



MAKERERE UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF HEALTH SCIENCES

NEWSLETTER

CHS

January - March 2026



76th Grad: CHS Presents 26 PhD

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Message from the Principal



Dr. Bruce J. Kirenga
Principal, College of Health Sciences

As we reflect on the period, January to April of 2026, I am proud of the continued dedication and excellence demonstrated across the College. During the period, our staff and students are committed to supporting health outcomes of the Uganda population and beyond through our mandate of teaching, research, innovation and community outreach. The commitment of our members reinforces our position as a leading institution in health sciences education and innovation.

In this issue of our newsletter, you will note strides by the College in strengthening partnerships, expanding research capacity, and nurturing the next generation of

health professionals. I commend the hard work, resilience and creativity of our faculty and students in the face of evolving global and national health challenges.

As we move forward, let us remain focused and I encourage all members of our College community to continue collaborating, innovating, and striving for excellence in all that we do.

Thank you for your continued commitment and contribution.

CHS Showcases Research Strength with 26 PhD Graduates



PhD Graduands at 76th Grad

At the Makerere University 76th Graduation Ceremony, held in February 2026, graduands were presented for conferment of degrees and award of diplomas from the Makerere University College of Health

Sciences (MakCHS), alongside other colleges.

MakCHS presented a total of 26 graduands for conferment of Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) degree. This is a testament

to the colleges and Makerere University's contribution in training skilled health professionals and strengthening Uganda's and Africa's health systems through education, innovation and research.

Research by the 26 PhD scholars drawn from Uganda and other African nations is poised to shape policy, strengthen health systems, and drive innovation. Trained across diverse fields, these scholars represent a wave of expertise committed to addressing the country and region's pressing health challenges. Their work not only underscores the critical role of doctoral training in development but also signals a growing capacity for locally driven, evidence-based solutions to improve health outcomes in Uganda and beyond.

The PhD Scholars studied various challenges as presented in the table below.

No	Scholar	Research Topic
1	Dr. Bagasha Peace	Quality of Life among Patients with Kidney Failure: A Mixed Methods Prospective Analysis, Exploring Dynamics, 12 Months Survival And Associated Factors
2	Dr. Birungi Caroline	Risky Sexual Behaviour Among Individuals with Severe Mental Illness in Uganda: Prevalence, Correlates, Perceptions and Effectiveness of a Risky Sexual Behaviour Reduction Intervention
3	Dr. Ezenwa Josephine Chisom	Genetic Determinations of Type-2 Diabetes Mellitus in Individuals of African Ancestry
4	Dr. Gumikiriza Joy Louise	Cultural Adaptation and Evaluation of the WHO Support Intervention for Reduction of Psychological Distress among Caregivers of Older Persons with Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementias (ADRD) in Uganda
5	Dr. Iragena Jean De dieu	Roll-out and Scale-Up of WHO-Endorsed Technologies for Tuberculosis Diagnosis in Africa: Opportunities, Strengths, and Challenges
6	Dr. Kayiga Hebert	Effectiveness, Acceptability, and Uptake of Early Versus Standard Intra-Uterine Contraception following Provision of First Trimester Medical Post Abortion Care in Central Uganda
7	Dr. Kintu Christopher	The Predictive Utility of Polygenic Risk Scores for Chronic Kidney Disease in Africans
8	Dr. Kiryowa Haruna Muhmood	Prevalence of Periodontal Disease in Patients with Diabetes Mellitus Attending National Referral Hospital: Prevalence, Risk Factors, Association with Glycemic Control and Insulin Resistance
9	Dr. Kisémbó Harriet Nalubega	Effects of Continuous Professional Development and Clinical Imaging Guidelines on Appropriateness of Computed Tomography Examinations Among Young Patients In Selected Hospitals In Uganda
10	Dr. Kituuka Olivia	Informed Consent Process for Emergency Surgery at Public and Private Teaching Hospitals Surgical Emergency Units in the Urban Ugandan Setting
11	Dr. Kudamba Ali	Anti-Cancer Activity and Safety of <i>Rhoicissus Tridentata</i> (LF) Wild & R.B. Drumm. As used in the Treatment of Prostate Cancer in Elgon Sub-region , Uganda
12	Dr. Kwizera Arthur	Acute Hypoxaemic Respiratory Failure in Uganda, Prevalence, Outcomes and Effect of Respiratory Interventions to Improve Outcomes
13	Dr. Lwere Kamada	Gut Microbiome Composition, Immune Response, and Genetic Predisposition to Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementias in a Ugandan Population
14	Dr. Mukisa John	Imputation Performance Killer Cell Immunoglobulin-like Receptor Diversity and Association with HIV Disease Progression among Paediatric Cohorts In Botswana and Uganda
15	Dr. Muwema Mercy	Assessment of the Quality of Perinatal Care and Development of an Improved Model to reduce Perinatal Deaths in Bunyoro Sub-region, Uganda
16	Dr. Nabakooza Grace	Modelling the Transmission Dynamics of Influenza in Africa
17	Dr. Nabukenya Sylvia	Understanding Stakeholder Perspectives, Preferences and Experiences on the return of individual Pharmacogenomic research results
18	Dr. Naggirinya Agnes Bwanika	Acceptability, Effect and Cost-Effectiveness of Mobile-Therapy Adherence among Youth: A mixed methods Sequential study in Kiryandongo District, Western Uganda
19	Dr. Nalwanga Damalie	Adult Patients with Cancer in Uganda: Validation of the Tool, Health-related quality of life, and patient experiences
20	Dr. Naamala Allen	Adult Patients with Cancer in Uganda: Validation of the Tool, Health Related Quality of Life and Patient Experiences
21	Dr. Namatovu Jane Frances	Continuing Professional Development for Primary Care Doctors in Low-resource Settings: Developing a Competency-based Framework
22	Dr. Namutebi Mariam	Post-partum Care in Uganda: Facility Readiness, Midwives' Perspectives, Individualised Care Planning, and Patient Outcomes
23	Dr. Okello Clement Dove	Mortality Rates and Frequency of Red Blood Cell Allo-immunization in Recipients of Leucoreduced and non-Leucoreduced whole Blood Transfusion in Uganda
24	Dr. Rutayisire Gad	Virological and Social Behavioural Factors associated with Mother-to-Child Transmission of Drug Resistant HIV-1 Strains In PMTCT Clinics in Rwanda
25	Dr. Ssekamatte Phillip	Immune Responses to Latent Tuberculosis Infection and Tuberculosis Preventive Therapy among Adults with Type-2 Diabetes Mellitus in Uganda
26	Dr. Wekesa Clara	Prevalence Patterns Biomarkers and Cytokine Profiles of Significant Liver Fibrosis among people living with and without HIV in Ugand

