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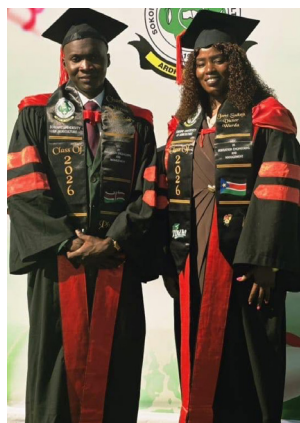
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IUCEA, Makerere Reaffirm Commitment to Strengthening Regional Higher Education Collaboration

A courtesy visit by Professor Idris A. Rai, Acting Executive Secretary of the Inter-University Council for East Africa (IUCEA) on 30th of April 2026, to Professor Barnabas Nawangwe, Vice Chancellor of Makerere University, reaffirmed the shared commitment of both institutions to advancing higher education, research, innovation, and regional integration within the East African Community (EAC).

The meeting provided an important platform for dialogue on strengthening collaboration between IUCEA and Makerere University, one of the region's most distinguished institutions of higher learning and a founding member of the Inter-University Council for East Africa. Discussions centred on enhancing regional academic cooperation and revitalising Makerere University's engagement in IUCEA-led initiatives and partnerships across East Africa.

Recognising Makerere University's historic and strategic role in the development of higher education in the region, the leaders highlighted the university's continued influence in shaping regional and global academic collaboration. Through active participation in IUCEA platforms, programmes, and networks, Makerere University has continued to contribute significantly to advancing academic excellence, research, innovation, and capacity building across the East African higher education landscape. The engagement underscored the importance of fostering deeper collaboration among universities in the areas of teaching, research, innovation, academic mobility, and knowledge exchange. Both leaders acknowledged that stronger institutional partnerships



Prof. Rai and Prof. Nawangwe at Makerere University on 30th April 2026

are essential in addressing emerging regional and global challenges while promoting the development of a competitive and integrated higher education ecosystem in East Africa. Professor Idris A. Rai emphasised the need to leverage Makerere University's leadership, legacy, and academic expertise to strengthen linkages among IUCEA Member Universities and support the advancement of the East African Community Common Higher Education Area. He noted that Makerere's experience and regional standing position it as a key partner in driving transformative initiatives aimed at enhancing the quality and relevance of higher education within the region.

The meeting also reflected Professor Rai's longstanding connection to Makerere University. An alumnus of the institution, he previously served as Deputy Dean at the School

of Computing and Information Technology, further underscoring his strong academic and professional ties to the university. His visit symbolised not only institutional collaboration but also a shared vision for strengthening the contribution of universities to regional development and socio-economic transformation.

Professor Barnabas Nawangwe reaffirmed Makerere University's commitment to continued collaboration with IUCEA and regional universities in promoting innovation, research excellence, and academic integration. He emphasised the importance of collective action and partnerships in ensuring that higher education institutions remain responsive to the evolving needs of society and contribute meaningfully to sustainable development across the East African region.

IUCEA Launches Cohort 7 of Regional Internal Quality Assurance Capacity Building Programme in Nairobi

The Inter-University Council for East Africa (IUCEA) has launched Cohort 7 of the Capacity Building Training Programme on Internal Quality Assurance (IQA) for Higher Education Institutions in East Africa. The three-day training, which was held from 11–13 June 2026 in Nairobi, Kenya, brought together quality assurance practitioners from IUCEA member universities and higher education institutions across the East African Community.

The programme was officially opened by the Acting Executive Secretary of IUCEA, Prof. Idris A. Rai, who underscored the critical role of robust Internal Quality Assurance Systems in fostering institutional excellence, accountability, continuous improvement, and regional integration within the higher education sector.

In his opening remarks, Prof. Rai noted that as the East African Community advances the implementation of the Common Market Protocol and the East African Common Higher Education Area (CHEA), higher education institutions must strengthen their internal quality assurance mechanisms to ensure the delivery of high-quality, relevant, and internationally competitive education.

He reaffirmed IUCEA's commitment



IUCEA Executive Secretary, Prof. Idris Rai, with Quality Assurance Practitioners on the 11th of June 2026 in Nairobi, Kenya

to supporting the development of quality assurance capacity across the region through strategic collaboration with national commissions and councils for higher education, universities, and the East African Quality Assurance Network (EAQAN). He emphasised that strong quality assurance systems are essential for building trust among institutions, facilitating academic mobility, and promoting the mutual recognition of qualifications across Partner States.

The training programme provides a platform for participants to enhance their competencies in internal quality assurance practices, exchange experiences,

and learn from regional experts and facilitators. It also contributes to the harmonisation of quality assurance approaches and standards across East Africa, thereby strengthening the foundations of the Common Higher Education Area.

The Capacity Building Training Programme on Internal Quality Assurance is one of IUCEA's flagship initiatives aimed at strengthening quality assurance culture in higher education institutions and supporting the region's vision of a trusted, harmonised, and globally competitive East African higher education system.

