future.

At its core, the declaration sought to create a borderless academic space where knowledge, skills and talent could move as freely as goods, services and capital, thus unleashing the full potential of regional integration.

To realise the promise of this transformation, the EACHEA must be elevated beyond policy papers, and embraced as a continental opportunity, requiring public awareness, institutional ownership and stakeholder collaboration.

The EACHEA is deeply rooted in the Common Market Protocol, a foundational pillar of the re-established East African Community. Specifically, Article 11 of this protocol affirms the free movement of persons, labour, goods, services and capital among EAC member states.

Crucially, this freedom extends to the mobility of students, educators and skilled professionals, recognising education not only as a right but also as a strategic resource for regional growth.

In the context of a regional common market, the higher education service should move freely and efficiently, just like any other factor of production. When academic systems across East Africa are aligned and responsive to one another, students and professionals can pursue opportunities across borders with confidence, certainty and

ease, thus strengthening both human capital development and regional integration.

To turn this vision into reality, the Inter-University Council for East Africa (IUCEA), in collaboration with EAC member states, established several foundational pillars. The East African Qualifications Framework for Higher Education defines comparable levels of learning to ensure that academic qualifications earned in one country are recognised in another.

The initiative emphasises Harmonised Curriculum Systems designed to communicate with each other. The focus is on academic compatibility, allowing for seamless credit transfers, joint degree programs, and smooth transitions between institutions across the region.

This is not a dream deferred to tomorrow, but a living policy for today. Yet the distance between ambition and implementation is too wide. The East African Common Higher Education Area (EACHEA) is reshaping the academic landscape. Thanks to its frameworks, students across the region are pursuing degrees without bureaucratic hurdles.

Policies such as charging East African students domestic fees are already in place, reflecting a commitment to equity and regional cohesion by treating all East African students as "home students."

Yet despite these promising strides, public awareness and institutional alignment are disappointingly low. Many universities lack streamlined systems for admitting regional students. Ministries of Education in some partner states are scarcely familiar with the protocols.

We need to tell the stories of students who are crossing borders to learn, grow and redefine what it means to be East African.

Universities must highlight their readiness to host regional learners, while ministries must promote frameworks that ease mobility and mutual recognition of qualifications.



Additional Financing for ACE II Project

Started July 2023

Strengthening
of Institutions

- 5 in M
- 1 in M

Financing of

- High-Q
- Applied



Dr. Jude Ssebuwufu

Coordinator, African Higher Education Centres of Excellence,
Inter-University Council for East Africa (IUCEA)

The students often navigate cross-border admissions, unaware that they are part of a bold regional agenda, a disconnect that must be addressed.

EACHEA success cannot be the burden of the Inter-University Council for East Africa (IUCEA) alone; it must be championed at all levels, by students and parents, university administrators and lecturers, government officials and policymakers alike.

We need to tell the stories of students who are crossing borders to learn, grow and redefine what it means to be East African. Universities must highlight their readiness to host regional learners, while ministries must promote frameworks that ease mobility

and mutual recognition of qualifications.

It is time to reframe regional education as a shared dream of a more connected and empowered East Africa. At its core, the EACHEA is about shaping a new kind of graduate, one who studies in Nairobi, interns in Kigali, conducts research in Arusha, and launches a career in Kampala.

That is the promise of the EACHEA; and now, it is up to all of us to fulfil it.

The author, Dr. Jude Ssebuwufu, is the Coordinator, African Higher Education Centres of Excellence, Inter-University Council for East Africa (IUCEA).



UNIVERSITY COUNCIL
OF EAST AFRICA

Quality Education
for Development



Prof. Gaspard Banyankimbona

IUCEA Executive Secretary Opening the Entebbe IUCEA workshop
on mutual recognition of qualifications in the East African
Community (June 21, 2025).



The Inter-University Council for East Africa (IUCEA) is leading efforts to harmonise recognition procedures and eliminate delays that deny thousands access to education and employment. Central to building a unified higher education area, the equating and recognition of academic and professional qualifications ensures that learners and professionals seamlessly cross borders to further their studies or pursue work opportunities.

Regional Mobility

IUCEA Wants Expeditious Qualifications Equating

The East African region states must fast-track the process to promote student mobility, employability and regional integration. The Inter-University Council for East Africa (IUCEA) is at the forefront of ensuring that compliance with qualification recognition processes is a regionally coordinated and streamlined endeavour. Robert Ayine, the IUCEA Senior Qualification Framework Officer, says East Africa's push toward a unified education space, one essential element of Equating and Recognition of Qualifications, remains at the centre of debate and reform.

He is concerned that when qualifications are not recognised or equated properly and promptly, individuals are denied the chance to further their education or pursue employment across borders.

Qualifications Recognition Matters

There are three critical reasons for qualifications equating and recognition:

- **Progression in studies**

If a student from the Democratic Republic of the Congo wants to enrol in a Ugandan university, the admissions board needs to establish that they meet the entry requirements, which may, for example, require two principal passes at A-level. This demands an objective interpretation or equating of the foreign qualification to ensure it matches local standards.

- **Employment and work placement**

Equally important is recognising the qualifications for purposes of employment. An engineer trained in Tanzania might seek a job in Kenya, where the minimum requirement is a bachelor's degree in engineering.

Without a proper recognition process, that individual's qualification may be dismissed or delayed regardless of their competence. This can create immense barriers to the free movement of labour, one of the key aspirations of the East African Community (EAC).

- **Confidence in comparable qualifications**

Beyond admissions and employment, recognition also fosters confidence that one's qualifications are on par within the region.

This kind of parity supports the realisation of a Common Higher Education Area, as envisioned in regional integration protocols. It assures students, professionals and employers that the academic and professional credentials issued across EAC countries are equal in weight.

Beyond admissions and employment, recognition also fosters confidence that one's qualifications are on par within the region. This kind of parity supports the realisation of a Common Higher Education Area, as envisioned in regional integration protocols. It assures students, professionals, and employers that the academic and professional credentials issued across EAC countries are equal in weight.

Compliance Challenges

Despite the importance of qualification recognition, compliance issues persist across East Africa. These are some of the most pressing challenges:

- **Delays in equating qualifications**

Students and professionals often wait months, sometimes longer, for their qualifications to be verified. These delays can lead to loss of academic opportunities, job offers, or scholarships.

- **Lack of understanding by receiving institutions**

Academic registrars from several institutions shared at a recent dialogue that they frequently struggle to interpret qualifications from outside their country, especially when those qualifications are based on different frameworks or grading systems.



- **Limited institutional capacity**

Many countries lack well-equipped agencies or dedicated personnel to efficiently handle recognition requests. There's often poor coordination between ministries, national qualification authorities and universities.

- **The proliferation of fake qualifications**

The rise in fraudulent credentials is a growing concern. Without robust verification systems, unqualified individuals can slip through, compromising the credibility of entire systems and denying genuine learners their due recognition.

- **The dilemma of refugees and displaced persons**

In times of conflict, many people flee without documents. With recent crises in the Sudan, several displaced persons have reached EAC countries without academic records, making recognition a humanitarian issue.

IUCEA's Regional Response

Recognising the urgency of these issues, the Inter-University Council for East Africa convened a groundbreaking Regional Dialogue on the Recognition of Qualifications on June 19–20, 2025. It assembled stakeholders from all EAC partner states, including ministries of education, national qualification agencies, the National Council for Higher Education (NCHE) of Uganda, and other regulatory bodies.

Development partners, the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and UNHCR actively participated, emphasising the global relevance of this issue. The ILO emphasised the connection between qual-

ification recognition and fair access to employment, while UNHCR highlighted the impact on refugee access to education and work. This dialogue marked the beginning of a regional conversation focused on compliance, capacity building and collaboration. It underscored that effective qualification recognition is a commitment to equity, inclusivity and economic integration.

Ayine says the dialogue established that many institutions lack professionals who understand the evolving qualifications and how to interpret them across contexts; hence, continuous training and development are needed. Each country was urged to develop or strengthen qualification databases, where all accredited programs and institutions are listed.

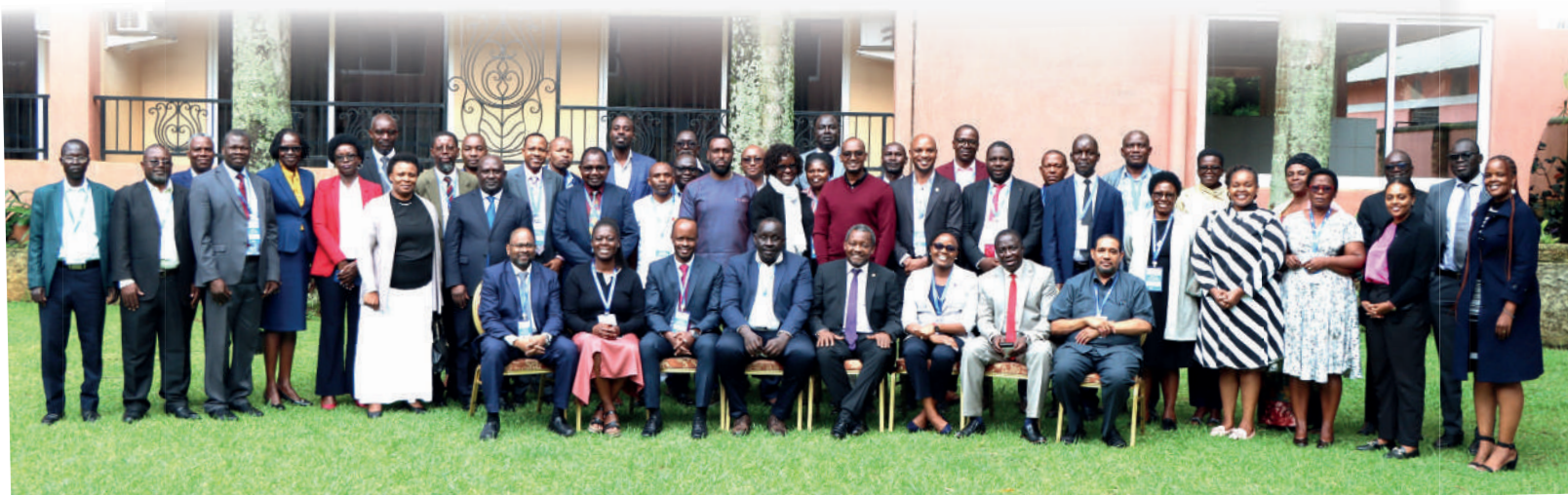
This would support easy reference and comparison during recognition exercises. Stakeholders recommended developing standard regional protocols for recognition, in the form of a Recognition Manual, to harmonise how qualifications are interpreted across borders.

Enhanced Collaboration

Universities, ministries and agencies must work together more effectively, ensuring that recognition does not depend on a single actor but on a coordinated system.

The rise of micro-credentials and Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) was highlighted as a contemporary challenge; the institutions' recognition of skills acquired online or on the job without a formal diploma.

These are urgent questions that the regional framework must answer. Special attention was given to persons of concern, including refugees and displaced



Participants in a workshop on mutual recognition of qualifications in EAC, held in Entebbe, to promote regional collaboration (June 21, 2025).





Students during a practical session at Arusha Technical College under the EASTRIP World Bank funded project.

students. Flexible approaches, such as competency assessments, may be necessary when documents are missing.

The Framework Behind Recognition

All recognition and equating of qualifications is anchored in the National Qualifications Frameworks (NQFs) of each country. These frameworks classify education levels; for example, Uganda's system includes Level 1: Primary, Level 2: Lower Secondary (O-level), Level 3: Upper Secondary (A-level), Level 4: Higher Education Certificate, Level 5: Diploma, Level 6: Advanced Diploma, Level 7: Bachelor's Degree, Level 8: Postgraduate Diploma and Master's Degree, Level 9: Doctoral Degree.

However, in some countries, PhDs are ranked at Level 10. This variation is why equivalence tables are necessary when comparing qualifications between countries, ensuring that, for instance, Uganda's Level 9 corresponds to Kenya's Level 10.

An emerging issue is the recognition of professional qualifications, such as Certified Public Accountants (CPA), across countries.

Should CPA Kenya be equivalent to CPA Uganda, and how do these professional certifications compare with academic degrees like BCom or BBA?

These are complex but vital questions as the region strives for parity and fairness.

Going Forward

For East Africa to realise a Common Higher Education Area, the equating and recognition of qualifications must be efficient, transparent and credible. The June 2025 dialogue was a bold first step in tackling the compliance barriers head-on.

The road ahead will require:

Institutional reforms to streamline recognition services and capacity-building at all levels.

Cross-border cooperation among qualification bodies embracing technology for qualification databases and online verifications.

Continued stakeholder engagement in refining the frameworks and protocols.

When done right, qualification recognition opens doors for learning, work and dignity. But when mismanaged, it is a gatekeeper that shuts out deserving individuals.

By reinforcing compliance and creating systems that are fair, fast and future-focused, the region will unlock mobility and opportunity.

The foundation has been laid, and the journey towards a fully harmonised higher education space in East Africa is ongoing. With increased investment, stronger policy alignment, and sustained political will, the region will benefit immensely financially, socially and intellectually,” Dr Jude Ssebuwufu, Coordinator, African Higher Education Centres of Excellence under the IUCEA.

Education Without Borders

Harmonisation Is Shaping East Africa’s Higher Learning

By Manifesto Publications

In recent years, East Africa has made bold strides to dismantle the barriers that once defined and divided its higher education sector.

Since its inception, the Inter-University Council for East Africa (IUCEA) has laid the groundwork for this regional integration, setting academic benchmarks and quality assurance frameworks in addition to supporting student and staff exchanges across borders. According to Dr. Jude Ssebuwufu, Coordinator of the African Higher Education Centres of Excellence under the IUCEA, harmonisation aims to enable students,

academic staff and qualifications to move effortlessly across borders, so that a degree earned in Nairobi is recognised with the same confidence and credibility in Kigali, Kampala, or Bujumbura.

“We are building a system where a medical degree in Uganda carries the same weight and quality as one from Tanzania or Rwanda. We are mainly interested in creating trust across borders—trust in the degrees we issue and the graduates we produce,” he said.

Ssebuwufu said harmonisation efforts in East Africa’s higher education sector are driven by a set of interconnected reforms aimed at promoting

International students; USA, Nigeria and Rwanda at Uganda Christian University-Mukono.





Kenyan students on a familiarisation visit to Makerere University School of Law.

consistency, mobility and quality across the region. One of the key pillars is the Academic Program Benchmarking, through which the Inter-University Council for East Africa has developed subject benchmark statements.

“These benchmarks define the expected learning outcomes and core content for priority disciplines such as medicine, engineering, law and education, ensuring that programs remain relevant and of high quality across all member states,” he said. The implementation of the Credit Transfer and Accumula-



University of Nairobi.



South Sudan students in Uganda stage a cultural show.

tion System enables students to transfer between universities without repeating coursework, thereby promoting academic mobility.

Alongside, the Mutual Recognition of Qualifications initiative collaborates with national higher education authorities to ensure that degrees and diplomas are recognised across borders, removing an obstacle for students and professionals alike.

Complementing these efforts is the Regional Quality Assurance Framework, which provides institutions with clear guidelines and tools for self-assessment and improvement, fostering comparability, trust and accountability throughout the region's academic space. Ssebuwufu said the effects of harmonisation are felt across East Africa, with students readily participating in semester-abroad programs.

On the other hand, universities are co-developing joint degree programs, and academic staff are teaching and conducting research across national boundaries.

Dr. Casim Umba Tolo, Director of Pharm-Biotechnology and Traditional Medicine Centre, Mbarara University of

Science and Technology, says the university has benefited from harmonisation, especially in the area of joint research.

