



UVCF Chronicles

SEPT 2025 Issue #003

Theme: "Strengthening Higher Education through Innovation, Collaboration, and Policy Engagement"

INSIDE

Editorial Message

Welcome to this 3rd edition of our newsletter! In this issue, we explore exciting developments, expert insights, and inspiring stories that matter to you. Dive in and stay informed, connected, and inspired

Thought Leadership

Discover fresh perspectives and expert insights that challenge conventional thinking and inspire innovation.

Institutional Highlights

Stay updated on the latest achievements, milestones, and initiatives from our member institutions.

Events

Explore upcoming and past events, including impactful workshops, conferences, and leadership forums. Stay informed, stay connected.



Executive Director's Message

By Prof Eriabu Lugujjo

"In a changing world, higher education must lead with innovation, resilience, and a commitment to shaping tomorrow's leaders."

Dear Members,

This edition highlights our recent engagements and the shared commitment to advancing higher education in Uganda and beyond.

"There is immense power when a group of people with similar interests gets together to work toward the same goals".

— Idowu Koyenikan



UVCF DIALOGUE WITH MINISTRY OF EDUCATION & SPORTS

The UVCF Executive Committee recently held a strategic meeting to advance higher education priorities in Uganda. Key issues and proposals were presented to Hon. Dr. John Chrysestom Muyingo, Minister of State for Higher Education, alongside senior commissioners from the Ministry of Education and Sports.

The engagement aimed to strengthen collaboration between UVCF and MoES in shaping national higher education policy and implementation. The Uganda Vice Chancellors' Forum continues to serve as an essential platform for dialogue on regional frameworks, institutional partnerships, policy development, and leadership priorities. Prof Paul Waako encouraged all members to remain proactive, innovative, and united as we chart a collective path toward a more resilient and forward-looking higher education system in Uganda.



Did You Know?

“Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.”

– Nelson Mandela



Extra- Ordinary Meeting

UVCF Calls for Scientific Review of Higher Education Access Certificate (HEAC) Programme at Extraordinary Sitting

On **23rd June 2025**, the Uganda Vice Chancellors' Forum (UVCF) held an extraordinary sitting at Makerere University, hosted by the Acting Vice Chancellor, **Professor Buyinza Mukadasi**. During the meeting, members issued a special appeal for a comprehensive scientific evaluation of the **HEAC** programme, noting that its future remains uncertain.

The call reflects UVCF's commitment to evidence-based decision-making to ensure programmes like HEAC effectively serve students and Uganda's higher education sector.

In the words of **John C. Maxwell**:

"Change is inevitable. Growth is optional." Let us choose growth.

Highlights of the Month

Quarterly Meeting at Mbarara University of Science and Technology (MUST).

The Forum held its quarterly meeting at MUST, hosted by Prof Pauline Byakika-Kibwika, which brought together Vice Chancellors and other senior leaders. Members deliberated on key issues affecting higher education, including quality assurance, financing, and policy reforms. The meeting also provided space to share institutional success stories and challenges. It reaffirmed UVCF's commitment to collective action and peer learning.



Philanthropy Training at Africa Renewal University (AFRU)

A specialized training session on philanthropy was hosted at AFRU, attracting representatives from several institutions. The training focused on practical strategies for mobilizing resources beyond tuition fees, including alumni engagement and external partnerships. Participants gained insights on building sustainable funding models for universities. The session highlighted the importance of cultivating a culture of giving within the higher education sector.



Training of Academic Registrars

Academic Registrars across the country gathered for a capacity-building workshop facilitated by UVCF. The training enhanced knowledge in academic administration, focusing on records management, digital transformation, and harmonization of practices. Registrars also discussed ways to streamline admissions, examinations, and graduation processes. The workshop was highly interactive and set the stage for stronger collaboration within this critical cadre of university leadership.



Formation of the Academic Registrars' Forum

One of the key outcomes of the Registrars' training was the establishment of the Academic Registrars' Forum (ARF). The ARF will serve as a platform for continuous professional development, peer learning, and policy engagement. Members expressed strong commitment to ensuring uniform academic standards across universities. The Forum will operate

under the umbrella of UVCF and report progress during quarterly meetings. This marks a milestone in strengthening governance structures within higher education.