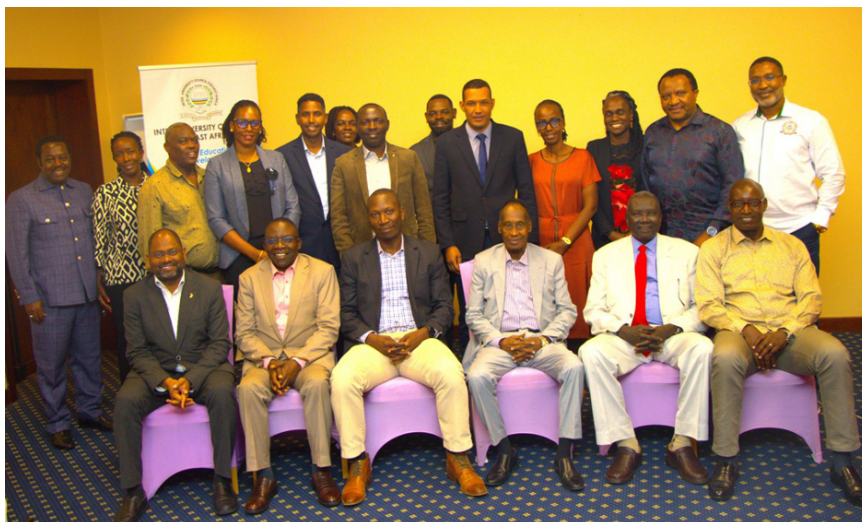
Toward a Stronger Common Higher Education Area: IUCEA Reviews Protocol Amendments

The Secretariat of the Inter-University Council for East Africa (IUCEA) convened a high-level Meeting of Experts to review and harmonise proposed amendments to the Protocol establishing the IUCEA, originally adopted in 2002.

Held from 11th to 15th May 2026 at the Lake Victoria Hotel in Entebbe, Uganda, the meeting brought together technical experts from the education and legal sectors across the East African Community (EAC) Partner States, alongside representatives from IUCEA member universities and officials from the Secretariat.

The meeting aimed to undertake a comprehensive review and harmonisation of comments submitted by Partner States regarding the proposed amendments to the IUCEA Protocol. This important exercise forms part of ongoing efforts to strengthen the legal and institutional framework underpinning regional cooperation in higher education within the East African Community.

The proposed amendments were necessitated by the need to strengthen and expand the mandate of the Inter-University Council for East Africa (IUCEA) to provide the requisite technical



Regional Experts from EAC Partner States, IUCEA Member Universities and IUCEA Staff at the amendments workshop in Entebbe

support for the attainment and advancement of the East African Community Common Higher Education Area. The review process follows a directive issued by the 18th EAC Summit in 2017, underscoring the strategic role of IUCEA in driving regional higher education integration and development.

Participants observed that the review process presents a timely opportunity to modernise the Protocol in response to emerging regional higher education priorities, while preserving the foundational principles and vision upon which the IUCEA

was established. The discussions further reflected the shared commitment of Partner States to strengthen collaboration, harmonisation, and policy alignment in the higher education sector.

The outcomes of the meeting are expected to significantly enhance the institutional capacity of the IUCEA and reinforce its mandate to promote regional integration, academic excellence, quality assurance, innovation, and sustainable collaboration in higher education across the East African Community Partner States.

Workshop on Regional Benchmarks for Construction and Architectural Studies Concludes in Nairobi



IUCEA Executive Secretary, Prof. Rai, with the experts on the 9th of June 2026 in Nairobi, Kenya.

The three-day workshop on the development of regional benchmarks for the Bachelor's in Architectural Education Studies, held from 8–10 June 2026 in Nairobi, Kenya, has successfully concluded.

Convened by the Inter-University Council for East Africa (IUCEA), the workshop brought together academics, higher education regulators, representatives of professional councils and associations, and other key stakeholders from across the East African Community (EAC)

to advance the harmonisation of Architectural Education programmes in the region.

Over the three days, participants reviewed existing curricula, identified core competencies and industry expectations, engaged with professional bodies, and developed a roadmap for the design, adoption, and implementation of regional benchmarks.

The workshop culminated in the development of draft benchmark documents and the establishment of technical teams to guide the

next phases of the process.

The outcomes represent a significant milestone in strengthening quality assurance, enhancing graduate competencies, promoting academic mobility, and advancing the East African Common Higher Education Area. IUCEA commended participants for their valuable contributions and reaffirmed its commitment to fostering regional cooperation and excellence in higher education across East Africa.

Prof. Rai Pays Courtesy Visit to Kenya's Principal Secretary for Higher Education and Research

Professor Idris Rai, the Acting Executive Secretary of the Inter-University Council for East Africa (IUCEA), paid a courtesy visit to Dr Beatrice Muganda Inyangala, the Principal Secretary for Higher Education and Research at the State Department for Higher Education and Research under Kenya's Ministry of Education. The meeting underscored the strong and growing collaboration between the IUCEA Secretariat and the Government of Kenya in advancing higher education development and regional integration within the East African Community (EAC).



■ Prof. Rai, Dr Muganda and Prof. Obongo at the Ministry of Education in Nairobi

Held in a spirit of partnership and shared vision, the engagement provided an important platform for constructive dialogue on strategic issues shaping the future of higher education across the region. Discussions focused on strengthening cooperation among EAC Partner States, enhancing the quality and relevance of higher education, promoting research and innovation, and advancing harmonisation efforts to build a more integrated and competitive regional higher education system.

The two leaders reaffirmed their shared commitment to supporting the development of the East African Community Common Higher Education Area through strengthened policy coordination, institutional collaboration, and regional academic partnerships.

They also emphasised the critical role of higher education institutions in driving socio-economic transformation, innovation, skills development, and sustainable development across the region.