Alumni Reunite for MakCHS Centennial Celebrations



MakCHS Centennial Dinner cake cutting

On 6th March 2026, over 500 alumni, students, faculty, and partners of the Makerere College of Health Sciences (MakCHS) gathered at Hotel Africana, Kampala for a memorable dinner to celebrate a century of excellence in medical education, research, and service. The event formed part of the College's ongoing 100-year anniversary activities that began in 2024.

The alumni dinner, first of its kind at MakCHS, was organised to celebrate a century of existence and launch fundraising for the refurbishment of the iconic Davies Lecture Theatre (DLT). Held in a warm and reflective atmosphere, the dinner provided an opportunity for alumni to reconnect, share experiences, and celebrate the institution's enduring legacy. Many attendees spoke of their formative years at the College, role it has played in shaping their journey and producing globally recognized professionals.

The event also attracted several retired faculty including former

Vice Chancellor Prof. George Kirya, Prof. George Paul D'Arbella, Prof. Anokbonggo and Prof Sam Luboga among others. Also in attendance were stakeholders from professional associations, Ministry of Health, regulators, directors of Hospitals among others.

The Chief Guest, Hon. Dr. Jane Ruth Aceng Ocerro - Minister of Health was represented by Dr. Rose Byanyima, Executive Director of Mulago National Referral Hospital, which also serves as MakCHS' main teaching hospital.

“Although the institution has evolved over the years from its humble beginnings as a medical training school in 1924, it has remained a pillar of excellence in medical education, research and clinical service; producing dedicated professionals serving humanity in Uganda and beyond”.

In the Minister's speech, she extended warm congratulations to Makerere University and the College on reaching the remarkable milestone. She noted that,

She expressed pride that as an alumna, highlighting that MakCHS has contributed to national development. She said, 'Over the past hundred years, the graduates of this College have become national assets. They are the clinicians caring for patients in hospitals and health centres across Uganda; the public health leaders shaping policy and programs; the researchers generating new knowledge; and the educators preparing the next generation'.

She reminded the College that heading into the next century, research and innovation is necessary to save lives. She added, 'scientific discovery must not remain confined to journals and conferences. It must translate into policies, guidelines, technologies, and interventions that directly improve health outcomes'.



Attendees enjoy dinner at the MakCHS Centennial Dinner

In his address, the Prof. Bruce Kirenga – Principal, MakCHS welcomed alumni and expressed appreciation for their continued contributions to healthcare, and national development. He noted that the centennial celebration was not only a moment to honour the past but also to envision the future of health professions education in an evolving global landscape. He thanked the organising committee, who through commitment delivered the centennial dinner and the events held from the launch of the celebrations in 2024.

