

# HESFB



**Inaugural Board's  
remarkable  
8 years**

Achievements and key  
resolutions highlighted as  
Board exits

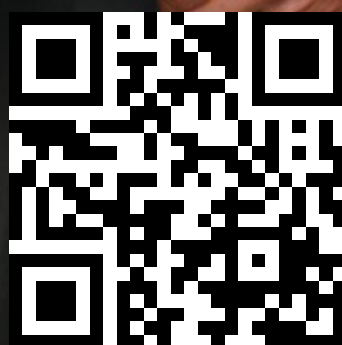
**Empowering  
Dreams**

Beneficiaries testify how  
the Loan Scheme saved  
their education dreams

**Calls for  
Increased  
Support**

Institutional Leaders  
highlight suggestions to  
the incoming Board

**APRIL 2022**



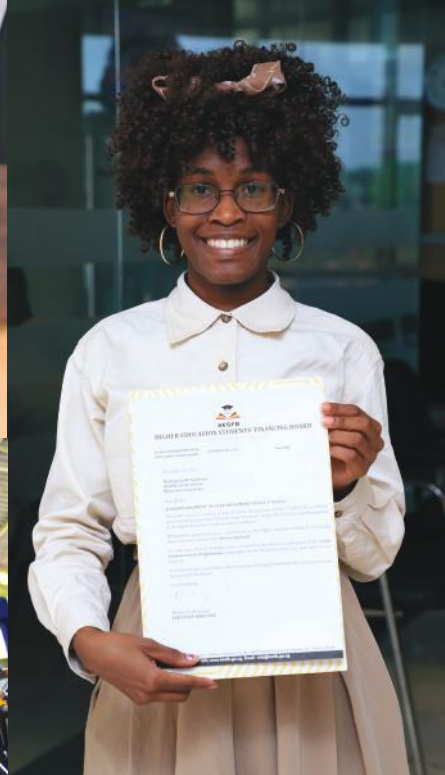
**timeline**

Key events in the  
Implementation of the  
Students' Loan Scheme



# contents

job well done	1
A Stellar 8-Year Performance In Higher Education Financing	3
The Birth And Growth Of The Students' Loan Scheme In Uganda	5
The Incredible 8 Years Of Inaugural Board Of HESFB	8
The HESFB Timeline	10
The Incredible 8 Years Of Inaugural Board Of HESFB	12
HESFB The Board Members For The Last 8 Years	14
Is HESFB Achieving Its Objectives?	18
Board Members telling their stories	24
Key Resolutions Of The Board For The Last 8 Years	26
The HESFB Impact	28
The Loan Scheme Helped Me Achieve My Dream	30
From a Street Vendor and Security Guard, the Loan Scheme has helped me back to School	33
Strategies to grow funding for the Study Loans	34
Transiting to Online Applications Accomplished	38
The Blind Girl whom I met by Chance is being Supported by the Loan Scheme	39
My Income Could Never Afford Me a Student at The University	40
HESFB is Increasing the Stock of Nurses and Midwives in the Country	42
Private Students on STEM programmes Increasing due to the Students Loan Scheme.	43
The Loan Scheme Has Increased the Enrollment of Students in TVET Institutions	45
The Loan Scheme is the Biggest Sponsor of Students at Bishop Stuart University	46
70% of our Engineering Students are Loan Scheme Beneficiaries – Ndejje VC	48
Steady Progress in the Loan Repayment and Recovery Process	50
Building a Strong Human Resource for the Board	





# Editor's Note

It is an absolute pleasure to present to you the commemorative magazine for the Higher Education Students' Financing Board (HESFB) after an incredible and illustrious eight (8) years of the inaugural Board that has been at the helm of decision making since April 24<sup>th</sup>, 2014.

In this magazine, we tell the story of the Board which was born out of Presidential pledge to a Task Force lodged under the Ministry of Education and Sports, to the preliminary steps of establishing a credit offering and management institution in the education sector. The stories are told by the individuals who were at the helm of this incredible work.

The Uganda Higher Education Students' Loan Scheme has been a building block. From establishing a loan awards criteria, to enlisting partners on to the Scheme in higher education institutions, formalizing this process in the established credit management guidelines by Bank of Uganda and instituting recoveries criteria for non-secured loans, the Board has walked a journey.

