



MAKERERE UNIVERSITY

College of Education and
External Studies

NEWSLETTER

January–March 2026



Enhancing E-Learning: Centre for Distance Learning building kicks off

Makerere University in partnership with the Korean International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) embarked on the construction of the Centre for Distance Learning building valued at USD 3.7 million.

The partnership entails the enhancement of the e-learning infrastructure through a state-of-the-art facility and modern equipment, and capacity building programmes to equip staff with skills needed to create high-quality digital content. The Centre of Distance Learning is scheduled for completion in September 2027. The Chairperson, University Council, Dr. Lorna Magara, highlighted the broader

significance of the project. "This is a turning point in bridging the gap between traditional teaching methods and modern learning needs. The project will enhance the capacity of the students, faculty, and staff. It is about making education more accessible and affordable, fostering innovation, creativity, and lifelong learning," stated Dr. Lorna Magara, in a speech read by Dr. Silas Ngabirano.

Dr. Magara urged staff and students to embrace the opportunities offered by online distance learning, reaffirming Makerere University Council's commitment to supporting initiatives that expand access to higher education.

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Message from the Principal



The College of Education and External Studies (CEES) began 2026 with a strong focus on research, innovation and community engagement. The College presented 27 students graduating with PhDs during the 76th graduation ceremony, demonstrating the College's growing contribution to knowledge production and policy-relevant research.

This edition of the newsletter provides evidence of the strides in research, digital education, implementation of competency-based education strategies, lifelong learning and teacher education. On behalf of Makerere University, the College in collaboration with a consortium of 21 partner institutions from 13 countries across Europe and Sub-Saharan Africa, is implementing a project titled: Critical Virtual Exchange in Artificial Intelligence (CVEinAI). Makerere University is the only participating institution from Uganda.

The College hosted the School Stakeholders' Exhibition, where graduate students partnered with various schools to

support the implementation of Uganda's Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC). The initiative demonstrated the College's commitment to linking academic training with practical educational needs.

In addition, the Department of Adult and Community Education Research Seminar Series were launched, to promote collaboration, co-authorship, and scholarly output among staff and graduate students.

The College contributed to topical conversations on mental health and psycho-social support in schools, emphasizing the importance of learner well-being in achieving quality education outcomes.

The visit by the National Council for Higher Education (NCHE) and the consultative meetings with the leadership, staff and students, re-enforced the College's commitment to quality assurance and academic excellence.

Specific to language education, the College hosted the Kiswahili Primary School Orientation Workshop, to strengthen skills in content and delivery, enhance assessment competencies, and improve the understanding of the Kiswahili curriculum.

Prof. Anthony M. Mugagga
Principal, College of Education and External Studies



COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND EXTERNAL STUDIES

schools

- School of Education
- School of Distance and Lifelong Learning
- East African School of Higher Education Studies and Development

Institutes

- Institute of Open, Distance and e-Learning (IODeL)
- Institute of Teacher Education and Research (MITER)

Centres

- Centre for Life Long Learning
- Centre for Teaching and Learning Support

New Associate Professors

	Name	Department/School	Promoted to
1	Dr. Josephine Bweyale	Humanities and Language Education	Associate Professor
2	Dr. Marjorie S. K. Batiibwe	Science, Technical, and Vocational Education	Associate Professor
3	Dr. Muhammad Kiggundu Musoke	Humanities and Language Education	Associate Professor
4	Dr. Timothy Tebenkana	Humanities and Language Education	Associate Professor

Source: 1&2 Appointments Board 787thMeeting, 12th March 2026

Source: 3&4 Appointments Board 788thMeeting, 1st April 2026

Ministry of Education and Sports tasks Mak to provide leadership in Competency-Based Education



During the 76th Graduation Ceremony, the Minister of Education and Sports, Hon. Janet Kataaha Museveni underscored the government directive to shift to the Competency-Based Education model.

The Minister urged Makerere University, to lead in curriculum reform, staff training, and infrastructure development to ensure graduates are equipped with practical skills, innovation, and problem-solving abilities.

“As we celebrate today’s achievements, we must also look far to the future. I reiterate a key directive from the Ministry of Education and Sports: all institutions of higher learning must prepare for the full implementation of Competency-Based Education and Training by July 2027. This is not merely a policy change; it is a fundamental shift in how we prepare our graduates.

We are moving toward a model that emphasizes practical skills, innovation, and problem-solving. I request the Vice Chancellor and your team to lead the way in curriculum reform, staff training, and infrastructure development to make Competency-Based Education (CBE) a reality,” she said.



