



Scholars Program

In partnership with



MAKERERE UNIVERSITY

Alumnnet

SHOLARS MAGAZINE

2025/26



Educate and Empower the next Generation of African Leaders



SAFEGUARDING STARTS WITH ME AS A STUDENT

My safety and your safety
is our collective responsibility



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at Mak**

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<https://safespace.mak.ac.ug/>



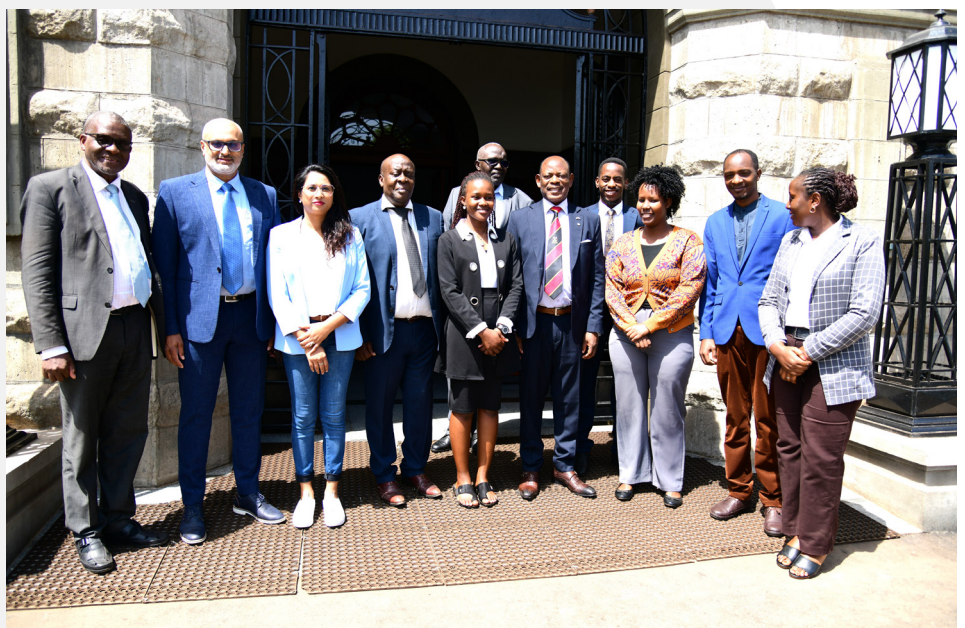
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ON THE COVER

Gabeya shaking hands with the Vice Chancellor, Prof. Nawangwe as he handed over office to her.





MAKERERE UNIVERSITY

About Makerere University

Established in 1922, Makerere University celebrated its 100th anniversary in 2022, marking a record of about 500,000 Alumni. On its renewed Journey for the next century, the University has committed to becoming a research-led university as stipulated in its 2020-2030 Strategic Plan. The new direction focuses on Innovative Teaching and Learning, Research and Innovations, a Professionally Managed Institution, and an Engaged University with Enhanced Partnerships.



VISION

A thought leader of knowledge generation for societal transformation and development.



MISSION

To provide transformative and innovative teaching, learning, research, and services responsive to dynamic national and global needs.



CORE VALUES

- Accountability
- Integrity
- Inclusivity
- Professionalism
- Respect

Numbers at the Main Campus

14000

Average number of enrolled undergraduate Students

3000

Average number of enrolled Graduate Students

They all belong to the Prestigious;

09 Colleges

03 Schools
Law, Public Health
and The school
of Gender &
Development Studies

3000

Average number of employed staff members

60%

Academic Staff

11%

Administrative Staff

29%

Support Staff

For more information about Makerere University, please visit our website:

<https://mak.ac.ug/>





About Mastercard Foundation

The Mastercard Foundation is a registered Canadian charity and one of the largest Foundations in the world. It works with visionary organisations to advance education and financial inclusion, enabling young people in Africa and Indigenous youth in Canada to access dignified and fulfilling work. Established in 2006 through the generosity of Mastercard when it became a public company, the Foundation is an independent organisation separate from the company, with offices in Toronto, Kigali, Accra, Nairobi, Kampala, Lagos, Dakar, and Addis Ababa. The Foundation's Board of Directors and leadership determine its policies, operations, and program decisions.

For more information on the Foundation, please visit www.mastercardfdn.org.

About the Mastercard Foundation Scholars Program



Scholars Program

The Scholars Program provides academically talented young people in Africa facing socio-economic barriers with access to quality education. The Mastercard Foundation Scholars Program aims to create a Cohort of next-generation leaders committed to creating positive social and economic growth in their countries. The Program is designed to foster transformative leadership by equipping Scholars with the knowledge, skills and motivation to make a difference. Students who qualify for the scholarships receive holistic financial, social, and academic support throughout their education journey and modest support during their post-graduate transitions. The Program comprises a global network of education institutions within Africa and beyond, and non-profit organisations that believe education catalyses social and economic betterment.

The Program aims to educate 100,000 young people and enable them to contribute to the economic growth and social development in their countries of origin.

The Core values:



The core elements of the Scholars Program include (i) Inclusion and Belonging, (ii) Quality Educational Experience, (iii) Transformative Leadership, (iv) Community Service and Giving Back, (v) Well-being and Psychosocial Support, (vi) Transition to Dignified and Fulfilling Work; and (vii) Alumni Engagement.

For more information, please visit www.mastercardfdn.org.



Mastercard Foundation Scholars Program (Phase Two) At Makerere University

Makerere University and the Mastercard Foundation renewed their partnership for the Second Phase of the Scholars Program to run through (2023- 2034).

During this phase, the Program will extend 1000 Scholarships to study at Makerere University-Main Campus at the undergraduate and Master's levels. The successfully selected Mastercard Foundation Scholars will receive comprehensive financial support, career guidance and mentorship support, psychosocial and mental wellness services, and welfare and health care support throughout their studies at Makerere University.

The main aim is to deepen inclusive university education

and empower youth to transform into leaders who will make meaningful contributions to national and regional development.

The Specific Objectives

Enable 1,000 talented young people in Africa to attain quality education at Makerere University.

Influence institutional policy and practice changes through engagements and learning from experiences and partnerships.

Provide inclusive education support services and skills development to facilitate meaningful transition.

Build a strong network of transformative leaders committed to service and giving back.

Ensure efficient and effective operational and strategic management of the Program.

During phase two, the Program will significantly focus on inclusivity when advertising and extending the Scholarships. In this case, Scholarship quotas have been pre-defined for the different categories' applicants: refugees and internally displaced youth (%25), young people living with disabilities (%10), students transiting from schools located in highly ranked poor sub-regions of Uganda (%20), Students from Refugee-hosting communities and minority tribes in Uganda (%10) other Ugandan students (%20) international students (%10), then %5 shall be students to pursue Master's degree Programmes.

Given the great accomplishments and lessons from Phase One of the Mastercard Foundation Scholars Program, Makerere University Management is committed to delivering this Phase successfully.

For more information, please visit our website: <https://mastercardfoundation.mak.ac.ug/>

Editorial Note:



Dear Reader,

We are excited to present the latest edition of AlumNet Magazine 2025/26, your go-to source for all the news, updates, and events related to the Scholars Program and the vibrant Makerere University community over the past year.

This edition holds special significance as it marks the kickoff of the second phase of the Scholars Program at Makerere University. The year 2024 was remarkable, bringing on board 100 new scholars and eight dedicated Program staff members. This magazine provides detailed updates about these exciting developments.

In this issue, we spotlight various impactful events, including the Scholars Award Ceremony, the Give Back Projects, Community Open Day, Career Fair, MakRun, the Graduation ceremony, and the Scholars Council and Alumni Convenings.

Additionally, our capacity-building sessions and numerous community engagement activities are highlighted. Check out our vibrant photo gallery, which captures the essence of these events.

We also feature engaging articles in which scholars share their personal experiences, entrepreneurial insights, academic achievements, and practical tips on finding jobs, starting businesses, and pursuing further studies. I encourage you to explore these insightful pages—you'll find valuable information that could greatly benefit you.

I want to express my heartfelt gratitude to our incredible editorial team, led by Chief Editor Mr. Sunday Amon, and the coordination by Mr. Joshua Akampurira and the team of editors. Their hard work and dedication in bringing this edition to life deserve commendation.

Finally, I would like to express my appreciation to Makerere University and the Mastercard Foundation for their visionary partnership, which continues to yield significant results.

Happy reading!

Bernard Buteera,
Principal Communications
and Public Relations Officer /
Editor-in-Chief

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Prof. Barnabas Nawangwe

I would like to extend warm congratulations from the University Management and myself to the Mastercard Foundation Scholars Program Team for securing the Second Phase of the Scholars Program at Makerere University, which will run from 2023 to 2034. This achievement is commendable! Makerere University takes great pride in its long-standing partnership with the Mastercard Foundation, which has yielded numerous valuable outcomes over the past decade. This collaboration has profoundly impacted the Scholars Program and various other initiatives.

During the challenging times of the COVID-19 pandemic, when many academic institutions shifted to online learning, the Mastercard Foundation played a pivotal role in enhancing our e-learning infrastructure through the E-learning Initiative project. This initiative has enabled the university to create high-quality, inclusive academic online content and support systems that benefit all Makerere University students and those from affiliated institutions across Uganda.

Additionally, Makerere University is working with the University of Cape Town and the University of Cambridge on another important Mastercard Foundation project: The Climate Resilience and Sustainability Collaborative. As part of this initiative, we will offer 40 PhD scholarships,

250 MSc scholarships, and skilling programmes for 500 youth. Moreover, 40 women- and youth-led green innovations will be supported, along with 30 post-doctoral scholarships. This demonstrates the immense value of our collaboration with the Mastercard Foundation, and we are optimistic about continuing this partnership for many years.

Like the first phase, the second phase of the Scholars Program will focus on providing scholarships to vulnerable young people from various backgrounds. Special attention will be given to refugees, young people with disabilities, those from refugee-hosting communities, and other underserved individuals from hard-to-reach areas. This emphasis on inclusivity will further enhance opportunities for deserving youth.

I am pleased to share that Makerere University is progressing significantly toward fostering inclusivity for all students. We have established the Disability Support Centre on the ground floor of the Frank Kalimuzo building, designed to serve as a comprehensive resource for our students with disabilities and other vulnerable young individuals. Thanks to the contributions from the Mak Run 2024, the Centre is now equipped with vital ICT services, including screen readers, JAWS, Fusion, Braille services, and other essential amenities to ensure our students can easily pursue their studies.

Furthermore, I want to assure all our students, staff, partners, and the broader community that the University Management is deeply committed to creating a safe and supportive learning environment. With the University Council's and partners' invaluable backing, we have developed and launched the Safeguarding Policy. This vital framework outlines our measures to protect everyone from abuse and harm at Makerere University. We are building

a community where everyone can learn, work, and thrive.

Makerere University remains a top choice for young people seeking higher education. The university's vision is "To be a thought leader of knowledge generation for societal transformation and development." Its mission is "To provide transformative and innovative teaching, learning, research, and service responsive to dynamic national and global needs." These aspirations place the university in a unique position, and it's essential to uphold them always. As a University, we will continue to strengthen our efforts to focus on the key issues facing humanity and meet our obligations to a broader society beyond education and research.

In conclusion, we are grateful to our invaluable partner, the Mastercard Foundation. The renewal of the partnership with Makerere University for another 10 years of Phase Two of the Scholars Program is a significant commitment that will empower 1,000 young people in Uganda and throughout Africa. We sincerely appreciate the Foundation's support and dedication to this mission. The University Management is committed to supporting the Mastercard Foundation Scholars Program to realize the vision and mission of Makerere University and the Mastercard Foundation as **We Build for the Future.**



A word from the Program Director

Prof. Justine Namaalwa

Since its launch in Africa in 2012, the Mastercard Foundation Scholars Program has established itself as a powerful initiative for creating a transformative network of young leaders and institutions committed to driving inclusive and equitable socio-economic progress.

At Makerere University, the Scholars Program began in 2013 with a decisive goal: to empower academically gifted yet economically disadvantaged youth by facilitating their access to higher education. The Scholars Program educates and cultivates the next generation of enterprising leaders who will significantly contribute to their communities. By addressing critical systemic barriers to higher education, the Program has successfully supported 1,032 talented individuals, with 965 Scholars having graduated by 2023 and expecting 32 to graduate during this 75th Graduation ceremony.

In December 2023, the Mastercard Foundation Scholars Program at Makerere University rolled into Phase Two of the Program to last another 10 years. The main aim is to deepen inclusive University education and empower youth to transform into leaders who will make meaningful contributions to national and regional development.

The second phase of the Mastercard Foundation Scholars Program at Makerere University (Main Campus) will provide 1000 scholarships at undergraduate and Master's degree academic levels for students to study at Makerere University's main campus. The Program is intentional on inclusivity, and therefore, Scholarship quotas will be set for the following special categories of applicants: refugees and internally displaced youth (25%), young people living with disabilities (10%), students transiting from schools located in highly ranked poor sub-regions of Uganda (10%), refugee hosting communities and minority tribes (10%), and international students (5%).

The selected Mastercard Foundation Scholars receive comprehensive financial support, career guidance and mentorship, leadership and entrepreneurship training, psychosocial and mental wellness services, and welfare and health care support throughout their studies at Makerere University.

Key Accomplishments of the Program in its First Phase (-2013 2023)

During the first phase of the Scholars Program, several achievements were realised at the individual, institutional, and ecosystem levels. Below, we highlight some of the most significant ones.

Recruitment:

The Program supported 1,032 scholars across six cohorts, achieving 103% of the target, 76% females and 24% males.

Graduation:

As of January 2025, 965 Scholars have successfully graduated, achieving an exceptional completion rate of 94%.

Impacting Communities:

The Scholars Program positively impacted over 12 communities across the country through key initiatives, including but not limited to;

- Construction of a two-room classroom block at Achukudu Primary School in Napak District in 2023.
- Construction of a two-room classroom block and a ventilated pit latrine at St. Katherine Primary School in Agago District in 2022.
- Construction of a borehole for the Bulamwaki community in Iganga District in 2021.
- Constructed a two-room accommodation for teachers and planted trees at Kibaale Primary School in Mityana District in 2019.
- Constructed a chain-link fence and planted trees at Salama School for the Blind.



- Constructed a classroom block and renovated another one at Muzinda Primary School, Wakiso district, central Uganda in 2017.

These efforts and many other community-engaged activities reflect the Program's continued commitment to uplifting vulnerable African communities.