Attention was given to preparations for the upcoming 17th IUCEA Annual Meeting and Conference, scheduled for 29th to 31st July 2026 in Nairobi, Kenya. The conference is expected to convene key stakeholders from across the East African region, including policymakers, university leaders, researchers, development partners, students, and representatives from both the public and private sectors.

Professor Rai commended

the Government of Kenya for its continued support to the IUCEA and its commitment to promoting regional cooperation in higher education. He noted that collaborative engagements such as these are essential in strengthening regional institutions and ensuring that higher education remains responsive to the evolving needs and aspirations of the East African Community.

The meeting further reaffirmed the strong partnership between the IUCEA Secretariat and EAC Partner States in advancing a shared vision for inclusive, innovative, and globally competitive higher education systems that contribute meaningfully to regional integration and sustainable development.

EAC Strengthens Postgraduate Supervision Through Regional Training in Entebbe

The Third Regional Postgraduate Supervisors Training concluded in Entebbe, Uganda. The meeting, that started from 12th to 13th May 2026, brought together scholars, postgraduate supervisors, and higher education leaders from across the East African Community. The training reflects ongoing regional efforts to strengthen postgraduate education and enhance the quality of research supervision within universities across East Africa.

Organised as part of broader initiatives to improve higher education standards and academic excellence in the region, the training seeks to equip postgraduate supervisors with advanced supervisory skills, contemporary mentorship approaches, and practical tools necessary to effectively guide postgraduate students in an increasingly dynamic academic and research environment.

The programme adopts a learner-centred and practice-oriented approach that combines both online and face-to-face learning methodologies. Participants engage in expert-led presentations, interactive discussions, collaborative exercises, and practical sessions designed to strengthen supervisory competencies and promote peer learning among academics from different institutions and disciplines.

The training is highly competitive and attracted significant interest



■ Participants at the Postgraduate Supervision training on 12th May 2026

from universities across the region. A total of 40 out of 109 postgraduate supervisors were selected to participate physically after completing preliminary online modules, demonstrating both commitment and readiness to strengthen their supervisory expertise.

The sessions focus on key aspects of postgraduate supervision, including effective mentorship, student support, research ethics, supervision best practices, academic communication, research methodologies, and emerging trends in postgraduate education. Participants are also exposed to strategies for fostering innovation, critical thinking, and research excellence among postgraduate students.

The initiative aims to enhance the capacity of supervisors to provide high-quality academic guidance while supporting the

timely completion of postgraduate studies and improving research outputs within universities across the East African Community. By strengthening supervisory practices, the programme contributes to the broader goal of building a strong research culture and producing highly skilled graduates capable of addressing regional and global development challenges.

Upon completion of the training, participants are expected to demonstrate a deeper understanding of their roles as supervisors and mentors, improved capacity to support postgraduate students effectively, and enhanced knowledge of contemporary research methodologies and evolving academic trends. The programme is also expected to strengthen collaboration and knowledge exchange among higher education institutions within the region.

IUCEA Champions Higher Education as a Driver of Regional Integration and Digital Transformation in East Africa

Speaking at the Higher Education Impact Stakeholders Forum organised by Obreal and DAAD in Nairobi on 6th May 2026, Professor Idris A. Rai, Acting Executive Secretary of the IUCEA, highlighted the increasingly strategic role of universities in shaping the future of the region. He emphasised that higher education institutions are no longer solely centres of teaching and learning, but are now critical drivers of innovation, economic growth, technological advancement, and evidence-based policymaking.



■ Prof. Rai giving his perspective at stakeholders meeting in Nairobi on 6th May 2026

Professor Rai noted that universities across East Africa are playing a vital role in supporting digital transformation, strengthening research and innovation ecosystems, promoting entrepreneurship, and developing the skilled human capital needed to respond to emerging regional and global challenges. He further underscored the importance of collaborative regional approaches in ensuring that higher education remains responsive, inclusive, and impactful.

In his remarks, Professor Rai highlighted IUCEA's contribution to the implementation of the EAC 7th Development Strategy through strengthened regional cooperation in higher education, research, and innovation. He stressed that regional collaboration among universities and stakeholders remains essential in building competitive knowledge economies and accelerating sustainable development across the East

African Community.

As a flagship example of these efforts, Professor Rai showcased the Regional Centre of Excellence in Artificial Intelligence (AI CoE), a strategic regional initiative spearheaded by the IUCEA. The Centre aims to bring together universities, policymakers, industry leaders, researchers, and development partners to advance artificial intelligence education, research, innovation, and responsible AI governance within the region.

Supported by development partners including GIZ, JICA, and UNESCO, the Regional AI CoE is expected to harmonise AI curricula across universities, strengthen regional digital skills, promote innovation ecosystems, and foster collaborative research and

knowledge exchange. The initiative also seeks to position East Africa competitively within the evolving global digital economy while promoting ethical and responsible use of artificial intelligence technologies.

The forum provided an important platform for stakeholders to reflect on the transformative role of higher education in development and to explore innovative partnerships that can enhance the impact of universities within society. IUCEA's participation reaffirmed its continued commitment to advancing regional integration, academic excellence, innovation, and sustainable development through higher education collaboration across the East African Community.

Regional Assessors Equipped to Advance Quality Higher Education Across East Africa



IUCEA Acting Executive Secretary, Prof. Rai with regional assessors at Entebbe on 15th May 2026

The 4th Cohort Training of Assessors for the Regional Programme Accreditation successfully concluded on 15th May 2026 in Entebbe, Uganda, marking another significant milestone in strengthening quality assurance and harmonised higher education systems across the region.