"We have greatly benefited from this area, and we are a leading institution in research, innovation and product development," he said. But despite the progress over the years, several challenges slow down full harmonisation. Variations in national policies, bureaucratic hurdles, visa restrictions and the cost of student permits can still impede mobility.

Some universities lack the institutional capacity to fully implement the new frameworks or integrate regional benchmarks into their curricula. According to Ssebuwufu, some institutions are harmonising in practice without realising it; the challenge is to translate this quiet progress into formal policy alignment.

Contrary to what some think, harmonisation is a declaration that education knows no borders, and a strategic move to empower a generation of East Africans to learn, work and lead wherever opportunity takes them across the region.

The implementation of the Credit Transfer and Accumulation System enables students to transfer between universities without repeating coursework, thereby promoting academic mobility. Alongside, the Mutual Recognition of Qualifications initiative collaborates with national higher education authorities to ensure that degrees and diplomas are recognised across borders, removing an obstacle for students and professionals alike.



“The development of the framework is a critical milestone in regional integration. It is designed specifically to assure the quality and relevance of training, recognise prior training and fast-track regional integration of TVET in line with the project development objective for EASTRIP,” Dr. Cosam Joseph explains.

Regional Labour Mobility

Boosting Harmonised Skills Assessment and Certification

By Godwin Bonge Muhwezi.

For decades, fragmented education and certification systems have hindered skilled labour mobility across East Africa. An electrician trained in Kenya might struggle to prove their qualifications in Tanzania or Ethiopia. A chef trained in Tanzania may equally not have their competencies recognised in Kenya or Ethiopia.

These are some of the challenges East Africa and African states have grappled with, even as the region advances in po-

The Regional Framework has been developed for Ethiopia, Kenya and Tanzania, and with the potential for adoption or benchmarking beyond these countries. It is designed to operationalise the Regional TVET Qualifications Framework for Ethiopia, Kenya and Tanzania (RQF-EKT), another framework developed under EASTRIP to facilitate mutual recognition and portability of qualifications

litical integration as part of the East African Community (EAC) or the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD). However, a Regional Framework for Occupational Competence Assessment and Certification (RFOCAC) aims to transform the way occupational competencies are assessed and certified across borders.

Developed under the auspices of the Inter-University Council for East Africa (IUCEA) through the East Africa Skills for Transformation and Regional Integration Project (EASTRIP), the frame-



The Dean, Kombolcha Polytechnic College, Mr. Ermias Getnet, with students and trainers at an automotive workshop at Kombolcha Polytechnic College.



work represents a bold new chapter in Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) for Ethiopia, Kenya and Tanzania, and a vision for the entire continent.

The World Bank and the governments of Ethiopia, Kenya and Tanzania funded this initiative.

A Shared Vision

The Regional Framework has been developed for Ethiopia, Kenya and Tanzania, and with the potential for adoption or benchmarking beyond these

countries. It is designed to operationalise the Regional TVET Qualifications Framework for Ethiopia, Kenya and Tanzania (RQF-EKT), another framework developed under EASTRIP to facilitate mutual recognition and portability of qualifications. It will ensure that the assessment and certification processes align with the broader qualifications framework, creating a seamless and integrated system that supports the development and recognition of skills at all levels.

“Ethiopia, Kenya and Tanzania TVET experts have developed the Regional Framework for Occupational Competence Assessment and Certification (RFOCAC).



Dr. Cosam Joseph,
Regional Project Coordinator
for EASTRIP.



It is a demonstration of the collaborative efforts and commitment of dedicated stakeholders, thanks to World Bank support. We highly hope that RFOCAC will catalyse positive and transformative change, drive regional integration, economic growth and empowerment of individuals, and contribute to the creation of a harmonised labour market throughout East Africa and beyond," Dr. Cosam Joseph, the Regional Project Coordinator for EASTRIP, said.

Why It Matters

The significance of regional frameworks is in their timing and strategic value. Across the continent, there is an urgent demand for a workforce that is highly skilled, mobile, adaptable and certified according to regional and international standards. Under EASTRIP, countries in the region have harmonised 44 occupational standards and identified 235 existing TVET qualifications for mutual recognition at a regional level. "The development of the framework is a critical milestone in regional integration. It is designed specifically to assure the quality and relevance of training, recognise prior training and fast-track regional integration of TVET in line with the project development objective for EASTRIP," Dr. Cosam explains.

A Reality Framework

RFOCAC is a product of rigorous analysis and extensive stakeholder consultation and participation. Each participating country - Ethiopia, Kenya and Tanzania - brings their unique TVET system, policy environment, and institutional capacity, creating a common foundation. In Ethiopia, there are regional Centres of Competence (CoC) providing a decentralised infrastructure for assessment and certification. In Kenya, legal instruments like the TVET Act and the Kenya National Qualifications Framework Act ensure institutional support and transparency. Tanzania integrates TVET into broader national development goals, recognising it as a strategic tool for industrialisation and sustainability. The regional framework harmonises these diverse national efforts, enabling them to speak a common language of competence and certification.

Who Makes It Work

The implementation of RFOCAC hinges on a wide array of actors. Ministries responsible for TVET and Skills Development, the industry, especially the private sector, are expected to set the policy tone. Regulatory bodies like the Tanzania National Council for Technical and Vocational Education and Training (NACTVET), Kenya's Technical and Vocational Education and Training Authority (TVETA) the TVET Training Curriculum Development, Assessment and Certification Council (TVET CDACC) and Ethiopia's Education and Training Authority provide the necessary oversight at national levels. TVET institutions and assessment centres are

expected to conduct training and testing, while the private sector will contribute technical expertise and help validate the relevance of occupational standards. Most importantly, the Framework introduces strict protocols for the assessors' accreditation, assessment tools and centres. Assessors must be trained and demonstrate substantial industry experience. Certification is offered at multiple levels, from full qualifications to micro-certifications, reflecting the varied pathways learners and workers take.

Quality, Trust and Integrity

RFOCAC's essence lies in maintaining integrity, transparency and trust across all processes. Quality assurance is embedded throughout—from internal audits by assessment centres to external evaluations by national regulators. Assessment data is digitised, safeguarded against fraud, and maintained in national databases, enhancing accountability and accessibility. Appeals mechanisms ensure fairness, while the inclusion of special provisions for candidates with disabilities reflects the Framework's commitment to inclusivity.

A Catalyst for Change

While currently focused on Ethiopia, Kenya and Tanzania, the Framework is built for expansion. Its principles; mutual recognition, quality assurance and labour mobility are universally relevant in various regional economic communities on the African continent. It offers a model for other countries in the region and beyond, particularly in the context of Africa's drive toward a Continental Free Trade Area and the African Union's Agenda 2063. In many ways, RFOCAC mirrors the ambition of East Africa itself: interconnected, future-ready, and rooted in the power of human capital. It gives a young graduate in Addis Ababa the same competitive edge as their counterpart in Nairobi or Dar es Salaam, and by extension, positions East Africa as a hub for skilled, certified and mobile talent.

A Future Forged by Skills

The Regional Framework for Occupational Competence Assessment and Certification is a roadmap for shared prosperity, a mechanism for dignity at work, and a commitment to unlocking the region's full human potential. For the millions of East African youths seeking employment, a future, and a chance to succeed, the Framework offers an opportunity to expand their sphere beyond national borders.

The success of the initiative will ultimately be measured not just in certificates issued or standards harmonised, but in the enhanced livelihoods of millions of East Africans whose skills and contributions gain the recognition they deserve.

Godwin Bonge Muhwezi, the author of this article, is the Project Communication Specialist for EASTRIP at IUCEA.





Textile Students at Kisumu National Polytechnic College in one of the practical session.

Approximately 1,177 students have participated in exchange programmes at the 16 TVET centres under EASTRIP, a significant increase from just 30 at the project's inception. Additionally, 239 staff at TVET institutes from another country have engaged in the programmes, rising from a baseline of 0. This highlights the increasing significance of cross-border knowledge sharing in TVET programs, teaching and learning.

Staff, Students Exchange

Driving TVET Integration in East Africa

By Godwin Bonge Muhwezi and Assen Bushira

Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) institutions across East Africa have deepened cooperation in staff and student exchange to promote regional integration.

This collaboration has led to an increasing number of trainers and students crossing borders to share knowledge and best practices, returning with new insights that are transforming the way young people

are taught. The initiative is funded by the World Bank and the governments of Ethiopia, Kenya and Tanzania, through the East Africa Skills for Transformation and Regional Integration Project (EASTRIP). "The qualifications framework removes barriers to mobility for graduates and workers, opening up regional employment opportunities and enabling labour to move where demand is highest," Dr. Cosam Joseph, the Regional Project Coordinator for EASTRIP at Inter-University Council for East Africa (IUCEA), says.

For instance, Kombolcha Polytechnic College in Ethiopia has been sending its trainers to TVET institutions across East Africa to share knowledge and explore new teaching methods in other countries. Nine trainers have recently returned from their exchange programmes at Kisumu Polytechnic College with new knowledge and a renewed vision of what teaching can be.

The instructors were tasked with learning the latest developments in automotive technology and teaching methodologies to bring those insights home to transform their classrooms. Among them were Mr. Ali Fenta, the Head of the Department of Automotive Technology, and Mr. Suleyman Seid, a trainer in the same department.

They were placed at Kisumu National Polytechnic College in Kenya, one of the country's premier centres for technical education. At Kisumu, the trainers were immersed in intensive, hands-on training that connected theory to real-world applications. Fenta says, "We were actively involved, troubleshooting and working alongside Kenyan trainers. It pushed us to rethink how we teach and how we prepare our students for the demands of the industry." Ali, recalling how Kenyan students debated solutions, sometimes even challenging instructors respectfully. "Student weren't just memorising; they were solving problems on their own." For Suleyman, the



Engineering students at Kenya Coast Polytechnic College in a metal workshop.

The initiative is funded by the World Bank and the governments of Ethiopia, Kenya and Tanzania, through the East Africa Skills for Transformation and Regional Integration Project (EASTRIP). "The qualifications framework removes barriers to mobility for graduates and workers, opening up regional employment opportunities and enabling labour to move where demand is highest,"

biggest lesson was about trust. "In Kenya, teachers gave students space to try, to fail, and try again.

That's how confidence grows. It changed how I see my role." At Kombolcha, the trainers have redesigned lessons around hands-on tasks and initiated partnerships with local industry, securing internships that pushed learning beyond the college's gates.

The authors: Godwin Bonge Muhwezi is the Project Communication Specialist for EASTRIP at IUCEA, and Assen Bushira, the M & E Specialist for EASTRIP at Kombolcha.



Renewable energy students at Arusha Technical College in Tanzania during a demonstrate at a session.



While the initial focus is on Ethiopia, Kenya and Tanzania, the Framework is designed to be scalable and adaptable by other countries in the region, willing to subscribe to the philosophy and principles of regional integration; discussions are underway to extend the Framework to other East African Community (EAC) countries, making it a cornerstone of regional education and economic policy.

Unlocking Skills Without Borders

Regional Qualifications Framework Transforms East Africa's TVET



A student at Kenya Coast Polytechnic College workshop.

By Godwin Bonge Muhwezi

The Regional Technical and Vocational Education and Training Qualifications Framework (RTQF-EKT), established by Ethiopia, Kenya and Tanzania in 2022, is a framework for regional integration, economic transformation, skills development and youth empowerment.

The Framework was developed under the auspices of the East Africa Skills for Transformation and Regional Integration Project (EASTRIP), with funding from the World Bank and governments of Ethiopia, Kenya and Tanzania, with coordination from the Inter-University Council for East Africa (IUCEA). It seeks to harmonise the standards and levels, and recognition of technical

and vocational qualifications across the three countries. It means that a diploma in electrical engineering earned in Kenya is recognised in Tanzania or Ethiopia without the need for bureaucratic reassessment.

This mutual recognition will enable students and skilled workers to move freely for employment or further education, significantly impacting regional integration.

“The Regional Qualifications Framework for Ethiopia, Kenya and Tanzania promotes skilled labour regional mobility through standards harmonisation and mutual recognition of qualifications,” said Dr. Cosam Joseph, the Regional Project Coordinator for EASTRIP. He elaborates that by aligning our systems, we are build-



A student of Arusha Technical College in Tanzania at a workshop.

ing a more agile, skilled and competitive workforce.

Why It Matters Now

While TVET has been identified as a key driver of employability and industrialisation, national differences in qualification structures have historically hindered the mobility of skilled labour and trust in qualifications issued in the various countries.

The framework aligns with the African Union's Agenda 2063 and the Continental Education Strategy for Africa, which emphasise a common qualifications space and the free movement of people and skills.

Through EASTRIP, Ethiopia, Kenya and Tanzania have collaboratively established 16 Regional Flagship TVET Institutes (RFTIs), which are TVET Centres of Excellence. They are in the key growth sectors of the economy; textiles and garments, leather, agro-processing, aviation, marine engineering, highways technology, building and construction, renewable energy and ICT.

The centres are regional hubs for specialised skills training, developing skilled manpower for the entire region. "We are preparing a regional workforce that can support the industrialisation goals of East Africa," Dr. Joseph stresses.

What Makes RTQF-EKT Unique

The RTQF-EKT specifically targets the TVET sector, a first of its kind in the region. The framework introduc-

What RTQF-EKT Offers

- Mutual recognition of TVET qualifications across Ethiopia, Kenya and Tanzania.
- Eight qualification levels harmonised regionally.
- Supports credit transfer, Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL), and curriculum alignment.
- Developed in consultation with industry, training institutions and policymakers.
- Positioned for future expansion across the EAC and Africa.
- Ease of referencing of national qualifications frameworks between the three countries through the RTQF-EKT.

Through EASTRIP, Ethiopia, Kenya and Tanzania have collaboratively established 16 Regional Flagship TVET Institutes (RFTIs), which are TVET Centres of Excellence. They are in the key growth sectors of the economy; textiles and garments, leather, agro-processing, aviation, marine engineering, highways technology, building and construction, renewable energy and ICT.

es eight clearly defined qualification levels, from entry-level certificates to doctoral-level qualifications, each described in terms of skills and competencies.

It embraces the concept of Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL), giving informal and non-formal sector workers and self-taught artisans a pathway to formal recognition, a shift in a region where millions learn outside traditional classrooms.

From Paper to Practice

The implementation is underway. Ministries responsible for TVET and TVET authorities in all three countries have endorsed the framework, and select Regional Flagship TVET Institutes (RFTIs) are aligning their curricula to match the new harmonised standards.

Employers were also involved in developing the Framework. Industry representatives have contributed to the development of occupational standards and assessment tools, ensuring that qualifications are not only comparable but also relevant to real-world demands.

Looking Ahead

While the initial focus is on Ethiopia, Kenya and Tanzania, the Framework is designed to be scalable and adaptable by other countries in the region, willing to subscribe to the philosophy and principles of regional integration; discussions are underway to extend the Framework to other East African Community (EAC) countries, making it a cornerstone of regional education and economic policy.

The long-term vision is alignment with the African Continental Qualifications Framework (ACQF), thereby placing East African skills and qualifications on the continental and global map.

In a region often divided by borders and bureaucracies, the RTQF-EKT is a symbol of what can be achieved through collaboration and shared vision. For the youth of East Africa, it is a passport to boundless opportunities across the region.

The authors: Godwin Bonge Muhwezi is the Project Communication Specialist for EASTRIP at IUCEA.





Tanzania Students at Kampala International University, Dar es Salaam Campus.

According to the IUCEA, one of the most immediate and empowering benefits of the EACHEA framework is the freedom of academic choice. No longer confined to institutions within their home countries, learners can now apply to universities across East Africa, without the anxiety of qualification rejection.