We have packaged these stories from the Board members to the beneficiaries, to institutions and all other stakeholders that have been engaged in this process in the last 8 years.

Incredible to note is that the outgoing Board leaves at the point the Scheme is at the start of sustainability performance with registered results in the recovery process. The reader will get the in-depth understanding of the Board's objectives and how far it has gone to achieve the overall mandate of increasing equitable access to Higher Education and the incredible impact on the beneficiaries.

HESFB is empowering dreams. Congratulations to the members of the Board and the Secretariat for a stellar performance.

## Bob Nuwagira

Editor in Chief | bob.nuwagira@HESFB.go.ug

## Contributors;

Conan Businge, December Kiconco and Martin Kitubi

## Design and Layout

Emmanuel Masambu | jemasambu@gmail.com

## Photography

Pitman Photography and Bob Nuwagira



# LOANEE PROFILE



**Name:** Gloria Kevin Adikin

**Status:** Loan Scheme Beneficiary (2014 - 2018)

**Institution:** Makerere University

**Course:** Bsc Agriculture

**Current Status:** Personal Banker, Centenary Bank

**Loan Repayment Status:** In Repayment

**Story:** In 2014, we were four siblings who were joining Higher Education Institutions at the same time and my parents would never have afforded to support all of us. When I applied for the Students' Loan Scheme and was offered an opportunity, it was big relief to my parents. The Scheme helped me concentrate on my studies with no interruptions. At the back of my mind I knew this was a loan I needed to repay one day, so it motivated me to work hard.

**Repayment Motivation:** The Students' Loan Scheme helped me through campus and this was my inspiration that when I received my first paycheck, I embarked on a monthly repayment. Someone in my previous situation needs this help.





Hon. Janet Kataaha Museveni, First Lady and Minister of Education and Sports

# JOB WELL DONE

I congratulate the Board of Directors who have superintended the Higher Education Students' Financing Board (HESFB) in the last eight years for the great job and dedication that saw the birth and growth of an alternative higher education financing model, the Students' Loan Scheme.

The Students' Loan Scheme was started as a sustainable financing model to help absorb the growing numbers of learners we had registered from progressive basic education initiatives of the NRM Government like the Universal Primary Education (UPE), Universal Secondary Education (USE), Uganda Post O' Level Education and Training (UPOLET) among others.

The Students' Loan Scheme was also introduced to address the problem of inequitable access to Higher Education and I am proud to note that Government of Uganda has registered great milestones in achieving the education sector objective of increasing equitable access to Higher Education.

I am aware that, since 2014, Government has awarded loans to 12,780 students spread in 22 Universities, both Public and Private Chartered Universities and 36 other Tertiary Institutions that offer diploma programmes. These are young people who would otherwise missed out on their academic dreams without this support.

The Students' Loan Scheme is helping us achieve equity in other aspects such as gender given the dedication to support the girl child

**“The Students' Loan Scheme was started as a sustainable financing model to help absorb the growing numbers of learners we had registered from progressive basic education initiatives**

in the award of these loans. The scaling up of female beneficiaries on the Scheme is providing hope for young girls in lower levels of education for a chance at higher education and encouraging many to put extra effort in science education.

The affirmative action programmes targeting Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) and those instituted to establish regional balance are stimulating inclusive and special needs education across all levels. This is a sure sign

that with more funding, no one will be left behind.

From a budget of UGX 4.3 billion in loans disbursed in the Financial Year 2014/15, Government's support has been steadfast to a total of over UGX 102 billion spent on study loans in the last eight years. I applaud the Board for efficiently using the limited resource to reach as many beneficiaries as can be accommodated.

In spite of these achievements, we have noted that there is increasing demand for the students' loans from learners seeking to join different levels of higher education and Continuing students who are struggling financially to finish their courses.

My Ministry is discussing with Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development to explore options for increased funding to enable the Board widen and broaden access to higher education. Government shall continue providing equitable access to affordable Higher Education so as to eliminate any gender and wealth disparities in the country.

As I conclude, permit me once again to applaud the exiting members of the Higher Education Students' Financing Board and Staff of the Secretariat for the tireless effort and excellent job done. I wish you God's blessings in your next endeavors.