A cross section of CEES Masters’ degree graduands at the 76th Graduation Ceremony

Vice Chancellor Lauds CEES Initiatives



The Vice Chancellor, Prof. Barnabas Nawangwe lauded CEES for cultivating partnerships to simplify the competency-based curriculum, enhance access to university education, skills development, lifelong learning, and community engagement.

School Stakeholders' Exhibition

"Graduate students partnering with schools and learners to simplify the Competence Based Curriculum (CBC) is a great initiative. Congratulations to the graduate students and CEES."

UVTAB and CEES Partnership

"I congratulate the 200 UVTAB graduates upon attaining National Diplomas and Certificates. The UVTAB programmes coordinated by the Centre for Lifelong Learning at CEES provide an avenue to access quality education services. I commend this academic milestone built on partnership, skills development, lifelong learning, and community engagement."

RESEARCH PEAK

Current research within the College focuses on:

- Competency-based education
- Digital learning
- Inclusive education
- Teacher education
- Early-childhood education
- Curriculum reform

HIGHLIGHT

Emerging studies emphasize the role of Technology-Enabled Learning in expanding access to education and improving student outcomes, particularly through Open and Distance Learning models.

cees Graduates positioned for the competitive job market



76th Graduation: CEES Celebrates Academic Excellence



The Principal, Prof. Anthony Mugagga reading the names of Graduands.

Degree	Graduands
PHD	27
MASTERS	106
POST GRADUATE DIPLOMAS	111
BACHELOR'S	527
TOTAL	824



CEES PhD graduands at the 76th graduation Ceremony on 24th February 2026.

CEES Champions Digital Transformation and Competency-based Curriculum



The Vice Chancellor, Prof. Barnabas Nawangwe, underscored the strategic role of the College of Education and External Studies in driving the University's digital and pedagogical transformation.

"The College continues to play a pivotal role in Makerere University's digital and pedagogical transformation. Makerere University institutionalised the Institute of Open, Distance, and e-Learning effective January 1, 2025. The College of Education and External Studies, through the Institute of Open, Distance, and e-Learning, in collaboration with the College of Engineering, Design, Art and Technology (CEDAT), is implementing a KOICA-funded project to strengthen distance education at Makerere University," Prof. Nawangwe said.

The partnership has yielded significant milestones, including the development and approval of a 10-year Distance Education Master Plan (2025–2035), the ongoing construction of the Centre for Distance Learning, and the capacity building of academic staff in multimedia e-content production.

The initiative reflects Makerere's deliberate shift towards innovative, technology-enabled learning models designed to expand access, enhance quality, and position the University as a leader in digital higher education in the region.

The efforts, alongside the ongoing Phase II of the e-Learning Initiative supported by the Mastercard Foundation, demonstrate Makerere's resolve to integrate online and face-to-face learning in expanding access to quality higher education.

The Vice Chancellor applauded CEES for advancing Competency-Based Education (CBE) across Africa. In 2025, CEES coordinated nine partner institutions and secured a prestigious €1 million ERASMUS+ grant to spearhead the institutionalisation of CBE in East and West Africa.

TRUCE Project Aligns with Mak's Competency-Based Education Agenda



The policy directive from the Ministry of Education and Sports, coincides with Makerere University's partnership with nine (9) consortium partners to implement an Erasmus+ Capacity Building Higher Education project titled: Transitioning Higher Education Regulators and Universities to Competency-Based Education in East and West Africa (TRUCE).

The project seeks to strengthen the capacities of universities and higher education regulators in Uganda and Ghana to transition to Competency-Based Education (CBE).

Funded by the European Union, the four year TRUCE project (Dec. 2025 to Dec. 2029),

draws from African and European expertise in curriculum reform, assessment, quality assurance, digital pedagogy, and stakeholder engagements.

TRUCE brings together Makerere University as the lead partner, working with, the Mountains of the Moon University, University of Ghana, Legon University of Education, Winneba, Universitat de Barcelona, Instituto Politecnico do Porto, the National Council for Higher Education of Uganda, the Ghana Tertiary Education Commission, and RUFORUM.

At Makerere University, the TRUCE Project is implemented through the College of Education and External Studies (CEES), with Associate Professor Josephine Esaete as the Principal Investigator, and Professor Anthony Muwagga Mugagga, the Principal of CEES providing oversight. At the strategic level, the TRUCE Project brings onboard Vice Chancellors of the participating universities, Deputy Vice Chancellors, Academic Registrars, the Directors of Quality Assurance, and Chief Executive Officers.

