

# MAKERERE



# UNIVERSITY

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## REMARKS BY THE VICE CHANCELLOR AT THE MAY 29<sup>TH</sup>, PRESS CONFERENCE

**Time: 10:00am. Venue: Senior Common Room**

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**Good morning colleagues, members of the press,**

It is my pleasure to welcome you to this important media briefing, where we share compelling findings from two groundbreaking studies that reflect Makerere University's ongoing commitment to impactful research, innovation, and community transformation.

The first is a pioneering initiative led by the Infectious Diseases Institute—the **IDI Medical Drone Programme**. This project explores the use of drone technology to deliver lifesaving HIV medications and test samples to hard-to-reach populations, particularly in Kalangala District and the West Nile region. The study demonstrates how drones can overcome logistical barriers, reduce costs, and enhance access to critical healthcare in some of Uganda's most underserved communities.

The second study is the ***Kampala Status Summary 2023 on Road Safety Risk Factors***, conducted under the Bloomberg Philanthropies Initiative for Global Road Safety. This collaborative effort between the Johns Hopkins International Injury Research Unit and our Trauma, Injury, and Disability Unit here at Makerere University presents over two years of data on vehicle speed and helmet use in Kampala. It provides vital insights into the human behaviours and systemic gaps contributing to road traffic injuries and fatalities—particularly among vulnerable road users. The study also offers evidence-based recommendations for enforcement, planning, and public health messaging aimed at making Kampala's roads safer for all.

We are proud to support this kind of research that not only advances knowledge but also drives tangible improvements in public health and safety.

Before I invite the researchers to present their findings, allow me to briefly highlight some transformative developments in the areas of academic registry and ICT advancement here at Makerere University:

**1. Digital Certification of Academic Transcripts:**

Alumni can now certify their transcripts digitally through the Makerere Academic Records System (Mak-ARS <https://makars.mak.ac.ug/>), eliminating the need for physical visits. This user-friendly platform allows access from anywhere in the world, supported by comprehensive video tutorials and public communications.

**2. Digital Supervision of Graduate Students**

We have introduced the Research Information Management System (Mak-RIMS), piloted at the College of Agriculture and Environmental Sciences, to streamline the supervision of Master's and PhD research. This initiative enhances accountability, timely feedback, and is now being rolled out university-wide to improve graduation rates.

**3. Inclusive eLearning and Smart Classrooms**

Through support from development partners and the Government of Uganda, we are establishing multimedia studios and smart classrooms across our colleges. These state-of-the-art facilities are designed to produce professional, accessible learning content, including tools tailored for students with visual and auditory disabilities. This aligns with our goal of equitable, globally competitive education.

**4. Launch of the AI Laboratory at CoCIS:**

The newly launched Artificial Intelligence Laboratory will spearhead the development of AI-enabled solutions tailored to Uganda's socio-economic needs, including localized assistive eLearning tools and context-sensitive curriculum development.

These initiatives are part of our broader vision to transform Makerere University into a research-led, inclusive, and globally relevant institution.

At this point, I would like to invite the dedicated researchers behind these two significant studies to share their key findings and the implications in greater detail.

**Please join me in welcoming them.**

Prof. Buyinza Mukadasi  
**Ag. Vice Chancellor**