

# Medical Education for Equitable Services to All Ugandans Consortium (MESAU)

*MESAU Consortium pays courtesy call on the Vice Chancellor, Mbarara University of Science and Technology, Professor F.I.B. Kayanja*

**By Dennis Lukaaya**

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The MESAU Consortium is a country-wide partnership of Busitema University, Gulu University, Kampala International University, Makerere University and Mbarara University of Science and Technology in Uganda with Johns Hopkins University support to catalyze capacity and performance enhancements in medical education and relevant research with a focus on excellent, nationwide service delivery.

## **The Courtesy Call**

The MESAU Principle Investigator, Professor Nelson K. Sewankambo lead the Consortium comprising of Busitema University, Gulu University, Kampala International University, Makerere University and Mbarara University of Science and Technology in Uganda with Johns Hopkins University from the United States of America representatives who paid a courtesy call on Professor Kayanja the Mbarara University Vice Chancellor in his office on the

The Vice Chancellor welcomed the team and was glad that they found some time to stopover. He spoke of the great commitment that Mbarara University attaches to the MESAU Consortium initiatives and noted that it had gone a long way in assisting the training at the SMbarara Medical School, “we appreciate the



Morning of Thursday October 6,2011.They were ushered in by Dr Samuel Maling the MUST-MESAU liaison.

work of MESAU at Mbarara University and are happy that we have overcome many challenges through the initiatives”. He suggested that the medicals schools of Gulu, Makerere and Mbarara need to sit down and come up with a better system that would enhance the relationships with the teaching hospitals giving his experience of the excellent and cordial relationship between Massachusetts General Hospital (MGH) and the Harvard Global Health Institute at Harvard University in the US. “The relationship policy there is very good and if well

studied, it can be emulated” said Professor Kayanja.

In response Professor Sewankambo noted that it was indeed an important issue that has been raised on a number of occasions and deserves attention ,he reiterated that , “as a consortium, this is a challenge we can highlight since we have a big voice”. He informed Professor Kayanja that the Consortium was in an upbeat spirit and progressing well with great enthusiasm of its members. The spirit to share the resources under MESAU was indeed a very welcome innovation that has been bought into my other partners because it demonstrates that, “it is about working together and not competition” an idea that has impressed the National Institutes of Health (NIH).

On the slow opening of Busitema Medical School now a concern to National

Institutes of Health (NIH), Professor Kayanja in a candid peer advisory tone said that the predicament of Busitema needed a clear position from the ministry of Education to guide the National Council for Higher Education which he fortunately chairs. He prayed that the Consortium will help in dealing with the biggest challenge to Busitema’s opening of the medical school a situation he referred to as ‘ambivalence’ in some quarters resulting from the fear to wipe out the lower level medical and health institutions at the hosting sites, adding, “you want not to ‘kill’ anything”, he counseled Busitema drawing on the Kenyan experience where they have maintained the lower level health professional training institutions. The representatives from Busitema acknowledged their predicament and viewed it as a positive challenge which they reported was getting new

focus towards its resolution. They appreciated the peer advice and welcomed the continued support that they were receiving form the Consortium .Their pledge was not to give into the challenge but find constructive partnerships with all stakeholders to resolve the matter that would lead to the opening of another much needed Medical School at Busitema.

Professor Sewankambo thanked the Vice Chancellor for the time accorded to the Consortium members and the wise Counsel shared especially on unlocking the issue on Busitema Medical school opening. He expressed happiness with Mbarara University’s continued support and active participation in the Consortium. He also informed the Vice Chancellor that his team would return to Mbarara for a one week supervisory tour on MESAU activities next year.



Professor Kayanja acknowledged the warm sentiments about Mbarara University and wished the Consortium members a nice stay in Mbarara even when they returned in the New Year emphasizing that the University and he were committed to the Consortium. He invited the members for a group photo in front of the main administration block.

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