The two-day training brought together participants from National Commissions and Councils for Higher Education across the EAC Partner States, alongside regional trainers, quality assurance experts, and experienced programme assessors. The training formed part of ongoing regional efforts to build a competent and credible pool of assessors capable of supporting the implementation of regional programme accreditation within the East African Community.

The primary objective of the training was to equip national assessors and programme reviewers with the knowledge, practical skills, and professional competencies required to conduct objective and effective reviews of academic programmes, institutional

facilities, and staffing. Through this initiative, the EAC continues to strengthen the capacity of higher education quality assurance systems and promote the delivery of academic programmes that meet regional and international standards.

During the training sessions, participants were exposed to international best practices in programme accreditation and quality assurance processes. They also gained deeper insights into the EAC regional Standards, Guidelines, and Procedures for programme accreditation, which are critical in promoting harmonisation, comparability, and mutual recognition of qualifications across Partner States. The interactive sessions provided participants with practical experience in the use of assessment methodologies, evaluation tools, and evidence-based review approaches necessary for conducting credible programme evaluations. Emphasis was also placed on enhancing participants' ability to analyse and interpret institutional and programme data objectively, prepare comprehensive assessment reports,

and effectively communicate findings and recommendations.

Facilitators underscored the important role of trained assessors in safeguarding academic quality, strengthening institutional accountability, and promoting continuous improvement in higher education institutions across the region. Participants were encouraged to apply the knowledge and skills acquired during the training to support the advancement of quality higher education that responds to regional development priorities and global trends.

The successful completion of the 4th Cohort Training reflects the continued commitment of the East African Community and its Partner States to strengthening regional cooperation in higher education through harmonised quality assurance mechanisms. The initiative is expected to contribute significantly to enhancing the credibility, relevance, and competitiveness of academic programmes offered within the region.

IUCEA, AAIN Strengthen Partnership to Advance Agribusiness Innovation and Youth Entrepreneurship in East Africa

The African Agribusiness Incubators Network (AAIN) held a strategic engagement with Professor Idris A. Rai, Acting Executive Secretary of the Inter-University Council for East Africa (IUCEA), at the IUCEA Headquarters on 28th of April 2026 to advance the operationalisation of the partnership between the two institutions and deepen regional impact in agribusiness innovation and entrepreneurship.



IUCEA Team and AAIN team at IUCEA Headquarters on 28th April 2026.

The meeting builds on the existing Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed between IUCEA and AAIN, which provides a collaborative framework for promoting agribusiness innovation, entrepreneurship development, research commercialisation, and capacity building within higher education institutions across East Africa. The partnership reflects a shared commitment to strengthening the role of universities in driving sustainable economic growth, youth empowerment, and regional development.

During the engagement, discussions focused on enhancing collaboration in areas such as innovation ecosystems, business incubation, entrepreneurial skills development, research translation, and strengthening linkages between academia, industry, and communities. The two institutions also explored strategies for supporting youth-led enterprises and increasing opportunities for students and graduates to

participate meaningfully in the agribusiness value chain.

Professor Idris A. Rai emphasised the critical role of universities as engines of innovation, enterprise, and socio-economic transformation. He noted that higher education institutions must move beyond traditional teaching and research functions to become active contributors to job creation, entrepreneurship, and community development.

He further observed that the partnership between IUCEA and AAIN presents a valuable opportunity to bridge the gap between academic knowledge and practical application by supporting the commercialisation of research, strengthening entrepreneurial capacities, and creating pathways for youth employment and self-reliance.

“Universities have immense potential to generate innovative ideas and solutions that can transform communities and

economies. Through strategic partnerships such as this, we can empower young people with the skills, knowledge, and opportunities needed to turn innovation into sustainable enterprises,” Professor Rai noted.

Richard Ekodeu, Deputy Chief Executive Officer of AAIN, underscored the organisation’s commitment to transforming ideas into viable and impactful enterprises. He highlighted the importance of strengthening university-led innovation systems and supporting young innovators and entrepreneurs to scale their ideas into sustainable businesses capable of contributing to regional economic development.

The engagement reaffirmed the shared vision of IUCEA and AAIN to build a vibrant regional innovation ecosystem that leverages higher education, research, and entrepreneurship as key drivers of inclusive growth and sustainable development in East Africa.

University Leaders Visit IUCEA to Advance Regional Cooperation in Higher Education



IUCEA team, Higher Education Council Rwanda, Prof. Rai, Prof. Kusiluka and Prof. Matoc at IUCEA Headquarters on 12th May 2026

Prof. Lughano Kusiluka, Vice Chancellor of the University of Dodoma and Prof. Abraham Matoc Dhal, Vice Chancellor of Dr John Garang Memorial University, paid a courtesy visit to the Inter-University Council for East Africa Headquarters on May 12th, 2026, where Professor Idris Rai, IUCEA Acting Executive Secretary, warmly received them.

The visit provided an important opportunity for engagement and dialogue on matters central to the advancement of higher education, research, innovation,

and regional integration within the East African Community (EAC). It also reaffirmed the growing commitment of universities across the region to strengthen institutional partnerships and deepen collaboration in pursuit of a more integrated and knowledge-driven East Africa.