NCHE tasks CEES to provide leadership on Competency-Based Curriculum



NCHE team with CEES leadership and staff

From 10th to 12th March 2026, the National Council for Higher Education (NCHE) visited the College of Education and External Studies (CEES) to engage with its leadership, staff, and students. The visit formed part of ongoing efforts to enhance the quality and relevance of higher education in Uganda through collaborative dialogue and institutional support. The engagement involved a series of specialized meetings focused on positioning CEES as a leader in teacher education, research, and a center of excellence in Competency-Based Education. During the interactive sessions, participants discussed practical strategies for improving teaching and learning approaches, with emphasis on aligning academic programs to national development needs.



School of Education staff participating in the NCHE meeting



CEES Students participating in the NCHE meeting



NCHE meeting with CEES leadership

School Stakeholders' Exhibition: Simplifying the new Competency-Based Curriculum



On 26th March 2026, Makerere University hosted the School Stakeholders' Exhibition to demonstrate how Uganda's Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC) can be implemented through experiential learning and real-life situations.

Championed by graduate students from the College of Education and External Studies (CEES) and the College of Humanities and Social Sciences (CHUSS) under the supervision of Dr. Anne Ampaire, a Lecturer of Educational Psychology, the Exhibition brought together learners, teachers, researchers, and education policymakers.

The graduate students studying the Master of Early Childhood Education, Postgraduate Diploma in Education, and the Master of Education-Educational Psychology, teamed up with various schools and learners, to showcase the possibilities of taking classroom content into real-life situations.

Connecting theory with practice through stakeholder collaboration

Dr. Anne Ampaire welcomed the participants to the exhibition, designed to connect theory with practice through stakeholder collaboration.

Why is it important for Makerere University academic staff and students, to engage with headteachers, teachers, administrators, and learners from pre-primary, primary, and secondary levels? "The answer lies in collaboration and shared responsibility, to effectively implement the Competency- Based Curriculum," she said.

Education is no longer confined within classroom walls

The Competency-Based Curriculum represents a major shift in education delivery. "Education today is no longer confined to classrooms, not even the transmission of knowledge from teacher to the learners is adequate. The Competency-Based Curriculum focuses on developing competencies that prepare learners for a rapidly changing world," she stated.

Critical Virtual Exchange in Artificial Intelligence (CVEinAI)



Makerere University, in collaboration with a consortium of 21 partner institutions from 13 countries across Europe and Sub-Saharan Africa, is implementing a three year project titled: Critical Virtual Exchange in Artificial Intelligence (CVEinAI). The project activities commenced in February 2025.

In Uganda, Makerere University is the only participating institution. On 25th March 2026, the CVEinAI project team at the School of Distance and Lifelong Learning at CEES hosted an open day to onboard stakeholders by highlighting the activities accomplished, the work in progress, and the expected impact of the CVEinAI in the higher education sector across Africa and Europe.

During the open day, the participants and stakeholders appreciated that the CVEinAI project, is aimed at reshaping how students and staff engage with Artificial Intelligence (AI) while strengthening their critical thinking skills. They acknowledged the European Union and Makerere University Research and Innovation Fund (MakRIF) for funding the project.

The participating countries include: Italy, Denmark, Belgium, Ireland, Portugal, France, Romania, Ethiopia, Uganda, Kenya, Namibia, Ghana and Botswana with the University of Padua in Italy coordinating the consortium.

CVEinAI project team: Dr. Harriet Nabushawo-Project Investigator (P.I.), Professor Paul Muyinda- Birevu (Co-PI), Dr. Harriet Najjemba, Dr. Richard Kajumbula and Ms. Hope Musiime.

Strengthening Management of Mental Health and Psycho-social Challenges in Schools



Makerere University is taking significant steps to address mental health and psycho-social challenges in schools through targeted training and stakeholder engagement. The initiative aims to equip educators with the knowledge and skills needed to support learners facing emotional and psychological difficulties.

The program brought together teachers, school leaders, and counselors to discuss common mental health issues affecting students, including stress, anxiety, and trauma. Experts emphasized early identification and intervention as critical to improving learner well-being and academic performance.

Workshops focused on practical strategies such as creating supportive classroom environments, promoting positive discipline, and strengthening guidance and counseling services. Participants also explored ways to involve parents and communities in supporting student mental health.

University officials highlighted the growing importance of mental health in education, noting that holistic learning requires attention to both academic and emotional needs. They stressed the need for continuous professional development to ensure educators are well-prepared to handle emerging challenges.