The Scholars Entrepreneurship Fund (SEF):

Entrepreneurship Engagements:

The Scholars Entrepreneurship Fund and capacity building and mentorship supported 46 enterprising projects being implemented nationwide.

Social Venture Initiatives:

Besides fostering entrepreneurship through the SEF initiative, the Scholars have had the opportunity to pitch their ideas and compete for funding with partner institutions. Twenty-four project teams have been successful to date through Resolution Social Venture, a partner of Mastercard Foundation, in bringing their projects to life.

We are excited to collaborate with the Mastercard Foundation, an organisation focused on enhancing the quality of life for the African people. This partnership aligns well with Makerere University's vision to be a thought leader in knowledge generation for societal transformation and development. Together, we continue to nurture skilled human resources that will drive the development of our nation. For more information, please visit our website: <https://mastercardfoundation.mak.ac.ug/>



**Hon. Syllas Ruhweza
Atwoki**
**President, Makerere AlumNet
Foundation**

Your most valuable asset upon graduation will be your professional network. Cultivate strong, meaningful connections with your fellow Scholars and individuals from diverse backgrounds.

A note from the Makerere Alumnet Foundation President

Welcome to yet another edition of the AlumNet Magazine! I would like to extend my deepest appreciation to the publication and editorial teams for their dedication in ensuring that we never miss an edition since the magazine's inception.

In this issue, I wish to share a special message with the current Scholars of the Mastercard Foundation Scholars Program at Makerere University. I hope you take a moment to read this short but important letter below.

Dear Second Phase Pioneer Scholar

On behalf of the Makerere AlumNet Foundation (Scholar Alumni Network at Makerere University), I extend warm greetings and heartfelt congratulations as you embark on this pivotal chapter of your academic journey. We recognize and commend your demonstrated commitment to academic excellence, which has earned you this prestigious opportunity. We encourage you to maintain this dedication and continue to strive for the highest standards of intellectual achievement.

As alumni, we reflect on our own experiences as Scholars, navigating the unique challenges and opportunities presented during our time at Makerere. Many of us assumed significant responsibilities beyond our academic pursuits, often becoming primary financial providers for our families. We shouldered the burden of educational expenses, household contributions, and other essential obligations, embodying the spirit of Ubuntu: the African philosophy of communal responsibility and interconnectedness.

However, we also observed that these responsibilities, while noble, frequently placed substantial strain on the stipends intended to support our academic endeavors. We understand the deep-seated desire to contribute to your families and communities; however, we implore you to prioritize your academic commitments.

Cultivating the courage to establish a balanced approach between your responsibilities and your scholarly pursuits is paramount. Effective time management and strategic prioritization will be critical to your success.

Furthermore, we wish to emphasize the importance of proactive preparation for life beyond the university gates. While your current environment may seem secure and promising, the academic journey at Makerere, though transformative, is transient. It is akin to a temporary sanctuary, and the transition to post-university life demands careful planning. Your most valuable asset upon graduation will be your professional network. Cultivate strong, meaningful connections with your fellow Scholars and individuals from diverse backgrounds. These relationships will serve as invaluable pillars of support and opportunity in your future endeavors. Endeavor to understand your peers not merely by name, but by their unique strengths, aspirations, and potential contributions. Remember, your network is an integral component of your future success.

Employ strategic networking practices and start looking for your "Gamba N'ogu" now.

Recognize and cultivate genuine relationships with individuals who possess diverse perspectives and experiences, including those from influential backgrounds. The benefits of such connections often manifest in unforeseen ways in the future. Do not allow the

comprehensive support provided by your scholarship to create a false sense of self-sufficiency. A robust network is indispensable for navigating the complexities of post-graduate life.

Finally, please be assured that the entire Makerere AlumNet Foundation Community stands firmly behind you, offering support and wishing you boundless success and prosperity in all your future endeavors.



A note from SAMAK President

Dear Scholars and gallant Makerereans

It is with great pride and enthusiasm that I address you as the President of our esteemed Scholars Association at Makerere University (2024-2025). As we embark on another year of intellectual exploration, collaboration, and innovation, I am reminded of the profound impact that our collective efforts have on shaping the future of academia and society at large.

Our association has always been a beacon of excellence, fostering a community where scholars from diverse disciplines come together to share ideas, challenge conventions, and push the boundaries of knowledge. In a world that is increasingly interconnected and complex, the role of scholars has never been more critical. We are not merely observers of change; we are active participants in shaping the narratives that define our times.

This year, our focus will be on "Advancing Knowledge, Empowering Futures and impacting communities." This theme reflects our commitment to not only advancing academic excellence but also ensuring that our work has a tangible impact on the world around us through ground-breaking innovations, inventions and community engagement. We are the power to drive positive change and empower future generations.!

One of our key priorities this year will be to strengthen interdisciplinary collaboration. The challenges we face today be it; climate change, social inequality or technological disruption require holistic solutions that transcend traditional academic boundaries. By fostering dialogue and collaboration across disciplines, we can unlock new insights and develop more comprehensive approaches to these pressing issues.

We will also be placing a strong emphasis on mentorship and professional development. Our younger members are the future of our association and the academic community at large. It is our responsibility to provide them with the guidance, resources, and opportunities they need to thrive. Through mentorship programs, workshops, and networking events, we aim to create a supportive environment where scholars can and will flourish.

In addition, we will continue to advocate for the importance of academic freedom and the ethical responsibility of scholars. In an era where misinformation and polarization are on the rise, it is crucial that we uphold the integrity of our walks and remain steadfast in our commitment to truth, equality, empowerment and equity. Our voices matter, and we must use them to promote understanding, tolerance, and justice.

As we move forward, I encourage each of us to actively engage with our association initiatives and contribute your unique perspectives and expertise. Together, we can achieve remarkable things and leave a lasting legacy for future scholars.

Thank you for your continued dedication and support. I look forward to working with all of you to make this year a transformative one for our association and the broader academic community of Makerere University.

Yours in service
Asiimwe Derrick
President, Scholars Association
at Makerere University 2024/25



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A WORD FROM THE SCHOLARS' COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVE

Stepping into the role of Scholars' Council Representative for the 2024/2025 academic year is both an honour and a profound responsibility. This position is not just about leadership; it is about service, collaboration, and inspiring positive change within our community. My journey to this role has been shaped by a lifelong passion for serving others. From my early days in high school, where I served as a leader from Form 1 through Form 6, I have always been driven by the desire to make a difference. Leadership for me has never been about titles but about the impact we create through our actions.

When I became a Mastercard Foundation Scholar, I was introduced to the program's core values, particularly the emphasis on Transformative leadership and giving back. It was then that I realized becoming a Mastercard Foundation Scholars Council Representative would be the perfect opportunity to continue serving others on a larger scale. The competition for this role was intense, with five highly qualified candidates vying for the position. I must admit, there were moments when I doubted my chances of winning. But with determination, a clear vision, and the support of my peers, I emerged victorious. This victory is not just mine but a testament to the collective belief in my ability to lead and serve.

As I reflect on this achievement, I am reminded of the words of Reeta Roy, CEO of Mastercard Foundation: "I can't change Africa alone, but through a collective effort, we can make it a better continent." These words resonate deeply with me because they underscore the power of unity and collaboration. No single individual can solve all the challenges we face, but together, as a community of scholars, leaders, and change-makers, we can create a ripple effect of positive change that transcends borders and transforms lives.

A Journey of Growth and Transformation

The Mastercard Foundation Scholars Program has been a pivotal force in redefining my life. Growing up in a single-parent household with limited financial resources, the dream of attending university seemed almost unattainable. My mother worked tirelessly to provide for our family, but the burden of university fees was overwhelming. Just when I had begun to lose hope, the Mastercard Foundation Scholarship came into my life like a beacon of light.

I applied for the scholarship, went through the rigorous selection process, and was overjoyed when I received the news that I had been selected. This scholarship was not just a financial lifeline, it was an opportunity to redefine my future. I was told about the program's benefits; leadership training, mentorship and the chance to give back to my community. I immediately realised that this was the turning point I had been waiting for.

The scholarship has given me more than just education; it has given me hope, purpose, and the tools to dream bigger. It has taught me that no matter where we come from, we all have the potential to achieve greatness and make a meaningful impact in the world.

The Power of Giving Back

One of the core values of the Mastercard Foundation Scholars Program is the importance of giving back. This value has become a guiding principle in my life. In 2024, I had the privilege of leading a Giveback initiative with my fellow scholars. We organized a project to provide scholastic materials to two underprivileged schools in Uganda. Witnessing the joy and gratitude on the faces of the students and teachers was a humbling experience. It reminded me of the transformative power of education and the importance of sharing your blessings with others.

This initiative was not just about donating materials, it was about instilling hope and showing these young learners that they too can achieve their dreams. It reinforced my belief that giving back is not just an obligation but a privileged one that allows us to create a positive ripple effect in our communities.

A Milestone Achievement: Hosting the Scholars' Council Representative Meeting

One of the highlights of my journey as a Scholars' Council Representative was the privilege of attending and hosting the Scholars' Council Representative meeting at Speke Resort Munyonyo. This event was a significant milestone, not only for me but for the entire Scholars' Association, as it marked the first in-person meeting of its kind.

The meeting brought together like-minded young Africans from various universities, all united by a shared vision of leadership and community impact. It was an incredible opportunity to connect with fellow scholars, exchange ideas and forge meaningful relationships that will undoubtedly shape our collective future. Being the first Council Representative to host this meeting was a tremendous honour and a testament to the trust and confidence placed in me by my peers and the Mastercard Foundation.

This experience reinforced my belief in the power of collaboration and the importance of creating spaces where young leaders can come together to share their visions and strategies for driving change. It was a reminder that we are not alone in this journey; we are part of a larger network of change-makers committed to transforming Africa and the world.

A Call to Action: Embrace the Challenge

As we move forward, I challenge each of us to embrace the values of humility, kindness, and co-creation that the Mastercard Foundation instils in us. Let us strive to be leaders who not only excel in our respective fields but also inspire and empower those around us.

To my fellow scholars, I urge you to take full advantage of the opportunities this

program offers. Engage actively in mentorship, participate in community service, and seek out leadership roles. Remember, the knowledge and skills we gain here are not just for our benefit but for the betterment of our communities and the world at large.

As we move forward, I challenge each of us to embrace the values of humility, kindness, and co-creation that the Mastercard Foundation instills in us. Let us strive to be leaders who not only excel in our respective fields but also inspire and empower those around us.

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An Inspirational Message to All

To my fellow scholars, mentors, and the entire Mastercard Foundation community, I want to leave you with this message: **Your dreams are valid, and your potential is limitless.** No matter where you come from or the challenges you face, remember that you have the power to create a brighter future, not just for yourself but for those around you.

Leadership is not about standing above others; it's about standing with them, lifting them up, and walking together toward a shared vision. Each of us has a unique role to play in this journey and every small step we take contributes to the greater good. Let us continue to dream boldly, act courageously and lead with compassion.

As we move forward, let us remember that our greatest achievements are not measured by personal success but by the lives we touch and the positive change we create. Together, we can build a better Africa and a better world.

"The future belongs to those who believe in the beauty of their dreams." – Eleanor Roosevelt

Dumba Noah Nelson
Scholars' Council Representative
2025/2024
Makerere University

COVER STORY...



Gabeya in a group photo after attending a partners meeting.

Empowering the girl child- Leadership through mentorship

Story compiled by
Carol Kasujja Adii,
Senior Communication
Officer, Mastercard
Foundation Scholars
Program at Makerere
University.

Elizabeth Gabeya's Unforgettable
Day in the Makerere University Vice
Chancellor's Seat

It was a dream come true for 21-year-old Elizabeth Gabeya, a Mastercard Foundation Scholar at Makerere University, when she took charge of the Vice Chancellor's office for two days- March 10th and 11th.

She temporarily assumed the role of Prof. Barnabas Nawangwe, the office bearer, a day after International Women's Day. Each year, Uganda joins the rest of the world in commemorating International Women's Day. To mark the occasion, Prof Nawangwe permitted a first-year female student to shadow him for two days as he went about his daily activities.

Excited about the opportunity, Gabeya, a student pursuing a Bachelor of Agricultural and Rural Innovation, arrived at 1:00 p.m., ahead of the appointed time. Dressed in a white T-shirt and blue jeans, she underwent security checks at the Main Building entrance.

She was escorted to the Vice Chancellor's office on the second floor by Betty Kyakuwa, the University's Acting Deputy Chief of Public



Gabeya shaking hands with the Vice Chancellor, Prof. Nawangwe as he handed over office to her.

Relations. As she made her way to the Vice Chancellor's office, Gabeya nervously called out the name of Jesus.

At 2:30, Gabeya was summoned to the Vice Chancellor's office. She entered with confidence and shook Professor Nawangwe's hand, and at precisely 2:40, she assumed the position of Vice Chancellor.

She received a team of senior staff from the Uganda Revenue Authority, His Excellency Vincent Lubega Nsamba, the 90th Guild President of Makerere University, and other members who had come to discuss the 90th Guild celebrations with the Vice Chancellor.

She advised the guild President to write to her office to officially inform her of the event. During the discussion, she also pointed out that over the last six graduation ceremonies, Makerere University has seen a rising number of female graduates. At the recent graduation in January, 53% of the graduates were female, while 47% were male.

The Team also discussed how the university could support male students, just as it has done for female students. Professor Nawangwe listened attentively, demonstrating a sincere interest in their perspectives.

Experience as the Vice Chancellor

Gabeya recounts that the hour she spent with Professor Nawangwe was an inspiring and unforgettable experience. She learned about his other side.

"I have never thought that I would ever enter the Vice Chancellor's office; all along, I believed he met with students who perform well, those with talent, and dignitaries. I was surprised when I entered his office and he said: **"Welcome, Elizabeth; you are the Vice Chancellor."** She adds that as she approached the VC's office, she kept wondering what she would discuss when she was finally ushered into the Vice Chancellor's presence, but Prof Nawangwe's fatherly aura dispelled all her apprehensions, and she found herself feeling quite comfortable.

"He struck me as a father-figure, friendly, down to earth, simple and a listener, he allowed me to chair a meeting and also ask him questions. The Vice Chancellor's words challenged me to dream bigger, work harder, and seek opportunities beyond the classroom," she said

Though it was an hour-long event, the experience made Gabeya feel valued and engaged as a student and scholar at the University.