*Hon. Janet Kataaha Museveni, First Lady and Minister of Education and Sports*

## LOAN DISBURSMENT

**2014**

**4.3**  
Billions

**2021**

**102**  
Billions

*The Minister of Education and Sports with the Board Chairperson in a previous engagement*







Hon. Dr. John Chrysostom Musingo,  
State Minister for Higher Education



## A Stellar 8-Year Performance In Higher Education Financing

**E**ight years ago, at the Ministry of Education and Sports, we welcomed a new agency, The Higher Education Students Financing Board (HESFB) whose mandate was to increase access to Higher Education.

The success of Government's basic education initiatives (UPE, USE, UPOLET, Skilling Uganda and others) had increased the number of students enrollment at all levels of education with the enrolment in primary now at about 8.8 million per year, 1.3 million in secondary, but only 186,000 manage to make to Higher Education Institutions.

The gross enrollment ratio in Higher Education Institutions in Uganda stood at 6.3% which is very low compared to Asia and Europe whose gross enrollment ratio is above 50% or the current global average of 26%.

The Higher Education Students' Financing Scheme is therefore intended to address the above lacuna by availing financial assistance to the needy students on loan basis. Many students are now able to obtain loans under the Students' Loan Scheme to pursue Higher Education with the current number of beneficiaries standing at 12,780 in the eight year period.



The Country is realizing increasing number of graduates in the fields of Science Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM), a big human resource needed for steering the current national agenda on industrialization.

**Primary Education Enrollment**  
**8,800,000 PUPILS**  
Per year

**Secondary Education Enrollment**  
**1,370,000 STUDENTS**  
Per year

**Secondary Education Enrollment**  
**186,000 STUDENTS\***  
Per year

There have been successes on various aspects as well. The Country is realizing increasing number of graduates in the fields of Science Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM), a big human resource needed for steering the current national agenda on industrialization.

Statistics show that regions with previously low enrollment levels into higher education like the Karamoja region and island districts have been boosted. The

introduction of the Continuing Students' Loan product will consequently lower the attrition rates in higher learning institutions.

Gender parity and support for persons with disabilities in access to higher education are all on a positive trajectory while a number of those who benefited from the Scheme are paying back to ensure a revolving fund.

These and more achievements

have been possible because of the dedication, commitment and hard work of excellent members that constituted the inaugural Board of Directors at HESFB. In the last two terms, the members worked tirelessly to establish operational manuals, guidelines, regulations and technological infrastructure to support a sustainable students financing Scheme and popularizing it across the Country.

I wish to extend my sincere appreciation to the Chairperson, Rev. Fr. Prof. Callisto Locheng A. J (PhD) and all the members of the Board, for setting the foundation of meeting key milestones as regards increasing access to Higher Education.

The increasing number of applicants, appeals to address attrition rates, the call to open up the scheme to address key programmes in the humanities and the commitment to ensure the revolving fund, establish the stage for the incoming team.

I extend my appreciation too to the Staff of HESFB and all our Partners for assisting the Board achieve these successes. I wish you the best in your next endeavors. For God and my Country.

Hon. Dr. John Chrysostom Musingo, State Minister for Higher Education





**Rev. Fr. Prof. Callisto Locheng A. J  
(PhD), Chairperson Board of Directors**

## The Birth And Growth Of The Students' Loan Scheme In Uganda

In 2011, the President of the Republic of Uganda, His Excellency Yoweri Kaguta Museveni announced his intentions to start the Students loan scheme to support the disadvantaged learners who found difficulties in raising fees for higher education.

The Higher Education Students' Financing Board (HESFB) was then established in February, 2014 by an Act of Parliament, The Higher Education Students Financing Act (HESF Act) No. 2 of 2014, with a mandate to provide Loans and Scholarships to Ugandan students to pursue Higher Education and with the overall objective of increasing equitable access to Higher Education.

The Students' Loan Scheme was meant for students who have qualified to pursue accredited courses of study or programmes in the recognized Higher Education Institutions but are unable to support themselves financially.

Government always supported 4,000 students annually on various Scholarship Schemes out of over 150,000 qualifying learners. Many qualifying students usually fail to join Higher Learning Institutions because of lack of funds and these form the target group for the Students' Loans Scheme.