The initiative reflects Makerere's commitment to improving education systems by addressing key barriers to learning. By strengthening mental health support in schools, the university aims to contribute to healthier, more resilient learners and communities.

Research Seminar Series: Strengthening Authorship and Scholarly Engagement

On 24th March 2026, the Department of Adult and Community Education (DACE) at CEES commenced the bi-weekly research seminar series to enhance scholarly engagement and co-authorship among staff and students.

“The research seminar series will enhance knowledge production, increase publications, and promote evidence-based engagement in the field,” said Dr. Joseph Watuleke.

Themed, Understanding Co-Authorship in Academic Practice, the inaugural series brought together academic staff, PhD students, and recent graduates of the Master of Adult and Community Education (MACE) programme to reflect on collaborative research and scholarly writing.

The participants engaged with key aspects of co-authorship, including contribution, collaboration processes, and the role of joint writing in enhancing academic mentorship and productivity.

UVTAB-CEES partnership: Enabling Access to Quality Education



On 28th February 2026, 200 students examined by the Uganda Vocational and Technical Assessment Board (UVTAB) were awarded National Diplomas and Certificates during the 7th graduation ceremony organized by the Centre for Lifelong Learning (CLL) under the College of Education and External Studies (CEES).

The graduation ceremony marked a significant milestone not only for the graduates, but also for the university's expanding lifelong learning and technical education mandate.

The ceremony also underscored the role of vocational education in addressing unemployment and promoting economic development.

The Speakers described the ceremony as a celebration of partnership, and the growing recognition of skills-based education as a driver of national transformation.

A Growing Role in Uganda's TVET Landscape.

The ceremony reflected Uganda's broader efforts to strengthen Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET).

The partnership between Makerere University Centre for Lifelong Learning and UVTAB demonstrates how universities and national assessment bodies can collaborate to expand access to quality, standards-based technical education.

The Speakers commended the government for supporting TVET reforms and reaffirmed Makerere's commitment to inclusive education pathways that serve both traditional and non-traditional learners.

Language Education: Strengthening Educators' Capacity in Kiswahili



The Center for Teaching and Learning Support at CEES in partnership with instructors in Language Education, held a workshop, to strengthen the educators' capacity to effectively teach Kiswahili.

Held on Saturday 14th March 2026, the workshop provided a platform to the primary school teachers to acquire new skills in content and delivery, enhance assessment competencies, and improve the understanding of the Kiswahili curriculum.

The participants were introduced to modern teaching methodologies that promote active learning and student engagement. The sessions focused on pronunciation, vocabulary development, and interactive classroom activities designed to enhance language acquisition.

The facilitators emphasized the importance of Kiswahili as a regional language that fosters communication and integration across East Africa. Teachers were encouraged to adopt learner-centered approaches that make language learning more practical and enjoyable.

The workshop also provided an opportunity for teachers to share experiences and challenges in teaching Kiswahili. Through group discussions, participants identified solutions and best practices to improve classroom outcomes. The organizers highlighted the need for continuous professional development to maintain high teaching standards.

Makerere University, DVV International Reaffirm Partnership in Adult and Community Education

Makerere University's College of Education and External Studies (CEES) hosted a delegation from DVV International on 26 February 2026, reaffirming their collaboration in Adult and Community Education. The delegation, including Ms. Frauke Heinze, Ms. Aminata Tamboura, and Mr. Caesar Kyebakola, met CEES leadership to review joint initiatives, such as the edited volume "Contemporary Issues in Adult Education", student internships, research, and professional development programs.

The discussions reinforced a shared commitment to strengthen academic collaboration, enhance capacity-building for adult educators, and advance lifelong learning initiatives that support community development and national education goals in Uganda and the wider region.



ARESRO Foresight Workshop Opens with a Call to Re-imagine Education System Resilience in Uganda



The Africa Regional Education Systems Resilience Observatory (ARESRO) held a Foresight Analysis Workshop in Kampala on 4th – 5th February 2026, bringing together education leaders, researchers, and policymakers.

The workshop emphasized building resilient education systems capable of withstanding pandemics, conflict, and technological disruptions. Prof. Anthony Muwagga Mugagga, Project Head, urged proactive planning, while Dr. Roy William Mayega highlighted foresight thinking to prepare for multiple future scenarios.

Participants from government, universities, teacher education institutions, and civil society discussed strategies to strengthen policy, enhance preparedness, and improve the adaptability of Uganda's education system, ensuring it can respond effectively to future challenges and continue delivering quality learning outcomes.

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