At 3:00 p.m., she handed over the office back to Prof Nawangwe, who still wanted her to be around and chair more meetings.

"Thank you, Prof Nawangwe, for allowing me to be the Vice Chancellor. This is not just an event, it is a milestone in my academic journey. It has reminded me that I am part of a bigger mission to lead, innovate and create a better future for my community," Gabeya expressed gratitude.

Prof. Nawangwe speaks out

"This action is a strong catalyst, propelling many young women into leadership and positioning

them as agents of change in their communities," Prof. Nawangwe remarked. He further highlighted Makerere University's commitment to women's empowerment through various initiatives, including mentorship programs, scholarships, and leadership training as prescribed under the SDG 4.

"Over the years, Makerere has made significant strides in promoting gender equity. We have seen a steady increase in female enrollment and graduation rates, with women now outnumbering men at recent graduation ceremonies. Our goal is to continue nurturing women leaders, researchers, and innovators who will contribute meaningfully to national and global development," he added.

Today, Gabeya attended the university's Top Management meeting, which she chaired, receiving guests from Mauritius. The guests shared opportunities for venture capitalism with the management team, which excited Elizabeth. She expressed her hope to visit Mauritius one day to learn more about investment financing.

"I will never forget these two days in my life. As a student, I cannot afford to get retakes or be average. I am going to study hard and see that one day I occupy that office," Gabeya said.



Gabeya having a chat with the Vice Chancellor, Prof. Nawangwe at his office.



Gabeya chairing a meeting at Vice Chancellor's Office.



Thank you, Prof Nawangwe, for allowing me to be the Vice Chancellor. This is not just an event, it is a milestone in my academic journey. It has reminded me that I am part of a bigger mission to lead, innovate and create a better future for my community.

Gabeya expressed gratitude.

FEATURE STORY...

The Big Interview

WITH

**Winnie Kushaba as
a shining example
of resilience and
determination...**

On 8th March 2025, the world celebrated International Women's Day with the inspiring theme "For All Women and Girls: Rights. Equality. Empowerment." This theme encourages us to take meaningful actions toward achieving equal rights, power, and opportunities for all, fostering a feminist future where all young women can thrive. This theme resonates deeply with the Mastercard Foundation Scholars Program at Makerere University, which is dedicated to empowering young women to emerge as transformative leaders and change-makers in their communities. This year, we proudly highlight one of our Mastercard Foundation Scholars Program Alumni, Ms. Winnie Kushaba.

Winnie is a powerful example of what is possible when access to education and empowerment are prioritized for women and girls. Her journey is a testament to the power of hard work and perseverance, serving as an inspiring model for aspiring scientists. By breaking through barriers, Winnie advances her career and contributes to the growing field of chemistry in Uganda, paving the way for future generations.



Who is Winnie Kushaba

Winnie Kushaba was born on 21st December 1994 in Rakai District. Challenges marked her early life as she grew up in a complex family environment. Although her biological mother was absent, Winnie was raised by her stepmother and later by her maternal grandmother, with additional support from her maternal aunt. Throughout her childhood, Winnie experienced several transitions as she sought stability. She moved between various locations, including Rakai, Ibanda, Kiruhura, Kazo, and Isingiro, searching for a place to call home. Each transition contributed to her resilience and adaptability, shaping the strong character with which she navigated these changes.

Winnie speaks openly about her childhood challenges.

"I have never met my biological mother, and I do not know if she is alive or not," she asserts. "As the firstborn in a family of five children, each from a different mother, I took on the significant responsibility of caring for my four brothers from the age of eight," Winnie explains. This experience has instilled in her a strong sense of resilience and leadership.

Early Education

At age five, Winnie was enrolled at Katembi Primary School in Isingiro district, where her father was a teacher. Unfortunately, it wasn't long before her father developed a mental illness, which ultimately led to his passing. This tragic event marked the start of Winnie's educational struggles. Despite these challenges, Winnie was a resilient young girl determined to pursue her education at any cost.

She moved from one school to another, receiving support from generous individuals who provided bursaries for her at various local schools. Winnie

attended six primary schools before finally taking her Primary Leaving Examinations at Mwamba Junior School, where her aunt had enrolled her. Despite the numerous school transitions and changes, Winnie excelled in her final exams, emerging as the top student in her school.

Pursuing Secondary Education...

Winnie's outstanding performance in the Primary Leaving Examinations earned her a bursary to attend Mwamba Secondary School for her lower secondary education. Shortly thereafter, she was allowed to transfer to St. Catherine Girls' School in Kiruhura District, where she was welcomed into her paternal grandmother's home. With the unwavering support of her grandmother and aunt, Winnie not only completed her Form Four final examinations but also distinguished herself as one of the top students at her school. This journey highlights her resilience and determination to pursue academic excellence.

Pursuing High School Education...

After achieving outstanding results in her Form Four examinations in 2010, Winnie felt optimistic about her future and hoped her generous benefactors would support her enrollment in Advanced Level education. However, due to financial constraints, her elderly grandmother and aunt could not afford her high school tuition, which led to a challenging four-year absence from formal education. During this time, Winnie dedicated herself to various community jobs to save money for her schooling.

A compassionate Catholic nun recognized her potential in a positive turn of events in 2014. She offered her a bursary to attend Boncosilli Catholic School in Isingiro district, providing Winnie with a renewed opportunity to pursue her dreams. At Boncosilli Catholic School, she pursued a challenging combination of Biology, Chemistry,



government scholarship to attend university. This placed Winnie in another difficult situation, forcing her to remain out of school for another two years.

Unlike her earlier experience in Form Four when she was still relatively young, this time, due to her age, her two-year absence from education attracted the attention of many village men who began asking for her hand in marriage. The situation became so overwhelming that her aunt started locking her indoors during the day, allowing her to leave only in the evenings to protect her from the advances of the village men.

Securing a scholarship through the Mastercard Foundation Scholars Program to attend the University...

When all hope seemed lost for Winnie to attend university, a young man who lived in her neighbourhood and was a student at Makerere University informed her about the Mastercard Foundation Scholars Program scholarships available at the University. Seizing the opportunity, Winnie boarded a bus to Kampala, Uganda's capital, for the first time. She collected the scholarship forms, and, as luck would have it, she was awarded the scholarship in 2016 to pursue a Bachelor of Science degree in Botany and Chemistry.

At Makerere University, Winnie's potential flourished. Despite a challenging childhood that affected her well-being, the psychosocial support and academic assistance from the Mastercard Foundation Scholars Program played a pivotal role in her journey. With this support, she completed her studies and graduated in 2021.

"Had it not been for the [Mastercard Foundation Scholars Program] Team's psychosocial and remedial academic support, completing my university education would have been challenging," Winnie asserts.



and Mathematics, ultimately earning 13 points in her final examinations. While this score was considered quite good for someone who had been out of school for four years, it unfortunately fell short of the requirements for a

Life after Makerere University....

After graduating from Makerere University, Winnie began her professional journey with a graduate internship at Bio Fresh Ltd. This company exports fresh fruits and vegetables to the European Union market. Starting her career in the Quality Control department, she quickly demonstrated her skills and commitment. Her exceptional performance as an intern led to a full-time position as a Quality Control Officer. Over the next four years, Winnie continued to advance within the organization, and she now holds the dual roles of Product Development Manager and Internal Control Systems Manager at Bio Fresh. Her progress reflects her dedication and talent in the field.

Impact on the Community....

Through her work earnings, Winnie has significantly impacted her community. She has ensured that her siblings receive a quality education by covering their school fees and supported her paternal aunt by constructing a comfortable home. Additionally, she has played a vital role in helping two young girls from the Kaberamaido district return to school.

Winnie has also established skills programs to empower young women, especially mothers in Gayaza, a suburb of Kampala. By training and mentoring them in entrepreneurship, she has equipped these women to start small businesses, such as snack production and selling fruits and vegetables. This initiative has enabled them to achieve financial independence and improve their livelihoods.

"With my earnings, I am dedicated to ensuring my younger brothers receive a quality education. One is currently studying for a Bachelor's degree in Medicine and Surgery at Gulu University, the other is pursuing a Bachelor's degree in Social Sciences at Ibanda University, and the youngest is in form four," Winnie happily shares. "I have also been able to support two vulnerable young girls from the Kaberamaido District in Eastern Uganda who had dropped out of school by helping them return to their studies because they reminded me of my troubled childhood," Winnie adds, with a look of

satisfaction on her face.

Looking into the future....

Winnie has a clear vision for her future and confidently shares her aspirations. In the immediate term, she plans to pursue a Master's degree in Quality Control Management in 2026, followed by a PhD in the same field shortly thereafter. Winnie is passionate about conducting research that enhances the quality of crops and plants in Uganda, aiming to make a meaningful contribution to this critical area of knowledge. Additionally, as a devoted mother of one, she is committed to creating a nurturing and enriching environment for her children, ensuring they have a fulfilling childhood filled with opportunities that she wishes she had experienced.

Message to fellow young women...

Winnie inspires young women to remain steadfast in pursuing their dreams, even when faced with challenges and difficult circumstances. She emphasises the importance of recognising and celebrating small achievements and encourages individuals to excel in all their endeavours. No matter the obstacles, she believes in the power of determination and resilience to help them reach their fullest potential.

"I urge my fellow young women in Uganda to remain resilient in the face of challenges. It's important to actively nurture your dreams and maintain hope, as these are essential for unlocking your true potential," Winnie emphasises.

This interview was conducted by Mr. Bernard Buteera, the Principal Communications and Public Relations Officer at the Mastercard Foundation Scholars Program at Makerere University.



How to Gain Admission to Your Ideal Graduate School

by Marion Apio

Marion Apio is a scholar-alumnae currently pursuing graduate studies at the University of California, Berkeley, United States of America.

Gaining admission into graduate school was filled with excitement, setbacks, and valuable lessons. If you dream of entering your ideal program, I hope my experience will help you confidently navigate the process. I questioned whether journalism was the best path for me, so I discussed with my mentors, including Bernard Buteera, Anika McGinnis, and others, exploring potential courses and asking critical questions such as: Is this what I want to do for the next

three years? Am I passionate about it? Does it fulfil me?

1. Defining My Goals and Researching Programs

I knew I wanted to pursue a Master of Journalism, but I wasn't sure which school would be the best fit. I spent months researching different programs, examining faculty expertise, funding opportunities,

and career prospects. UC Berkeley stood out as the perfect choice, with its strong investigative journalism program, incredible faculty, and network of accomplished alumni.

I spent much time on the school's website, reading about its mission and values. A message from the Dean at the time, Geeta Anand, resonated with me deeply—her hope for journalism and desire to support courageous journalists reinforced my interest in the program. However, I didn't only focus on UC Berkeley. I also considered applying

to Stanford but ultimately didn't submit my application due to financial limitations. To gain a deeper understanding of Berkeley, I contacted students, watched YouTube videos about the program, and attended information sessions, all of which helped me confirm that it was the right fit.

2. Building a Strong Application

Since my background was investigative and fact-checking journalism, I ensured my application reflected my strengths. I highlighted my experience with Debunk Media Initiative, business reporting work, and passion for local and accountability journalism. I was clear in my statement of purpose that I saw journalism as a tool for change, not only in my life but in the lives of those I encounter. I also highlighted how my big vision fits into UC Berkeley and how Berkeley presented itself as a space for me to grow.

I also wrote a personal story, which was an opportunity to tell my story. I value storytelling, and there is a saying that people will not know you unless they know who you are. And who you are is the stories you tell about yourself. This personal approach made my application more compelling and helped the admissions committee see my unique perspective and experiences.

3. Getting Strong Letters of Recommendation

Since my background was investigative and fact-checking journalism, I ensured my application reflected my strengths. I highlighted my experience with Debunk Media Initiative, business reporting work, and passion for local and accountability journalism. I was clear in my statement of purpose that I saw journalism as a tool for change, not only in my life but in the lives of those I encounter. I also highlighted how my big vision fits into UC Berkeley and how Berkeley presented itself as a space for me to grow.

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4. Dealing with Financial Hurdles: Deferring and Applying for Scholarships

Even after getting admitted, I faced financial challenges—I didn't have enough funding to cover my expenses. Instead of giving up, I decided to defer my admission for a year while

applying for scholarships. This was a tough call, but it was the best decision. I secured funding from the Mastercard Foundation, which had also paid my tuition at Makerere University during my undergraduate studies. Their support made my dream of attending UC Berkeley financially possible.

5. Don't Stop Learning

Getting into grad school isn't just about being qualified—it's about being strategic and resilient. Even after getting admitted, I had to fight for funding. I learned that networking matters; talking to alumni and faculty helped me understand what the school was looking for and how to strengthen my application. There's no shame in deferring; if finances are an issue, deferring to apply for scholarships can be a game-changer. I also realised the importance of applying widely. Even though Berkeley was my dream school, I applied to multiple programs and scholarships to keep my options open. Lastly, I discovered that storytelling is powerful. Your story matters; how you tell it can shape how others see you and your potential.

Gaining Admission into graduate school was one of my life's most rewarding yet challenging experiences. If you're on this journey, know that setbacks don't mean failure—they can be stepping stones to even better opportunities. Stay focused, seek funding aggressively, and never give up on your dream. You've got this!

Meet our New Program Staff

In November 2024, the Scholars Program Team at Makerere University expanded with six additional staff members. Who are they?



Mr. Daniel Otim

Portfolio: Principal Monitoring & Evaluation Officer

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Daniel is a MEAL (Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability, and Learning) professional with 15 years of practical experience and leadership. He has worked across various sectors, including education, health, agriculture, and human rights. Daniel holds a Master of Business Administration from Makerere University, a Postgraduate Diploma in Monitoring and Evaluation from the Uganda Management Institute, and a Bachelor's degree in Statistics from Makerere University. He also possesses several certificates in Impact Assessments and Social Research. His passion lies in designing MEAL frameworks, implementing data-driven systems, conducting research and data analytics, and leveraging digital tools for impactful project assessments. In his

role, Daniel collaborates closely with the Planning and Development Department and the Quality Assurance Directorate. He is responsible for developing and managing the MEAL framework, maintaining a comprehensive database of Alumni and Scholars, and overseeing evaluation and learning processes. Additionally, he monitors programme progress, promotes learning, ensures proper reporting, and acts as a safeguarding ambassador.