**UGX 6**  
Billion initial seed capital  
to the Loan Scheme

Upon the enactment of the HESF Act in 2014, I was nominated the first Chairperson of the Board and approved by the Cabinet of Uganda in April 2014. The first Board comprised of nine (9) members (6 men and 3 women) and all of us were appointed for a four years' term ending in April 2018.

I found the new Board members to be highly professional, ethical and hardworking and worked tirelessly to put up the institutional framework

and systems in place for efficient and effective operationalization of the Act.

The first Board comprised of the following members; Rev. Fr. Prof. Callisto Locheng, A.J. (PhD), myself, as the Chairperson, Prof. Opuda-Asibo, J representing the National Council for Higher Education, Prof. Christine Dranzoa, representing Vice Chancellors' Forum and Mr. William Ndoleriire representing Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development.

Mrs. Solome Luwaga was a member representing the Federation of Uganda Employers, Mr. Legesi Stephen Mwanika representing Workers' Organizations, Ms. Esther Kyoziira representing National Union of Disabled Persons of Uganda, Mrs Elizabeth Gabona representing Ministry of Education and Mr Sserwada Mohammed representing the Uganda Students Association.

Being the inaugural Board, Members worked selflessly to operationalize the business of the Board. I say thank you to the great men and women of this Country.

We were initially given seed fund totaling to US\$ 6 Billion to commence supporting of the students and this required recruiting staff. We started off with three Board committees to assist the Board in its operations namely; the Loans and Scholarships Committee, Finance and Administration Committee and the Audit Committee. In order to have the Audit Committee functional and fully constituted, two members were co-opted from the private sector and the Institute of Certified Public Accountants of Uganda (ICPAU).

The Finance and Administration Committee was charged with the recruitment of the initial staff which they ably accomplished in a short span of time with the approval of the Board. Key critical departments were filled starting with the position of the Executive Director whom we worked with closely to fill other positions in Finance; Loans; Legal; Procurement and ICT department.

In a span of five months, we had a very vibrant, highly technical staff of the Secretariat who ensured that the first cohort of the Loan beneficiaries totaling to 1201 for the AY 2014/2015 was released by September 2014.

While we were busy awarding loans, we also embarked on the development of operational manuals and policies to guide and give direction to the Board and ensure that our vision was in line with the



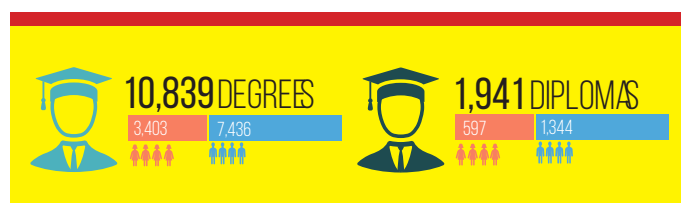


NDP II and the Sector Ministry of Education and Sports strategic plan and other operational guidelines in place.

These include the Board's initial strategic plan, the Loan application form to be used by applicants, the Eligibility Criteria and the score card for selection of the beneficiaries and the Institutions and programmes for the award of the loans. Others include the Credit/Loans Manual, the Finance Manual, Human Resource Manual, Internal Audit Manual

The Board also superintended the implementation of the Loan Management Information System (ILMIS) that paved way for the automation Loan management from application to recovery.

During the first term, we were joined by Mr Odok Oceng Robert as a representative for the Ministry of Education and Sports having replaced Mrs. Elizabeth Gabona who had retired and joined the Education Service Commission



**“Many qualifying students who are selected on the Scheme fail to meet their obligation under the cost sharing arrangement**

as Vice Chairperson.

The first term of the Board expired in April 2018 and their mandate was renewed for another four years' term expiring in April 2022.

I was returned as a Chairperson with Six (6) old members who

were joined by Rev. Canon Dr. Kagume Alex as a representative of National Council for Higher education who replaced Prof Opuda-Asibo who had retired from the Institution. Dr. Jane Egau later replaced Mr Odok Oceng Robert as a representative of Ministry of

Education and Sports.

The Board approved a staff structure of 65 staff and continued filling it annually based on the available resources and currently employs 28 staff.

