



UR MONTHLY

The official newsletter of the University of Rwanda

UR AWARDS PRIZES TO THE BEST 2019 GRADUATES FOR THEIR OUTSTANDING PERFORMANCE



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The University of Rwanda acknowledged hard work from best graduates 2019 which saw 38 best performing students awarded different prizes. 6 best graduates from colleges were selected and among them the overall best performer was given a computer and the remaining 5 received smart phones thanks to the support of RADIANT Insurance Company and Kenya Commercial Bank. In addition, the University of Rwanda gave each of 38 students 100 thousand Rwandan francs.

In his remarks, Amb. Dr Charles Murigande told graduates that being best performers should give them a lot of confidence to go out and be the best employees wherever they will go and best employers if they are going to create their own business. He further asked them to carry on the art of excellence for those who wish to undertake studies for Masters and PhD levels.

According to Murigande, this is a

vindication that they can be the best in whatever endeavour they may attempt to undertake.

"You did not acquire knowledge for the sake of knowledge, you need to use acquired skills for the purpose of serving the community" said Murigande who is UR Deputy Vice Chancellor for Institutional Advancement. He also called on best performers to connect their capacity with heart in order to serve and do the right thing.

Speaking on the occasion, the representative of best graduates assured that they are going to use their skills for the development of the community. On behalf of the best performers, he expressed the wish to serve the university in different capacity and requested UR to consider them for potential scholarship opportunities so that they can take their studies to a higher level. He further advocated for building a comprehensive internship scheme through which students can easily have access to industrial attachment.



Staff present a gift to Prof Ijumba (2nd right) and his wife (second left)

UR BIDS FAREWELL TO PROF NELSON IJUMBA, FORMER DVC ACADEMICS AND RESEARCH

Prof. Nelson Ijumba, former Deputy vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs and Research handed over office duties to Dr Emile Bienvenu in colorful ceremony in which the outgoing was cheered for his exquisite performance during his tenure. Prof. Ijumba has been serving the University for six years since the inception of the University of Rwanda.

In the course of the farewell ceremony, staff expressed a fulfilling feeling to work with Nelson and noted that he has been an upper hand in what the University of Rwanda has achieved so far. It was also witnessed that Prof Nelson has been championing team spirit among staff which was a key to overcome some of the challenges that the University went through in early stages of its inception.

Speaking on the occasion, Prof Nelson Ijumba stated that UR has made tremendous achievements due to a responsible people driven by a teamwork spirit towards excellence.

"We should congratulate our serves because UR reached a point where it cannot go back" Nelson said while expressing his appreciation to the Government of Rwanda that entrusted him to take up one of the highest and challenging office.

The incoming Ag. DVC Dr Emile Bienvenu took over office with extensive experience in academic and leadership positions. He has been serving as the Director of University Centre for Innovation and Entrepreneurship also doubling as the senior lecturer in the College of Medicine and Health Sciences. Previously, Bienvenu served as the Chairperson to the Board of Directors of RSB (Rwanda Standards Board) and also a Board member of Rwanda Military Hospital.

We should congratulate our serves because UR reached to a point where it cannot go back

Prof Nelson Ijumba

NEWLY ADMITTED PHD STUDENTS AND POST-DOCTORAL RESEARCHERS URGED TO UPHOLD THE CULTURE OF INNOVATION AND CREATIVITY



A total 41 doctoral students and 26 post-doctoral researchers who will soon be enrolled in 14 Swedish Universities were taken through an induction exercise aiming at explaining to them expectations out of their studies in Sweden. This was organized by UR Sweden Programme in collaboration with International Science Programme (ISP) within the existing research cooperation between Rwanda and Sweden. This is the 4th phase of the cooperation which aims to boost UR capacity building in research and deliver on Rwanda National Development Agenda.

In his remarks, Prof Phil Cotton, the University of Rwanda Vice Chancellor asked the newly admitted PhD students to be creative individuals with a complete set of skills and knowledge and judiciously use them in different aspects of their professional lives and careers. He also urged them to be creators by not only creating new things but also grow and nurture practices in place.

"You also need to exhibit compassion in your different areas of specialization in the way that you use your knowledge and skills to better the nation and people that you serve" Cotton added.

The induction exercise was attended by Ms Anne Höglund, the Acting Head of Mission for the Swedish Embassy in Rwanda. She informed that industrialization and access to natural resources wouldn't have been enough for Sweden to prosper if there wasn't a huge investment in education for all and high quality of research leading to innovation in several areas.