Mr. Brian Buggah

Portfolio: Systems Administrator & IT Support Officer

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Brian is the Systems Administrator and IT Support Officer for the Mastercard Foundation Scholars Program at Makerere University. He holds a Master of Science in Information Systems from Lund University in Sweden and a Bachelor's degree in Information Technology from Makerere University. With over 15 years of experience, Brian specialises in managing software and information systems, overseeing IT projects, and implementing IT solutions in large programs. Brian is passionate about cloud technology, software development, security, open-source systems, and the Internet of Things (IoT). He collaborates closely with the Directorate of ICT Support (DICTS) and is responsible for ICT-enabled program activities. His duties include managing the procurement and maintenance of all ICT-related equipment, software, and licenses for the program and enabling the integration of program databases with university systems where appropriate. Additionally, Brian works closely with the Dean of Students' office to support the IT function at the Makerere University Disability Support Centre. This includes providing ICT-related support for assistive devices and technologies and harmonising all IT operations at the Centre.



Ms. Carol Kasujja Adii

Portfolio: Senior Communication Officer

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Carol is the Senior Communication Officer and a highly skilled journalist and communications expert with over 18 years of experience, including 15 years in investigative roles. She holds a Master of Arts in Journalism and Communication and a postgraduate diploma in Investigative Journalism from Makerere University, and a bachelor's degree in Mass Communication from Uganda Christian University. Carol has a strong background in communication, crisis management, and building relationships with key stakeholders. Before joining the Mastercard Foundation Scholars Program, she held several senior positions at the New Vision newspaper, where she worked as an investigative writer and multimedia journalist. As an award-winning journalist, she embodies the true essence of journalism: truth, accuracy, and objectivity. In her previous roles, she covered significant local and international news events related to education, human rights, gender, and health.



Mr. Ayub Kiranda

Portfolio: Senior Transition Officer

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Ayub serves as the Senior Transition Officer for the Mastercard Scholars Program at Makerere University, where he assists program scholars and alumni in their transitions to employment and further education. He aims to achieve this by fostering strategic community engagement, empowering the alumni network, and building strong partnerships with key stakeholders. He holds an MSc in Development Management from the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE), a master's degree in Social Sector Planning and Management, and a Bachelor of Arts from Makerere University. Additionally, Ayub is a distinguished fellow of LSE's Programme for African Leadership, highlighting his leadership capabilities and commitment to Africa's development. Ayub

is passionate about development research, particularly in cooperative development models that address socio-economic challenges in Africa. He is dedicated to exploring solutions that promote inclusive and sustainable development, community empowerment, and economic independence.



Mr. Robert Egwalu

Portfolio: Scholars Recruitment Officer

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Robert is the Scholars Recruitment Officer for the Mastercard Foundation Scholars Program at Makerere University. In this role, he coordinates pre-enrolment engagements and recruitment of scholars for the Program. His dream is to reach out to the most disadvantaged, vulnerable, and deserving youth across Africa, providing them with information about scholarship opportunities. He aims to establish strong networks and partnerships with key stakeholders to further this mission. Robert holds a Master of Arts in Development Studies, focusing on Human Rights, Gender, and Conflict Studies from Erasmus University in the Netherlands. He also has a Bachelor's degree in Adult and Community Education from Kyambogo University in Kampala, a Youth in Development Work Diploma from Makerere University, and a Postgraduate Diploma in Project Planning and Management from the Uganda Management Institute. As an expert in refugee and forced migration issues, Robert is an educationist, a human rights advocate, and a humanitarian and development specialist. He has implemented education-related projects for over 13 years, benefiting more than 25,000 individuals, including refugees, internally displaced persons, and returnees from the Great Lakes region and the Horn of Africa. Robert is passionate about empowering, mentoring, and building the capacities of vulnerable, marginalised, and economically disadvantaged youth, including refugees, IDPs, persons with disabilities, and minorities, helping them live dignified lives. He advocates for a society that champions freedoms, fairness, equality, and social justice for all.



Mr. Francis Ocaaki

Portfolio: Assistant Finance and
Administration Officer

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Francis is a 5th Cohort Scholar Alumnus of the Mastercard Foundation Scholars Program at Makerere University, where he earned a bachelor's degree in commerce. He has over two years of experience in internal auditing and finance and is currently advancing his expertise through the CPA program. Francis began his professional career as an Internal Audit Assistant at Ugachick Poultry Breeders Limited, where he honed his skills in financial data analysis and automation of repetitive tasks using advanced Excel formulas and Power Pivot. His passion for accounting and finance drives his dedication to inspiring youth to become better versions of themselves using 21st-century skills. As a Scholars Program Alumnus, Francis is honoured to be part of the program implementation team, enabling him to give back to his community and fellow scholars while upholding the program's core

values. As a student, he demonstrated strong leadership as the General Secretary of the Scholars Association and as a member of the Scholars Giveback Committee. Francis's commitment to societal impact extends beyond his professional work. In 2022, during the outbreak, he served as a focal person for Ebola virus risk communication in Buheesi Sub-county, Bunyangabu District. He also volunteered as a blood donor recruiter with the Uganda Red Cross Society in Kabarole Branch. As a Resolution Project Fellow and Co-founder of Pearl Api Uganda, Francis empowers school-going students with beekeeping skills, enabling them to generate income for school fees.



Ms. Diane Nabikolo Osiru

Portfolio: Safeguarding Liaison
Officer

Ms. Diane is the Safeguarding and Liaison Officer for the Mastercard Foundation Scholars Program at Makerere University. She holds a Master's degree in Agribusiness Management and a Bachelor of Science in

Agriculture (Hons) from Makerere University, Uganda. She is currently a PhD candidate at the University of Nairobi. Additionally, she holds professional certifications in Safeguarding in Further Education, Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults, and Risk Management for Projects, highlighting her specialised expertise in creating secure environments. Previously, she was involved in conducting safeguarding risk assessments, developing safeguarding policies, and collaborating with action research teams focused on improving the well-being of students in higher education. Diane has also participated in training peer educators on personal safety in peer-to-peer relationships. Ms. Diane enjoys reading and writing; she is dedicated to lifelong learning and serves on the executive committee of the Uganda Agricultural Economics Association, where she has contributed to the preparation of the Strategic Plan 2024-2029. She is a choir leader at her local church and a registered member of the Mothers' Union.

From Scholarship to Leadership: My Journey of Influence.

by Nalumansi Aisha



Transitioning from University as a scholar to a professional leader is a journey filled with learning, growth, and moments of self-discovery. Reflecting on my journey from a young girl with big dreams to a woman making meaningful contributions in advocacy

and communications, I see a story of resilience, passion, and unwavering commitment to positive change. My experience, from being a Mastercard Foundation Scholar at Makerere University to my current role as a Program and Advocacy Associate at the

Strategic Initiative for Women in the Horn of Africa (SIHA), has been one of transformation, purpose, and impact.

The Foundation of My Journey

Growing up, I was always curious about people and the issues affecting communities around me. I was particularly drawn to the power of storytelling and communication in driving change. This curiosity led me to pursue a Bachelor's degree in Community Psychology, where I found my passion for understanding human behaviour and advocating for social justice and mental health.

My scholarship experience was not just about academic excellence; it was about leadership, service, and leaving a mark on the world. The Mastercard Foundation Scholars Program provided me with an incredible platform to refine my skills in communication, advocacy, and mentorship qualities that would later define my career path.

At Makerere University, I took on leadership roles such as Baobab Ambassador and Information and Publicity Minister of SAMAK. These positions were not just titles to me, they were opportunities to serve, inspire, and create impact. I still remember my pride and fulfilment when the Scholar's Community shouted in the room and chose me as their Best Leader in the SAMAK Cabinet of 22-2021. It was a moment that validated my dedication to leadership and community engagement.

Creating Impact Beyond the Classroom

Mental health and youth empowerment have been central to my work. During my time at Campus, I volunteered at the Makerere University Counselling and Guidance Center, I supported students through peer counselling and mental health awareness campaigns. I also worked with the Tukule Foundation, where I mentored young people, encouraging them to harness their potential and develop sustainable livelihoods.

In addition, I played a significant role in career development initiatives through the Career Accelerator Program with Makerere Alumni as I was a program Associate on the Scholars program, which was a fulfilling opportunity, where I encouraged Mastercard Foundation Scholar Alumni to participate in professional growth sessions actively. Through this, I witnessed the transformative power of mentorship and networking in shaping young professionals, today I found colleagues who attended the CAP using the skills they learnt recently one Scholar I always supported won funding from the scholar's MCF Alumni Fund, this is a person who was not active but I have seen her progress after the encouragement. I am happy that I contributed to her growth.

Beyond mentorship, I have actively contributed to mental health advocacy by writing articles on mental well-being and working on awareness campaigns highlighting the importance of psychological support for young people. One of my most impactful engagements was facilitating a mental health session with mentees who were university students from Northern Uganda under the Triskelion Education and Skills Initiative (TESI), where I guided discussions on emotional resilience, stress management, and mental well-being among young professionals. Due to my impact, I was invited by a fellow Alumni Scholar to facilitate this session. I delivered it well, leaving the participants wanting more of these sessions.

Lessons and Reflections

Transitioning from scholarship to leadership has come with invaluable lessons, some of which I learned the hard way. Here are some key takeaways from my journey:

- Embrace Leadership Opportunities: Every role you take, big or small, shapes your ability to lead and influence change. Never underestimate the power of the little things you do.

- Build Meaningful Networks: The relationships I formed within the Mastercard Foundation Scholars community and beyond have opened doors to incredible opportunities. Some of the best opportunities in my life have come from the people who believed in me.

- Give Back to Your Community: True leadership is about impact. Contributing to society through mentorship, advocacy, or social projects is essential. I have found immense fulfilment in giving back and encouraging others to do the same.

- Stay Committed to Learning: Growth never stops. Through professional experiences, training, and volunteering, I continue to develop my skills and expand my impact. Every experience, whether good or bad, has been a lesson that shaped my journey.

Looking Ahead

As I continue my career in communications and advocacy, I remain committed to using my skills and experiences to amplify voices, champion social justice, and empower the next generation of leaders. My journey is a testament to the power of education, mentorship, and determination. To fellow alumni and scholars, I encourage you to take charge of your journeys, embrace

growth opportunities, and remember that our impact shapes tomorrow's leaders. You have the power to create change, to inspire others, and to leave a legacy.

Aisha Nalumansi

A Scholar Alumni Cohort Five 2019-2023, & Assistant Communication Lead at the Makerere Alumnet Foundation

"The future belongs to those who believe in the beauty of their dreams." – Eleanor Roosevelt. Together, we can drive meaningful change.

You should Start Using LinkedIn while at the University—Here is why



By Irene Nandyose,

Project Lead @ Discover Cohort 3 Alumni

The One Platform I Overlooked for Too Long

If I could return to my university days, I'd do one thing differently: I would have started using LinkedIn much sooner. Like many students, I thought LinkedIn was just for CEOs, senior professionals, and people in suits. I assumed you did networking after graduation, when you were actively searching for jobs.

I couldn't have been more wrong.

The truth is, LinkedIn isn't just a job search platform—it's a credibility builder, a networking tool, and an open door to opportunities you didn't even know existed. I realised this only after graduation, but looking back, I see how much I could have gained if I had started sooner.

How LinkedIn Opened Doors for Me

After graduating, I began using LinkedIn seriously, not merely as a static resume, but as a platform to showcase my skills and insights. I started posting about my work, my learnings, and the challenges I was navigating. I engaged with professionals in my field and connected with people I admired. Then, something unexpected happened: I met incredible individuals who became mentors, collaborators, and career guides. Opportunities began coming my way—not because I applied, but because people noticed my work.

My current boss trusts me due to the expertise I display on LinkedIn. It struck me: I had been sitting on one of the most powerful career-building tools.

Why Every University Student Should Be on LinkedIn Now

↳ If you're still in university, you have a golden opportunity I missed. Here's why you should start leveraging LinkedIn right now:

↳ Visibility = Opportunities – You never know who's watching. Posting about your projects, skills, and interests can attract job offers, internships, and mentorships.

↳ Connections Matter – Building a network before graduation means you'll have a support system when entering the job market.

↳ It's a Digital Proof of Your Skills – LinkedIn isn't just about listing your achievements—it's about showcasing your expertise in action through posts, articles, and engagement.

↳ Employers Are Watching – Many recruiters and employers check LinkedIn before hiring. The earlier you start building your presence, the better.

Where to Start?

If I had the chance to do it again, here's what I would do as a student:

Create a Strong Profile – Use a professional photo, craft a compelling bio, and list your skills.

Engage with Alumni & Professionals – Like, comment, and connect with people in your field.

Share Your Journey – Talk about your experiences, projects, and what you're learning.

Reach Out & Learn – Send connection requests to people you admire and ask for advice. Start Now, Thank Yourself Later

I wish someone had told me in university what I'm telling you now:

"Your career doesn't start after graduation. It begins with the connections, credibility, and skills you build today.

So, take the leap—set up your LinkedIn, engage with people, and start sharing your journey.

A future opportunity could await you on the other side of a straightforward post."

The Ripple Effect of Giving Back: A Story of Community and Compassion



By Nalumansi Aisha

In a world that often feels divided, the act of giving back has the power to unite us, to remind us of our shared humanity, and to create a ripple effect of positive change. My journey of giving back began when I became a beneficiary of the Mastercard Foundation Scholars Program, an initiative that not only invests in education but also instills the value of service to others. This year, I had the privilege of actively participating in the annual Give Back event, an experience that deepened my understanding of the transformative power of collective action.

The Give Back initiative is more than just a day of service; it is a celebration of community, compassion, and the belief that small actions can lead to significant impact. As a scholar, I was inspired to mobilize my family and neighbors to address a pressing issue in our community: access to clean drinking water. In my village, we rely on a communal well for our daily water needs. Over time, the well had become contaminated, posing a health risk to everyone who depended on it. Recognizing the urgency of the situation, I decided to act.

With the support of my family, I organized a community clean-up day. We gathered tools, rallied our neighbours, and worked together to clean the well and its surroundings. It was not an easy task—the well was deep, and the debris was stubborn—but the spirit of teamwork and determination kept us going. As we worked, I was struck by the sense of unity that emerged. People of all ages, from children to elders, came together with a shared purpose: to ensure that everyone in our community had access to clean, safe water.

The impact of that day extended far beyond the physical act of cleaning the well. It sparked conversations about the importance of maintaining our shared resources and inspired others to take initiative in their own ways. My younger siblings, for example, started a small garden using water from the well, growing vegetables that they shared with neighbors. The well, once a source of concern, became a symbol of what we can achieve when we come together.