Prof. Kirenga highlighted that beside refurbishment of the

Davies Lecture Theatre, other developments to improve infrastructure at the College were underway; including laboratories improvement, skills labs, and administrative offices. He acknowledged support from government and development partners in these improvement endeavours.

The Principal pledged to support efforts to implement further alumni engagement and invited members to the Centennial monument unveiling scheduled to take place later in the year.

Professor David Meya, Chairperson of the MakCHSat100 Organising Committee thanked the committee, guests and partners for the support in the various activities held to mark 100 years of Health Professionals Training in Uganda since 1924. Prof. Meya reminded the congregation that this only the start for MakCHS alumni engagement, and that all resources raised will go towards refurbishing the Davies Lecture Theatre, calling on alumni to support the fundraising drive.

Several alumni shared inspiring personal journeys, highlighting how their training at the College instilled values of service, resilience, and scientific excellence. They encouraged stronger alumni engagement through mentorship, research collaboration, and support for current students.

The evening concluded with renewed commitment from alumni to actively support the College as it embarks on its next century. By the end of the night, dinner and raffle ticket sales reached UGX 118 million. Additional donations and pledges totalled about UGX 100 million and USD 7,000.

Mentorship and Pushing Boundaries: \$25,000 prize won in Global Innovation Competition



NeoNest Team - Vivian Arinaitwe and Saajan Patel

Makerere University's culture of innovation once again took centre stage on the global platform, with Che Innovations emerging the overall winner at the prestigious Brown Venture Prize Competition, securing a \$25,000 prize.

The team's winning innovation, NeoNest, is a locally designed neonatal transport device developed at the Design Cube—Makerere University. NeoNest is engineered to safely transport newborns while maintaining the critical warmth they need to

survive during transfers between healthcare facilities, addressing a major gap in neonatal care in low-resource settings.

The award-winning pitch was compellingly delivered by Vivian Arinaitwe, a Biomedical Engineering alumni of Biomedical Engineering at Makerere University College of Health Sciences, alongside her co-founder Saajan Patel based in the United States of America. Their presentation stood out among global competitors, earning them first place and international recognition. Vivian

has been mentored by the Biomedical Engineering Unit at MakCHS even after she completed her studies.

This milestone underscores the growing impact of locally developed medical technologies and highlights Uganda's potential to contribute meaningful, scalable solutions to global health challenges. It also reflects the strength of interdisciplinary collaboration and innovation fostered at Makerere University.

Che Innovations was born out of the Duke-Makerere Summer Biodesign Fellowship, an initiative organized by the Design Cube—Makerere University. The founding team—Vivian Arinaitwe, Saajan Patel, Joseph Okileng, and Sophia Singer—came together as students from diverse cultural and academic backgrounds, united by a shared mission to solve pressing healthcare challenges.



Vivian and Saajan with Che Innovations Prize cheque

Despite being spread across continents after the fellowship, the team remained committed to their vision. Over the past two years, they have navigated distance, time zone differences, and academic demands to grow their idea into a purpose-driven enterprise.

Reflecting on the journey, Vivian Arinaitwe noted the resilience and collaboration that has defined their work. She praised her co-founder Saajan Patel for his dedication and support, emphasizing that their partnership is a testament to what can be achieved when strong

vision meets commitment.

What started as a student project has evolved into a promising innovation with the potential to save lives. Through NeoNest, Che Innovations is not only building a company but also delivering life-saving solutions that give newborns a better chance at survival.

The success of Che Innovations is a powerful reminder of the transformative potential of African-led innovation. As locally designed and manufactured technologies gain global recognition, they reinforce the role of universities as hubs for impactful research and entrepreneurship.

Congratulations to the entire Che Innovations team on this remarkable achievement. Their success marks a significant step forward for Uganda's innovation ecosystem and the future of healthcare on the continent.

MakCHS, Chosun University Sign MoU to Boost Medical Training and Research



MakCHS and Chosun University teams after signing of MoU

On 20th January 2026, the Makerere University College of Health Sciences (MakCHS) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Chosun University, South Korea in a move set to deepen academic collaboration, research innovation, and capacity building in medical sciences.

The partnership marks a significant step in strengthening global cooperation between Uganda and South Korea, with both institutions committing to joint research, faculty and student exchange, and the development of innovative solutions to emerging health challenges.

The MoU reflects a shared vision to advance medical education, promote cutting-edge research, and enhance knowledge transfer in ways that improve health outcomes locally and globally. The partnership will focus on strengthening academic cooperation, particularly in medical education, including student exchange programs in basic medical sciences and clinical medicine.