Celebrating The 14th Uganda Vice Chancellors' Forum (UVCF) Annual Conference 2025

Theme: Delivering Quality Higher Education in a Challenging Economic Environment

The Uganda Vice Chancellors' Forum (UVCF) is celebrating its **14th Annual Conference** on **16th–17th October 2025** at the **Best Western Hotel, Entebbe**.



Guided by the theme *"Delivering Quality Higher Education in a Challenging Economic Environment,"* the two-day event will convene Vice Chancellors, Deputy Vice Chancellors, policymakers, government officials, and industry leaders to engage in meaningful dialogue on the future of higher education in Uganda.

UVCF is privileged to celebrate this milestone with the generous support of our sponsors: **Bank of Uganda, Arxia, Serosoft–Academia, UVTAB, Stanbic Bank Uganda and Victoria University.**

As we mark this important occasion, UVCF reaffirms its commitment to advancing quality, innovation, and collaboration in higher education for the transformation of Uganda and beyond.



Strengthening Partnerships

During the month, UVCF deepened its engagement with government ministries, regulatory bodies, and development partners. These efforts are aimed at creating stronger linkages between universities and policy actors. Dialogue focused on aligning institutional priorities with national development goals. Strategic collaborations are being explored to improve funding opportunities, research partnerships, and student support systems. Such partnerships are vital to sustaining the growth of higher education in Uganda.



Feature Insight: AI Innovations Shaping the Future

Artificial Intelligence is driving groundbreaking change across education, healthcare, and industry. From AI-powered tutors that personalize learning, to drug discovery accelerating healthcare solutions, to creative tools reshaping art and content – AI is revolutionizing the world.

Top AI Breakthroughs of 2025:

- Personalized AI Tutors – Custom learning experiences for students.
- AI-Designed Medicine – Faster, more effective treatments.
- Multimodal AI – Text, image, and video integration.
- Creative AI – Partnering with artists and creators.
- Accelerated Scientific Research – AI speeding discovery and innovation.



Did You Know?

AI tutors can now create customized study plans for University students

UVCF Courtesy Visit to Uganda Vocational Training and Assessment Board (UVTAB)



On 18th September 2025, the UVTAB welcomed a delegation from the Uganda Vice Chancellors' Forum (UVCF) at its Secretariat. The UVCF team, led by Prof. Eriabu Lugujjo, Executive Director, and Ronald Balimunsi, Head of ICT, engaged with UVTAB representatives, including Onesimus Oyesigye (CPA), Executive Secretary, and the Deputy Executive Secretary.

The meeting served as an important platform to foster stronger collaboration and explore potential synergies in advancing skills development and competence-based education. During the visit, Prof. Lugujjo extended a formal invitation to UVTAB to participate in the upcoming UVCF Annual Conference, scheduled for 16th October 2025 in Entebbe.

UVCF Courtesy Visit to Makerere University Business School (MUBS).



A team from the UVCF Secretariat, led by Prof. Eriabu Lugujjo, Executive Director, alongside Ronald Balimunsi, Head of ICT recently visited Makerere University Business School (MUBS), where they were warmly welcomed by Prof. Moses Muhwezi, PhD, the newly appointed Principal of MUBS.

During the visit, Prof. Lugujjo extended his congratulations to Prof. Muhwezi on his appointment and engaged in fruitful discussions on potential areas of collaboration, policy development, and strategies to enhance the quality of higher education in order to better support the economy.

The delegation also took the opportunity to invite Prof. Muhwezi to the upcoming UVCF Annual Conference, scheduled for 16th–17th October 2025 at Best Western Hotel, Entebbe.

The conference will bring together high-level dignitaries to deliberate on national and regional challenges under the theme: “Delivering Quality Higher Education in a Challenging Economy.”

Why Grooming Graduates Will Spur Uganda’s Productivity and Competitiveness



**Jane Amuge Okello -
Chief Operations Officer**

Recently, on the back of a compliance engagement I was having with our company tax advisor, we found ourselves detouring off for a handsome 30 minutes. And guess what was bothering us both? It was our recent encounters and experiences with employees whom we found ourselves commonly calling weird.

Every often, I see young graduates celebrating the successful completion of their various academic pursuits. For these young people and their parents, the promise of a new lease of life is profound, given the anticipated opportunities that are associated with academic excellence. They are anxious to enter the job market and build a life for themselves, and debut their newly acquired skills.