What began as a single day of service has now evolved into a sustained effort. Inspired by the success of the initial clean-up, my neighbors and I established a schedule to periodically clean the well. Every few months, we come together to ensure that the well remains clean and functional. This ongoing commitment has not only improved access to clean water but has also strengthened the bonds within our community.

This experience taught me that giving back is not just about addressing immediate needs; it is about fostering a culture of care and responsibility. It is about recognizing that we are all interconnected and that our actions, no matter how small, can create a ripple effect that touches countless lives. The Mastercard Foundation Scholars Program has given me the tools and opportunities to make a difference, but it is the values of empathy and service that have truly shaped my journey.

As I reflect on the Give Back event and the ongoing clean-up efforts, I am reminded of a quote by Margaret Mead: "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has." My family, my neighbors, and I may be just a small group, but together, we have made a lasting impact on our community. And that, I believe, is the true essence of giving back.

The Power of Giving Back....



By Nyago Doreen

There is a timeless principle that has stood the test of time, "It is more blessed to give than to receive". In a world where personal success often takes precedence, the act of giving remains one of the most powerful ways to create a lasting impact. My journey as a Mastercard Foundation Scholar and now as an alumna, has reinforced this truth, proving that generosity not only changes the lives of those we help but also transforms us into better individuals and leaders.

Throughout my journey, I have had the privilege of leading and participating in impactful giveback projects that have brought hope and relief to communities in need. One of the most memorable was the fundraising campaign I spearheaded to drill a borehole in Bulumwaki Village. This community had struggled for years without access to clean water, forcing residents especially women and children to walk long distances in search of this basic necessity. Through collective efforts as Mastercard Foundation scholars, we successfully raised funds, and today, the village has a borehole that provides clean water to over 200 households. Seeing the joy on the faces of the community members reminded me of the incredible power of giving.

Another significant project was the Alumni Project at St. Kizito Nambula Primary School in Buyende District. The school lacked adequate facilities, and students faced challenges that hindered their learning

experiences. With the support of fellow alumni, well-wishers, and partners, we mobilized resources, and we constructed a VIP latrine, donated desks for pupils, and planted trees to improve the school environment. These seemingly simple acts of giving created a significant effect that students can now focus on their studies in a healthier environment, and the school administration is inspired to push for further development.

My personal journey of giving extends beyond community projects. Five years ago, I made one of the most fulfilling decisions of my life, I adopted a son, and I have been paying for his school fees ever since. Providing for his education and well-being has reinforced my belief that giving is not just about financial support; it is about creating opportunities for a better future. Seeing him grow, learn, and thrive reminds me daily of the impact one act of kindness can have on a life.

POLITICS AND LEADERSHIP

When the Shuttle of Your Own Hostel Leaves You: A Tale of Leadership, Academics, and Kampala's 'Slow' Boda Bodas



Sunday Amon,
Vice President SAMAK
2024/25

It's 7:45 AM, and the hostel shuttle has just left without you again. As you sprint to the gate, assignments half-completed in your bag, you realize two things: 'You are now at the mercy of Kampala's boda riders. The same boda guys you've always accused of over speeding are suddenly the slowest motorists on the planet.

These experiences have taught me that giving is not about how much you have, but about the willingness to share what you can. Whether it is time, skills, financial support, or mentorship, every act of generosity makes a difference. Giving fosters unity, instills a sense of responsibility, and builds a legacy that extends beyond our lifetime. As scholars and alumni, we have been privileged to receive education, mentorship, and opportunities. The greatest way to honor this privilege is by paying it forward.

I challenge each one of us to embrace the spirit of giving back. Look around you, there is always someone in need. Let us be the miracle that brightens another person's path. The impact we make today will shape the world for future generations, proving that indeed, it is more blessed to give than to receive.

This is the moment of truth. Because waiting for you on campus is that lecturer, the one who treats attendance like it's the holy grail of academia. The one who, in a lecture hall of 300 students, will still lock eyes with you the second you tiptoe in late.

The Leadership Bug (And Its Questionable Side Effects)

When I first arrived at Makerere, something shifted in me. Maybe it was the campus air, or maybe it was the free Mastercard Foundation merch, but suddenly, I wanted to do everything. Leadership? Yes. Networking? Absolutely. Career workshops at ungodly hours? Where do I sign?

I became the student who couldn't resist an opportunity. BAOBAB app workshop at dawn? I was there before the facilitators. LinkedIn training? My profile was updated before the presenter even finished their intro. And Class Representative elections? Well... let's just say my first campaign was more of a learning experience than a victory.

But like a determined underdog in a Nollywood movie, I tried again and won a spot in the Scholars' leadership. From there, it was a domino effect: Peer Coach? Applied. AlfEducation opportunity? Submitted. Vice President? Why not?

The Chaos of Trying to Do It All

Picture this: I, sprinting across campus with one shoe untied, papers flying behind me like confetti, trying to make it from a lecture to a leadership meeting in less than three minutes. Some days, I'd be in a serious student discussion while secretly typing an assignment under the table. Other days, I'd miss lectures because of meetings then miss meetings because of deadlines.

I was like a boda boda stuck in traffic revving the engine but going nowhere.

And those lecturers who take attendance like it's a national census! They have a sixth

sense for latecomers. I've mastered the "late entrance shuffle" that awkward tiptoe into class, trying to look like I've been there the whole time while the lecturer gives me the look.

The Breaking Point

When the AlumnNet Magazine editorial team opened applications, I wrote mine like a witch doctor under deadline pressure. Against all odds, I became Chief Editor but still clung to my Peer Coach and AlfEducation roles like my life depended on it.

Here's the truth: I've lost more applications than I've won. Rejections? Plenty. But leadership isn't about winning every time, it's about getting back up after the boda boda of life leaves you behind.

What I've Learned

You can't be everywhere at once no matter how many energy drinks you chug.

Saying "no" is a superpower I'm still learning.

That student leader who seems perfect, well, they've also sprinted after a shuttle they missed.

Boda bodas are only fast when you don't need them to be.

Attendance-obsessed lecturers are the real superheroes or villains depending on the day.

So to all my fellow opportunity chasers; Chase your dreams, but remember to breathe. Take on challenges, but know when to pause.

And if you ever see me running for President of Mars or even a leadership role in any other university I am even not enrolled in, don't laugh too hard just nod your head and continue. Life is about showing up, occasionally face-planting, and always getting back up preferably before the shuttle leaves.



What is transformative leadership?

By Nakiriisa Flavia,
*Bachelor of Science in
Quantitative Economics*

Transformative leadership inspires and motivates individuals to create meaningful change within themselves and their organisations or communities. It transcends mere task management, instead focusing on empowering others, fostering innovation, and driving long-term success. Transformative leaders guide with vision, passion, and a commitment to making a positive impact. Transformative leadership is founded on several key principles that distinguish it from traditional leadership styles:

Vision and Inspiration:

Transformative leaders possess a clear vision of the future and articulate it in ways that inspire others. They motivate individuals to look beyond their immediate circumstances and strive toward a collective goal that benefits the entire organization or society.

Empowerment and Personal Growth:

Unlike authoritarian leaders who dictate actions, transformative leaders empower others by fostering personal and professional growth. They inspire team members to develop skills, take initiative, and embrace challenges.

Innovation and Adaptability:

Transformative leadership fosters creativity and adaptability. Leaders inspire new ideas, challenge the status quo, and promote innovation to drive progress and improvement. They recognise that change is inevitable and effectively guide their teams through transitions.

Ethical and Values-Based Leadership:

Integrity and strong moral values are essential for transformative leaders. They lead by example, demonstrating honesty, fairness, and ethical behaviour. This fosters trust and credibility, encouraging others to follow their lead.

Building Strong Relationships:

Transformative leaders prioritise relationships and emotional intelligence. They listen actively, value diverse perspectives, and create inclusive environments where people feel heard, respected, and motivated to contribute.

Transformative leadership has a powerful effect on individuals, organisations, and communities. In Organisations, it increases employee motivation, productivity, and job satisfaction. Transformative leaders create a culture of trust, collaboration, and innovation. Teachers and university leaders who adopt this approach inspire students to think critically, take initiative, and become lifelong learners. In communities, transformative leaders drive social change, advocate for justice, and encourage people to work toward the greater good.

Many historical and modern figures embody transformative leadership. Nelson Mandela united a divided nation through vision, forgiveness, and resilience. Martin Luther King Jr. inspired a civil rights movement through nonviolent resistance and powerful oratory. Oprah Winfrey used her influence to empower and inspire millions, advocating for education and social change.

Transformative leadership entails inspiring and empowering others to achieve greatness. It is rooted in vision, ethics, innovation, and personal growth. In business, education, or social movements, transformative leaders foster lasting change by motivating people to realise their full potential. By adopting this leadership style, individuals can significantly influence their organisations and society.

What is the Importance of Engaging in Leadership at University?



University life is more than just academics; it is a crucial time for personal and professional growth. One of the best ways to develop essential life skills and prepare for future success is by engaging in leadership roles. Whether through student organizations, clubs, student government, or academic projects, leadership at university offers invaluable experiences that can shape a person's character, career, and community impact.

Taking on leadership roles at university helps students develop essential skills such as communication, problem-solving, decision-making, and teamwork. These skills are not only valuable in academic settings but also crucial for professional and personal success. Leading a team, organizing events, or managing conflicts all contribute to becoming a confident and effective leader.

Engaging in leadership positions encourages students to take initiative and make important decisions. This builds confidence in their abilities and teaches them to take responsibility for their actions. Learning to handle challenges, manage people, and execute projects prepares students for leadership roles in their future careers.

Employers value leadership experience when hiring graduates! Being involved in student leadership shows initiative, adaptability, and the ability to work with diverse groups of people. It provides real-world experiences that set students apart in job interviews and professional settings. Many leadership experiences also lead to networking opportunities, internships, and recommendations that can benefit future career paths.

Leadership positions expose students to a wide range of people, including faculty members, professionals, and fellow students. Building strong relationships and networking with influential individuals can open doors to career opportunities, mentorship, and collaborations. Many successful professionals attribute their career growth to networks they built during their university years.

Effective leadership is not about working alone but about inspiring and guiding a team. University leadership experiences teach students how to work with diverse groups, resolve conflicts, and

create an inclusive environment. These teamwork and collaboration skills are highly valued in any workplace or community setting.

It also promotes personal growth and adaptability. University leadership roles often come with unexpected challenges, requiring students to think critically and adapt to different situations. Overcoming obstacles and learning from failures help develop resilience, creativity, and a strong work ethic. These qualities are essential for both personal and professional life.

Leadership involvement makes a positive impact on the University Community. Engaging in leadership allows students to contribute positively to their university community. Whether by organizing events, advocating for student rights, or leading initiatives, student leaders help improve campus life. They play a crucial role in fostering a sense of belonging, inclusivity, and positive change within the university.

Leadership experiences at university serve as a foundation for future

leadership roles in society. Many great leaders started their journey in student organizations, political groups, or volunteer activities. The experiences gained during university provide a strong base for leadership in professional, social, and civic settings.

In a nutshell, engaging in leadership at university is an enriching experience that shapes students into well-rounded, confident and capable individuals. It provides valuable skills, enhances career prospects, expands networks, and allows students to make a meaningful impact. By stepping into leadership roles, students not only prepare for their future but also contribute to building a stronger and more dynamic university community.

By Paul Wandera Makhulo,
Phase 2 Cohort 1

The Balance of Leadership and Academics at University



Nakacwa Caroline,
Bachelor of Arts in Social Sciences

University life offers students numerous opportunities beyond the classroom, including leadership roles in student organizations, clubs, and community initiatives. While engaging in leadership can be rewarding, it also comes with challenges especially when trying to maintain academic excellence. Striking a balance between leadership and academics is essential for personal growth, career success, and overall well-being.

Leadership at university plays a crucial role in shaping students into well-rounded individuals. It helps develop key skills such as teamwork, communication, problem-solving,

and decision-making. Leadership experiences also provide networking opportunities and career advantages, making graduates more competitive in the job market.

However, while leadership is beneficial, academic performance remains the primary goal of university education. Failing to manage both effectively can lead to stress, burnout, or poor academic results.

Strategies for Balancing Leadership and Academics

1 Time Management and Prioritization

Effective time management is the key to balancing leadership and academics. Students should:

- Use planners or digital calendars to schedule classes, meetings, deadlines, and study time.
- Prioritize tasks based on urgency and importance.
- Set realistic goals for both academic and leadership commitments.

2 Setting Clear Boundaries

It is essential to know when to say “no” to avoid overcommitting. Students should:

- Choose leadership roles that align with their academic goals.

- Avoid taking on excessive responsibilities that may negatively impact studies.

- Communicate their academic priorities with peers and mentors in leadership roles.

3 Effective Study Habits

Balancing leadership and academics require discipline in studying. Strategies include:

- Establishing a consistent study schedule.
- Using focused study techniques like the Pomodoro method.
- Seeking academic support when needed, such as tutoring or study groups.

4 Delegation and Teamwork

A good leader understands the importance of delegation. Students should:

- Share responsibilities with team members to avoid burnout.
- Trust and empower others to take on tasks.
- Focus on teamwork rather than trying to do everything alone.

5 Maintaining a Healthy Lifestyle

Physical and mental well-being are crucial for managing multiple responsibilities. To stay balanced:

- Get enough sleep and maintain a healthy diet.
- Exercise regularly to reduce stress and improve focus.
- Take breaks and practice self-care to avoid burnout.

6 Seeking Support and Mentorship

Having a mentor such as a professor, senior student leader, or advisor, can provide guidance on balancing leadership and academics. Universities also offer resources such as counseling and time management workshops to help students navigate challenges.

7 Reflecting and Adjusting as Needed

Students should periodically assess their workload and adjust. If leadership commitments are negatively affecting academics, it may be necessary to reduce responsibilities or reorganize priorities.

Balancing leadership and academics at university is challenging but highly rewarding. By managing time effectively, setting boundaries, and prioritizing self-care, students can succeed in both areas. Leadership should complement academic growth, not hinder it. With proper planning and discipline, students can make the most of their university experience and prepare for future success in both their careers and personal lives.