Specifically the institutions agreed on the following: Pursue collaborative academia and research as individual or Colleges, Schools, Institutes, departments and directorates; Establish linkages in areas of mutual interests including education, and health, innovative solutions for improved service delivery; Promote each other where it is possible in strategic partnerships

with international bodies to enhance mutual interests; Promote knowledge exchange and cooperation between the parties and other stakeholders; Mobilize resources including funding and infrastructure for joint research and development projects; and Build capacity through training of staff and recognizing the considerable benefits in providing internship opportunities which encourage knowledge exchange.

Speaking at the signing ceremony, the MakCHS Principal-Professor Bruce Kirenga thanked Bethesda Hospital, Kampala for initiating the collaboration between MakCHS and Chosun. He expressed hope that this will be an actionable partnership as opposed to signing for show as witnessed at other institutions due to the global

push for internationalisation in universities. 'We look forward to a fruitful MoU and collaboration, not a paper document', he said.

Professor Kirenga noted that the MoU strengthens Makerere University' ties with South Korea.

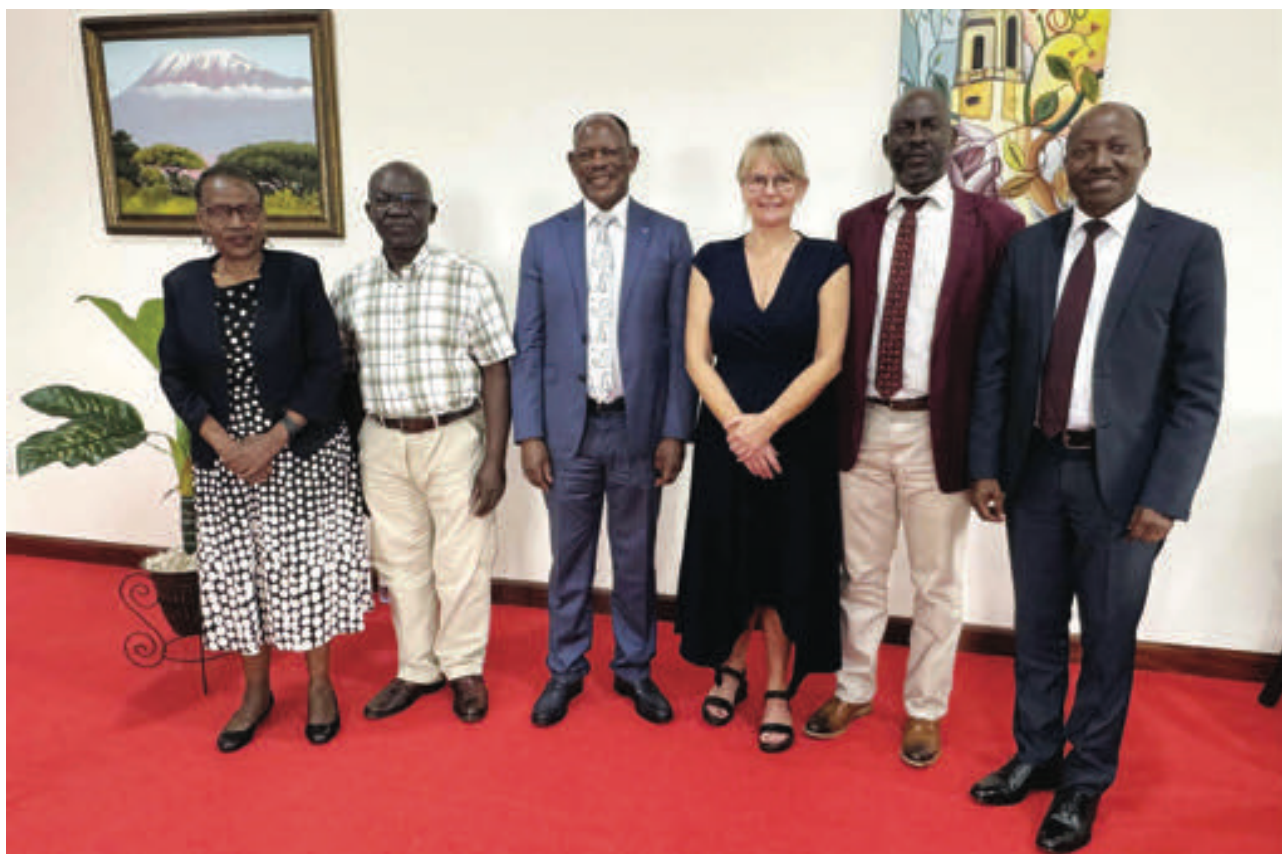


Prof. Bruce Kirenga and Professor Young Joon Ahn

The Parliament of Uganda recently approved a 162 million US dollar concessional loan from the Korea EXIM Bank to upgrade science, technology and innovation infrastructure at Makerere University, including modern laboratories, smart classrooms and advanced facilities for engineering and health sciences.

