

Minister Elioda Tumwesigye commends Makerere's contribution to fighting youth unemployment

The Minister for Science, Technology and Innovation Honourable Elioda Tumwesigye has strongly commended Makerere University and all other research led academic institutions for their great contribution to curbing unemployment levels by equipping youth with knowledge and skills relevant to Uganda's development. This was during the 6th Makerere University CEDAT Open Day organised by students and staff of the College of Engineering, Design Art and Technology to show case their potential in research and innovation through exhibition of projects and a Fashion Show.

According to Honourable Elioda Tumwesigye technological research and innovation by the youth has played a powerful role in achieving development in many nations in and out of Africa. He acknowledged the students tremendous engagement in research and innovation that will significantly contribute towards the achievement of the middle status of Uganda.

The 6th CEDAT Open Day was held on 21-22 October 2017, under a theme; *"promoting youth innovations to boost Job creation and employment amongst youth in Uganda."* It focused on giving an opportunity to the University stakeholders to see the first-hand potential available at CEDAT for technological transformation of the country.

"Exhibitions like this provide a positive response to a soaring need for more hands-on value adding university programs that responds to our nation's fast developing needs. In a constantly evolving world and today's challenging economic climate, promotion of youth through innovations and creativity to boost job creation and employment are no longer optional but essential," said the Minister.

"I have toured the exhibition tents and I am convinced that this generation of students if supported and guided well, Uganda is heading for change. It is these innovations exhibited here today by these young boys and girls that the government is looking forward to supporting. Addressing youth Unemployment starts with engaging young people in decision making and planning both in academia and industry," he added.

He applauded the Government of Uganda for its tremendous efforts in enhancing investments through creating a peaceful and stable environment that has attracted foreign investors and entrepreneurs who have been encouraged to set up various industries that are dependent on local research findings.

"In a bid to meet the global challenges of youth unemployment, the Ugandan Government has created avenues and platforms to involve the young people in the country's planning and management. The government has also continued to collaborate with private sector and other key

stakeholders to curb youth unemployment. We courage youth to find the currently available support from government aimed at creating employment,” he said.

In the speech ready by the Acting Deputy Vice Chancellor for Finance and Administration Professor William Bazeyo, the Makerere University Vice Chancellor Prof. Barnabas Nawangwe assured the Minister and the Government of Uganda of the University’s commitment to reducing the unemployment levels in Uganda through various innovations and skilling projects.

“Youth unemployment remains a big challenge in our nations and our aim is to have graduates with practical and relevant skills by engaging in research and innovations,” he said.

He thanked the government of Uganda for its continued support to Makerere University through various projects such as the Presidential initiative and the African Development Bank funded projects. “The government has continued to provide financial support to the innovations in Makerere. This has been helpful in furnishing some laboratories at CEDAT, the development and implementation and supporting acquisition of practical skills by field attachment,” said the Vice Chancellor.

He asked the government to help researchers in patenting of innovations, as it remains a big challenge to the university.

The Deputy Principal of the College of Engineering Design Art and Technology Dr Venny Nakazibwe, thanked the College Administration and staff for working closely with the students projects and ensuring that students and staff are given a platform where they can showcase their work. “We are privileged and delighted to share with you some of our technological innovations, which we hope will contribute to propelling the country to industrialization and reducing the level of unemployment. Special appreciation goes to the students who have spearheaded this event,” she said.

During the two days event, students were able to showcase their innovations in mechanical engineering, electric innovations, agricultural innovations, architectural designs, wonderful art pieces, designs and fashions.