A Legacy of Leadership and Impact: Reflecting on My Presidency at SAMAK

Okello Godfrey, Cohort 6,
Former President of Samak



Reflecting on my time as the 2023/2024 Mastercard Foundation Scholars Association President at Makerere University (SAMAK), I feel immense pride and gratitude. Leading a small but determined community of just 17 continuing scholars and my dedicated executive team of 15 members was a privilege and a challenge that shaped me in ways I never imagined. We were a close-knit group united by a common goal: to make the Scholars Association a beacon of impact and transformation for ourselves and the communities we served.

One of the most defining aspects of our journey was how well we embraced mentorship programs. Even though they were already established, we did more than participate; we fully immersed ourselves, ensuring that every scholar found guidance, support, and motivation to grow academically, professionally, and personally.

The Peer Coaching model became essential to our experience, fostering a culture where scholars could rely on one another for advice and support. My council representative, Hon. Babalanda Immaculate, and I particularly valued the African Career Network (ACN) Peer Coaching program. Through this initiative, we assisted fellow scholars in refining their career aspirations, connecting with opportunities, and building critical professional networks that continue to influence their journeys.

Another major highlight of our time was how we actively engaged in learning and give-back projects. These initiatives were already outlined in the objectives of the Scholars

Association, but we took them beyond paper; we lived them. The scholars' dedication to these projects was not just about fulfilling obligations; it was about making a lasting impact. One of the most transformative moments of our leadership was the give-back project at Achukudu Primary School in Napak District, Karamoja Region. This area had one of the lowest education levels, and witnessing the tangible change we created was deeply fulfilling.

We mobilised funds from within ourselves, from scholar alumni, and partner institutions, with immense support from the program Implementation Team, raising enough to construct a permanent classroom block and provide 40 desks to the school. For the first time, the students of Achukudu had desks to sit on and a classroom structure that was not just temporary. The joy in their eyes and the renewed motivation among the teachers and community members were beyond words. Seeing how our efforts inspired the community to begin constructing another permanent classroom block was a moment that reaffirmed the power of collective action. It was not just a project but a legacy of hope and transformation.

One of the greatest joys of my presidency was witnessing our scholars reach the finish line and graduate. It was a profound moment of pride for each graduate and for all of us as a community. We had travelled the academic journey together, supported one another through challenges, and celebrated milestones. Watching my fellow scholars' step into the world with degrees in hand,

prepared to create change, was one of the most fulfilling experiences of my leadership.

Beyond our impact, my time as SAMAK President opened doors for me in ways I had never anticipated. It enabled me to secure a fellowship with the Mastercard Foundation-EARTH University Fellowship Program, a platform that is now shaping my transition to the professional world. The exposure I gained through leadership, networking with industry experts, engaging with scholars from various institutions, and spearheading impactful projects has prepared me to take on greater responsibilities beyond university life.

Leading the Mastercard Foundation Scholars Association was more than a role; it was a journey of growth, service, and transformation. The experience strengthened my belief in the power of leadership, community, and resilience. It demonstrated that when passionate individuals unite for a common purpose, they can create waves of change far beyond their immediate reach.

My Rotaract Story: Service, Leadership, and Community After the Scholars Program



As a proud alumnus of the Mastercard Foundation at Makerere University, I was immersed in a culture of giving back. This spirit of service became ingrained in my very being, and after university, I yearned to find an organisation where I could continue to make a tangible difference. The answer, as it turned out, was Rotaract.

Inspired by fellow alumna Miria Ankunda, I took a leap of faith and joined the Rotaract Club of Kampala North in December 2022. This decision has shaped my post-university life in ways I couldn't have imagined. I hope my story inspires other scholars and alumni to consider Rotaract as a powerful avenue for continued growth and service.

My Rotaract journey has catalysed both personal and professional development. Within the club, I discovered my passion for public relations and digital marketing. I have had the incredible opportunity to refine my skills as the Public Relations Director for two Rotary years. I have played a key role in strategically leveraging social media to showcase our club's projects and impact, making the Rotaract Club of Kampala North the most followed club across various online platforms. Witnessing how effectively we can connect with and inspire our community through digital storytelling is gratifying.

Beyond the professional benefits, Rotaract has enriched my life with deep and meaningful connections. I've forged friendships that feel more like family, surrounded by individuals with a common commitment to service and making a positive impact. The network and support I've found in Rotaract have been invaluable.

So, why should you consider joining Rotaract? Rotaract's goals are not merely words on paper; they serve as

a roadmap for personal and collective transformation.

- Develop professional and leadership skills: Rotaract provides hands-on opportunities to learn and grow in a supportive environment.
- Emphasize respect for others' rights and promote ethical standards and the dignity of all useful occupations: Rotaract instils a strong sense of social responsibility and ethical conduct.
- Provide opportunities for young people to address the community's and world's needs and concerns: Rotaract empowers us to tackle real-world challenges and create positive change.
- Provide opportunities for working in cooperation with sponsoring Rotary clubs: Rotaract fosters intergenerational mentorship and collaboration.
- Motivate young people for eventual membership in Rotary: Rotaract cultivates a lifelong commitment to service.

Suppose you, like me, are a Mastercard Foundation Scholar or Alumnet Magazine reader seeking to continue your journey of growth and service. In that case, I urge you to explore the transformative power of Rotaract. Find a nearby club and embark on an adventure that will enrich your life and empower you to make a lasting impact on the world. The spirit of giving back, kindled during my time as a Mastercard Foundation Scholar, continues to thrive through Rotaract, and I invite you to join us! How to Join Rotaract:

If the transformative power of Rotaract inspires you and you want to join our global network of young leaders, here's how:

- **Contact me directly at muzoorai5@gmail.com**
- **Or, discover a Club:** Look for a Rotaract club nearby. Utilise the Rotary International Club Finder tool on the Rotary International website (<https://my.rotary.org/en/club-search>). You may search by location to locate clubs close to you.
- **Contact the Club:** Contact the Rotaract club you want to join. Most clubs list contact information on their websites or social media pages.
- **Attend a Meeting:** Attend a club meeting or event to learn more about the club's activities and meet its members. This is a great way to see if the club is a good fit for you.
- **Express Your Interest:** Let the club members know if you want to join. They will guide you through the membership process, typically involving an application and an interview.
- **Get Involved:** After becoming a member, participate in the club's projects and activities. This is the most effective way to positively impact your community and build lasting relationships with your fellow Rotaractors.

Ikra Muzoora, Lead of Fundraising and Resource Mobilization, Makerere Alumnet Foundation



Promoting Equality in Task Assignments.

Awien Rose Madot,
Scholar Alumni - Cohort 6 South
Sudanese

I once attended an event commemorating International Youth Day at a primary school. While the celebration itself was well-organized and enjoyable, my attention was drawn to something else. As the students arrived, they carried cartons of water and soda. A lady who I assume to be a teacher gathered them around her, giving instructions, and after a few minutes, they dispersed. The boys returned carrying the cartons, while the girls distributed the drinks to the guests.

At first glance, this might seem like a normal occurrence, but it highlights a deeper issue. The boys were tasked with lifting heavy boxes, and the girls were assigned to serve – a much lighter role. You might think this is fine because boys are generally physically stronger, but aren't we reinforcing stereotypes that harm both genders by assigning roles based on gender? Aren't we implying that men should only do the heavy lifting and women should only serve?

This isn't just limited to this event. I've noticed similar patterns at workshops, conferences and meetings. Men are often tasked with technical jobs like setting up projectors or controlling the computer, creating digital forms such as Google forms, flyers, excel sheets while women are assigned roles like taking notes or serving water. This happens even when the person assigning these tasks doesn't know the abilities of the individuals involved. They assume men will be better at IT roles and women will excel at secretarial tasks.

In workplaces, women are often given "soft" roles, while men are assigned "hard" tasks. For example, when an organization needs

someone to go to the 'field' they usually choose male staff. As someone that has worked with media organizations, this is especially true in newsrooms, where women cover stories on entertainment (gossip), entrepreneurship or events, while men cover politics or sports. I am aware that statistically, more male than female journalists cover the topics of sports and politics hence the common assumption that men are more interested in sports and politics, which frankly could be true but this is also a long-standing debate. My point however, is instead of walking into a room and assuming men know more about these topics, how about we move away from traditional mindsets and give women the opportunity to engage in politics and sports roles as well. Lately many women are interested in these areas, and assuming otherwise can be sexist.

I understand that those assigning these roles might have good intentions, wanting to protect women's safety. However, I believe that this approach reinforces traditional beliefs about what men and women can do. If we're concerned about women's safety, should we be worried about men's safety as well? Most employers ensure their staff's safety anyway, so why not give women the opportunity to take on challenging roles if they're willing?

I know some women might be comfortable with easier roles, but it's essential to ask before assuming. We have women with IT skills and those who are willing to take on risky fieldwork. So, next time, let's ask if someone is capable or willing to do a task before assigning roles based on gender. This way, we can break the cycle of harmful stereotypes and promote equality.

Nurturing the Next Leaders of Africa

Greetings readers, my name is Sam Omukaga. With due respect, I boldly recognise all the members, leaders, facilitators and prominent Pan Africanists for instance Professor Lumumba, Mahatma Gandhi, Kwame Nkrumah whose intellectual words of wisdom and writings have greatly inspired, motivated and encouraged me to take on leadership. The first day I saw the earth managed to be a red-letter day for my leadership. Basing on biblical teaching, being a first born exposes me to leadership roles and

duties on a view that authority comes from God.

My primary school journey marked the beginning of leadership in my life, first and foremost starting the leadership as a timekeeper in P.4, mess prefect in P.5 and Head boy (P.6-P.7) at Hope Nursery & Primary school, Bunyinda, Manafwa district. Transitioning still to secondary school, my ambition did not cease irrespective of my background and status because victory was always on my side. Luckily enough by God's

grace, I managed to contest and was endorsed as the Dining Hall prefect of Rock high school, Tororo (2022-2023). Hence with all the leadership skills, training, traits and techniques I am now currently serving as a volunteering welfare minister at **SAMAK (Scholars association at Makerere university)** Executive.

As growing passionate and motivated leaders of the future generation, this write up is very paramount in your leadership journey as adequately you

spare some moment to peruse through it. Being a beneficiary of Mastercard Foundation Scholarship demands an individual to be credible of any action taken as per the core values of humility, listening, kindness & respect, co-creation and Impact. My broad perspective on what a true leader inspires leads me to pose an intellectual question to my readers: 'Is leadership a process or an outcome?' This is a personal reflection, but based on my point of view and our mutual understanding Leadership is both a process and an outcome.

Leadership entails one to pass through various processes among which include being just, possessing listening skills, problem solving skills and abilities, critical analysis abilities, personal reflection, inclusive attitudes and then being empathetic to effectively lead others equally. It combines all those evaluation procedures and they take a long period to be attained, definitely making it a **"process"** that never ends because a good leader should be ready to learn. Additionally, Effective leadership challenges circumstances, situations and withstands all possible adjustments to come up with a result that eventually accounts as an outcome. to achieve what you desire as a leader, involves being a good problem solver, situation analyser, and a good listener. If one follows this then an **outcome** is attained in the form of discipline and effective leadership. To talk more, as a transformative leader in this

'gen z' era, one requires the intellectual experience to possess 21st century skills that enhance their cognitive perspectives and effectively lead others. These skills aid in advancing one's career path, leadership journey, place of work, and interview panel, and include the following.

Critical thinking; ability to analyse and question, challenge the powers available and give judgement according to existing judgement.

Communication; to express your opinions, emotions, ideas and attitudes boldly, eloquently and loudly so as to be clearly heard and pass on the right information.

Collaboration; the virtue of networking, active engagement with other leaders, people to cooperate as a team in a view of achieving a certain goal.

Empathy; the power of filling and taking up the situations and positions of one another in terms of suffering or joy.

Courage; the ability to express yourself in a public gathering, social relations without fear.

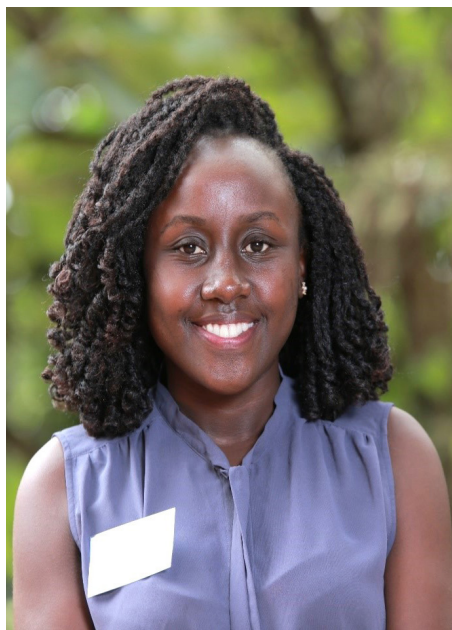
Conclusively, with the brief cup of those words, I believe that a pool of leaders is to be transformed, changed, elevated and impacted to take on their leadership roles.

The Power of Connections: Why Your Campus Friendships Matter

Shirah Narinda

First Cohort Alumnus, Former Scholars' Council Representative, Wife, Mother, and Accountant

As I watched the swearing-in ceremony of the 11th Parliament, I excitedly turned to my mum and said, "That's my former roommate!" The newly elected Woman MP of Katobo County (let's keep the real place anonymous) had once shared a room with me at university. I had seen clips of her campaign during the election season, but honestly, I hadn't given them much thought. Perhaps I had some bias, thinking she wouldn't win. But there she was, standing tall, taking her oath in a beautifully elegant blue and white gomesi, the colours of her political party, which, I'm sure, you can already guess.



We were roommates for just one semester before I moved to another hostel for reasons I can't recall. She was in her final year, juggling an evening program, while I was just a freshman navigating my daytime schedule. Our interactions were limited, but we exchanged contacts and had that basic roommate connection. Over time, we lost touch. We didn't have many shared memories; honestly, I never invested much in our relationship. I had four more years ahead of me, and she was leaving.

Yet, seeing her rise to a national position made me feel connected to her success, even for a fleeting moment. I couldn't help but feel

proud and wanted to associate myself with her achievement. But did she even remember me? I highly doubt it. And just to be clear, I wasn't trying to ride on her success—I was genuinely happy for her. But let's be honest, we all love being linked to accomplished people. Am I right?

Think about it—how often do we hear phrases like, "Oh, the manager of that bank was my classmate!" or "Yeah, we stayed in the same hall of residence as the Managing Director of that organisation!" or "That CEO? His business started small while we were on campus, and now it's global!" We love making those connections. And guess what? There's nothing wrong with that.

So, is it bad to admire and celebrate successful people we once knew? Absolutely not. Is it wrong to mention our affiliation with them? Not at all. But here's the real question—what about you? Have you considered where you will be in a few years?