The delegation from Chosun University led by Professor Young Joon Ahn - Dean College of Medicine expressed pleasure on signing the MoU and future work with MakCHS. Highlighting interest in the area of longitudinal clinical studies and clerkships, he said 'we look forward to having a fruitful collaboration and thank you for welcoming us'.

EU Earmarks Shs19.8bn for 15 Joint PhD Scholarships in Health, Environment Research



Prof. Stella Neema, Dr Herbert Muyinda, Vice Chancellor, Prof. Barnabas Nawangwe, Prof. Lotte Meinert, Prof. Julius Kikooma, and Dr. Godfrey Siu take a photo moment at Makerere University.

The European Union earmarked Euros 4,658,684 approximately (Shs19.8 billion) to fully fund 15 PhD scholarships under a new international collaborative research programme that brings together seven universities across Africa and Europe, including Makerere University.

The project, dubbed HEALENAE (Health and Environment in Africa and Europe), will support doctoral research examining the complex links between environmental change, climate crises and health outcomes, with a strong focus on Africa Europe comparative perspectives.

The scholarships are open to anthropologists, social scientists and related humanities scholars who hold an internationally recognised Master's degree and are interested in pursuing a joint PhD (dual degree).

Successful candidates will be enrolled at two universities one in Africa and one in Europe and will graduate with a joint or dual PhD degree. The consortium brings together Makerere University, University of Oslo, University of Cape Town, KU Leuven, University of Edinburgh, University of Nairobi, and Aarhus University.

The PhD research areas include: Metabolic impact: agricultural intensification and health transformations; Climate change migration and care for the elderly; Toxic layering in a precarious world: environmental harms and well-being; Livestock and natural resource management: biodiversity and zoonotic diseases; Epidemics, disease and state formation in Africa; Climate crisis, youth migration, adaption and associated health outcomes; Toxicity: urban living in landscapes of extraction; Gendered cancer epidemics and questions about environments; Infrastructures of toxic evidence and civic protection; Biosecurity: food, health risks and animal disease; Non Communicable Diseases,

environments and questions of repair; Urban commons: environments, infrastructures, and health; Youth mental health and gambling epidemics in times of environmental crisis; Epidemics and natural disasters as 'business'; and Frontiers of Vector Borne Disease: Expertise and Response in Africa and Europe.

Dr. Godfrey Siu, the University's Senior Lecturer and Director of the Child Health and Development Centre (CHDC); Dr. Herbert Muyinda, Senior Lecturer; Prof. Stella Neema from the Department of Sociology and Anthropology; alongside Prof. Lotte Meinert of Aarhus University will jointly supervise the students, together with other PhD supervisors from other collaborating Universities.

On Tuesday, January 27, Prof. Julius Kikooma, Director of the Directorate of Graduate Training at Makerere University, Dr Siu, Dr Muyinda, and Prof. Neema alongside Prof. Lotte paid a courtesy visit to the University's Vice Chancellor, Prof. Barnabas Nawangwe.

Prof. Nawangwe welcomed the funding and commended the EU for its support, noting that the generous contribution reflects the confidence the EU has in Makerere University. He added that the University is working hard to address the loophole previously raised by the EU regarding the implementation of EU-funded grants. The Vice Chancellor congratulated the team and pledged the University's full support to ensure the project's successful implementation.

Speaking in an interview, Prof. Lotte said the program is particularly suited for candidates with strong grounding in anthropology, sociology and related social sciences.

Eligible candidates must have an internationally recognised Master's degree in anthropology or related social sciences and humanities disciplines.

Lotte added that the positions are fully funded for three years, with generous support for fieldwork, coursework, conferences, writing retreats and research training.

Candidates are expected to conduct up to 12 months of fieldwork. They will be enrolled at both universities and are required to spend at least one semester at the partner institution.

According to Dr Siu, the HEALENAE model where fifteen joint PhDs are funded under one programme is the first of its kind in Uganda.

Addressing concerns about differing academic expectations across universities, Dr Siu said these are anticipated and manageable.

“While there are some differences, PhD training globally follows a similar structure. For instance, Makerere requires all PhD students to complete mandatory cross-cutting courses, including philosophy of methods, advanced research methods, and scholarly writing and communication skills,” he said.

Prof. Kikooma briefed the team on the structure of the PhD program at Makerere University and provided guidance on how to align the dual program with the University's framework.

He also pledged his support and expressed optimism that the program offers new opportunities for Makerere University to learn from and strengthen dual programs. The initiative aligns with Makerere's vision of becoming a research-led university through intensified PhD training.