During the discussions, the leaders exchanged views on the evolving role of universities in addressing regional development priorities, promoting academic excellence, and supporting socio-economic transformation through research,

innovation, and skills development. They underscored the importance of regional cooperation in enhancing the quality and relevance of higher education and ensuring that institutions remain responsive to emerging global and regional challenges.

The cordial interaction reflected a shared vision of building a resilient, inclusive, and globally competitive higher education sector that contributes meaningfully to the development aspirations of the East African Community.

Daaru Salaam University Explores IUCEA Membership and Regional Collaboration Opportunities

The Acting Executive Secretary of the Inter-University Council for East Africa (IUCEA), Prof. Idris Rai, hosted Dr. Osman Mohamed Hassan, Chancellor of Daaru Salaam University, Somalia, at the IUCEA Headquarters on 16 June 2026 for discussions on opportunities for regional collaboration and institutional engagement within East Africa's higher education sector. The meeting provided an important platform for introducing Daaru Salaam University to IUCEA's mandate and strategic role in advancing quality higher education, research, innovation, academic mobility, and regional integration across the East African Community (EAC).

During the discussions, Prof. Rai highlighted the benefits of IUCEA membership, including participation in the East African Common Higher Education Area (CHEA), access to regional quality assurance frameworks, opportunities for staff and student mobility, collaborative research initiatives, capacity-building programmes, and networking with higher education institutions across the region.

Dr. Hassan expressed keen interest in the opportunities available through IUCEA and welcomed the prospect of becoming part of a regional community of universities committed to academic excellence and integration. The engagement



IUCEA Executive Secretary, Prof. Rai and the team from Daaru Salaam University on the 16th of June 2026 at IUCEA Headquarters.

enhanced his understanding of IUCEA's role in harmonising higher education systems and supporting the development of a competitive and globally recognised higher education sector in East Africa. Founded in 2012 and based in Mogadishu, Somalia, Daaru Salaam University is a vibrant private institution offering programmes in Health Sciences, Medicine, Nursing, Public Health, Business Administration, Information and Communication Technology, Engineering, Agriculture, Education, Law, and other disciplines. The university is dedicated to providing quality education, advancing research and innovation.

Dr. Hassan noted that membership in IUCEA would provide valuable

opportunities for Daaru Salaam University to strengthen partnerships with universities across East Africa, expand research collaborations, and participate more actively in regional academic initiatives. He expressed his commitment to pursuing membership and looked forward to contributing to the shared vision of a harmonised and internationally competitive East African Common Higher Education Area.

The visit underscores IUCEA's commitment to engaging current and prospective member institutions in promoting academic excellence, knowledge exchange, and regional cooperation for the advancement of higher education in East Africa.

Promoting Research Excellence in Higher Education Across East Africa



Education Stakeholders at Entebbe on the 21st May 2026

The Inter-University Council for East Africa (IUCEA) has intensified efforts to strengthen research quality and performance in higher education institutions across the East African Community (EAC) through the implementation of the Research Excellence Framework for Higher Education in East Africa (REFHE-EA).

On 6 May 2026, IUCEA hosted a virtual sensitisation webinar on REFHE-EA, followed by a two-day Capacity Building Workshop held in Entebbe, Uganda, on 21–22 May 2026. These initiatives brought together universities, research institutions, policymakers, funding agencies, researchers, research managers, quality assurance practitioners, and policy experts from across the region to enhance understanding and implementation of the framework.

Developed as a regional guide,

REFHE-EA aims to improve research quality, governance, productivity, and societal impact within higher education institutions. The framework responds to key challenges affecting research in East Africa, including weak research governance and management systems, limited research capacity and infrastructure, low research productivity, and inadequate collaboration and funding mechanisms.

The virtual sensitisation webinar served as the first phase of IUCEA's engagement strategy, creating awareness and deepening stakeholders' understanding of the framework while encouraging institutions to embrace REFHE-EA as a tool for strengthening research performance. The initiative also laid the foundation for broader stakeholder participation in subsequent capacity-building activities.

Building on this momentum, the practical capacity-building workshop in Entebbe focused on strengthening institutional and individual capacity for the implementation and operationalisation of REFHE-EA.

Through technical presentations, practical exercises, peer learning sessions, and discussions on institutional assessment tools, participants gained the knowledge and skills required to strengthen research governance, improve assessment and monitoring systems, and enhance institutional readiness for research excellence. The workshop also provided an important platform for regional collaboration, enabling participants from EAC Partner States to share experiences, discuss common challenges, and identify solutions for advancing research quality and impact across the region. IUCEA emphasised that such collaborative

engagements are critical for building a strong regional network committed to innovation, evidence-based decision-making, and socio-economic development.

Through these sensitisation and capacity-building initiatives,

IUCEA continues to equip higher education stakeholders with the knowledge, tools, and competencies needed to improve research governance, strengthen quality assurance mechanisms, and increase the contribution of research to addressing regional

and global challenges. The efforts demonstrate a strong regional commitment to advancing research excellence and building resilient higher education systems across East Africa.

IUCEA Awards Grants to Boost University–Industry Innovation Across East Africa

The Inter-University Council for East Africa (IUCEA) has announced the successful proposals selected under its Competitive Call for Strengthening University–Industry Collaboration, a regional initiative designed to advance innovation, research commercialisation, and partnerships between academia and industry across the East African Community (EAC).