"Knowledge and skills are essential for any country's development" she said, adding that Swedish support to Rwanda is meant to build up Rwanda's own capacity in research but also in other areas such as agriculture, health and others.

Speaking on the occasion, Mr Raymond Ndikumana noted that the UR-Sweden Programme is built around skills development through PhD and Post-doctoral training which takes 66 percent of the total budget. He added that all the other activities through which the Programme is involved such as research capacity building, ICT support and research environment have to trigger change in Rwandan society.

"The programme is not only about numbers but also about the results and impact it makes for UR and hence for the populations of Rwanda" said Raymond. He added that the Programme has shifted its attention towards interdisciplinary research clusters which are instrumental to deal with the complexity of national and global developmental challenges.

The School of Engineering at the College of Science and Technology (UR-CST), University of Rwanda signed a joint agreement with Harbin Institute of Technology, School of Transportation Science and Engineering (HIT-TSE) China. The agreement will see the establishment of a Joint Laboratory for Intelligent Construction, Maintenance Technology and Equipment (IC-NTE-Lab) for Transportation Infrastructure. The agreement was signed by the Vice-Dean of HIT-TSE Prof. Lianzhen Zhang and Dr. Ignace Gatere the Principal of UR-CST.

Among other things, the collaboration is expected to raise skills in construction and maintenance of transportation infrastructure such as roads, bridges, airports, railways, tunnels and other infrastructure facilities to promote the development of advanced technology in transportation infrastructure.

Both parties expect that the lab will promote the development of both universities mainly in the area of scientific research. The agreement is a turning point in cementing academic exchange and enhancing research and educational capabilities for both universities.

Prof. Lianzhen Zhang is convinced that the joint laboratory will benefit both students and lecturers of how best to use intelligent construction. He also believes that the just started collaboration will lead to more mutual partnership in various areas.

"We are also geared towards looking for other cooperative projects that we can work together with UR-CST," Lianzhen said.



The Vice-Dean of HIT-TSE Prof. Lianzhen Zhang and Dr. Ignace Gatere the Principal of UR-CST.

UR-CST and Chinese varsity move to promote transportation infrastructure and maintenance



Group photo of participants after the MoU signing

UR takes a bold step towards solving the degree issue for 2019 graduates

UR's ambition has always been to have degree certificates printed as close to the graduation ceremony as possible. However, having a final graduation list is often thwarted by graduands clearing financially just a few minutes prior the graduation ceremony. UR chooses to graduate all cleared students by the time of conferment.

For example, we have to help local employers to navigate their way around signed and certified transcripts and testimonials, and we are working with the Ministry of Public Service and Labour to affect this



ic testimonials and transcripts which have as much legitimacy as any other document including diplomas.

"For example, we have to help local employers to navigate their way around signed and certified transcripts and testimonials, and we are working with the Ministry of Public Service and Labour to affect this" added Tengera.