But while this is going on, numerous employers are lamenting, wondering what fabric today’s employees are made of. You will hear statements like, “I wonder whether the new breed of employees went to the very universities that some of us attended, and so on?”

Amidst the business upheavals that entrepreneurs are having to deal with, the desire for “fresh and ready” is as tempting as the fallacy of the “perfect couple made for each other” until the exhaustion of firing and rehiring overwhelms.

Reflecting on the stories I have heard and shared with fellow entrepreneurs, a common conclusion is that young workers are being nurtured both at homes and in schools, which are shaping most of them to become the scary lot that most employers are having to contend with. Interestingly, we all took note that children from families with a good culture, ethics, and who had worked along with their parents or guardians with discipline and tenacity to acquire their education often had more focus and a greater drive to be more than what they were and vice versa.

Consequently, today’s employers hiring fresh graduates face the following challenges: the lack of practical skills, selfish character, indiscipline, purposelessness, the corruption driven get-rich-quick attitude, a sense of entitlement, low productivity harnessed by laziness, the culture of copying everything from the internet!

Notwithstanding the calibre of young workers an employer ultimately hires, coaching and mentoring them should be a key pillar if employers are to groom them to the excitement of adding value to their business. Like anything, coaching and mentorship is an investment that requires purposefulness, time, courage, sacrifice and placing value on talent development. The SkillCoop Graduate Apprentice Program (SGAP) is a pioneer initiative by The Uhuru Institute for Social Development under its flagship enterprises the SkillCoop Academy, Coop360° Network and the #NoExcuses youth leadership and entrepreneurship development program. In collaboration with cooperative members of the

Coop360° Network, Uganda Vice Chancellors Forum and Chartered Universities and Colleges in Uganda, SGAP provides an amazing avenue through which fresh graduates are being groomed into the real world of work.

Cooperatives in Uganda, like other businesses, are faced with very lean teams who are often expected to juggle many assignments, on the assumption that the cooperative can afford employees, something that is currently a luxury to most. Typically, most cooperatives belong to the micro or small businesses categories and have no employees but are run by their boards and subcommittees. I can say without a doubt that these elected leaders are most times in need of coaching and mentorship as well, but we shall delve more into this on another day.

Started in September 2024, the SkillCoop Graduate Apprentice Program (SGAP) is creating unique shared spaces for members, leaders, employees of cooperatives, universities, colleges, seasoned business owners and professionals to explore ideas and opportunities.

SGAP is collaboratively facilitating skills and knowledge building for cooperative productivity, competitiveness, and identity. For the fresh graduates venturing into the world of work, SGAP is promoting engagement, providing real-world experiences, developing critical thinking skills, and fostering creativity, a key skill for one to thrive in today's competitive business environment.

Given the perception that Uganda's secondary school curriculum is too broad; vocational education curriculum also considered not to be dynamic and the higher education curriculum not sufficiently incorporating practical work-based training as a

form of preparation for the world of work, Uganda's next blue print recognizes that employers are spending significant amounts of work time and resources re-orienting, re-tooling and training new entrants into the job market. With a target of impacting 100 fresh graduates per year, SGAP could transform Uganda's labour, which is inadequately skilled and is perceived to have a poor work culture, according to the country's National Development Plan IV.

As we place our eyes on a promising future ahead, we congratulate Shuuku SACCO, Bushika Integrated Area Cooperative Enterprise and Bwindi Coffee Cooperatives for being launch pads for the first Cohort. We also acknowledge Busitema, Bishop Stuart, Kisubi, Nkumba, Soroti, Kabale Universities for recommending fresh graduates for the inaugural recruitment. Starting small, learning as we go, and building on these lessons the SGAP has the potential of becoming one of Uganda's most rewarding practical employment creation and enterprise development models.

SGAP is designed for graduates between the ages of 18-25 who have graduated from a college, institution, or university in the last two years with a certificate, diploma, or degree. They are interviewed and placed based on the requests from the cooperative members of the Coop360° network. Currently, the program is sponsored by TUI and the cooperatives, and so the numbers are restricted by the available budget lines. Our hope is that we shall join hands to widen the scope and benefit of the program. #DoingitRight

This article is written by Jane Amuge Okello, the Chief Operations Officer of the Uhuru Institute for Social Development.



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