Launched under Call Reference Number IUCEA/CALL/UIC/2025/01, the initiative seeks to strengthen systems for university–industry engagement, enhance knowledge and technology transfer, and promote collaborative product development in priority sectors including artificial intelligence, agri-tech, renewable energy, health technologies, and the blue economy. Each selected project will receive up to USD 10,000 in funding for implementation over a 12-month period.

Among the successful proposals is a project led by Prof. Simon Maina Karume of **Kabarak University, Kenya**, titled *“University–Industry Collaboration in AI, IoT and Robotics for Upskilling and Applied Innovation.”* The project aims to

strengthen applied innovation and workforce readiness in emerging digital technologies.

Makerere University Business School, Uganda, through lead applicant Ms. Barbara N. Kayondo, secured support for *“Strengthening University–Industry Collaboration through an AI-Enabled Digital Collaboration Platform,”* an initiative that seeks to create a digital ecosystem to enhance collaboration between universities and industry stakeholders.

In Tanzania, Dr. Frank Mbulinyingi Msafiri of **Kairuki University** will lead a project on *“Establishing Local Production of Dehydrated Culture Media Powder in Tanzania,”* which is expected to strengthen local pharmaceutical and laboratory supply systems.

Another selected project, led by Dr. Fanuel Kawaka of **Jaramogi Oginga Odinga University in Kenya**, focuses on advancing the blue economy through *“Beach Literacy Clubs & Indigenous Knowledge Hubs”* around Lake Victoria.

Uganda’s Gulu University, through Prof. Mugonola Basil, will

implement *“University–Industry Linkages for Enhancing the Soybean Value Chain in Uganda,”* targeting improved agricultural productivity and stronger industry collaboration within the soybean sector.

Also selected was a proposal by Dr. Benson Kituku of **Dedan Kimathi University of Technology, Kenya**, titled *“Building AI Capacity and Language Technologies through Collaboration and Co-Creation,”* which seeks to strengthen regional capabilities in artificial intelligence and language technologies.

The supported initiatives are expected to foster sustainable partnerships between academia and industry, strengthen skills development for students and researchers, and accelerate innovation ecosystems across East Africa. By supporting practical, industry-driven research and innovation, IUCEA continues to advance the role of higher education institutions as key drivers of economic growth, technological advancement, and regional transformation.

IUCEA Conducts Regional University Assessments for the EAC Scholarship Programme



IUCEA Team with Staff of KCA University on 15/06/2026

The Inter-University Council for East Africa (IUCEA) has concluded a series of institutional assessment visits to universities across Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania, and Uganda between 15 and 18 June 2026 as part of preparations for the expansion of the EAC Scholarship Programme.

The assessment visits followed an open call issued by IUCEA to eligible higher education institutions across the East African Community to express interest in

participating in the EAC Scholarship Programme. Before the visits, IUCEA conducted an eligibility assessment and detailed technical evaluation of applications received from 37 member universities across the Region, resulting in the shortlisting of 22 institutions for further evaluation through on-site assessments.

The visits were undertaken to assess the capacity and suitability of the shortlisted higher education institutions to host future

beneficiaries of Phase II of the EAC Scholarship Programme, which is supported by a EUR 9 million grant from the Federal Republic of Germany. The assessment evaluated the universities' capacity to host scholarship beneficiaries, focusing on academic and research support, facilities, student welfare, grievance mechanisms and administrative arrangements for successful completion

The EAC Scholarship Programme aims to strengthen regional



IUCEA Team with Staff of the University of Rwanda on the 15/6/2026

integration through student mobility, improve access to quality higher education and regional exposure, and develop a skilled workforce capable of contributing to the socio-economic transformation of the East African Community.

In Kenya, the assessment covered Murang'a University of Technology, Dedan Kimathi University of Technology, Strathmore University, Egerton University, United States International University-Africa, Daystar University, KCA University, Kibabii University, Jaramogi Oginga Odinga University of Science and Technology, Chuka University, and Kabarak University.

In Rwanda, visits were conducted at the University of Rwanda and Institut Supérieur d'Enseignement de Ruhengeri.

In Tanzania, the Visited Institutions are Dar es Salaam University College of Education, the Eastern Africa Statistical Training Centre, the University of Dar es Salaam, the Nelson Mandela African Institute of Science and Technology, the University of Dodoma, and Sokoine University of Agriculture.

In Uganda, the exercise included Busitema University, Mbarara University of Science and Technology, and Nkumba University.

The exercise also provided an opportunity to strengthen collaboration between IUCEA and participating institutions in advancing the objectives of the East African Common Higher Education Area.

The findings from the assessments will inform the selection of host

institutions for future cohorts of the EAC Scholarship Programme and contribute to ensuring that scholars benefit from high-quality learning environments that support academic success, innovation, and regional integration.

The expansion of the EAC Scholarship Programme reflects IUCEA's continued commitment to enhancing access to quality higher education, promoting academic mobility, and strengthening regional cooperation among universities in the East African Community. Through partnerships with universities, Partner States, development partners, and other stakeholders, IUCEA remains dedicated to building the human capital required to drive sustainable socio-economic development across the region.

NCHE Uganda Benchmarks IUCEA's Best Practices in Higher Education Institutional Registers



IUCEA Team and NCHE Uganda Team at IUCEA Headquarters on 24th of June 2026

The National Council for Higher Education (NCHE) of Uganda paid a courtesy call to the Inter-University Council for East Africa (IUCEA) Headquarters on 24 June 2026 as part of a benchmarking visit aimed at learning from IUCEA's experience in the development and management of registers for higher education institutions.