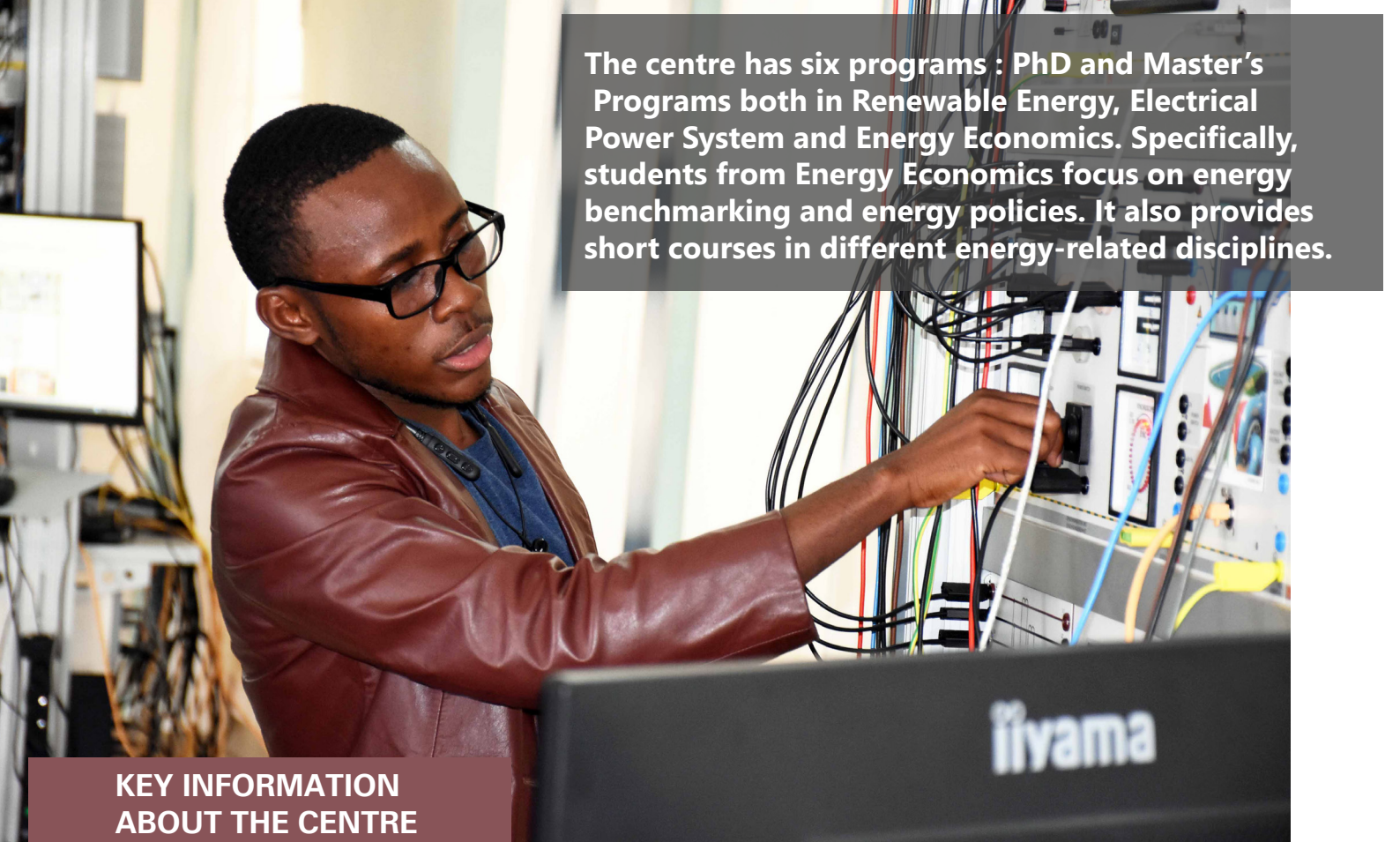
The other important progress is that from this year we will de-couple the date of award from the date of the graduation ceremony. This means that if one completes degree requirements in March 2020, there is no longer a need to wait for a degree certificate dated November 2020 (the month of the annual graduation ceremony) but will get a degree certificate conferred with the blessing of the Board and Chancellor once they clear financially and academically.

While the vast majority will complete their academic journey just before graduation and attend the ceremony, others will be facilitated to take up their careers. The degree certificate will state that 'The Academic Senate of March 2020, ratified by the Board, awarded the Masters/Bachelors degree in ...to NAME'. HEC will clearly be involved in this process that will enable graduates to move on and seek employment

In normal circumstances, once a graduates list is approved it can be sent to the printing company to start printing degree certificates. This year though is an important milestone because UR has embraced the good practice of printing degree certificates locally rather than in Europe as had previously been the experience. However, ensuring secure printing of degree certificates is still a challenge because it requires either to have the required technology and technical know-how to do it internally.

"The new move requires to have specialized papers with specific security features to ensure authenticity and personalization of certificates and academic transcripts" said Françoise Tengera, UR Deputy Vice Chancellor for Finance.

UR has initiated a big project in collaboration with National Identification Agency (NIDA). While waiting to realize this project, UR is buying papers with security features from outside in order to print degree certificates locally. Thus, it is expected that the first batch of degree certificates will be availed to graduates at the end of January 2020. In the meantime, graduates are being facilitated and given academ-



The centre has six programs : PhD and Master's Programs both in Renewable Energy, Electrical Power System and Energy Economics. Specifically, students from Energy Economics focus on energy benchmarking and energy policies. It also provides short courses in different energy-related disciplines.