Beyond Borders

Embracing The Regional Mobility Power

By Manifesto Publications

When Maureen Wanjiru stepped off the bus in Dar es Salaam for the very first time, her heart raced with a blend of nervous anticipation and excitement. She was thousands of miles from her home in Kenya, yet closer than ever to a dream she had nurtured for years – the dream of becoming an agricultural engineer. At the time, studying in Tanzania presented more than just an academic opportunity, as it gave her a chance to experience the cultural and personal transformation that came with living in Tanzania.

“At that time, moving to Tanzania meant adapting to new norms, embracing a different language rhythm, and forging friendships across borders. But it also represented endless possibilities of a connected East Africa, where borders no longer limit my ambition, and education becomes a bridge to unity,” she says. Michael Mushi, a Tanzanian student now pursuing his engineering degree at Kyambogo University in Uganda, tells a parallel story. Like many young East Africans, Michael had long dreamed

The policy has a deliberately crafted framework that harmonises curricula, standardises credit transfer mechanisms, and streamlines admission procedures across all accredited universities in the East African Community. By tearing down administrative barriers, the policy empowers students to pick courses from partner institutions

of studying abroad. However, unlike those who looked to Europe or North America, he sought opportunities close to home, yet with the benefits of a broader experience. Uganda turned out to be the perfect destination.

With its relatively low tuition fees, strong academic track record, and increasingly harmonised education system through the East African Community, the country offered both quality and accessibility. For Michael, this was emotional and practical because he didn’t want to feel like a foreigner in an unfamiliar land.

“Uganda gave me that balance. It welcomed me, challenged me, and connected me to something greater than just a degree—it connected me to a regional identity,” he says. Both Maureen and Michael are part of a growing wave of East African students embracing the vision of the East African Common Higher Education Area (EACHEA), a

regional initiative aimed at harmonising education standards, facilitating credit transfers, and making cross-border education a practical and enriching reality.



Through programs that enable cross-border mobility, harmonised curricula, and support institutional collaboration, a new generation is being empowered to learn and lead the transformation of East Africa from a collection of individual nations into a truly united academic and economic bloc. With the Inter-University Council for East Africa (IUCEA), the Student Mobility Policy, the foundation of the Common Higher Education Area, is a bold blueprint for regional integration through education.

The policy has a deliberately crafted framework that harmonises curricula, standardises credit transfer mechanisms, and streamlines admission procedures across all accredited universities in the East African Community. By tearing down administrative barriers, the policy empowers students to pick courses from partner institutions, pursue joint degree programs, or ideally spend entire semesters abroad, without losing progress toward their home campus degrees.

Alice Nansubuga, a Ugandan student pursuing her studies at Kenyatta University in Nairobi, is another living proof of the life-changing potential of the East African Common Higher Education Area (EACHEA). She describes the regional education framework as a gateway to personal and academic transformation. According to Nansubuga, studying in Kenya has completely reshaped her perspective and approach to learning, given the dynamic and engaging academic environment at the university.

"Here, there is a strong focus on open dialogue, research-based assignments, and campus innovation hubs, and I have been pushed out of my comfort zone. The environment here has encouraged me to think more critically and creatively," she observed. Yet for Alice, the most profound lessons have been outside the classroom. Immersing herself in a different East African culture has deepened her understanding of diversity and adaptability.

Living in Nairobi, for instance, has taught her cultural flexibility in ways she never expected. "From how people interact, to their sense of time, and even how they communicate, Kenya is different from Uganda," she explains, adding that in Uganda, interactions with elders or lecturers tend to be more reserved and formal. This cultural contrast has expanded her worldview and equipped her with the soft skills

to thrive in an increasingly interconnected region. But perhaps most striking was the cultural mix she found on campus, with the Luo, Kikuyu, Kamba, Luhya, Gusi and other tribes, as well as an array of cultures from other regional countries. Through exposure to different belief systems, social norms and academic cultures, Nansubuga says she has become more adaptable, empathetic and open-minded. According to the IUCEA, one of the most immediate and empowering benefits of the EACHEA framework is the freedom of academic choice. No longer confined to institutions within their home countries, learners can now apply to universities across East Africa, without the anxiety of qualification rejection.

The harmonised system ensures that academic credits and credentials are recognised across borders, allowing students to focus on pursuing their passions and building their futures, rather than navigating red tape. In addition, access to well-funded research centres, laboratories and innovation hubs across the region enhances students' academic experience, equipping them with the tools to engage in impactful research and innovation that addresses real-world regional challenges—from climate change to food security, to public health. Despite the harmonisation efforts, bureaucracy remains a persistent obstacle. Students often report delays in processing academic transcripts, verifying qualifications, or receiving student passes and visas.

"The application process itself is usually straightforward, but obtaining the student visa can take a significant amount of time. There is no clear information, and you have to make several trips to immigration before your issues are resolved," Mushi alleges.

He notes that the administrative hiccups can delay enrolment, increase stress, and discourage prospective students from pursuing opportunities across borders. In addition, he notes that although credit accumulation and transfer are central to EACHEA, not all institutions have adopted or digitised these systems fully. As a result, some students experience uncertainty or inconsistency when transferring credits between universities in different countries.



South Sudanese student in Uganda, Ajah Tabitha Chol Manyiel, one of the graduates at KIU's 29th graduation ceremony, says that KIU has greatly changed her life.





Prof Mike Kuria - the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Kenya's Commission for University Education.

Universities in East Africa should view IUCEA as their institution, join in large numbers, set specific targets for the region, and work together to achieve those targets. Through IUCEA, universities in East Africa can advocate for a stronger role and a respected voice in the global academic arena.

The East African Community Academic Integration

The East Africa region's journey in harmonising higher education quality assurance is deeply rooted in shared academic history and growing regional ambition. Reflecting on his time at IUCEA, Prof Mike Kuria notes that East African higher education institutions have evolved from a common academic foundation to a coordinated framework of quality standards that now underpins regional collaboration.

Prof Kuria, the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Kenya's Commission for University Education (CUE), is a former Deputy Executive Secretary of the Inter-

University Council for East Africa (IUCEA). He points to the foundational role of Makerere University, University of Nairobi and University of Dar es Salaam in offering regionally shared specialisations in the 1970s, as a historical precursor to today's harmonisation drive.

With support from partners like DAAD, IUCEA has developed the region's key tools; quality assurance handbooks ("Roadmap to Quality"), subject benchmarks in various fields, and the East African Higher Education Qualifications Framework.



While the uptake of these tools varies across institutions, Kuria is confident that the region has made significant progress over the past decade.

Quality Assurance Standards Harmonisation

The harmonisation of higher education in the East African Community began with the establishment of higher education in the region. For a good reason, Makerere University started as the University of East Africa, a constituent college of the University of London.

After 1970, Makerere University, the Universities of Dar es Salaam and Nairobi were established with the idea that each would specialise but serve the whole region; Medicine at Makerere, Engineering at Nairobi University and Law at the University of Dar es Salaam.

Graduates would be drawn from the entire region, and all would graduate first and foremost before considering their specialisations. University education was harmonised to serve the entire region, and it has since grown tremendously.

In Kenya, the number of universities has grown from one in 1970 to 80 in 2025, and enrolment from about 3,000 to the current 650,000 students, a trend replicated in all the partner states. The community itself has grown from the original three to eight member states.

The growth has inevitably led to the need for a more coordinated harmonisation process, similar to Europe's identification of a similar need in the Bologna Process. With the German Academic Exchange Service, the Inter-University Council for East Africa (IUCEA) has spearheaded this harmonisation process since late 2015, making tremendous progress.

The quality assurance handbooks, the Road Map to Quality, the subject benchmarks in diverse fields such as education, engineering, medicine, business studies, and computer science, and standards and guidelines, like the Standards and Guidelines for Postgraduate Studies, have been developed.

An East African Higher Education Qualifications Framework is now in place. Capacity building has targeted quality assurance directors, peer reviewers, vice-chancellors, deans and academic department heads. East Africa has made significant gains in the

Through research, we shall quantify the impact of these harmonisation processes and the effect of investment in quality, which is not instantaneous.

There is a need for continuous tracking and documentation, into which IUCEA has put significant efforts.

last decade, although gains must be scaled.

Through research, we shall quantify the impact of these harmonisation processes and the effect of investment in quality, which is not instantaneous. There is a need for continuous tracking and documentation, into which IUCEA has put significant efforts.

Regional Quality Assurance Framework

It was indeed an honour and privilege to be part of a great team. The late Prof Mayunga Nkunya and the late Dr. Rispa Odongo deserve special mention here; they left us too early before they could see the fruits of their labour.

There was hardly any institution, except the University of Dar-es-Salaam, at the outset of the East African region's higher education quality assurance, which had a functional quality assurance directorate.

Now you are hard-pressed to find a university without such an office, regardless of its designation, as a directorate, a department, a centre or a unit.

Quality assurance has become mainstreamed in most universities due to this EAC regional initiative.

In Kenya, the quality assurance handbook has been incorporated into the national standards and guidelines, and university regulations. However, continuous improvement is at the heart of quality assurance. Quality is the destination we aim at, but never quite arrive at because the goal posts keep shifting. Change is the only constant.

Quality assurance professionalisation in higher education is needed to the extent that it becomes a career path, like people pursue medicine, engineering, agriculture, literature, etc. In most universities, quality assurance is an office, such as that of a dean, except that no special qualifications in the field of quality assurance are required of the holders.

It should be a field of specialisation, and one of the competencies the office holders should have is the capacity to work with big data; excellent people skills, including written and verbal; and versatility.

There should be an effort in each university to raise the profile of the quality assurance offices and to entrench strong internal quality assurance practices.

Best Practices

I have been involved in assuring higher education quality at multiple levels. At the institutional level, the quality assurance director at Daystar University; at the regional level, the Deputy Executive Secretary at IUCEA; and now the CEO of the Commission for University Education at the national level.

The most critical best practice is a demonstrated commitment to quality at the institutional level, which is only achievable through collective ownership at each institution. The most effective way to achieve sustainable quality assurance practices is through investment in building a strong internal quality assurance system.

Regulation and accreditation are only good in the service of collective ownership and commitment, enforcing collective values. The cogs in the wheel of that system could vary from institution to institution and include the senate, school and departmental

boards and curriculum development committees, which must be strong, independent and appropriately staffed with the requisite competencies.

The East African Quality Assurance Network

EAQAN was founded to provide a forum where quality assurance practitioners could network, share ideas, benchmark, learn from international best practices and contribute to building a strong and resilient East African Higher Education System. Conscious that we were all new to the field, we desired to learn from each other.

EAQAN has grown from a regional outfit to a national network in each of the EAC partner states, and its future is great. It needs to revamp its resource mobilisation, strengthen its secretariat and actively build a strong, accessible database of professionals that the various national higher education councils and commissions can draw from.



Delegates to the National Sensitization Forum on the EAC Common Higher Education Area in Nairobi, Kenya, March 19, 2025.

Uganda

Joined the EAC in 2000*

Population: 42.86 million (2017)

Number of Tertiary Students: 165,396 (2014)

GDP Per Capita: USD\$604 (2017)

Rwanda

Joined the EAC in 2007

Population: 12.2 million (2017)

Number of Tertiary Students: 80,773 (2016)

GDP Per Capita: USD\$748.4 (2017)

Burundi

Joined the EAC in 2007

Population: 10.86 million (2017)

Number of Tertiary Students: 61,724 (2017)

GDP Per Capita: USD\$320 (2017)

Democratic Republic of the Congo

Joined the EAC in on July 11, 2022

South Sudan

Joined the EAC in 2016

Population: 12.6 million (2017)

Number of Tertiary Students: No Data Available

GDP Per Capita: USD\$237.4 (2016)

Kenya

Joined the EAC in 2000*

Population: 49.7 million (2017)

Number of Tertiary Students: 539,749 (2016)

GDP Per Capita: USD\$1,507 (2017)

Tanzania

Joined the EAC in 2000*

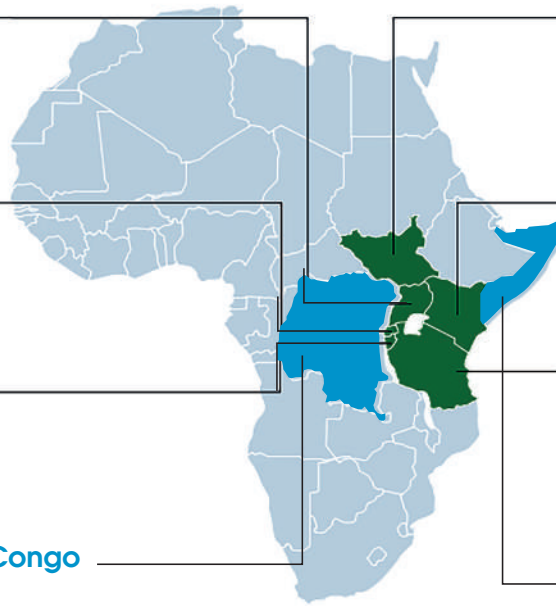
Population: 57.3 million (2017)

Number of Tertiary Students: 178,598 (2016)

GDP Per Capita: USD\$936.3 (2017)

Democratic Republic of Somalia

Joined the EAC on November 24, 2023



It also needs to source experts in various fields, peer reviewers, curriculum developers, pedagogy experts and a continuous capacity-building function for the region.

IUCEA and National Commissions Collaboration

The national higher education commissions and councils do not have a choice but to work closely with IUCEA and with each other to realise a strong East African Common Higher Education Area.

Whereas IUCEA lacks the power to enforce standards, the national commissions and councils can translate regional standards into national regulatory frameworks.

IUCEA can help the commissions “watu wamkono” to envision the kind of ideal regional higher education system; it can incentivise commissions to implement and translate dreams into reality.

A dream I had when I was the IUCEA Deputy Executive Secretary was to set up a Centre for Capacity Building in Teaching and Learning, Research and Innovation at IUCEA, a regional thinking space for generating great ideas to address challenges; past, present, emerging or future ones.

The ideas would be operationalised in various EAC partner states through collaborative efforts.

The IUCEA has supported the establishment of a committee of the CEOs of the national commissions and councils of the EAC partner states, signalling optimism of imminent greater collaboration.





Prof. François Havyarimana
Minister for National Education and
Scientific Research speaks at the opening of
the school year 2024-2025

Burundi's NCHE

Quality Assurance, Regional Integration Commitment in Higher Education

By Busein Samilu

As the East African Community (EAC) strengthens its integration agenda, higher education is a critical pillar in building a knowledge-based regional economy. The standards harmonisation drive ensures quality and

promotes academic mobility across member states at the heart of this transformation. In this context, the National Commission for Higher Education (NCHE) of Burundi, also referred to as the Commission Nationale de l'Enseignement Supérieur (CNES), plays a key role in shaping policies that enhance institutional capacity



and align national reforms with regional frameworks. The Permanent Executive Secretary / NCHE-Burundi, Prof. Leonidas Ndayizeye, shares Burundi's achievements, contributions and vision within the regional higher education landscape, in close collaboration with the Inter-University Council for East Africa (IUCEA).

Higher Education Quality Assurance Strengthening

The National Commission for Higher Education (NCHE) of Burundi is essential for ensuring and enhancing the quality of higher education in the country. As the central regulatory authority, NCHE/CNES is responsible for accrediting institutions and academic programs, conducting regular evaluations, and ensuring that national and regional standards are met. These evaluations align with benchmarks set by the Inter-University Council for East Africa (IUCEA) and the East African Community (EAC). This is evidenced by the third EAC-led re-inspection of medical faculties in Burundian universities, during which all institutions scored above 80%, reflecting the effectiveness of ongoing quality assurance efforts.

Beyond its quality assurance mandate, NCHE/CNES is also tasked with developing and enforcing higher education policy frameworks.

As the central regulatory authority, NCHE/CNES is responsible for accrediting institutions and academic programs, conducting regular evaluations, and ensuring that national and regional standards are met. These evaluations align with benchmarks set by the Inter-University Council for East Africa (IUCEA) and the East African Community (EAC).