The NCHE delegation was received by Prof. Michael Mawa, Chief Principal for Quality Assurance and Qualifications Frameworks at IUCEA, and Mr. Patrick Aviku, Records and Information Management Assistant. The visit provided a valuable platform for knowledge exchange and institutional learning on best practices in maintaining comprehensive and reliable registers of higher education institutions.

During the discussions, the two institutions explored the systems, policy frameworks, tools, processes,

and quality assurance mechanisms that support the establishment, maintenance, and regular updating of higher education institutional registers. Particular emphasis was placed on ensuring data accuracy, integrity, accessibility, and sustainability as critical elements of effective higher education governance.

Prof. Mawa highlighted the importance of robust institutional data management systems in promoting transparency, accountability, and evidence-based decision-making within the higher education sector. He noted that accurate and up-to-date institutional registers are essential for quality assurance, regulatory oversight, regional integration, and stakeholder confidence in higher education systems.

The NCHE delegation expressed appreciation for IUCEA's willingness

to share its experiences and expertise, noting that the insights gained from the benchmarking exercise would contribute significantly to ongoing efforts to strengthen Uganda's higher education information management systems.

The visit underscores the continued collaboration between higher education regulatory and coordinating bodies in the East African region and reflects a shared commitment to enhancing quality assurance, institutional effectiveness, and data-driven governance in higher education. Through such engagements, IUCEA continues to promote regional cooperation and the exchange of best practices among higher education stakeholders, contributing to the advancement of quality and harmonised higher education systems across East Africa.

Prof. Idris A. Rai Champions Localised Digital Learning at Global Future Higher Education Summit in China

Shenzhen, China, 6 June 2026 – Professor Idris A. Rai, Acting Executive Secretary of the Inter-University Council for East Africa (IUCEA), highlighted the importance of localising global digital learning resources to strengthen teachers' digital competencies across East Africa during the Global Future Higher Education Summit held at the Southern University of Science and Technology Convention Center in Shenzhen, China.

Addressing an international audience of higher education leaders, policymakers, academics, and innovators, Prof. Rai underscored the need to adapt global educational resources to local contexts to maximise their impact. He noted that digital learning initiatives are most effective when they are delivered through trusted regional networks and supported by learning experiences that reflect the realities and needs of educators and learners on the ground.

"Global training resources achieve their greatest value when they are contextualised to address local challenges and opportunities," Prof. Rai emphasised. He further highlighted the critical role of tailored digital capacity-building programmes in equipping teachers with the skills and competencies required to effectively integrate technology into teaching and learning.

The summit was organised by the UNESCO Institute for Information Technologies in Education (IITE), the UNESCO Regional Office for East



■ Prof. Rai making a presentation at the Global Future Higher Education Summit in China on 6th of June 2026

Asia, and the International Centre for Higher Education Innovation under the auspices of UNESCO (ICHEI). The event brought together global stakeholders to discuss the future of higher education in an era of rapid technological advancement and digital transformation.

Key discussions focused on emerging models of industry-education integration, the development of future-ready higher education ecosystems, and the transformative role of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in aligning education and talent development with evolving labour market demands. Participants also explored strategies for upskilling and reskilling the workforce, fostering innovation, and strengthening international collaboration through the International Institute of Online Education (IIOE) Global Ecosystem.

Prof. Rai's participation at the summit reaffirmed IUCEA's commitment to advancing innovation, digital transformation, and quality higher education across the East African Community (EAC). His contribution also reflected IUCEA's ongoing efforts to strengthen regional and international partnerships that enhance the relevance, accessibility, and quality of higher education while preparing graduates with the skills needed to thrive in the future world of work.

Through its engagement in global higher education dialogues, IUCEA continues to promote collaborative solutions that support digital learning, capacity development, and the creation of resilient and inclusive higher education systems across East Africa.

IUCEA, Makerere University Strengthen Collaboration for the 4th GORILA International Conference

Prof. Michael Mawa, Chief Principal for Quality Assurance and Qualifications Frameworks at the Inter-University Council for East Africa (IUCEA), hosted Prof. Yazidhi Bamutaze, Deputy Principal of the College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences of Makerere University, at the IUCEA Headquarters on 24th of June 2026 for discussions on the forthcoming 4th International Conference on Geographical Sciences for Resilient Communities, Economies, and Livelihoods under Global Environmental Change (GORILA Conference), scheduled to take place from 30 November to 6 December 2026.

The meeting focused on strengthening strategic partnerships and enhancing collaboration in planning and organising the conference, which is expected to bring together leading scientists, policymakers, practitioners, development partners, and other stakeholders from across Africa and beyond. The conference will serve as a premier platform for advancing dialogue and knowledge exchange on innovative approaches to addressing emerging environmental, social, and economic challenges affecting communities and livelihoods.

The discussions emphasised the importance of fostering multidisciplinary and cross-sectoral partnerships to support resilience-building initiatives and sustainable development efforts. Prof. Mawa and Prof. Mamutaze discussed the



■ Prof. Mawa, Prof. Yazidhi Bamutaze, and Prof. Obonyo at IUCEA Headquarters on 24th of June 2026.

conference's role in promoting the generation, dissemination, and application of scientific knowledge and innovations that contribute to transformative solutions aligned with the aspirations of the United Nations Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development and the African Union Agenda 2063.