Seven Graduate under the SIGHT Programme, Advancing Capacity in Biomedical Engineering



Dr. Robert Ssekitoleko (seated in coat), Head of the Medical Bioengineering Unit with the SIGHT Programme graduands and Unit staff

As Uganda continues to grapple with rising cases of NCDs such as cardiovascular diseases, diabetes, and cancer, initiatives like SIGHT play a critical role in fostering homegrown solutions. By investing in human capital and research capacity, the programme contributes to sustainable advancements in healthcare delivery and technology.

Makerere University College of Health Sciences is celebrating a significant milestone as seven students from Cohort 4 of the *Strengthening Research Capacity in Innovative Global Health Technologies for Non-Communicable Diseases in Uganda (SIGHT)* programme successfully graduate.

The SIGHT programme, implemented by the Makerere University Biomedical Engineering Unit in the Department of Physiology in partnership with Case Western Reserve University, was established to build capacity in medical technology innovation and nurture a new generation of researchers in Biomedical

Engineering. Through targeted scholarships, the programme has supported Masters students committed to addressing the growing burden of non-communicable diseases (NCDs) in Uganda.

The graduation of Cohort 4 marks another step forward in strengthening Uganda's research ecosystem. The graduates' achievements reflect not only their dedication and academic excellence but also the programme's broader mission to equip professionals with the skills needed to design and develop innovative, context-appropriate health technologies.

Makerere University has commended the graduates for their resilience and commitment, expressing confidence in their potential to drive impactful change in the health sector through research and innovation.

The University also extended its appreciation to the Fogarty International Center at the U.S. National Institutes of Health (NIH) for its invaluable support in funding and sustaining the programme.

Congratulations to the seven graduates on this important achievement. Their journey signals a promising future for biomedical innovation in Uganda and beyond.

MakCHS and University of Saskatchewan Explore areas of Collaboration in Nursing

On 23rd February 2026, the School of Health Sciences at Makerere University College of Health Sciences (MakCHS) hosted a high-level delegation from the University of Saskatchewan's College of Nursing, marking an important step toward strengthening international academic partnerships in nursing

and midwifery education. The visiting team was led by Dr. Solina Richter, Dean of the College of Nursing, alongside Dr. Shehnaz Alidina, Dean for Global Engagement.

The engagement brought together faculty from the MakCHS Department of Nursing

and representatives from the visiting delegation for a focused discussion on areas of mutual interest and collaboration. At the centre of these discussions was a shared commitment to advancing excellence in nursing and midwifery training, research, and practice through strategic international cooperation.



Dean of the University of Saskatchewan College of Nursing, Dr. Solina Richter (3rd from the left), and Dr. Shehnaz Alidina, Dean for Global Engagement (4th from the right) with staff from MakCHS

Key areas of collaboration identified included joint research initiatives, faculty exchange programmes, curriculum development, and the creation of shared teaching and learning opportunities. Both institutions emphasized the value of leveraging their respective strengths and experiences to enhance the quality of training for nursing and midwifery students, while also addressing emerging global and local healthcare challenges.

A notable outcome of the meeting was the agreement to begin by fostering direct connections between faculty members from both institutions. By linking scholars with aligned research interests and teaching specializations, the partnership aims to build strong, sustainable academic relationships that can serve as a foundation for long-term collaboration. This approach is expected to not only promote knowledge exchange but also stimulate innovative, cross-context research that responds to real-world healthcare needs.

The discussions also underscored

the importance of collaborative curriculum development, particularly in ensuring that training programmes remain responsive to evolving healthcare systems and patient needs. Opportunities for co-teaching, joint supervision of graduate students, and the sharing of academic resources were highlighted as practical steps toward enriching the learning experience for students at both institutions.

In addition, both teams recognized the potential of faculty and student exchange programmes in fostering global exposure, professional growth, and cultural competence among nursing trainees and educators. Such exchanges would provide valuable opportunities for experiential learning, collaborative research, and the sharing of best practices in healthcare delivery and education.

To sustain the momentum generated by the visit, it was agreed that a follow-up virtual meeting will be convened within the next three months. This meeting will focus on refining priority areas, identifying specific collaborative projects,

and advancing the process of formalizing the partnership through the development of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).

The visit reflects MakCHS' continued commitment to building meaningful global partnerships that enhance academic excellence, strengthen research capacity, and contribute to improved health outcomes. By engaging with leading institutions such as the University of Saskatchewan, MakCHS is positioning itself as a key player in shaping the future of nursing and midwifery education both in Uganda and internationally.

MakCHS CGS Report: Service by Students

As this quarter of the Financial and Academic Year draws to a close, it also marks the final chapter of service for the MakCHS College Guild Council (CGC) under the 91st Makerere University Students' Guild, a chapter defined by dedication, transformation, and purposeful leadership.