One of its key instruments is the National Qualification and Certification Framework (NQCF) (Cadre National de Qualification et de Certification (CNQC), which is harmonised with the East African Qualifications Framework for Higher Education (EAQFHE). NCHE/CNES also supports universities in strengthening internal quality mechanisms, staff qualifications and curriculum development processes, ensuring a consistent and forward-looking approach to academic excellence.

Regional Harmonisation

Burundi has demonstrated a strong commitment to the goals of regional harmonisation and academic integration as envisioned under the EAC framework. One of the most notable steps is the adoption of the Bachelor-Master-Doctorate (BMD) system, aligning the national higher education structure with regional academic standards. NCHE/CNES participates in IUCEA-led initiatives and regional forums, including the recent Nairobi meeting on data harmonisation, contributing to the

shaping of shared quality assurance tools and policy frameworks.

Burundi has also contributed to the operationalisation of the East African Common Higher Education Area (EA-CHEA), proclaimed in 2017, and supports initiatives for mutual recognition of academic qualifications and credit transfers.

Burundi offers study-abroad opportunities for international students, especially in the fields of agriculture, health and education.



These efforts reflect Burundians' ongoing engagement in the construction of a truly unified higher education space in East Africa.

NCHE / CNES Achievements

Several transformative reforms have been carried out under the leadership of the Ministry of National Education and Scientific Research, through the National Commission for Higher Education (CNES). Foremost among them is the very establishment of the Commission, which centralised and streamlined higher education regulation in Burundi. In parallel, a comprehensive reform of health-related training programs is underway, aiming to align curricula with both regional and global standards. This process has received technical and financial support from strategic partners including UNFPA, WHO and UNESCO.

Another significant milestone was achieved with the 2020 revision of Burundi's national higher education law, which formally integrated principles of regional cooperation and the National Qualification and Certification Framework (CNQC). The new legal framework also strengthened institutional autonomy, clarified the governance of public and private institutions, and promoted greater professionalisation through modular training formats and enhanced internship schemes. CNES has further ensured the inclusion of students with disabilities, reflecting a strong commitment to equity and access in higher education.

Cross-Border Mobility, Opportunities, Challenges

The growing integration of East Africa's higher education systems has opened new opportunities for academic mobility. Thanks to frameworks like the EAQFHE, it is now easier for students and staff to transfer across institutions within the EAC. Burundi welcomes students from neighbouring countries, notably the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and is actively involved in IUCEA mobility programs and scholarship schemes.

There is steady progress in aligning language and curriculum standards to support smoother



Prof. Leonidas Ndayizeye.
Permanent Executive Secretary
NCHE - Burundi,

integration. However, limited infrastructure and funding in certain institutions restrict their ability to accommodate large numbers of mobile students and academic staff. Language differences, particularly between French-speaking and English-speaking countries, continue to pose barriers to academic integration.

Moreover, disparities in tuition policies and difficulties in recognising qualifications across borders hinder the full realisation of seamless academic mobility in the region.

Enhanced Regional Collaboration

To accelerate academic integration and improve student outcomes across East Africa, NHCE/CNES offers several recommendations.

It calls for capacity-building initiatives to be expanded to train quality assurance officers and institutional leaders. The development of digital platforms for transcript validation and qualification recognition should be fast-tracked to facilitate cross-border verification. Further, joint research initiatives with co-funding from EAC partner states should be promoted, together with creating regional innovation hubs. There is also a need to enhance the regional data infrastructure for tracking academic statistics and student mobility, a task already underway. Finally, harmonised tuition policies and inclusive mobility frameworks would go a long way in ensuring equity and effectiveness in regional academic collaboration.

Further Contributions

As part of this inaugural IUCEA magazine edition, NCHE/CNES is proud to share several milestones. These include the foundation of NCHE/CNES, the national adoption of the BMD system, and the articulation of a national strategy for higher education development. In terms of internationalisation, Burundi's universities are open to admitting students from the broader EAC region and beyond. CNES recognises and celebrates the achievements of students and faculty who contribute to academic excellence and innovation.

Lastly, the Commission supports community engagement initiatives that extend the impact of higher education to underserved and rural areas.



Meeting Quality Standards

The Bujumbura International University



Bujumbura International University is a private university institution with bilingual teaching (French and English) which was approved by order number 610/136 of February 3, 2014 of the Minister having higher registration and scientific research in his attributions.

BIU also collaborates with various universities and major international schools to offer training courses meeting the highest quality standards.

BIU was established to fill the gap in high-quality training that meets international standards in the fields of commerce,

BIU was established to fill the gap in high-quality training that meets international standards in the fields of commerce, business management, as well as science and technology to serve the national, regional and international job market.

business management, as well as science and technology to serve the national, regional and international job market. Internationally renowned foreign universities and national partners are working with BIU to ensure the success of this diverse training in the field of commerce and management.

Programs offered:

Business Administration and Management
A bachelor's degree in "Business



Administration and Management" with the possibility of following one of the following three options in the 3rd year:

- Management of Non-Governmental Organizations and Sustainable Development;
- Regional Integration and International Trade;
- Procurement and Supply Chain Management.

Science and Technology

A Bachelor's degree in "Science and Technology" with the possibility of following one of the following two options in the 2nd year:

- Software Engineering;
- Networks and Telecommunications.

Master's Program

Evening programs with the possibility, under certain conditions, of following courses by videoconference.

A master's degree specializing in:

- Market Finance and Monetary Policy;
- International Integration, Trade and Investment;
- Financial Management, Accounting and Auditing;
- Logistics and Supply;
- Marketing and Digital Communication;
- Project Development, Management and Evaluation.

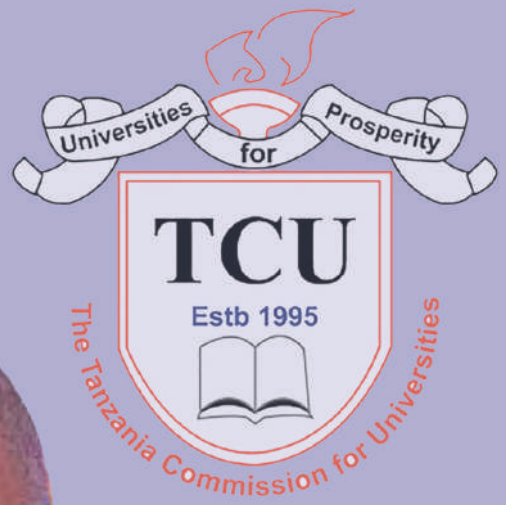
Thanks to its extensive partnership network with large local companies and institutions and certain organizations of the United Nations system accredited in Burundi, BIU guarantees exceptional professional integration.

In addition, its collaborations with foreign universities such as the University of Tours in France, Northern Arizona University and Northeastern Illinois University in the United States and other countries, open the doors to a promising future.



Amb. Dr. Libérat Mfumukeko
President of Bujumbura -
International University





Prof. Charles D. Kihampa
TCU Executive Secretary



Tanzania Commission For Universities

A system of higher education was first introduced in Tanzania in 1961 with the establishment of the University College Dar es Salaam (UCD) as an affiliate of the University of London. In 1963, the University of East Africa was established as a regional university for three East African countries: Tanzania, Uganda and Kenya, with the University College of Dar es Salaam, Makerere University College in Uganda, and Nairobi University College in Kenya as its constituent colleges.

In 1970, the University College of Dar es Salaam was transformed into the present-day University of Dar es Salaam (UDSM) following the decision by the three East African countries to establish national universities in each country, leading to the dissolution of the University of East Africa.

Beginning in the late 1980s and continuing through the mid-1990s, Tanzania liberalised its political and socio-economic policies. These reforms led to an increased demand for social services, including higher education. Since then, higher education has experienced exponential growth, including the establishment of private universities.

However, the proliferation of higher education institutions was seen as a potential threat to both the quality of the institutions being established and the education provided. In response, the government deemed it necessary to establish a University Regulatory Framework to ensure that this rapid expansion did not compromise the quality of education. Consequently,

in 1995, the Higher Education Accreditation Council (HEAC) was established by the Education Act, Cap. 523 of 1995, to regulate the establishment and accreditation of private university institutions in the country.

The fact that HEAC's mandates were limited to private universities was considered unfavourable for the promotion of a viable public-private partnership in higher education, as stipulated in the National Higher Education Policy of 1999.

Additionally, the need for a harmonised higher education system in the country, since quality issues apply to both public and private universities, led to

TCU is mandated to regulate the establishment, registration and quality assurance of both public and private university institutions in Tanzania. The mandates and core functions of TCU are outlined in Section 5(1) of the Universities Act, Cap. 346 of the Laws of Tanzania. The functions are categorised into three main areas: regulatory, advisory, and supportive.

the establishment of the Tanzania Commission for Universities (TCU) in 2005 through the enactment of the Universities Act, Cap. 346 of the Laws of Tanzania.

TCU is mandated to regulate the establishment, registration and quality assurance of both public and private university institutions in Tanzania.

The mandates and core functions of TCU are outlined in Section 5(1) of the Universities Act, Cap. 346 of the Laws of Tanzania. The functions are categorised into three main areas: regulatory, advisory and supportive.

1) Regulatory Function:

- i) Registration and accreditation of universities to operate in Tanzania;
- ii) Periodic evaluation of universities, their systems and programmes;
- iii) Validation and accreditation of programmes to ensure their credibility; and
- iv) Recognition of university qualifications attained from local and foreign institutions for use in Tanzania.

2) Advisory Function:

Advise the government and general public on:

- i) Higher education issues within and outside Tanzania;
- ii) International issues pertaining to higher education; and
- iii) Programme and policy formulation and also best practices.

3) Supportive Function:

- i) Ensure the orderly conduct of university operations by enforcing adherence to established standards and benchmarks;
- ii) Coordinate admission of students; and
- iii) Coordinate training and sensitisation in key areas such as:
 - a) Quality assurance;
 - b) University leadership and management;
 - c) Fund raising and resource mobilisation;
 - d) Entrepreneurship skills; and
 - e) Gender mainstreaming.



Legal Framework:

There are two major legal instruments that grant the Commission legal mandate and powers to execute its functions.

- i) The Universities Act, Cap. 346 of the Laws of Tanzania; and
- ii) The Universities (General) Regulations, G.N. 226 of 2013.

Policy Framework:

- i) Major policy directives on higher education are informed by the Education and Training Policy 2014 (2023 Edition); and
- ii) Policy guidelines issued to universities and the general public by the Commission from time to time on all matters related to the provision of higher education in Tanzania.

NOTABLE ACHIEVEMENTS

Over the years, TCU has achieved notable milestones that have contributed to the development of the higher education sub-sector in the country.

These achievements include:

- (i) Advancement of quality assurance practices in university institutions in Tanzania.
- (ii) Increased access to university education through the growth in the number of university institutions, from one (1) in 1961 to 50 to date.

Distribution of university institutions in Tanzania by ownership

Category of university institution	Ownership		Total
	Public	Private	
Full-fledged universities	12	21	33
University Colleges	7	10	17
Total	19	31	50

- (iii) Registration of Overseas Student Recruitment Agencies.
- (iv) Development of online systems for TCU operations, such as:
 - a) Universities Information Management System (UIMS);
 - b) Programme Management System (PMS);
 - c) Foreign Awards Assessment System (FAAS); and
 - d) No Objection Certificate System (NOCS).
- (v) Development of programme benchmarks, such as:
 - a) Benchmarks for the Doctor of Medicine (MD)/ Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery

- (MBBS/MBChB) Programme;
- b) Benchmarks for Bachelor of Science in Nursing Programme;
- c) Benchmarks for Bachelor Degree Programmes in Engineering;
- d) Benchmarks for Bachelor Degree Programmes in Information and Communication Technology; and
- e) Benchmarks for Bachelor Degree Programmes in Tourism and Hospitality.

(vi) Development of quality assurance tools, such as:

- a) Procedures for Admission of Applicants Holding Foreign Qualifications into Academic Programmes in Universities in Tanzania, 2024.
- b) Training Programme for Preparing University Leaders in Tanzania, 2023.
- c) Guidelines for Conducting Tracer Studies by University Institutions in Tanzania, 2023.
- d) Standards and Guidelines for Postgraduate Studies, Research and Innovation, 2023.
- e) Guidelines for Online and Blended Delivery Modes of Courses for University Institutions in Tanzania, 2022.
- f) Standards and Guidelines for Academic and Technical Staff Disposition in Universities Offering Health Profession Programmes in Tanzania, 2020.
- g) Handbook for Standards and Guidelines for University Education in Tanzania, 2019.
- h) Principles and Guidelines for Licensing Overseas Students Recruitment Agencies and Issuance of a No-Objection Certificate, 2019.
- i) Principles and Guidelines for Evaluation of Foreign Awards and Recognition of Qualifications, 2019.
- j) Evaluation of Foreign Awards and Recognition of Qualifications: Appeal Procedures, 2020.
- k) University Qualifications Framework, 2012.
- l) Practical Training Framework, 2012.

(vii) Enhanced capacity-building training and support, such as:

- a) Training workshops on university leadership and management;
- b) Pedagogy trainings;
- c) Development of market-driven curriculum;
- d) Workshops on admission matters;
- e) Development of admission and data management systems;
- f) Peer reviewers' workshops;
- g) Development of programme benchmarks;
- h) Consultative workshops with Professional Registration Bodies; and
- i) Public awareness programmes.

- (viii) Strengthened collaborations with regional and international agencies and networks, such as:
- a) Inter-University Council for East Africa (IUCEA);
 - b) Association of African Universities (AAU);
 - c) Association of Commonwealth Universities
 - d) South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA);
 - e) East African Quality Assurance Network (EAQAN);
 - f) African Quality Assurance Network (AfriQAN);
 - g) International Vocational Education and Training Association (IVETA);
 - h) Commission for University Education (CUE – Kenya);
 - i) National Council for Higher Education (NCHE – Uganda);
 - j) Higher Education Council (HEC – Rwanda);
 - k) Commission for Higher Education (CHE – South Africa);
 - l) National Council for Higher Education (NCHE – Malawi); and
 - m) Higher Education Commission (HEC – Mauritius).
- (ix) Strengthened collaborations with national professional and registration bodies, such as:
- a) Medical Radiology and Imaging Practitioners Council (MRIPC);
 - b) Traditional and Alternative Health Practitioners Council (TAHPC);
 - c) Veterinary Council of Tanzania (VCT);
 - d) Information and Communication Technologies Commission (ICTC);
 - e) Council for Legal Education (CLE);
 - f) Engineers Registration Board (ERB);
 - g) Medical Council of Tanganyika (MCT);
 - h) Health Laboratory Practitioners Council (HLPC);
 - i) Architect and Quality Surveyors Registration Board (AQRB);
 - j) Tanzania Nursing and Midwifery Council (TNMC);
 - k) Environmental Health Practitioners Registration Council (EHPRC);
 - l) Pharmacy Council;
 - m) Optometry Council;
 - n) National Council for Technical and Vocational Education and Training (NACTVET);
 - o) National Examinations Council of Tanzania (NECTA);
 - p) Higher Education Students' Loans Board (HESLB); and
 - q) Zanzibar Higher Education Loans Board (ZHELB).
- (x) Hosted, chaired, and participated in various international committees, conferences, and exhibitions, including:
- a) Harmonisation, Quality Assurance and Accreditation in Africa (HAQAA);
 - b) African Quality Assurance Network (AfriQAN);
 - c) SADC Technical Committee of Certification and Accreditation (TCCA);
 - d) African Continental Qualifications Framework (ACQF);
 - e) IUCEA Conferences;
 - f) IUCEA Quality Assurance Committee;
 - g) IUCEA Common Higher Education Committee;
 - h) Higher Education Forum; and
 - i) Higher Education, Science and Technology Exhibitions.
- (xi) Major projects implemented include:
- a) Tanzania Internationalisation Strategies for Higher Education (TANZIE) Project;
 - b) Higher Education for Economic Transformation (HEET) Project;
 - c) Education and Skills for Productive Jobs Programme (ESPJ) Project; and
 - d) Carnegie Project on Human Resource Capacity Building for Institutional Management in Tanzanian Universities.