The friends you have today, the classmates you share discussions with, and the people you casually greet in the corridors—these are the future leaders, entrepreneurs, policymakers, and changemakers. Right now, it may not seem significant. A decade ago, I didn't think much of it either. But today, I reflect on how the people around us shape our opportunities and networks.

Some of your classmates will join prestigious organizations. Others will pursue further

studies abroad. Some will start businesses, while others will take on leadership roles in academia or politics. And you? You, too, will find yourself somewhere remarkable. The question is: Will you have cultivated relationships that open doors, provide recommendations, or inspire your growth?

University is the best time to build strong, meaningful friendships. Life only becomes busier, and making new friends in the professional world is not as easy as on campus. The friendships you cultivate now could become your strongest connections in the future.

Your friends will be the ones to alert you about graduate scholarships, upcoming job intakes, and career opportunities. They'll recommend you for prestigious programs or introduce you to influential circles. They could even be why you enrol in that professional course that changes your career trajectory. And yes, some might even become your future life partners—but I won't dwell on that!

The key takeaway? Cultivate genuine friendships. Treat people with kindness. Avoid unnecessary conflicts, as the future is unpredictable. The opportunities you seek often arise from the people you know, whether through direct recommendations or word-of-mouth referrals.

As you transition from university to the next phase of your life, remember this: social capital is a powerful asset. Invest in friendships now, and you'll thank me later.

Looking back, I wish I had maintained my friendship with my now-Honourable former roommate. Not because I want anything from her, but because relationships are valuable. The people around you today will likely be part of your life's journey for years.

Nurture your friendships—they are your future.

The friends you have today, the classmates you share discussions with, and the people you casually greet in the corridors—these are the future leaders, entrepreneurs, policymakers, and changemakers



How can scholars save effectively?

Set a Monthly Saving Target: Even small amounts saved consistently can grow into a significant financial cushion. As a scholar, you can save up 40-50% off your monthly stipend for unforeseen future.

Use Secure Savings Options: Consider mobile banking savings accounts, SACCOs, or investment funds to grow your money safely. Banks like GTBank Uganda offer free saving accounts with no deductions and interests that accrue within certain periods, you may consider such.

Cut unnecessary Spending: Many young people waste money trying to impress others with a fake lavish lifestyle. Expensive clothes, gadgets, weekend outings, and unnecessary subscriptions drain money that could be saved for future investments. Worse still, toxic relationships with fake girlfriends and boyfriends can become financial traps, where one spends excessively trying to maintain an image or keep a relationship that is not adding value. If someone is only with you for what you can give him or her, they are a financial liability, not an asset. Drop them.

Be Wise About Family Support

It is natural to want to help family, especially when they supported you during your education. However, helping does not mean sacrificing your own future stability. Some scholars, out of love or pressure, end up giving away all their money to family, leaving themselves broke after graduation. The harsh reality is that family may not always be in a position to help you in return when you are struggling. While it is good to give back, it must be done with wisdom. By being smart about family financial expectations, scholars can ensure they remain financially stable while still supporting their loved ones in a responsible way.

Set a limit: Decide on a specific amount that you can afford to give, without compromising your own financial goals and stick to it.

Prioritize your stability first: You cannot help others effectively if you are struggling yourself.

Avoid emotional giving: Guilt or pressure should not drive your financial decisions. Help within your means and plan for sustainability.

Thinking like an Entrepreneur

Relying solely on employment is risky in today's competitive job market. Alumni who succeed after graduation often diversify their income sources by exploring entrepreneurship, freelancing, or investing in small businesses. Whether its agribusiness, digital services, or trade, having a side hustle can provide financial stability while seeking long-term employment.

Scholars have a unique opportunity to secure their futures while still in school. Investing in land, saving aggressively, and thinking beyond traditional employment can set scholars up for success after graduation. The job market is unpredictable, but with smart financial decisions today, scholars can graduate with confidence, knowing they have a strong financial foundation to build on. Do not wait until after graduation to start thinking about your financial future. The time to act is now! Secure Your Future Now.

**By Alli Faiza,
Cohort Five Alumna, Banker**

Success Is Personal

Grace Namata Sennoga,
Principal Welfare Support Officer



Success means different things to different people. For some, it might be excelling academically. For others, it could mean making new friends, joining clubs, or discovering a passion, impacting a community or being alive. As you navigate university life, remember that your definition of success is unique. Embrace it and celebrate your milestones, no matter how small.

Avoiding Comparison

In university, it's easy to compare yourself to classmates, friends, or even social media influencers. Some students may seem to have it all figured out, while others might struggle. Theodore Roosevelt wisely said, "Comparison is the thief of joy." Everyone's path is different—what matters is staying true to yours.

Social media can amplify feelings of inadequacy. Remember, what you see online is often a curated version of reality. Focus on your own growth and avoid measuring your worth against others' highlights.

Strategies to Stay Grounded

Here are some practical ways to focus on your personal journey and build confidence:

Reflect on Your Progress: Compare yourself to who you were yesterday, not to others. Celebrate your growth and accomplishments.

Keep a Wins Journal: Write down your achievements, big or small, to remind yourself of your progress.

Limit Social Media: If scrolling leaves you feeling inadequate, set boundaries. Use it as a tool for growth, not comparison.

Practice Gratitude: Acknowledge and appreciate the good in your life, whether it's a supportive friend, a helpful lecturer, or a sunny day on campus.

Seek Inspiration, Not Envy: If you admire someone, focus on what you can learn from them instead of feeling envious. Channel their strengths into your own life.

Be Kind to Yourself: Write a letter to yourself, showing compassion and encouragement. Revisit it when you're feeling down.

Track Compliments: Note the kind words others share about you. They're reminders of your value.

Think of Life as Your Movie: You're the lead character in your story. Others aren't there to overshadow you but to teach you lessons and help you grow.

Embracing Diversity

University is a melting pot of backgrounds, experiences, and goals. Embrace this diversity. It's a chance to learn from others while staying grounded in your values and aspirations. Remember, everyone's race is different. Some may excel quickly; others might take time to find their footing. Celebrate your journey, respect others' paths, and offer encouragement along the way.

Building Confidence

By focusing on your own race and practicing self-compassion, you'll develop the confidence to thrive in any environment. Engage with your peers, attend events, and be open to growth. University is just the beginning of your journey. Make it your own and enjoy the ride.

Run your race—it's yours to define and conquer.

Personal Experiences

With Jennifer Nakato narrating how she used her upkeep to educate her Siblings.

By Carol Kasujja Adii



For Jennifer Nakato, life is not about sitting back and wait for her single mother to pay for her sister's school fees. She uses her scholar's monthly stipend to pay for her sister's tuition at Makerere University Business School. But this would have never been possible without the Mastercard Foundation Scholarship.

The -21year-old is the fourth born of six, Nakato narrates that while in Senior Three, she realized that financial constraints were setting in. Her mother could not sustain her education alongside her siblings demands.

"During holiday I would sell home use products like basins in Kikubo trading center to be able to sustain ourselves. Our mother was working but Government would take long to pay her so that is why we had to come in to support her," Nakato, said.

To keep her in school, her mother went to great length by getting salary loans to finance her education. After senior six, she performed well and was admitted to Makerere University to do Business Administration on private sponsorship.

"Much as I celebrated the results, my mother who is a Primary teacher, was a bit worried how she would pay my tuition and that of my twin sister. She could only afford the basic needs such as clothes and food," Nakato, narrated.

As Nakato was still searching for options on how to join University, A friend she had studied with in Secondary School opened her eyes about the Mastercard Foundation Scholarship opportunity and encouraged her to apply.

"Coming from Kampala District, I applied for the scholarship with so many doubts, I thought such scholarships were meant for students who come from far districts not Kampala. We applied with my sister and after three weeks I was called for interviews. But even after the interviews, I was still doubtful," Nakato, explains.

When Nakato received news that Mastercard Foundation would be sponsoring her education at Makerere University, she had given up on her chance of joining University or any other good Higher Institution of Learning.

Today, Nakato is a first year Bachelors of Business Administration student at Makerere University. Apart from the fact that she is pursuing a degree, there has

been a lot of progress within her family as a whole. Before benefiting from the scholarship, her siblings were all studying on loans and always struggled to get what to eat.

With the monthly stipend she receives as part of her scholarship benefit, she has been able to pay tuition for sister who is in year one and also support her other siblings with school fees and other school requirements. She also supports her mother to get basics needs at home. Her siblings can now afford two meals a day.

"I am grateful to Mastercard Foundation for the opportunity offered to me to be able to impact my family in a positive way. It is because of the scholarship that my sister is also in school," Nakato, noted.

After her three years, Nakato wants to become an entrepreneur to be able to impact others.

"I want to be able to create jobs opportunities for people to fight poverty

our names just remain strong and determined," Nakato, said.

She has learnt the power of giving back to community and helping others.

"Good Samaritans have made me who I am today and I need to carry on the legacy by touching the lives of others. I would not have seen a University lecture room if it was not for being helped. Even before I graduate, I will continue helping others," she said.

Through this journey, she has learnt to be there for people especially parents or guardians."

"When you are on the receiving side, you might not know what the other person goes through. But our parents go through a lot, so if you are in position to assist them, do so, it also comes with blessings,"

Nakato at glance

Born to Charles Sserwanga and Noeline Nambuusi, she went to Kasubi Progressive Primary School, she later joined St Noa Girls School in Zzana for O-level and St Balikudembe Senior Secondary School for her A-level.

When you are on the receiving side, you might not know what the other person goes through. But our parents go through a lot, so if you are in position to assist them, do so, it also comes with blessings,"

Lessons learnt

Nakato shared that after her life being changed, she calls upon people to always believe in God no matter the situation.

"God can make a way for you in the least expected manner. I did not know anyone and I had lost hope but God remembered me through the scholarship opportunity. No matter your background, God knows



PICTORIAL



Alumnet Foundation Leadership pose in a photo with the Program Team, during the Scholar-alumni Convening 2025



The audience listening attentively during the Safeguarding policy launch, April 2025.



Team from Ardhi University and Makerere AlumNet Foundation Leaders pose in a photograph after an engagement meeting at Pool Road.



Students with disability attending capacity building session at Makerere University.



Scholars handing over stationery during their give back at St. Charles Rwahunga, Nursery and Primary School in Kyegwegwa



Scholars handing over sports wear during their give back at St. Charles Rwahunga, Nursery and Primary School in Kyegwegwa



Scholar-alumni pose for a group photo during their annual alumni dinner



Scholar-alumni during their day of community service in Buyende District.



Rt. Hon Thomas Tayebwa, unveiling the Makerere University Disability Support Centre recently.



A cross section of Cohort one Scholars, & Scholar- Alumni pose for a photo after the Scholars_ Cultural Dinner at Lumumba Hall, Makerere University



Prof. Nawangwe, HE. Ellen Johnson, Ms. Reeta Roy and other Board Members, pose in a photograph with Scholars Program Staff.



Prof. Barnabas Nawangwe, HE. Ellen Johnson and Ms. Reeta Roy, pose in a photograph at Makerere University.



Prof. Barnabas Nawangwe, the Vice Chancellor flanked by other officials during the Scholars Council convening at Makerere University.



PIT, a cross section of University and Scholar leaders pose for a photo during the leadership capacity building workshop at Royal Suite, Bugolobi.



Phase 2 Cohort 1 scholars attending a mental health awareness session at Frank Kalimuzo Central Teaching Facility



Peer buddies with the University Secretary after the peer buddy training workshop



Orientation for Cohort One Scholars



Ms. Reeta Roy, the President & CEO of Mastercard Foundation inspecting one of the stalls of the alumni during the exhibition.



Mr. Adrian Bukonya, the Country Director, Mastercard Foundation-Uganda along side university officials attending the Safeguarding Policy Launch at Makerere University



Mastercard Foundation Scholars Council representatives during their convening at Makerere University



Hon. Hellen Asamo, signing a commitment card to continue supporting inclusivity at Makerere University and the country as a whole.



Hon. Rukia Nakadama, signing the dummy representation of the Safeguarding policy



Graduation Photo 2024



Cohort One Scholars under Phase two of the Program during their Award Ceremony.



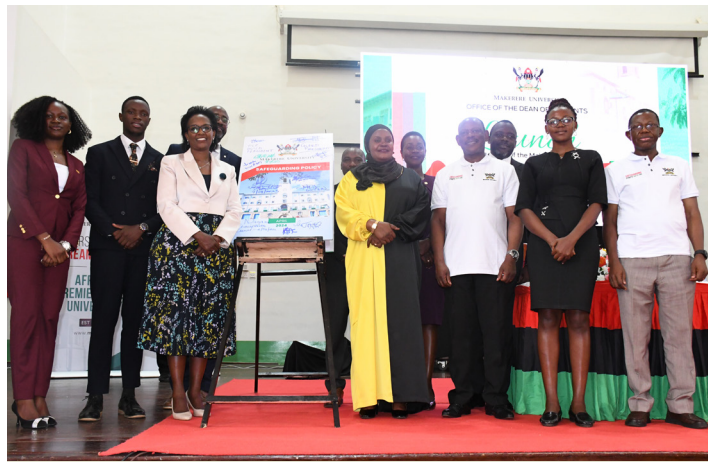
A cross-section of the Scholars Program partners pose in a photograph after the partnership breakfast meeting at Serena Hotel, October 2024.



A cross-section of Makerere University students attending the annual career organised by the Scholars Program in partnership with the University in March 2024.



A cross section of PIT, Scholar Alumni & Phase 2 Cohort scholars pose for a photo upon arrival for the Scholars_ Cultural Dinner at Lumumba Hall, Makerere University



3rd Deputy Premier Hon. Rukia Nakadama, Vice Chancellor Prof. Nawangwe, Chairperson University Council, Mrs. Lorna Magala, and other university officials launching the Makerere safeguarding policy

The SEF and Resolution project

Mastercard Foundation Scholars Program at Makerere is nurturing the next generation of young innovators and Social Entrepreneurs.

Social Entrepreneurship Fund (SEF) is a Mastercard Foundation Scholars Program initiative in partnership with Makerere University. It was launched in 2018 to support scholars' transformative leadership experience and entrepreneurial spirit. SEF empowers scholars with entrepreneurial skills, provides expert mentorship, networking opportunities with sector specific businesses as well as funding.