KEY INFORMATION ABOUT THE CENTRE

The first intake came in 2017 and 2018, which had about 33 PhD students. All Master's programs were accredited in May 2017, where it started recruiting students for the first cohort. The first cohort is made of 45 students with full scholarship from the Center and the second cohort has 72 students fully sponsored by the Center, Higher Education Council or the Inter-University Council for East Africa (IUCEA). For the PhD, 7 new students joined the Center during the second intake to have now 39 PhD students.

There are more international partnerships, bringing in different professors from different parts of the world, hence imparting various skills to students. The students are writing more proposals for income generations. At the moment the centre, for example, has imperial colleges where it won £1 million shared.

The centre also wrote a proposal under SIDA project and won € 1.7 Million. Not only this but also it won about USD 250,000 to establish an incubation Center under the Inter-University Council for East Africa (IUCEA) and the process has already started. This is another milestone towards skills development.

ACE-ESD: ANOTHER MILESTONE TOWARDS IMPROVEMENT OF REGIONAL ENERGY SECTOR

The African Center of Excellence in Energy for Sustainable Development (ACE-ESD) is a World Bank-funded project which intends to solve key economic challenges subsequent from low rural energy access, poor adoption of energy technologies especially in rural areas, and poor inter-state energy trading in the Eastern and Southern Africa region.

(ACE-ESD) is one of 24 African Centers of Excellence in Eastern and Southern Africa Higher Education Centers of Excellence (ACEII) Project funded by the World Bank, whose main aim is to generate a superlative energy Centre that will be a regional hub for exploration and training of African engineers and policymakers and energy utility managers (in micro-grid energy systems using renewable energy sources and interstate energy trading, management and policy). The University of Rwanda emerged the winner in Rwanda to start courses in energy for both Masters and PhD to cause a solution in energy problems.

This Center was created for about two years and a half back. It is a government project in partnership with the World Bank. This phase II is operational in East and Southern Africa where it has around 10 countries. About eight countries applied. The call was to select at least 24 Centers of excellence, where out of these, Rwanda won four Centers of Excellence. Students from different parts of the world are eligible to be trained in these Centers.



EXPLORING THE FEASIBILITY OF IMPLEMENTING STROKE UNIT CARE IN RWANDA

The burden of stroke in low-and middle-income countries (LMICs) has risen strongly as of late and the step of increment is set to quicken due to socio-segment and way of life changes identified with industrialisation and an ascent in numerous modifiable vascular malady chance factors. The University of Rwanda (UR) would like to share you a glance about a successful PhD thesis defense of its lecturer Gerard Urimubenshi that he did recently at University of Glasgow in United Kingdom entitled "Exploring the feasibility of implementing stroke unit care in Rwanda".

The pushing factors that triggered Urimubenshi are in three reasons. According to him, the first aim was to establish, for countries like Rwanda, how much stroke is a major problem. The second aim was to explore whether the existing stroke services were well prepared. The third aim was to develop and implement a relevant service improvement in Rwanda.

The research findings show that in LMICs, stroke is common and important while stroke services fall below the recommended standards. To address the current gaps, the thesis showed that, taking an example of two selected hospitals in Rwanda, stroke services and patient outcomes can be improved by using a combination of evidence-based practice

change interventions such as site champions, audit and feedback on usual care, education on stroke key performance indicators and local consensus discussions.

Urimubenshi recommends Policy makers and health care professionals that they should consider implementing the stroke unit care Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) including those that are not yet initiated like a geographic stroke unit. The university of Rwanda community wishes all the best to him as he will graduate in April 2020.



INTRODUCING NEW UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMMES

UNDER PRIORITY SKILLS FOR GROWTH



●● **BACHELOR OF SCIENCE
WITH HONOURS IN
PROCUREMENT, LOGISTICS
AND SUPPLY CHAIN
MANAGEMENT**

●● **BACHELOR OF SCIENCE
WITH HONOURS IN TRANS-
PORT MANAGEMENT**

We are delighted to inform the public that under Priority Skills for Growth (PSG) program implemented by the Government of Rwanda in partnership of the World Bank, we have developed and got accreditation for two undergraduate programmes.

Eligibility

Privately and Government sponsored candidates who wish to study either during day or evening

Mode of application

Online application and key info can be accessed at www.admissions.ur.ac.rw . Candidates are advised to pay required application fee and submit the application before 3rd March, 2020.

More details and support, please send an email to principal.cbe@ur.ac.rw or call +250 784 568 103