The MakCHS CGC, a dynamic team of ten leaders—the Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, General Secretary, Speaker, Finance Secretary, Projects Secretary, Women's Affairs Secretary, Academic Secretary, Publicity

Secretary, and Associations Coordinator—has stood at the forefront of student representation, championing the voices and aspirations of the student body.

Serving the MakCHS student fraternity has been both an honor and a privilege. These past months, especially as we wind up our term, have been profoundly impactful. As Chairperson, I take immense pride in the opportunity to lead and serve the remarkable students of the Mighty College of Health Sciences.

From the very beginning, our agenda was clear: to bridge the gap between students and administration. Today, we confidently affirm that this vision has not only guided us but has been realized. Communication has been strengthened, collaboration enhanced, and student voices amplified in spaces where it matters most.

The Academic Year 2025/2026 stood out as historic, marked by the MakCHS Centennial celebrations—100 years of excellence. These milestone events, including the Public Dialogue, the MakCHS Centennial Run, the Sir Albert Cook Library Exhibition, and the Centennial Dinner, were a testament to our rich legacy. Notably, students were not just participants but key drivers—successfully organizing the MakCHS Centennial Run, an event that embodied unity, energy, and pride.

With invaluable support from the college administration, the CGC also organized the White Coat Ceremony, proudly ushering in the 101st cohort of future health professionals—an inspiring moment that symbolized continuity, responsibility, and hope for the future of healthcare.

One of the defining achievements of this 91st CGC has been securing a dedicated office space for student leadership at the college. This milestone is more than just a physical space; it is a bridge, fostering accessibility, engagement, and stronger interaction between students and administration.

Indeed, much has been accomplished. These successes are a reflection of teamwork, resilience, and the unwavering commitment of a passionate group of student leaders.



MUMSA at 53: A Year of Impact, Innovation, and Student Voice



MUMSA Students on a Community Cleaning exercise

Established in 1972, the Makerere University Medical Students' Association (MUMSA) remains the oldest and one of the most influential student-led medical bodies in Uganda. Rooted in a rich legacy at the Makerere University College of Health Sciences, MUMSA continues to serve as the central platform for medical students—particularly those pursuing the Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery—championing their academic, professional, and social development.

Over the past year, the 53rd MUMSA Cabinet has demonstrated a remarkable commitment to redefining student leadership. Through a wide range of initiatives, the association has gone beyond representation to actively shape a holistic and engaging student

experience—one that reflects the evolving demands of medical training in today's world.

A key highlight of MUMSA's work has been its strong emphasis on community engagement. Through medical camps held in Mutundwe parish, West Nile, Nyamitanga Parish, and the Makerere University community, students stepped beyond the classroom to provide essential health services, interact with diverse patient populations, and gain first-hand exposure to the realities of healthcare delivery. These outreaches

not only addressed immediate community needs but also played a transformative role in shaping empathetic, socially responsive future doctors.

In addition to community service, MUMSA has actively contributed to shaping conversations in healthcare. By participating in public dialogues on the current state and future of health professionals' training in Uganda, students engaged critically with key issues affecting their education and future practice. Their involvement in the Federation of Uganda Medical Students' Associations (FUMSA) General Assembly further strengthened collaboration and idea-sharing among medical students nationwide, reinforcing the role of students as active stakeholders in health system development.

Academic and professional growth has remained at the heart of MUMSA's agenda. Through initiatives such as the MUMSA Inspires series, students interacted with experienced practitioners who shared insights into career pathways, emerging medical trends, and the realities of clinical

These outreaches not only addressed immediate community needs but also played a transformative role in shaping empathetic, socially responsive future doctors.



MUMSA Students at a Medical Camp

practice. These sessions, often interactive and engaging, blended knowledge with creativity—incorporating discussions, personal stories, and activities that made learning both impactful and memorable. Complementing this was the career guidance symposium, which expanded students' horizons by highlighting global opportunities, including pathways to international training and residency.

Equally significant has been MUMSA's effort to amplify student voices and experiences. The MUMSA Spotlight initiative created a platform for storytelling, allowing students to share their journeys through medical school. From navigating demanding ward rounds to balancing academic pressures with personal passions, these stories fostered connection, inspiration, and a sense of community. They revealed the human side of medical training—one marked by resilience, creativity, and aspiration.

Beyond academics, MUMSA has cultivated a vibrant student life. The annual Sports Gala brought together students across all years in a celebration of teamwork, wellness, and camaraderie, while integrating meaningful activities such as blood donation and health awareness campaigns. Other events, including the Internal Medical Quiz, encouraged academic excellence and mentorship, promoting collaboration across different levels of study.