The Resolution Project in partnership with the Mastercard Foundation Scholars Program on the other hand empowers young leaders to pursue socially responsible solutions to issues affecting the community and the world.

The Resolution project funds, mentors, and supports young people who have innovative ideas to improve their home communities. Through the Social Venture Challenge, the winning scholar teams have received mentorship, access to resources and seed funding to kick start their ventures.

1 A HAND FOR A REFUGEE-H4R

CO-FOUNDERS

Safali Libia, Kataike Viola and Ogero David

Kyangwali Refugee settlement, Kikuube District — **Area of Operation**

A Hand for a Refugee is a community-based social venture that started operations in 2020, dedicated to empowering refugee populations through sustainable livelihood support, education, and psychosocial support services.

The venture primarily focuses on transitioning refugees from dependency to self-reliance by addressing the root causes of poverty, unemployment, and food insecurity. The key activities include:

Vocational Training & Skills Development (beadwork, tailoring)

Climate-smart farming and agribusiness training

Social entrepreneurial leadership programs and mentorship

Village Savings and Loan Associations (VSLA) Resource mobilization for basic needs for refugees

Extent of Direct Reach

Over **500 smallholder farmers** have been trained and supported, leading to the creation of **100 agribusinesses** in tomato, watermelon, and hot pepper farming.

300 youths have gained vocational skills in areas such as soap making, shoe crafting, and other crafts, resulting in **30 new businesses**

30 savings groups have been established using the VSLA model to help beneficiaries increase and manage their incomes.

Our Work



2 CHEAP BUILD LIMITED

CO-FOUNDERS

Kitimbo Elizabeth, Nankya Elizabeth, Kamoga Andrew

Kampala and across Uganda — **Area of Operation**

Cheap Build Ltd is dedicated to transforming Uganda's construction sector by producing interlocking stabilized soil blocks (ISSB) an innovative, eco-friendly alternative to traditional bricks. ISSBs are crafted from locally sourced soil, sand, and cement, offering superior affordability, strength, and thermal insulation.

Their unique interlocking design eliminates the need for mortar, reducing costs and speeding up construction, while their sun-curing process minimizes environmental impact and deforestation. To ensure sustainability and community empowerment, we train local youth in ISSB production, creating jobs and fostering entrepreneurship.

Recognizing the need for diversification, Cheap Build Ltd. now also manufactures durable concrete products such as pavers, bio digesters, and curb stones broadening our impact and supporting year-round operations.

Extent of Direct Reach

53 girls and women reached

116 customers served

Our Work



3 CRAFTWEAR CITY UGANDA

CO-FOUNDERS

Esther L. Adeke, Ibrahim Lubega

Uganda, Central region
— Area of Operation

Craftwear City is a social enterprise dedicated to creating craft shoes and home décor from textile waste and plant-based leather. We also provide eco-entrepreneurship training for youth with disabilities and students, empowering them to drive sustainable change.

At the core of our mission is a commitment to inclusivity, ecoentrepreneurship, and environmental stewardship. We leverage entrepreneurship as a powerful tool for fostering inclusive economic growth, reducing economic disparities, building resilience, and enabling self-sufficiency.

At Craftwear City, success is not solely measured by the number of craft products we produce and sell. It is also reflected in the skills we help develop among people with disabilities and students, the volume of textile waste we upcycle, and the meaningful relationships we cultivate within communities.

Extent of Direct Reach

7 Makerere University students with disabilities supported

297 female students trained in eco-entrepreneurship

Our Work



4 DEPLOY RESOURCE AFRICA LTD/ UGABRUSH

CO-FOUNDERS

Enoch Muwanguzi, Paul Soddo

Wakiso District, Central Region
— Area of Operation

Deploy Resource Africa Ltd, through its Ugabrush brand, manufactures eco-friendly, locally made brushes using cow tail hair and sustainably sourced wooden handles. The venture supports local manufacturing, youth employment, and wasteto-value practices. We currently produce ordinary and premium shoe brushes, customized engraved brushes, and are piloting a new line of edge brushes for women for hair styling.

Our work with local abattoirs, artisan women, and timber dealers to turn overlooked materials into quality products for a market of over 15 million Ugandans who wear leather shoes.

Extent of Direct Reach

Ugabrush directly employs 14 people, of whom 12 are women and 2 are Men.

We also work with more than 15 rural women and 10 men who collect and preserve cow tail hair.

Our Work



5 FARMPAWA

CO-FOUNDERS

Eteku Moses and Osborn Gumoshabe

Office: Kampala
Field Operations: Kapelebyong, Amuria, Wakiso
— Area of Operation

FarmPawa is a digital crowd farming platform that empowers smallholder farmers in Uganda by bridging the gap between agriculture and investment. We connect investors with real, impactful farming opportunities, channeling resources directly to smallholder farmers.

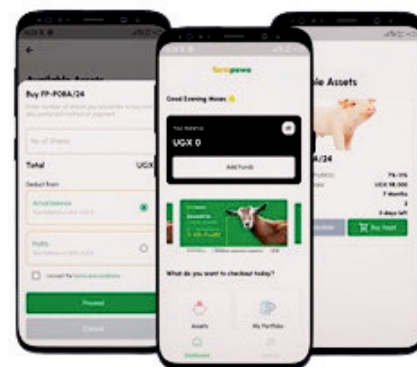
Our model unlocks sustainable growth in rural communities by providing farmers with access to capital, quality farm inputs, expert training, and guaranteed markets through our integrated supply chain.

By supporting farmers through the entire agricultural cycle, we reduce risk, increase productivity, and create shared value. After harvest and sales, profits are distributed to investors, making FarmPawa a low-risk, high-impact investment in Africa's agricultural future.

Extent of Direct Reach

FarmPawa is a social venture that has supported **120 smallholder farmers**, **40%** of whom are women.

Our Work



6 GIRLS A LIVE UGANDA

CO-FOUNDERS

Marion Apio

Tororo District, Eastern Nile

— Area of Operation

Girls Alive Uganda (GAU) is a grassroots, non-profit initiative founded in 2019 in Tororo District, Eastern Uganda, with the mission to educate, empower, and uplift girls and women in rural communities. The organization primarily addresses the pressing challenge of menstrual-related school absenteeism with the hope of producing and distributing affordable, hygienic sanitary pads to vulnerable girls. GAU conducts training and peer-to-peer mentorship programs that equip girls with reproductive health knowledge and pad-making skills, fostering both self-reliance and community impact

Operating through a growing network of volunteers, GAU combines education, awareness campaigns, and outreach to tackle stigma, improve menstrual health literacy, and enhance girls' educational outcomes. The organization also engages in school-based programs, providing scholastic materials, especially to girls in candidate classes, to support academic completion. Through this holistic approach, Girls Alive Uganda is not just improving menstrual hygiene management, but also creating pathways for girls to stay in school, lead healthier lives, and become change-makers in their communities.

Extent of Direct Reach

A dedicated group of **60 volunteers**

Over **3,000 school girls** across various schools in Uganda

Over **10 schools and communities** reached and impacted through outreach and skilling

Our Work



7 KAUNTA BOOK

CO-FOUNDERS

Eteku Moses, Kajubi Phillip, Kayondo Musa

Head Office: Kampala Operating across Uganda — Area of Operation

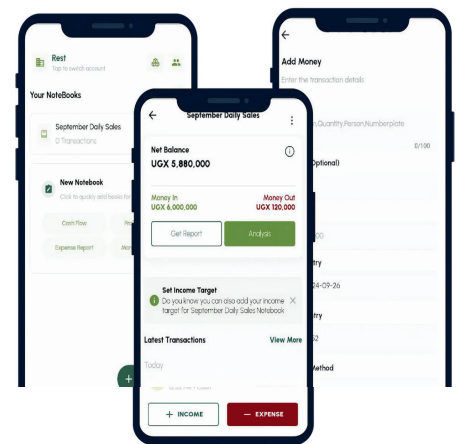
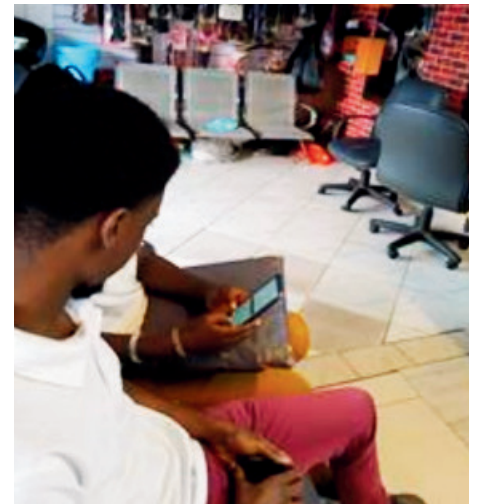
KauntaBook is a mobile-first bookkeeping app designed for small and medium business entrepreneurs to track finances, manage inventory, control cash flow, and set budgets. It helps to automate records, supports real-time insights, and helps users make informed financial decisions while staying credit-ready.

The app supports team roles, multiple businesses, and works both online and offline, making it reliable even in low-connectivity areas. The App helps users manage money better, stay organized, and build financial discipline all from their phone. The App is available on Google Play and usable all over Uganda.

Extent of Direct Reach

Is a profit-making enterprise with **800 businesses** onboarded across Uganda. Designed for micro and small business owners, such as boda riders, vendors, freelancers, and hustlers looking to improve money management and be able to access credit.

Our Work



8 MARO FOODS (U) LTD

CO-FOUNDERS

Ali Faiza, Piracel Jacklyn, Nimungu Elvis, Paramungu Nelly, Kumakech James, Aaron Wood, Caro Ayiorwoth

Zombo District, West Nile

— Area of Operation

Maro Foods emerged from a grassroots farmer group, ALEPRO (Alengukuma Farmers Production), with the aim of adding value to agricultural produce, enhancing farmer productivity, promoting food security, and reducing post-harvest losses.

The venture currently processes and distributes all-purpose flour, cassava, millet, and soya bean for food, porridge, and baking, targeting retail shops and local communities in Zombo District.

In addition, Maro Foods conducts Quarterly ClimateSmart Agriculture (CSA) trainings at the village level to build community resilience to climate change and promote improved farming practices for higher yields.

Extent of Direct Reach

A dedicated female farmer group of **30 members** contracted to supply cassava for value addition

10 jobs created, both formal and informal, through production, training, and distribution activities

400 women, girls, and young people reached and impacted through ClimateSmart Agriculture (CSA) trainings

Our Work



9 PEARL API UGANDA

CO-FOUNDERS

Nahwera Eufemia and Ocaaki Francis

Bushenyi district (Western region) — **Area of Operation**

We empower secondary school students and teenage Mothers through training in commercial beekeeping to enable them afford school fees, support their families, and improve their overall Standard of living.

After a 2-3 months of hands-on training each student or teenage receives 2 traditional bee hives as a starting point. We also provide continuous support like mentorship to individuals implementing the project.

We purchase their unprocessed honey during harvesting season, stock and sell during scarcity at a higher price.

Extent of Direct Reach

Over **28 girls, 22 boys, and 15 teenage mothers** are implementing the project and currently under our supervision

Our Work



10 RIKI INDUSTRIES LIMITED

CO-FOUNDERS

Richard Kikurohoki

Kikuube Mid-Western Region — **Area of Operation**

Riki Industries Limited deals in manufacturing of the most Affordable, Durable, and Dustless school chalk branded as Smart Chalk.

Riki Industries Limited aims at creating a healthy learning environment for both learners and teachers in Uganda through provision of school chalk which is totally dustless yet locally made.

Extent of Direct Reach

Riki Industries Limited is currently supplying **512 schools**, both in Western and Northern Uganda.

Our Work



10 TAL YOUTH UGANDA

CO-FOUNDERS

Ambrose Onapa, Sylvia Akurut

Akokoro, Apac — **Area of Operation**

The founders recognized the need to economically empower young people, particularly girls, many of whom were school dropouts. In communities like Akokoro, Apac, it is uncommon for students to complete secondary school and even rarer for them to graduate from university. The dropout rate is alarmingly high.

These young people often lack the skills and opportunities to find work or contribute meaningfully to society, leaving them vulnerable to risky and harmful lifestyles. This understanding inspired the creation of TAL Youth Uganda, which began by making and selling donuts. Along with this, the organization offers employment and skills training to school dropouts, helping them build better futures.

TAL Youth works in Northern Uganda to economically empower young people, especially women, to become resilient in the face of climate change. The organization has expanded its focus to include climate-resilient agriculture and skilling youth in handicrafts, further contributing to the empowerment and sustainability of local communities.

Extent of Direct Reach

212 farmers linked/supported with access to a market for cassava flour and sweet potatoes

500 youth farmers trained in the climate-resilient agriculture initiatives

180 youth skilled in handicrafts/green jobs

Our Work





SAFEGUARDING STARTS WITH ME

My safety and your safety is
our collective responsibility

Safeguarding in Makerere refers to measures put in place to promote safety and wellness of all students, staff, and other stakeholders.

The 5Rs Of Safeguarding Actions at Makerere University

1. RECOGNISE

- Be vigilant about detecting the different signs and symptoms of potential harm or abuse or an incident that has occurred
- Attending a safeguarding awareness session will help you understand the different signs and symptoms of harm

2. REPORT PROMPTLY

- Any safeguarding concerns (risk, abuse, or harm) that you have observed or experienced.
- Report to any of the University designated desks/persons (see details below).
- Confidentiality shall be guaranteed to the extent possible.

3. REFERRAL SUPPORT

- Refer the affected person to the Makerere University Hospital in case medical help is needed before any next step for reporting
- Refer the affected person to the relevant support services centres for Medical Services, Legal Aid Services, Safety and Security Services, Disability Services, Shelter Services, Violence Prevention Services, Child Protection Services.

4. RESPOND

- If contacted to provide more information about the reported incident, please respond accordingly
- Support the timely and effective management of a reported incident by cooperating with the investigation team.
- Confidentiality shall be guaranteed to the extent possible.

5. RESTORE

- As an affected person for any safeguarding Harm, it is in your best interest to re-integrate, re-focus and re-purpose your life
- Seek help (counselling, mentorship and guidance) to re-purpose your life and get back on track
- Resume your daily engagements to meet your set targets as a student or Staff

**Safety Matters
at Mak**

Visit MakSafeSpace:
<https://safespace.mak.ac.ug/>



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Me!



Scholars Program

In partnership with



MAKERERE UNIVERSITY

MASTERCARD FOUNDATION SCHOLARS PROGRAM AT MAKERERE UNIVERSITY

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