TCU extends its profound gratitude to stakeholders and development partners for their incredible cooperation and support. We acknowledge and greatly value your invaluable contributions to TCU's success. We remain grateful for your patience during times of unforeseen challenges.

TCU is committed to fostering continued collaboration in the coming years.

FUTURE OUTLOOK

TCU's agenda is to continue supporting the systematic growth and excellence of university education in Tanzania by advocating for improvements and addressing the challenges that adversely affect university education.

Our aim is to enhance accessible, equitable, harmonised and quality university education systems that produce a competitive human resource base for national development. However, the goal of promoting accessible, equitable, harmonised and quality university education systems that produce nationally and globally competitive outputs should also be the responsibility of every university in the country.



The Zanzibar University

The Zanzibar University, the first university on the Isles, is a private institution sponsored by Darul Iman Charitable Association (DICA). The main campus is situated at Tunguu area, in the Central District, some 19 kilometers from Zanzibar Town.

The University campus, with a total area of 69 hectares of land, is located among pleasant and quiet countryside surroundings overlooking vast expanses of deep blue waters of the Indian Ocean. It is an ideal place for serious academic work and research. Public transport from Zanzibar Town will bring you to the University campus gates. Private cars are also common.

Ownership and Accreditation

The Zanzibar University was founded and is owned and governed by Darul Iman Charitable Association. It was established

on the basis of the following:

The Constitution of Darul Iman registered under the Society's Act No. 6, 1995 given at Zanzibar on 2nd August, 1996. A letter of Interim Authority issued by the then Higher Education Accreditation Council bearing Ref. No. HEAC/SU of 1st May, 1998. The Certificate of Provisional Registration No. 007 of 22nd December, 1999.

The Certificate of Full Registration No. 003 of 4th May, 2000; The provisions of the Universities Act, 2005; and The Zanzibar University Charter, 2010 issued on 24th March, 2010 by the President of the United Republic of Tanzania, H.E. Dr. Jakaya Mrisho Kikwete.

Mission

The mission of the University is to educate broadly and liberally men and women without discrimination of race,

The University campus, with a total area of 69 hectares of land, is located among pleasant and quiet countryside surroundings overlooking vast expanses of deep blue waters of the Indian Ocean. It is an ideal place for serious academic work and research. Public transport from Zanzibar Town will bring you to the University campus gates.



22nd Graduation ceremony at the Zanzibar University - December 2024





Zanzibar University Chancellor, Sheikh Dr. Abdulqader Othman Hafiz hands the award of the Doctor of Economics, Honoris Causa to H.E Dr. Hussein Ali Mwinyi, the President and Chairman of the Revolutionary Council at the Graduation Ceremony - December 2024

religion or physical disability, so as to reduce the severe inadequacy of qualified professionals and practitioners, improve the quality of education with the ultimate aim of up-lifting the quality of life of Tanzanians in particular, and that of other people at large.

Vision

The vision of the Zanzibar University is to become a centre of excellence for the acquisition and dissemination of knowledge through teaching, research and consultancy with the view of providing expertise to the appropriate wider markets within Tanzania and beyond by the year 2025.

Establishment of Academic Faculties

1. The proliferation of business enterprises, hotels, beach resorts, and the gradual expansion of the tourism industry in the country, had convinced the development partners to begin first with a Faculty of Business Administration in 1998, with the view to satisfy the immediate needs of the business community. Five more faculties have been established as per the market demand for other professions.
2. In 1999, the Faculty of Law and Shariah was established.
3. In 2002, the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences was also established. Within seven or so years that followed, however, more but quite modern structures with larger classrooms were erected to

4. accommodate bigger students intakes.
4. During 2012/2013, the Faculty of Engineering was established.
5. During 2013/2014, the Faculty of Health and Allied Sciences was established on the University campus.
6. During 2015/2016, the Faculty of Science was established.
7. During 2008/2009, the Institute of Continuing Education was established
8. During 2008/2009, the Institute of Postgraduate Studies and Research was established.
9. During 2016/2017, the Institute of Islamic Banking and Finance was established.

Membership

Zanzibar University is a full member of the following institutions:

1. The Inter-University Council for East Africa (IUCEA)
2. The Association of Commonwealth Universities (ACU)
3. The Association of African Universities (AAU)
4. Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals – Tanzania (CVCP-T)
5. Tanzania Association of Private Universities (TAPU)
6. Tanzania Education Research Network (TERNET)
7. Tanzania Universities Sports Association (TUSA)
8. Tanzania Counselling and Guidance Association (TACOGA)



DR Congo's ANAQ-ESU

Consolidating East Africa's Higher Education Quality Assurance

By Busein Samilu

The East African Community (EAC) is at a crossroads in higher education, given a growing desire to build a coherent, competitive regional academic space adapted to contemporary challenges.

Prof. Emeritus Constant Nkiama Ekisawa is the Executive Secretary of the National Agency for Quality Assurance of Higher and University Education (ANAQ-ESU) in the DR Congo. He says the integration of his country into the EAC was significant in harmonising education systems and strengthening academic synergies.

The ANAQ-ESU specifically aligns with the East African Qualifications Framework for Higher Education (EAQFHE), the mechanisms for the recognition of prior learning, and the structuring of a common quality space based on the convergence of standards.

"The DRC has also initiated bilateral cooperation programs with certain Regional Quality Assurance Agencies, to embrace best practices and adapt its tools to regional realities, key reforms and recent successes," he says.

ANAQ-ESU is responsible for ensuring and improving the quality of higher education in the DRC. It conducts evaluations and accreditations of higher education institutions and programs, ensuring that institutions and



Prof. Emeritus Constant Nkiama Ekisawa,
Executive Secretary of the National Agency for Quality Assurance of Higher and University Education (ANAQ-ESU) in DRC.

programs meet established quality standards and guidelines.

It advises the government on higher education policy matters related to quality assurance, and works to foster a culture of quality within the higher education sector in the DRC.

ANAQ-ESU is among the national agencies with which the Inter-University Council for East Africa (IUCEA) is collaborating to foster quality assurance in higher education and enhance the quality of higher education in the East African region.

Prof. Nkiama Ekisawa says the DRC, with its demographic strength and linguistic and cultural wealth, intends to make a significant contribution to this dynamic through its ANAQ-ESU. This contribution is part of a

process of structural transformation of Congolese higher education, focused on quality, innovation and regional roots.

ANAQ-ESU in Quality Assurance, University Standards

According to Prof. Nkiama Ekisawa, the DRC's ANAQ-ESU is responsible for defining public policies, strategic planning for the sector, and quality control of higher education institutions.





ANAQ-ESU

AGENCE NATIONALE D'ASSURANCE QUALITE DE L'ENSEIGNEMENT SUPERIEUR ET UNIVERSITAIRE

"To operationalise this mission, ANAQ-ESU relies on its tool, which is central in the evaluation of institutions and programs, as well as supporting universities and developing a culture of continuous self-evaluation," he says.

ANAQ-ESU has established a national framework based on international standards. This structure aims to ensure transparency, fairness and continuous improvement in all DRC universities, whether public or private.

Another role of ANAQ-ESU is its contribution to regional harmonisation within the framework of the EAC. As a new EAC member state, the DRC is actively participating in the effort to harmonise higher education systems. The goal is to achieve mutual recognition of qualifications and seamless mobility of students and faculty between member countries.

Key Reforms

Several major reforms have been undertaken, including but not limited to: institutionalisation of quality assurance with a clear regulatory framework, defined procedures and qualified staff.

Internal Quality Assurance Units (CIAQ) have been developed in universities, with the support of ANAQ-ESU, and national awareness campaigns on quality culture have been organised.

These actions have helped to improve training provision, strengthen institutional governance, and improve the international perception of the Congolese system.

ANAQ-ESU is responsible for ensuring and improving the quality of higher education in the DR Congo. It conducts evaluations and accreditations of higher education institutions and programs, ensuring that institutions and programs meet established quality standards and guidelines. It advises the government on higher education policy matters related to quality assurance and works to foster a culture of quality within the higher education sector in the DR Congo.

Cross-Border Education Opportunities, Challenges

Cross-border education is a response to the challenges of African integration. It promotes skills mobility, joint degrees, resource pooling, and regional competitiveness. The DR Congo, with its geographical location and linguistic diversity, can become a bridge between the French-speaking, English-speaking, and Portuguese-speaking blocs.

However, several challenges hinder smooth progress, including weak digital infrastructure to support hybrid learning, complexity of degree recognition systems, mismatch between educational offerings and regional market needs, and poor coordination of academic migration policies.

"To overcome these obstacles, it is necessary to create bilateral legal frameworks for university cooperation, encourage co-accredited regional programs, strengthen cross-border quality monitoring mechanisms, and establish a regional academic mobility fund," Prof Nkiama Ekisawa notes.

Enhanced Cooperation Through IUCEA

The Inter-University Council for East Africa (IUCEA) is a strategic lever for stimulating academic integration and improving student outcomes at the regional level.

To strengthen its impact, it would be prudent to establish a regional platform for sharing quality data, accessible to Agencies and Institutions, and joint quality audits between member countries to promote transparency and convergence.





Université de Kindu

Travail - Service - Excellence



Prof. Dr. Kimenya Musailwa Deogracias
University of Kindu Rector,



University of Kindu

Students, Staff Mobility, Quality Assurance, Academic Excellence

By Busein Samilu

The University of Kindu (UNIKI), originally a Maniema University Centre of University of Lubumbashi 32 years ago, is one of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC)'s major centres of excellence.

Established in 1993, it was among the DRC's first four official universities during the expansion of higher education, universities and scientific research institutions in Zaire.

The University of Kindu received His Excellency Joseph Kabila Kabange's Presidential Ordinance No. 11/105 on 27 October 2011, becoming the DRC's fourth official university after the Universities of Kinshasa, Lubumbashi, and Kisangani.

According to its official website, the University of Kindu is a public scientific institution within the public service of Higher Education, as specified in Ordinance No. 11/105 of 27 October 2011. By its statutes, the University of Kindu, as stated on its website, contributes to fulfilling the public service missions of higher and university education for the community.

It trains design executives across various sectors of national life and organises basic scientific research aimed at solving the country's specific problems, while considering global developments in science, techniques and technology. It offers services to the community, such as the Eco-tourism Development programme run by the Faculty of Agricultural Sciences, and supports social promotion and professional integration.

"The history of higher and university education in the DRC is shifting towards a commitment to success, far from any thought of failure. Like all other institutions, we believe in this change and are convinced that we will achieve it," says Professor Dr Kimenya Musailwa Deogracias, the UNIKI Rector.

"Since we arrived at the head of this young university institution, we have set ourselves the following objectives: to truly raise the level of student training through attractive, high-quality teaching; implement sound financial, academic and administrative management; and gradually introduce a new mentality of academic culture to students," Prof Mimenya Musailwa adds.



The Rector Kindu University Prof. Dr. Kimenya Musailwa Deogracias after the 15th IUCEA Annual meeting and conference in Juba - South Sudan





Medicals students in the University of Kindu exchanging skills

Josué Muwolo serves as the IUCEA-UNIKI Focal Point, the University's Webmaster, and Digital Campus Manager. He states that the University of Kindu has broadened its programmes to include six faculties: Law; Medicine; Agronomy; Economics; Social, Political and Administrative Sciences (SSPA); and Psychology and Educational Sciences.

UNIKI has also introduced a postgraduate programme in collaboration with the University of Kisangani, thereby strengthening doctoral research.

AREAS OF EMPHASIS

Harmonisation, Quality Assurance

According to Muwolo, the UNIKI has had a Quality Assurance Unit active since 2010, with facilitators trained as part of the VLIR-UOS project.

The University participates in CREAQ seminars and applies national and regional standards for internal and external evaluation.



Université de Kindu

Travail - Service - Excellence





Graduation ceremony

Student evaluation of teachers (each teacher is evaluated digitally by students using a smartphone form) and a report is submitted to improve the quality of teaching.

In 2022, the University of Kindu was the only one in the DRC that conducted an internal self-assessment and submitted a report to the relevant ministry.

Students, Staff Mobility

The University encourages academic mobility through national and international partnerships. Faculty members are seconded to the University of Kisangani for postgraduate studies, and students participate in regional events such as the mock trial on humanitarian law in Kigali.

East African Higher Education Common Space

UNIKI is a member of the Inter-University Council for East Africa (IUCEA), facilitating its integration into the regional Common Higher Education space. The University adopts the LMD system and participates in continental academic cooperation initiatives.

Research, Innovation Highlights

The University introduced the tutored research project into the LMD system, enabling students to solve real-world problems. It collaborates with foreign universities to strengthen its research capacity.

Students, Faculty Achievements

In 2024, UNIKI graduated 693 students. It ranked 4th out of 15 French-speaking African universities in a mock trial in Kigali. It celebrated its 30th anniversary in 2024 with pride and ambition.

Community Impact Initiatives

The University develops community projects, such as the construction of a university polyclinic and the creation of the Via Nova Necropolis, a modern mixed-use cemetery for the Kindu community.

Milestones, Strategic Priorities

The University has prioritised consolidating the License-Master-Doctorate (LMD) system, digitisation of academic, financial and administrative services, strengthening bilateral and multilateral partnerships (Kindu University is partnering with UNESCO-ICHEI to promote innovation and develop the digital skills of its staff and students), creation of doctoral schools, and promotion of ICTs across all University departments.

Internationalisation

The UNIKI also collaborates with universities in Belgium, France, Great Britain, Brazil and Russia. It received a photovoltaic kit (27 kWh) and mannequins from Hasselt University for its Faculty of Medicine. Students participate in regional training courses in international law.

Admission Flexibility

The University accepts international applicants with equivalent qualifications. An entrance exam is required for candidates who have obtained less than 60%. For the Faculty of Medicine, the entrance exam is mandatory for all. Special registrations are possible under certain conditions.

The University of Kindu is positive that these elements will contribute effectively to the writing of your article. Please do not hesitate to contact us for any clarification or additional information.



ONY
PROJECT
PAIS-FUS)



H.E. Farah Sheikh Abdulkadir
Minister of Education for the Republic of Somalia



The Somali National University aims to develop research scholars who are both critical and creative thinkers, capable of contributing to knowledge creation within the global educational framework. We also strive to foster understanding of moral and ethical principles alongside a strong sense of social responsibility.

The Somali National University

The Somali National University (SNU) was established in 1954 in the Trust Territory of Somalia. It obtained the official university status in 1969. The main university campus is located six kilometres from the city centre. For the first thirty years, it was referred to as Jaamacada Gaheyra ("Gaheyra University").

In 1973, the Supreme Revolutionary Council (SRC) expanded its programs and facilities. The SNU developed over the next twenty years into an institution of higher learning, with 13 departments, 700 staff and over 15,000 students.

With investments in the most up-to-date facilities and the development of seasoned academic staff and international students, it aims to advance and foster multiculturalism. To go beyond traditional education by adopting an educational strategy that emphasises research and original thought to address the demands of the twenty-first century.

Somali National University (SNU) is the mother of higher education in Somalia, the country's only public and non-profit academic institution.

It has three campuses, of which the main campus is in the capital city of Somalia, Mogadishu, while the other two are in Abudwaq and Badhan.

Students study fundamental and specialised knowledge at universities, and also on their own learn how to use technology, interact with others, work in groups, and enhance their critical thinking and questioning abilities.



