

## VARSITIES HAVE LOST BILLIONS OF SHILLINGS AND DOLLARS FROM FOREGONE FEES

By Nelson Kiva

Post-COVID-19 recovery for universities will be too expensive for institutions to finance on their own.

Instead, experts suggest that government supports not only public universities but also the private ones in order to effectively adapt to the COVID-19-dictated global order.

The support, according to Prof. Emeka Akaezuwa, the vice-chancellor of the International University of East Africa (IUEA), was also necessary to other institutions expected to produce human resource with knowledge and new skills, which are critical for the country, pending the fourth industrial revolution.

"With the pandemic, academic institutions, both private and the public, have been affected and government needs to rethink the support for academic institutions, since they greatly contribute to the critical sectors of the economy in terms of producing the skills the country needs to advance," Akaezuwa said.

He made the remarks during the eighth graduation ceremony of IUEA in Kansanga, a Kampala suburb, where 520 graduates were conferred with diplomas, bachelor's and master's in different academic programmes on Friday.

During the graduation ceremony, the university also launched the IUEA Emerging Technology Park in its bid to become a leading technological research institution in the country.

Prof. Dr. Michael Koch, the head of international affairs at the SRH University Heidelberg in southwestern Germany, noted that the pandemic has globally taken a heavy toll not only on students, but also on the academic institutions.

"Universities have lost billions of shillings and dollars from foregone fees and, therefore, the institutions have to react.

# POST-COVID-19 RECOVERY TOO COSTLY FOR VARSITIES – EXPERTS

PHOTOS BY MPALANYI SSENTONGO



Awardees and the senior management of the university cutting a cake during the graduation ceremony

"They have to rebuild. More specifically, they must get ready to face a more digital learning environment. University education needs a true rethinking in a post-COVID-19 era," Koch said.

Proprietors of more than 1,000 private schools have since cried out for government bailout, saying their schools were at risk of being auctioned due to accumulated loan interests.

As a state intervention, the Bank of Uganda has since ordered the commercial banks to reschedule the loans as part of the interventions to save the schools.

Koch suggested that universities needed to adjust the way they operate and apply more digital interventions.

"Knowledge and information can be transported well, and

sometimes more effectively, through online channels.

Many workers may not return to their office environment at all and, will mostly, work from home in the future.

Others may combine office and home-based work on a permanent basis. The same type of digital change is equally required now at universities," he said.

He emphasised that despite the lack of revenue due to COVID-19-triggered lockdowns, investing in new online platforms was the way to go by the universities.

Hassan Alwi, the IUEA resident director, expressed concern that due to COVID-19-triggered challenges, some students did not graduate.

As an institution, Alwi noted that government support was critical, more especially on the different technological innovations they are undertaking, which resulted into them winning the 2021 Uganda Science Innovators award f.

Despite the challenges posed by COVID-19, the chairperson of the University Council, Moses Sebunya tasked the graduates with working hard and using the skills and knowledge acquired to solve community problems.

"The knowledge and skills that you have learned at IUEA will only be retained by yourself if you share it with others. Use your education to bring out the best in others," he said.

The commissioner in charge of private schools and institutions in the ministry education, George Mutekanga said with or without COVID-19, learning must continue.

He observed the need for all stakeholders going back to the drawing board and re-strategising on how effectively to deal with COVID-19-related challenges hindering the delivery of quality education.



Atwiine (left) scored a CGPA of 4.88

### BEST PERFORMERS

Charlotte Atwiine from the faculty of business and management with a CGPA of 4.88, was announced the overall best-performing graduate and awarded. Other top performers in First Class were Emmanuel Wathowan from the faculty of law; faculty of science and technology's Dunia Ghislain; faculty of business's Agatha Nalwanga and Salma Yakubu from the faculty of engineering.



## MINISTRY OF ENERGY AND MINERAL DEVELOPMENT

### INTEGRATED NUCLEAR INFRASTRUCTURE REVIEW (INIR) MISSION

The Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development has organized the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Integrated Nuclear Infrastructure Review (INIR) Mission to assess Uganda's readiness towards construction and operation of the first Nuclear Power Plant.

**Emphasis will be on;**

- 1) Evaluation of the development status of the nuclear infrastructure;
- 2) Identifying the areas that need further attention during the building of the national nuclear infrastructure in Uganda and;
- 3) Preparing an Action Plan to address areas for further improvement.

**Dates:**  
29<sup>th</sup> November to  
6<sup>th</sup> December 2021

**Venue:**  
Speke Resort Munyonyo

**The Opening Ceremony will be graced by the Prime Minister of Uganda Rt. Hon. Robinah Nabanjja.**

**Attendance Is by Invite!**

For more information Please Contact;  
**Commissioner Nuclear Energy Department**  
Call: 0414-341 494

**PERMANENT SECRETARY**