The conference aims to provide a forum for sharing cutting-edge research and innovations, strengthening collaboration among scientists and development actors, increasing the contribution of African scholars to global scientific knowledge, and enhancing the capacities of early-career researchers through mentorship, networking, and specialised training opportunities.

Also participating in the meeting was Prof. Meshack Obonyo, Senior Principal for Exchange and Linkages at IUCEA, who contributed to discussions on advancing institutional partnerships and strengthening regional and international cooperation in higher education, research, and innovation.

The engagement reaffirmed the shared commitment of IUCEA and Makerere University to promoting academic excellence, research collaboration, and strategic partnerships that drive sustainable development, strengthen resilience, and support the transformation of higher education in Africa.

IUCEA Celebrates EAC Scholarship Programme Graduates at Sokoine University of Agriculture

The Inter-University Council for East Africa (IUCEA) proudly congratulates Wurda Jane Sukeji Victor from South Sudan and Omondi Otieno Charles from Kenya, graduates of the 3rd Cohort of the EAC Scholarship Programme, on the successful completion of their Master of Science in Irrigation Engineering and Management at Sokoine University of Agriculture, United Republic of Tanzania.

The two scholars were awarded their degrees during the university's graduation ceremony held on 21 May 2026, marking a significant milestone in their academic and professional journeys.

As the Project Executing Agency of the EAC Scholarship Programme, IUCEA is honoured to have supported the scholars throughout their studies. Their achievement reflects not only academic excellence and perseverance but also the transformative impact of regional scholarship initiatives in developing highly skilled professionals for East Africa.

The graduates' expertise in irrigation engineering and management will contribute to addressing regional challenges in agricultural productivity, food security, water resource management, and sustainable development. Their success also exemplifies the role of higher education in fostering regional integration, knowledge exchange,



■ Two young Scholars at the Graduation Ceremony in Tanzania

and human capital development across the East African Community. IUCEA commends the graduates for their dedication and commitment and wishes them continued success

as they apply their knowledge and skills to advance sustainable agricultural development and contribute to the socio-economic transformation of the region.

Call for Applications: IUCEA Staff Mobility Programme 2026/2027

The Inter-University Council for East Africa (IUCEA) invites eligible academic and technical staff from its member universities to apply for the 2026/2027 Staff Mobility Programme.

The Programme promotes academic exchange, knowledge sharing, institutional collaboration, and research partnerships across the East African Community (EAC), contributing to the realisation of the East African Community

Common Higher Education Area (EACHEA). Participants benefit from cross-border professional engagement, strengthened institutional networks, enhanced teaching and research capacity, and opportunities for long-term regional collaboration.

The previous application cycle attracted strong interest from across the region, reaffirming the Programme's growing impact in advancing higher education

integration and excellence in East Africa.

Eligible staff from IUCEA member universities are encouraged to seize this opportunity to broaden their professional experience, share expertise, and contribute to regional academic development. For eligibility criteria, application guidelines, and submission details, visit **www.iucea.org**.

CALL FOR APPLICATIONS: EAC-SMS Undergraduate and Postgraduate Programs 2026/2027

Background

The Inter-University Council for East Africa (IUCEA) invites suitably qualified students who are nationals of the East African Community (EAC) Partner States to apply for the EAC Student Mobility Scholarship Scheme (EAC-SMS) for the 2026/2027 academic year.

What is the EAC-SMS?

The EAC-SMS is a regional scholarship programme designed to promote student exchange across the EAC Partner States. It supports students to pursue undergraduate, Master's, and PhD studies at universities in a Partner State other than their own.

Scholarship Coverage

This is a cost-sharing programme supported by:

- Host universities: Waive tuition and examination fees for students from other Partner States.
- IUCEA Secretariat: Covers travel expenses, health insurance, and research costs.
- Parents/Guardians/Students: Cover remaining costs

such as accommodation and daily living expenses through personal means or other available support schemes.

Scholarships Available for 2026/2027

A total of 188 scholarships are available in various disciplines:

- 1 Diploma
- 95 Undergraduate
- 81 Master
- 11 PhD

Where to Study?

Participating universities from across the EAC Partner States are offering scholarships for specific programs. The full list of programs, institutions, number of slots, and intakes is available at the following link: **<https://www.iucea.org/call-for-applications/>**

The deadline is 31st August 2026.

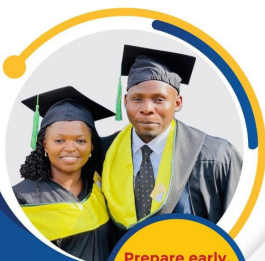
EAC-KfW Scholarship Programme, Applications Expected Later this Year



KfW

EAC SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAMME

PHASE II
2026 INTAKE



Prepare early.
Plan ahead.
Opportunities
are coming!

WHAT'S COMING?

Hosting Master's Students

Master's Scholarships

PRIORITY FIELDS OF STUDY

Mathematics	Informatics	Technology
Engineering	Science	Business Science

ELIGIBILITY

- ✓ EAC Citizen
- ✓ 35 years or below
- ✓ Second Class (Upper) or Distinction
- ✓ Study in another EAC country

Find more details at

<https://www.iucea.org/eacsp2/>

STAY TUNED!

Note: For awareness only
Applications are not
yet open

Full application details and timelines will be shared
through IUCEA official channels in due course.



17TH IUCEA ANNUAL MEETING & CONFERENCE



Powering the Future of Higher
Education in East Africa
Through Strategic Partnerships
and Collaborations

29-31
JULY
2026

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