The graduation ceremony for the Women, Peace and Security program, jointly organized by the Ministry of Women and Human Rights of Somalia and the Somali National University funded by UNDP



With investments in the most up-to-date facilities and the development of seasoned academic staff and international students, it aims to advance and foster multiculturalism.

The University aims to go beyond traditional education by adopting an educational strategy that emphasises research and original thought to address the demands of the twenty-first century.

Vision

SNU aims to be a leading public university that excels in education, innovation, research, community outreach and technology transfer while developing the world's most promising students and outstanding staff to make a positive impact on society.

Mission

SNU aims to provide relevant education and research programs to develop the professionals needed to address the country's socioeconomic, political, cultural, scientific and technological demands.

The Faculty of Agriculture and Environmental Science

The Faculty of Agriculture was one of the first faculties opened when the Somali National University was founded. The rationale was to boost agricultural production, meet the food demands of the Somali population, alleviate poverty and reduce dependency on food imports and aid.

The faculty has produced professionals who have contributed significantly to the expansion of cropland area and enhanced cereal production by applying modern techniques and technologies.

The Faculty of Veterinary Medicine and Animal Husbandry

The Faculty of Veterinary Medicine and Animal Husbandry at Somali National University (SNU) is a public institution, governed by a democratically elected management body per the Somali National University Act. While it operates under the Rectorate of SNU, it is autonomous in its daily management, planning and programs based on its mandate and objectives.



Health, Justice and Education officials undergoing training of Somali State Officials PAIS - FUS project

KICK-OFF CEREMONY

PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION ITALY SOMALIA PROJECT
TRAINING OF SOMALI STATE OFFICIALS (PAIS-FUS)
HEALTH AND JUSTICE SECTOR



ON
DISHU-SOMALIA

DATE
15 JULY

Università
degli Studi
Palermo



Università
degli Studi
di Palermo

OTTOPARK



KICK-OFF CEREMONY
PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION ITALY SOMALIA PROJECT
TRAINING OF SOMALI STATE OFFICIALS (PAIS-FUS)
HEALTH AND JUSTICE SECTOR

Prof. Hassan Osman Gacal, Rector of Somali National University

During PAIS-FUS, focusing on enhancing the knowledge and skills of civil servants to deliver modern, efficient and quality health and justice services, through Somalia-Italy institutional cooperation.

The faculty was established in 1973 and reached its climax during the eighties in providing technical services to the Somali people.

The faculty has two fully fledged schools, offering Bachelor of Veterinary Medicine and Bachelor of Animal Husbandry.

We stand to advance the animal productivity and, consequently, the well-being of the Somali people through education, research and public service.

Other Undergraduate Faculties

- Faculty of Sharia and Islamic Studies
- Faculty of Economic and Management Science
- Faculty of Science

- Faculty of Languages
- Faculty of Engineering
- Faculty of Education
- Faculty of Medicine and Surgery
- Faculty of Law
- Faculty of Social Sciences

Schools and Centres

- School of Management and Public Administration
- School of Public Health and Research (SPHR)

Graduate Programs

Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research

The author, Prof. Hassan Osman Gacal, is the Rector of Somali National University.



A Profile

Dr John Garang Memorial University of Science and Technology

By Busein Samilu

The Institute of Science and Technology was nationalised and upgraded to university status, as per Order No. 3, 2008, effective 24 October 2010, when it adopted the name Dr. John Garang Memorial University of Science and Technology (DrJGMUST).

DrJGMUST is a member of the Inter-University Council for East Africa (IUCEA) and the Regional Universities FORUM for Capacity Building in Agriculture (RUFORUM). RUFORUM has a membership of 175 from 40 African countries.

The university is located in Bor Town, Jonglei State, on approximately three kilometres by 1.5 km. Jonglei State, with a population of 1.3 million according to the 2008 census, is rich in natural resources, including fertile agricultural

land, livestock such as goats and sheep, and fisheries, making it an ideal and fertile ground for the growth and expansion of the programmes.

The university began with five colleges: the College of Agriculture, the College of Education, the College of Environmental Studies, the College of Management Sciences, and the College of Science and Technology.

These initially operated from container structures built in 2008, accommodating 104 students. Since then, the university has added five further colleges: the College of Medicine and Health Sciences, the College of Veterinary Medicine, the School of Mathematics and Computer Sciences, the College of Economics and Social Sciences, and the College of Law.

It also includes a College of Postgraduate Studies and Scientific Research, an Institute for Fisheries Studies, and an Agricultural Research and Training Centre at Awecrial County in Lakes State.

Its goals are to disseminate scientific and technological knowledge through education, promote understanding, and foster full participation in various aspects of the country's economic, social, and cultural development. It aims to prepare students for diplomas, bachelor's, and postgraduate degrees in scientific and applied disciplines, and to deliver programmes leading to academic degrees.



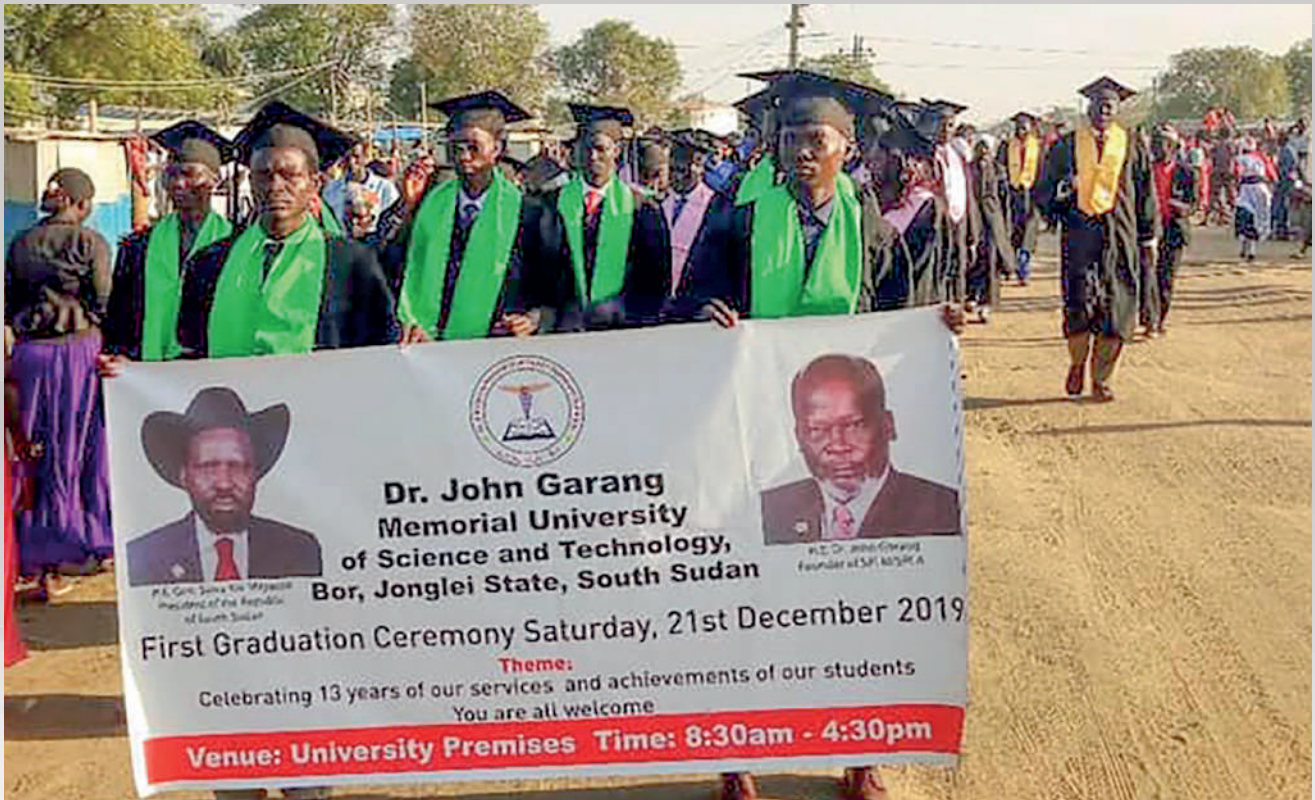
Partial view of Dr. John Garang Memorial University of Science and Technology





Prof Dr. Abraham Matoc Dhal
Vice Chancellor at the Dr. John Garang Memorial University
of Science and Technology





First graduation ceremony of John

Plans include a Child Abduction Reduction Studies Centre in Murle, a Rice Development Centre in Pagreu, Mashar Mashas in Warrap, a Forestry Development Centre in Western Equatoria, a Lake Nyibor wildlife reserve, and a Hotel and Tourist Institute.

The university also encompasses the Institute of Physical Education and Olympic Games Development, the Bor Centre for Peace, a Rice Training Centre on campus, and facilities for Environmental and Technological Development.

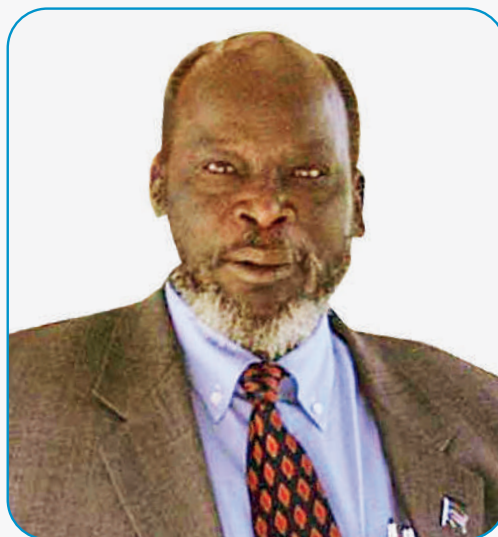
Its goals are to disseminate scientific and technological knowledge through education, promote understanding, and foster full participation in various aspects of the country's economic, social, and cultural development.

It aims to prepare students for diplomas, bachelor's, and postgraduate degrees in scientific and applied disciplines, and to deliver programmes leading to academic degrees. The university will conduct scientific and applied research

to meet societal needs and support the country's transformation.

Additionally, it plans to establish collaborative programmes and joint initiatives with government agencies and public corporations to enhance quality education in science and technology.

New Programmes include Rice Farming, Orchard and Digital Agriculture, introduced in 2023 in partnership with Habit ROCK HMEC Korea and the Korean Contingency under UNMISS in Bor town.



The university is named after Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) leader Dr. John Garang

These programmes aim to train students and engage community outreach to cope with floods, manage floodwaters, and bolster agricultural production and food sovereignty in South Sudan.

The Awerial Agriculture Training and Research Centre in Eastern Lakes, situated in Gulyar on the eastern bank of the Nile River, will train students and communities in cultivating onions, Irish potatoes, sorghum, maize, and vegetables, including





The College of Agriculture at Dr JGMUST grow vegetables for healthier diets.

watermelons. The Aluak-luak Groundnuts and Sesame Farming and Training Centre, also located in Lakes State, will focus on training students and communities to grow cash crops, chosen for their suitable soil conditions.

In collaboration with Israel and funded by the World Bank, the Digital Agriculture initiative will benefit 350 women and men, with digital facilities expected to be completed by February 2026. Science laboratories for Chemistry, Biology, Computer Science, and Physics are currently under construction by FAOSS, funded by the African Development Bank.



Growing vegetables



Training rural communities in best agricultural practices

13TH ACADEMIA-PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP FORUM (APPPF) - 2025

Fostering Innovation and Entrepreneurship through University-Industry Partnerships for East Africa's Sustainable Future



Hon. Joseph Nsengimana, Rwanda's Minister of Education (2nd from right) during the opening ceremony of the APPPF in Kigali, Rwanda.

All stakeholders in addressing socio-economic development challenges, including governments, the private sector and academia, must shift from dialogue to implementation through deliberate collaborative initiatives, clear frameworks and shared accountability.

University-Industry Collaboration

Shaping East Africa's Future

By Salome Guchu

Universities are vital knowledge hubs for generating research and producing graduates with technical expertise. However, there exist concerns and significant gaps between knowledge generation and its practical application in the East African private sector. IUCEA, in collaboration with partners, convened the 13th Academia-Public-Private-Partnership Forum (APPPF) in March 2025 in Kigali, Rwanda, to urgently champion the harnessing of university-industry collaboration for East Africa's sustainable future.

Cognisant that research, innovation and entrepreneurship are vital drivers of socioeconomic development, the 13th APPPF was themed "Fostering

With the participation of diverse private, public and academic sectors' stakeholders, the forum engagement and resolution reinforced the idea that the future of East Africa's development will be shaped by how well academia and industry work together.

Innovation and Entrepreneurship through University-Industry Partnerships for East Africa's Sustainable Future." It attracted over 300 participants from universities, private sector actors, researchers, entrepreneurs, government officials, and development partners.

A common goal of creating ecosystems that nurture innovation united them to address local challenges, equip youth for the future of work and bridge the gap between knowledge generation and practical application. Speakers at the Forum, including policymakers and business leaders, highlighted that effective university-industry collaboration is essential as universities are brimming with research and young talent, while industries need innovations, skilled labour and context-specific solutions.



Notably, in his opening remarks, Hon. Joseph Nsengimana, Minister of Education, Rwanda, encouraged the private sector to take a proactive role by co-developing curricula, fostering research collaborations, and launching initiatives that create a win-win scenario where industries gain skilled professionals, and graduates access meaningful opportunities.



Dr. Salome Guchu,
IUCEA Principal Innovation and
Outreach Officer

The private sector demonstrated the importance of effective collaboration. The keynote speaker, Dr. Eng. Anthony Githinji from Semiconductors Technologies Limited, shared a motivating case of a successful collaboration with Dedan Kimathi University of Technology, which has led to the training of hundreds of semiconductor engineers, and job creation. This was an encouraging case of academia-industry collaboration that is driving both technological advancements and employment. Cognisant of the key challenges of misaligned curricula, weak research commercialisation frameworks, and limited academia-industry dialogue, the forum offered practical solutions as essentials for impactful university-industry collaboration. Universities were encouraged to co-design research agendas with private sector input, making them more responsive to real-world problems.

Speakers called for increased investment in innovation and incubation hubs that can nurture student projects into viable enterprises. Stakeholders stressed the need for supportive policies and frameworks, including tax incentives and innovation grants, to stimulate private sector engagement in academic research, enable universities to establish companies, innovation hubs, and “factory teaching” approaches that transform student ideas into market-ready products.

Calls for reform were made for universities to be the drivers of future innovation by swiftly adapting training faculty members and structuring curricula in partnerships with industry partners to prepare graduates with entrepreneurial and artificial intelligence (AI) competencies. Stakeholders widely agreed that entrepreneurship should not be confined to business schools but should be embedded across all disciplines. Students must

be exposed to real-life challenges and given opportunities to apply their knowledge through internships, mentorships and participation in incubator programs.

The forum recommended that universities adopt practical and transdisciplinary education models that focus on solving local problems, rather than purely academic programmes. Representatives from business associations emphasised that while the private sector is a beneficiary of skilled graduates across the region, it should be recognised as an active partner in curriculum development, research funding, mentorship and innovation

commercialisation. The industry players stressed that with effective university-industry collaborations, companies are open to engaging, sharing challenges, and co-creating solutions. Industry players also emphasised the importance of defining success through outcomes such as employability, start-up creation, joint patents, and the uptake of university-developed technologies in the market. The 13th APPPF urged the universities to develop clear frameworks for engaging with industry, establish innovation hubs, conduct research aligned with local challenges, and invest in AI integration. Governments were encouraged to create enabling environments for collaboration through regulatory reforms, infrastructure investment and incentives. Industry players were asked to step into academic spaces as mentors, funders and co-creators of knowledge.