Innovation and specialization have also flourished through student-led societies and interest groups. The establishment of the



MUMSA Leadership with Prof. Richard Idro, Deputy Principal CHS at launch of MUMSA Sports Gala 2025

Makerere University Medicine Society (MakMS) marked an important step toward early career exploration, providing platforms for case-based discussions, mentorship, and peer learning. Alongside existing groups such as the Surgery Society, Anatomy Society, Emergency Medicine Interest Group, Cardiology Interest Group, and the Brain Chapter, these spaces have enabled students to pursue specific interests and build professional networks early in their careers.

MUMSA's impact has further extended into advocacy and public health action. Participation in initiatives such as the END Postpartum Hemorrhage campaign, community clean-up exercises in Kisenyi, and school-based health education programs underscores a deep commitment to addressing health challenges beyond clinical settings. Collaborations with organizations such as AOGU, KCCA, UNICEF's U-Report, and international partners like Uppsala University reflect a broad, collaborative approach to improving community health outcomes.

This year's achievements were particularly significant as they coincided with the centennial

celebrations of the Makerere University College of Health Sciences. Through participation in events such as the MakCHS@100 Run and Centennial Dinner, MUMSA students connected with a century-long legacy of excellence, engaging with alumni and faculty while reflecting on their role in shaping the future of healthcare. These moments served as both a celebration of history and a call to action for the next generation of medical professionals.

As MUMSA looks to the future, it continues to embody a powerful vision: that medical education is not solely about acquiring clinical knowledge, but about nurturing well-rounded, innovative, and socially conscious professionals. The work of the 53rd Cabinet stands as a testament to what student leadership can achieve when driven by purpose, collaboration, and a commitment to impact.

With a strong foundation built on tradition and a clear focus on the future, MUMSA proudly carries forward the legacy of Makerere—preparing to serve, lead, and transform healthcare for generations to come.

Makerere University's Infectious Diseases Institute as a National Hub for Antimicrobial Stewardship

Antimicrobial resistance (AMR) is a pressing global health challenge threatening the effectiveness of life-saving treatments. As bacteria and other pathogens evolve to survive the drugs designed to kill them, the world faces a growing crisis that affects the management of infections. In response, Makerere University's Infectious Diseases Institute (IDI) is spearheading AMR research in Uganda by being part of a global movement: the Centres for Antimicrobial Optimization Network (CAMO-Net).

At IDI, the programme focuses on three interconnected research projects that explore real-world challenges in clinical practice. These include analysing antibiotic prescribing patterns to understand where misuse is most common, developing therapeutic drug monitoring infrastructure to ensure that Patients Living with HIV (PLHIV) with co-morbidities receive the correct drug doses, and building advanced predictive analytics to strengthen AMR surveillance and burden estimation. By combining clinical research with informatics, implementation science, and economic modelling, CAMO-Net Uganda hub's work reflects a forward-looking, multidisciplinary approach that responds directly to public health needs.

Makerere University has become one of the network's focal points within a global learning ecosystem. As the network's Central Training Hub (CTH), IDI facilitates a reciprocal exchange of knowledge between high-income countries



and low- and middle-income settings. Under the coordination of Ellon Twinomuhwezi, the training and capacity-strengthening programme has supported emerging professionals through mentored placements, fellowships, and travel grants. These efforts have enabled researchers across consortium partner sites to address their specific gaps in antimicrobial optimisation, creating a ripple effect of strengthened capacity across the network.

The impact of CAMO-Net extends beyond research. By disseminating research findings to policymakers, the team was pivotal in establishing the parliamentary forum on AMR, influencing clinical practice and ultimately improving population health.

The success of CAMO-Net Uganda hub is anchored in strong

leadership. The programme is guided by Principal Investigators Dr. Andrew Kambugu, the Executive Director of IDI and Dr. Francis Kakooza, Head of the Global Health security programme at IDI. Their combined experience spans clinical research, infectious disease management, and health systems strengthening. The operational heartbeat of the programme is driven by Dr. Hope Mackline, the Project Manager, who oversees implementation across multiple technical teams.

By uniting scientists, clinicians, policymakers, and communities, CAMO-Net is building a resilient, informed, and globally connected response to AMR, one that ensures medicines work for every generation to come.

EDITORIAL TEAM

1. Dr. Bruce J. Kirenga, Principal
2. Ms. Zaam Ssali, Principal Communication Officer
3. Mr. Ash Luwambo, IT Officer
4. Ms. Eunice Rukundo, Deputy Chief-PRO
5. Mr. Agaba Issa Mugabo, Brand/Marketing Officer

Photography:

Matthew Mwenyi,
Department of Medical Illustration,
CHS

College of Health Sciences (CHS)

Makerere University
P.O. Box 7062, Kampala.
Email: pr.chs@mak.ac.ug
Website: <https://chs.mak.ac.ug>
X: @MakerereCHS
Phone: 256-414-698286