With the participation of diverse private, public and academic sectors’ stakeholders, the forum engagement and resolution reinforced the idea that the future of East Africa’s development will be shaped by how well academia and industry work together. By forging strong university-industry partnerships, East Africa can unlock innovation, create jobs, and build a competitive, inclusive and sustainable future.



Some of the delegates to the 13th Academia Public-Private Partnerships Forum in Kigali, Rwanda.



While the EAC has made strides through initiatives like the IUCEA Scholarship and staff mobility programs, a key indicator of a healthy regional ecosystem is the movement of its academic talent. EAC-SMS is a flagship program supported by IUCEA to enable institutions to attract cross-border students.

The Building Synergies

Unlock Common Higher Education Area for Development



While much of the world grapples with ageing populations, the East African Community (EAC) partner states' demographics are a dynamic, young and fastest-growing regional bloc. With over 75% of its population under 35, the EAC is a hotbed of emerging talent and a global test case for transforming the higher education region's economic trajectory. Yet without well-coordinated action to integrate and harmonise the East Africa Common Higher Education Area (CHEA), this dividend could become a crisis of unmet aspirations. The EAC is poised to harness its demographic dividend for economic growth and social progress. At the heart of this potential is the Common Higher Education Area, which is a strategic necessity. To fully realise this vision, governments, universities and regulators need to address the inherent barriers that impede regional integration.



Prof. Meshack Obonyo

their resilience, institute measures to improve female participation, and create robust mechanisms for cultural diversity and inclusivity. Best practices, such as providing special accommodations for student mothers and ensuring effective grievance redress systems, are crucial for fostering a resilient and vibrant regional student body.

Levelling Barriers

To unleash the full potential of the CHEA, line ministries (education, immigration) must act decisively to remove the policy and administrative roadblocks that hinder progress.

- **Systemic Barriers**

The existing state of affairs, marked by visa and student permit delays, reduces the pace of integration. How capable are our immigration policies in supporting student mothers who may require caregivers from their home? An example where a student was compelled to send her six-month-old baby back home due to immigration policy highlights the human cost of policies that have not yet woken up to the realities of the day.

- **The Path Forward**

Universities and other higher education institutions must proactively engage with governments to address these issues. This includes collaborating with immigration authorities to streamline the permit-issuing processes. Considerations of extending and urgently discussing the possibility of a uniform fees policy for regional students in the SADC region, then to other economic commissions (currently the disparity stands at 300% between EAC/SADC students). There are significant tuition disparities between regional students in some cases, whereas some countries are members of both blocs.

- Regulators have an important role; there is a challenge of recognition of qualification, unpacking the policies that enable the portability of qualification, the accumulation and transfer of credits, which requires regulators to confront accreditation bottlenecks and ensure that both public and private universities are actively participating.

- While the cost of living may be prohibitively high in certain countries, especially for students on modest or partially supported schemes like EAC-SMS, in the EAC, there is an opportunity through student loans and financiers of higher education to rally support.

The East Africa CHEA has the potential to become a global leader in academic excellence and mobility, rivalling the cohesion of frameworks like the European Higher Education Area (EHEA). This future, however, is not guaranteed. It hinges on the collective government's political will to provide sustained funding, the commitment of universities to foster a truly regional academic environment, and the courage of regulators to dismantle the barriers that stand in our way. The time for reflection is over; the time for decisive, coordinated action is now.

Prof. Meshack Obonyo,
Senior Principal, Links and Partnership at IUCEA.

Regional Mobility and Workforce Development

"In a knowledge economy, tertiary education helps economies gain ground on more technologically advanced societies, as graduates are better able to use new technologies," World Bank, 2005. Universities need to reflect on how to attract and support the mobility of regional students and faculty, and the mechanisms for preparing graduates for a cross-border job market. We need to interrogate the curricula offered by our higher education institutions in the region, and then reflect on the mentions of our curricula in cross-border issues.

The answer is in institutionalising programs that track graduate employment and align curricula with regional development priorities. By investing in these areas, universities can evolve from being locally focused institutions to becoming hubs for regional workforce development, directly supporting the EAC's Common Market protocol that facilitates the free movement of people, goods and services.

Aspiration to Action

Higher education contributes to socioeconomic development by building human capital. This calls upon higher education practitioners to orient themselves to align training with the socio-economic needs. The university leadership must enhance their commitment to regional integration by shifting institutional culture and policies.

- **Harmonised Curricula and Accreditation**

Program Benchmarks and Regional Accreditation are processes supported by IUCEA, and should be considered powerful tools, the first step in opening the gates to regional students. These guarantee the quality and endear academic programs to students from the region. Universities must proactively align their programs with the program benchmarks for comparability and portability, boosting their appeal and credibility.

- **Student Support and Inclusivity**

The challenges of long completion times, language barriers and cultural integration persist. Institutions that succeed will be those that establish support systems for regional students, such as language, offer strong student mentorship to boost



“With the ongoing digital revolution, HEIs are facing increasing demands to adapt and leverage technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI), big data analytics, and the Internet of Things (IoT) in teaching, research and service to students and staff - Data has merged as a strategic asset”.

Power of Data

Unlocking East Africa’s Higher Education Future

By Salome Guchu

The East African Community (EAC), guided by the bold ambitions of the EAC Vision 2050, is committed to enhancing access to quality higher education, fostering critical skills for emerging economies, and driving research and innovation that catalyse sustainable development.

The vision further emphasises the need for harmonious adoption of best practices in the management of institutions of higher learning to respond to the regional development needs.

Achieving these aspirations demands commitment and the use of reliable, standardised and high-quality data in decision-making. Many East African higher education institutions (HEIs), as in other parts of Africa, are grappling with data collection and management challenges.

The Harmonised Guidelines for Higher Education Data Collection and Management lay the groundwork for a unified and effective data ecosystem that supports evidence-based decision-making, improves institutional performance, and strengthens regional cooperation. There is commitment, inclusive stakeholder engagement, and sustained investment in capacity building and strong technical systems.

As it adapts to the rapid technological changes and demands for informed decisions, data has emerged as a strategic asset. Harmonised Guidelines for Higher Education Data Collection and Management in the East African Community have, therefore, been developed as a supportive unified framework to guide institutions on data collection and management.

These Harmonised Guidelines are designed to address long-standing challenges in higher education data management, which the Inter-University Council for East Africa (IUCEA), in collaboration with partners, observed in a study under the Demographics of African Faculty in the East African Community (DAF EAC) project.

The guidelines are envisaged to be a cornerstone for evidence-based decision-making, strategic investments, academic excellence and regional integration.





Developed with respect for institutional diversity, the guidelines focus on enhancing the quality, consistency, comparability and usability of data to inform strategic planning and improve educational outcomes.

They will facilitate best practices for accurate and timely data collection by supporting regional cooperation through comparable data sets.

They will also promote ethical, secure and sustainable data governance; integrate innovative technologies like AI and cloud systems; and facilitate student mobility and joint research through shared systems.

A key strength of the guidelines is in ensuring that data is protected and put to good use.

The data governance principles of accountability, transparency, data integrity, security, privacy and sustainability will be promoted while aligning with international standards.

The promotion builds on the existing EAC frameworks, ensuring that the guidelines position East Africa as a regional leader in higher education data management practices and innovation. Successful Harmonised Guidelines implementation requires active participation and coordination among key stakeholders, including HEIs, national commissions and councils for higher education, ministries responsible for higher/university education, IUCEA and partners.

Monitoring and evaluation are integral to the guidelines, with tailored performance indicators developed for institutional, national

and regional levels to measure the effectiveness of data systems, track progress, identify challenges, and inform continuous improvement efforts.

The Harmonised Guidelines for Higher Education Data Collection and Management lay the groundwork for a unified and effective data ecosystem that supports evidence-based decision-making, improves institutional performance, and strengthens regional cooperation.

Implementation of the Harmonised Guidelines requires commitment, inclusive stakeholder engagement and sustained investment in capacity building and strong technical systems.

This will position East Africa's higher education sector to be champions in evidence-based decision-making, innovation and regional integration. The future depends on the data we collect, how we manage it and use it.





IUCEA Executive Secretary, Prof Gaspard Banyakimbona with Ms. Amanda Bollig from KfW Development Bank discuss Phase I and II of IUCEA Scholarship programme-May 13, 2025.

Pathway for Integration

The EAC Scholarship Programme

Empowering and mentoring young East Africans while instilling a regional identity in them are central to building sustainable political and socio-economic integration in East Africa. This vision lies at the very heart of the EAC Scholarship Programme.

The programme is a partnership of Financial Cooperation between the East African Community and the Federal Republic of Germany. It seeks to create future change agents for the Integration Agenda, provide regional exposure to students through universities of their choice in a Partner State other than their own and promote participation of female students.

Wide range of master's courses

With a dynamic lineup of master's programs in Mathematics, Engineering, Informatics, Science,

Technology, and Business, scholarship recipients learn and transform. Equipped with cutting-edge technical skills and honed in adaptability, open-mindedness, communication and leadership, these young visionaries are ready to innovate, lead and shape a brighter, sustainable future for East Africa.

Priority Areas

1. Mathematics
2. Engineering
3. Informatics
4. Science
5. Technology
6. Business Sciences



Accessible and Fair Education for All

The Programme is committed to ensuring that financial barriers do not hinder talent and ambition. Across the Region, the scholarship programme has brought together 180 highly qualified young East Africans from the six EAC Partner States at the time, creating a dynamic tapestry of regional talent.

Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uganda and South Sudan are equally represented, with 30 students from each country, reflecting the programme's commitment to inclusivity and balanced participation.

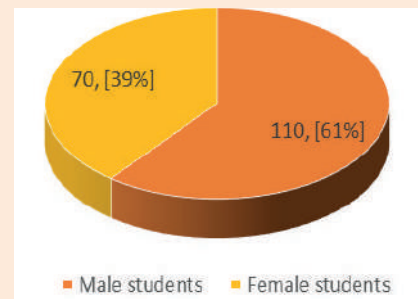
These beneficiaries have been supported to pursue postgraduate studies at 11 competitively selected universities across the region, opportunities they might not have been able to afford in a partner state other than their own.



Dorine Rwehera
Coordinator- EAC Scholarship Programme, IUCEA

This diverse cohort goes beyond numbers: more than a third of the beneficiaries are women, a deliberate stride toward gender parity in higher education.

Distribution of students by gender



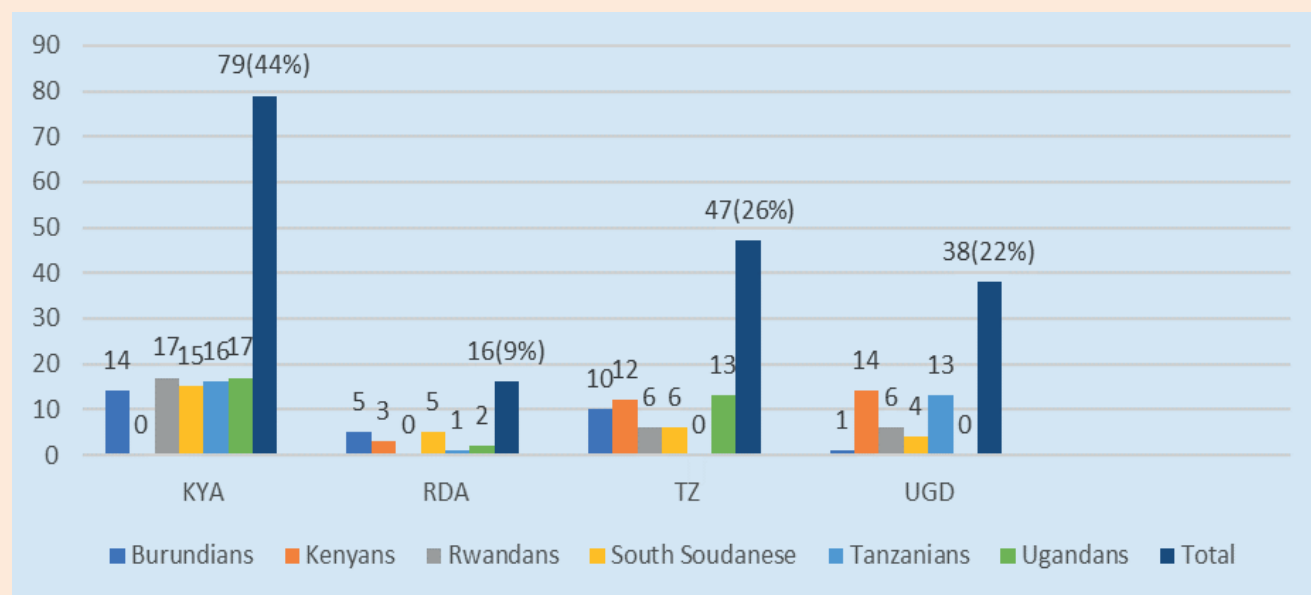
Importantly, scholarship recipients pay the same tuition fees as students from the host country, ensuring fairness and equity while promoting regional mobility and integration. This approach enables bright and motivated students to pursue advanced education without incurring additional financial burdens, levelling the playing field across the region.

In-Region Mobility soars

The Programme not only expanded access to postgraduate education but also fostered intra-regional mobility, enabling students to cross borders within East Africa for their postgraduate studies.

By studying outside their home countries, students gained first-hand exposure to diverse cultural and academic environments, preparing them to become tomorrow's leaders and champions of regional integration.

The distribution of students across host countries further underscores the Programme's wide reach and the commitment of universities across East Africa to welcoming peers from neighbouring states.



Distribution of students by nationality per host country



A Life-Changing Opportunity

“Our heartfelt gratitude goes to IUCEA and the German Development Bank–KfW for the scholarship that made this achievement possible. The financial support provided was more than just tuition assistance—it lifted a significant burden off our shoulders, enabling us to focus entirely on our studies, engage in extracurricular activities, and seize personal development opportunities. It gave us the freedom to immerse ourselves in learning without the constant worry of financial constraints, truly shaping the quality of our academic journey.

This opportunity has empowered us to pursue ambitious goals and contribute meaningfully to the East African Community and beyond. We remain deeply thankful for your investment in our education and the transformative impact it has had on our lives.”—Agnes Wambaire Wangai, Kenyan (MSc Taxation), Angelo Ndayiragije, Burundian (MSc Taxation) and Carine Karerwa, Burundian (MA Microfinance), INES-Ruhengeri cohort 3



“I am honored and humbled to be one of the recipients of East Africa Community Scholarship Programme. By awarding me this, you have honestly lightened and simplified my financial burden. Without this scholarship, I would not be able to finance my education to this high level of postgraduate programme. And as I always say “Gratitude is the Best Attitude” I would love to heartily says, THANK YOU SO MUCH MY DONORS. I believe and I trust that, the scholarship will also encourage me to develop strong and positive mindset of developmental integration and transformation ideologies. I assure you, my Donors that I will make the best out of this opportunity and make every effort to assist others in the nearest future in my own way, just as the way you have generously helped me. Thank you once again my generously donors. Thank You!” -KONGOR John Bior Duot, South Sudanese, MSC- Petroleum Geo- Sciences, University of Dodoma cohort 1

“As I complete my master’s degree at Mbarara University of Science and Technology, I would like to sincerely thank you for your financial assistance. Being a graduate funded through the EAC Scholarship Programme is a true honor, and I am deeply grateful for your kindness.

I also appreciate your support in facilitating interactions with colleagues from other EAC nations, as well as providing me with real-life exposure to Ugandan culture and customs. Today, I feel confident traveling across the EAC and look forward to visiting Kigali soon. This scholarship continues to foster regional unity, and throughout my studies, I treasured the opportunity to learn about diverse cultures from my peers. Thank you!” -Sahan Sylvester Jonathan, Tanzanian, MSC- Chemistry, Mbarara University of Science and Technology cohort 1

Regional Integration and Its Value

The Programme goes beyond developing human capital; it nurtures a shared sense of East Africanness and instils the importance of regional integration among its scholars.

Through vibrant extra-curricular activities, students engage with diverse stakeholders around a selected theme under one of the four pillars—customs union, common market, monetary union, or political federation— focusing on emerging priorities within the Region.

These activities also immerse students in the rich cultures of the host countries, fostering cross-cultural understanding. Cohort 1 focused on “Higher Education for Regional Integration” in Entebbe, Uganda (February 2020), Cohort 2 on “Higher Education, Students Mobility and Regional Integration in East African Community” in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania (April 2022), and Cohort 3 on “Free movement of workers and regional integration: opportunities and challenges” in Nairobi, Kenya.

Their shared classrooms, collaborative projects and cross-border interactions create a living laboratory for East Africa’s future, fostering innovation, understanding and lasting connections across the region.



Cohort 3 during their Summer School at the United States International University-Africa (USIU-A) in Nairobi, Kenya-October 2024

From Classroom to Community

Backed by an initial funding of EUR 5 million—formalised in April 2018 through a financing agreement between the EAC, IUCEA, and KfW (the German Development Bank)—the Programme has successfully nurtured the three cohorts comprising 180 master’s students from across East Africa.

Today, 128 students (71%) have completed their studies and are now actively engaged in the marketplace, driving change and transforming communities across the Region.



Kipolelo Aziz Mohamed from Tanzania, MSc- Applied Mathematics, Kenyatta University graduate- cohort 3

Coming Soon!

The Programme’s second Phase is officially underway, with EURO 9 million in funding now available. Universities—both new and returning—will soon be invited to submit applications, while students across East Africa should watch for the upcoming call for scholarships.

Don’t miss this chance to join the next generation of regional change-makers!

From 3 to 170 IUCEA Members

Regional Integration In Higher Education Gains Ground

When the Inter-University Council for East Africa (IUCEA) was established in 1980, it was a modest collaboration among three of the region's leading public universities: the University of Dar es Salaam in Tanzania, the University of Nairobi in Kenya, and Makerere University in Uganda.

The founding institutions shared a common vision to harmonise academic standards and promote higher education cooperation across national borders.

IUCEA Fast-forward

The Council now boasts 170 subscribing member institutions across the eight partner states of the East African Community (EAC), representing a diverse mix of public, private, technical, and faith-based universities.

This evolution is not only a reflection of IUCEA's expanding influence but also a testimony to the region's commitment to a unified higher education space. "The growth in membership underscores the increasing recognition of IUCEA's relevance and the value it brings to institutions across East Africa," says Prof. Idris A. Rai, the Deputy Executive Secretary of IUCEA.

Subscription and Organisation

At the heart of IUCEA's work is the goal of fostering regional integration through quality higher education.

The Council's mandate includes harmonising qualifications, facilitating academic mobility, supporting quality assurance, and advancing research collaboration.

The subscription structure, governed by the IUCEA Act, places responsibility on the Council of IUCEA,

Through the East African Quality Assurance Network (EAQAN), IUCEA provides training for QA staff, promotes shared standards and benchmarks, and offers external peer reviews to strengthen internal systems. Institutions also receive guidance on implementing IUCEA's QA Handbook and toolkits such as the "Roadmap to Quality."

composed of heads of all member institutions, to determine annual membership fees.

Despite financial constraints within the EAC, institutions have continued to show strong commitment. In the 2024/25 financial year, member institutions contributed 83% of the total expected membership fees.

Why Membership Matters

For universities and other institutions of higher learning, IUCEA membership offers a comprehensive suite of benefits that enhance academic credibility, improve quality assurance systems, and expand institutional visibility.

The core benefits include regional networking and collaboration. IUCEA facilitates partnerships across East African universities, enabling institutions to share curricula, co-develop academic programs, and engage in cross-border initiatives.

Advocacy in Regional Education Agenda

Through IUCEA, institutions contribute to regional discussions such as academia-private sector forums and help shape responsiveness to labour-market needs.

Quality Assurance (QA)

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Prof. Idris Rai
Deputy Executive Secretary of IUCEA



Student and Staff Mobility

IUCEA supports scholarships and exchange programs, allowing students and faculty to study and teach across member countries. This fosters cultural exchange and strengthens regional unity.

Training and QA Workshops

IUCEA organises workshops for QA coordinators, top administrators, and faculty to deepen quality management skills.

Access to QA Tools & Publications

Member universities gain access to IUCEA's QA toolkits, such as the "Roadmap to Quality" handbook and related benchmark documents, to support internal evaluation strategies.

Strengthened Regional Reputation

Subscribing institutions are part of a recognised regional council, which enhances standing in the EAC and signals adherence to accepted QA and academic standards.

Funding and Research Partnership Access

Joining IUCEA provides opportunities for joint research grants, collaborative institutional projects, and funded initiatives like the Centres of Excellence supported by organisations like the World Bank and Carnegie Foundation.

Capacity Building initiatives

Member institutions benefit from various capacity building and training initiatives such as leadership training, training on AI integration, Research Management and training of postgraduate supervisors, to name a few.

Networking Opportunities

Staff from member institutions are co-opted as experts to develop various tools, guidelines, policies, strategies and benchmarks through which they interact with their peers and forge collaborations.

Some Barriers.

Despite the benefits, not all accredited universities in East Africa have joined IUCEA. Several factors explain the hesitation:

Membership and subscription fees can be a barrier, especially for smaller or newer private universities with limited budgets. Some institutions may prioritise other operational costs over regional affiliation, especially when immediate ROI (return on investment) is unclear to them.

University leadership may not be fully informed about the scope of IUCEA's services or the long-term benefits of membership despite various efforts to engage them. Poor communication or outreach from IUCEA to non-member institutions might result in missed opportunities.

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A few universities may not see a direct link between IUCEA activities and their institutional priorities. Particularly in private institutions, if benefits like scholarships, QA support, or regional visibility are not tangible or immediate, the incentive to join may be low.

Competing Environments

Certain universities may choose to affiliate with other consortia (e.g., African Union-related platforms, global research networks, Commonwealth networks, L'Agence universitaire de la Francophonie (AUF), etc) perceived as more beneficial. Those with strong bilateral partnerships or donor support may not feel the need for regional collaboration via IUCEA. Institutions might question how actively IUCEA supports each member, or whether engagement leads to measurable improvements (e.g., increased research funding, student numbers, or visibility).

Strategies to Bring Everyone on Board

Recognising the need to address these challenges, IUCEA has developed a multi-pronged strategy to expand its membership base and ensure that no institution is left behind.

Targeted Awareness and Outreach Campaigns

- **University Leadership Forums**

IUCEA plans to participate in national university associations' platforms, and continue organising national-level sensitisation events for Vice Chancellors, Deans and Registrars in non-member institutions.

- **Tailored Info Packs**

Sharing concise, sector-specific brochures showing how IUCEA membership aligns with private, public, faith-based, or technical university needs.

- **Success Stories**

Publicising case studies of how current member universities have benefited, e.g., increased student mobility, improved QA systems, and research funding access.

Stakeholder Engagement and Policy Advocacy

- **Engage Ministries of Education**

IUCEA to work with EAC partner states to encourage membership for all accredited institutions as part of national QA policy.

- **Involve National Councils/ Commissions**

IUCEA to partner with regulatory bodies to include IUCEA membership as a criterion for institutional recognition or accreditation.

- **Brief Parliamentary Committees**

Sensitising legislators responsible for higher education on the regional integration value of IUCEA membership.



Incentive-Based Enrolment Mechanisms

- Pilot Membership Scheme**
 Offering a 1-year trial membership with partial benefits to showcase value before full onboarding.
- Performance-Based Benefits**
 Linking certain incentives (e.g., priority in scholarships or regional program participation) to active membership status.

Capacity Building for Non-Member Institutions

- Pre-Membership QA Support**
 Offering technical assistance to institutions struggling to meet minimum QA standards for joining.
- Mentorship Program**
 Pairing new or aspiring member universities with more established IUCEA members for guided onboarding.
- Online Orientation Modules**
 Developing digital courses or webinars on the benefits, responsibilities and services of IUCEA.

Enhanced Value Proposition

- New Member Welcome Kit**
 Creating onboarding packages (logos, web badges, visibility tools) to boost institutional branding upon joining.
- Grant/Project Access**
 Reserving specific regional research grants, capacity-building calls, or conference slots for member-only access.
- Increased Engagement Opportunities**
 Offering member institutions exclusive roles in policy dialogue, expert groups, regional think tanks, and pilot projects.

Collaborative Platforms and Events

- National IUCEA Chapters**
 Establishing national forums or focal points to support engagement and follow-up.
- Regional Exhibitions/Fairs**
 Involving non-member universities in IUCEA-led expos or summits to experience the ecosystem firsthand.

- Joint Visibility Campaigns**
 Co-branding IUCEA initiatives with universities to increase public recognition of membership value.

Monitoring and Follow-Up

- Non-Member Engagement Dashboard**
 Tracking universities by country and regularly assessing their engagement status.
- Annual Outreach Plan**
 Allocating resources annually to target specific countries or categories of institutions.
- Feedback Loops**
 Conducting surveys or focus groups with non-members to understand their hesitations and adjust the strategy accordingly.


Non-Members

Prof. Rai calls on institutions not yet affiliated to seize the opportunity and play an active role in shaping the future of higher education in East Africa. "Your university's future is regional, and so is its responsibility. By joining the IUCEA network, you unlock more than institutional benefits; you become part of a transformative force building the East African Higher Education Area," he emphasises. He adds that membership should not be viewed merely as compliance with regional standards, but also as a strategic investment in growth, relevance and international competitiveness.

Looking Ahead

As East Africa moves steadily toward deeper regional integration, the role of IUCEA is becoming more critical. By promoting shared academic standards, fostering institutional collaboration, and ensuring that quality education is accessible across borders, IUCEA is helping to build a more cohesive and capable East African workforce.

The journey from three founding universities to 130 members is a milestone, but not the final destination. With continued support, strategic partnerships, and strong leadership, IUCEA aims to bring all accredited institutions in the region on board, ensuring that no university is left behind in the quest for quality, relevance and regional cooperation.

 IUCEA Member Institutions	
TANZANIA	
University / Institution	
Ardhi University	Sokoine University of Agriculture
Muhimbili University of Health and Allied Sciences	The Open University of Tanzania
Mzumbe University	State University of Zanzibar
	The University of Dodoma
	University of Dar es Salaam





IUCEA Member Institutions

Mbeya University of Science and Technology
Institute of Finance Management
Dar es Salaam University College of Education
Mkwawa University College of Education
Moshi Co-operative University
Nelson Mandela African Institute of Science and Technology, Tengeru
Institute of Accountancy Arusha
National Institute of Transport
The Dar es Salaam Institute of Technology
Tanzania Institute of Accountancy
Eastern Africa Statistical Training Centre, United Republic of Tanzania, Dar es Salaam
Institute of Rural Development Planning
St Augustine University of Tanzania
Tumaini University Makumira
Kairuki University
Muslim University of Morogoro
Sebastian Kolowa Memorial University (SEKOMU)
Catholic University of Health and Allied Sciences
Zanzibar University
St John University of Tanzania
Dar es Salaam Tumaini University (DarTU)
International Medical
KCMC University
Mount Meru University
Mwenge Catholic University
Ruaha Catholic University (RUCU)
Ruaha Catholic University (RUCU)
Stefano Moshi Memorial University College
University of Arusha
University of Iringa
Archbishop Mihayo University College of Tabora (AMUCTA)

UGANDA

University / Institution

Busitema University
Culu University
Kyambogo University
Makerere University
Mbarara University of Science and Technology
Kabale University
Muni University
Mountains of the Moon University
Lira University
Uganda Management Institute
Makerere University Business School
Bugema University
Kampala International University

Nkumba University
Islamic University in Uganda
Ndejje University
Uganda Christian University
Uganda Martyrs University
Kampala University
Bishop Stuart University
International Business, Science and Technology University (ISBAT University)
International University of East Africa
African Rural University (ARU)
All Saints University, Lango
Livingstone International University
Uganda Technology and Management University
TEAM University
Cavendish University, Uganda
Nexus International University
Ankole Western University
Victoria University
Clarke International University, Uganda
St Ignatius University, Kabale
King Ceasor University

KENYA

University / Institution

Tharaka University
The Cooperative University College of Kenya
Egerton University
Jomo Kenyatta University
Kenyatta University
Maseno University
Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology
Moi University
University of Nairobi
South Eastern Kenya University
University of Eldoret
Kisii University
Dedan Kimathi University of Technology
Kibabii University
University of Kabianga
Maasai Mara University
Murang'a University of Technology
Laikipia University
Machakos University
Jaramogi Oginga Odinga University-Kenya
Bomet University College, in Kenya
Africa Nazarene University
Daystar University





IUCEA Member Institutions

Kabarak University
Kenya Methodist University
Mt Kenya University
Scott Christian University
St Paul's University
Strathmore University
The Catholic University of Eastern Africa
Pan Africa Christian University
United States International University
University of Eastern Africa, Baraton
Africa International University
KCA University
The Presbyterian University of East Africa
Kiriri Women's University
The Aga Khan University
The East African University
Umma University
Zetech University

SOUTH SUDAN

University / Institution

Rumbek University of Science & Technology
University of Juba
The University of Bahr El Ghazal
Upper Nile University Munuki Block C, Juba
Dr. John Garang Memorial University of Science and Technology
Catholic University of S. Sudan
Star International University College
Emmanuel Christian University

RWANDA

University / Institution

University of Rwanda
Adventist University of Central Africa
Catholic Institute of Kabgayi
University of lay Adventists of Kigali (UNILAK)
Institut d'Enseignement Supérieur de Ruhengeri (Institute of Higher Education- INES RUHENGERI)
Kigali Independent University
University of Technology and Arts of Byumba
University of Kigali
East African University
Protestant University of Rwanda (PUR)
African Leadership University
Rwanda Polytechnic
University of Tourism, Technology & Business Studies

Carnegie Mellon University in Rwanda
University of GITWE

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO - DRC

University / Institution

Uvira Higher Institute of Medical Techniques
Universite De Goma
Universite De Kisangani
Université de Kinshasa
Université de Kindu
Institut National des Arts
Universite De Kisangani
Université de Goma (UNIGOM)
Uvira Higher Institute of Medical Techniques / Institut Supérieur des Techniques Médicales d'Uvira
Institut Supérieur Pédagogique de la Gombe
Université Libre des Pays des Grands Lacs

BURUNDI

University / Institution

University of Burundi
Ecole Normale Supérieure B P 6983, Bujumbura
Institut Supérieure de Gestion des Entreprises
Institut National de Santé Publique Avenue Ruvubu
Ecole Nationale d'Administration (School of Administration)
Martin Luther King University
Hope Africa University (Université Espoir d'Afrique)
Université Lumière de Bujumbura (Light University of Bujumbura)
University of Ngozi
Université Du Lac Tanganyika (Lake Tanganyika University)
International Leadership University
Université des Grands Lacs, (Great Lakes University)
International University of Equator
Bujumbura International University 6 Avenue du C'inquanteenaire, Kigobe Sud.
Summit International Institute

SOMALIA

University / Institution

Somalia National University (SNU)
Somalia National University (SNU)
East Africa University Somalia
Benadir Univesity
University of Health Sciences





IUCEA Executive Secretary Prof. Gaspard Banyankimbona gifts the EAC Secretary General Ms. Veronica Nduva when she visited IUCEA Secretariat at Kigobe, Kyambogo Kampala - June 28, 2025





(Above) Artistic impression for New Headquarter complex for IUCEA at Kyambogo, Kampala



(Below) the same under construction



IUCEA, an institution of the East African Community (EAC), works to harmonize higher education systems and promote collaboration among universities in the region.



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