A lot has been achieved under our second term in the areas of enhancing staff structure and salaries, approving manuals and policies such as the Resource mobilization strategy; the communication strategy; the clients charter; the Risk Management Strategy and the Monitoring and evaluation manual and policy including the new strategic plan that the Board approved and awaits the Ministry of Education and Sports approval.

The Board has continued to register a number of successes in the areas of increased access to higher education. A total of 12,780 students have been supported of whom 10,839 are pursuing Undergraduate degree programmes and 1,941 are doing

diploma programmes. The Board has successful supported STEM programmes that underpin the country's drive to industrialization and wealth creation and address human resource gaps in critical programmes that spur economic growth.

In this, the Board took keen interest on issues of affirmative action and inclusivity in the Loan award process and this has seen the increase of the female beneficiaries to support girls in STEM, permitting persons with disabilities to study any programme of their choice including humanities and economics; and giving priority to Special Needs Education programmes on the Scheme.

Districts and regions with less representation on the Scheme including the Karamoja region, Kalangala and Buvuma Districts have greatly benefitted under this affirmative action arrangement.

I would like to thank the Government of Uganda that thought it befitting to offer loans to students who are struggling to meet the costs of higher education who will later pay the borrowed sums to create a revolving fund. However, many qualifying students miss out on the scheme because of limited resources yet they have no other source of funds for

**“Districts and regions with less representation in higher education enrollment have greatly benefitted under our affirmative action arrangement.**

paying for themselves. As a Country, we are missing out on the good brains that are future scholars, entrepreneurs and innovators.

Many qualifying students who are selected on the Scheme fail to meet their obligation under the cost sharing arrangement of other costs such as accommodation and scholastic materials. Funding for the Continuing Students' Loan needs to be scaled up to cater for all continuing students.

With only 28 Staff out of the approved structure of 65, there is need to support the Board to recruit additional staff so as to fulfill

the mandate of the Board.

Finally, I pay tribute to His Excellency the President of Uganda who allowed the commencement of the Students' Loan Scheme that has supported more than 12,000 students in the Country, the Political leadership of the Ministry of Education and Sports who have supported the Board in policy guidance and The Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development for the budget support.

I am also indebted to the technical staff led by the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Education and Sports for the cordial working relationship and continuous guidance to the Board; the Board Members of HESFB for the commitment, sacrifice made, selfless service and passion for the work you were tasked to do.

I also thank the staff of the Board for the technical support, teamwork and hard work exhibited throughout our tenure of service.

I warmly welcome the new Board and wish them a good tenure and tour of service. For God and My Country

*The Writer was the Inaugural Chairperson Board of Directors, HESFB from April 13th, 2014 to April 14th, 2022.*





# The Incredible 8 Years Of Inaugural Board Of HESFB

Following a Presidential pledge in the 2011 elections manifesto by His Excellency, President Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, the Ministry of Education and Sports thereafter took up the mantle of ensuring that a strong Legal and Institutional Framework was put into place for the establishment of a sustainable higher education financing Board.

The three year efforts of several Stakeholders led to the birth of the Higher Education Students' Financing Act, No.2 of 2014 which has been the springboard for the operationalization of the Students' Loan Scheme in the Country.

A Board of nine proficient and skilful men and women were appointed to spearhead the operationalization of the law establishing the Students Loan scheme. The members of the Board represent different key stakeholders in Education who nominate their representatives except the Chairperson of the Board who is nominated by the Minister responsible for Education. These were stipulated to hold

office for four years and eligible for re-appointment for up to two terms.

The Board at inception set up three Committees for proper execution of its mandate. The Committees are; the Loans and Scholarships Committee chaired by Prof Christine Dranzoa; Finance and Administration Committee

**“ 12,780 beneficiaries represent 33% of the total number of applicants**

headed by Mr. William Ndoleriire and Audit Committee chaired by Mr. Legesi Stephen Mwanika. The Committee worked tirelessly to set up systems and business processes to operationalise the law in place.

I would like to applaud the Board members for their selfless service,

commitment and timeliness in ensuring that a newly set up Board was able to effectively operate in a period of two months.

The first term of the Board expired in April 2018 and the Minister renewed their second term for those who were eligible for reappointment.

Upon my recruitment as the Executive Director, we embarked on the development of the necessary policies and manuals to help in the operations of the office and ensure that there are efficient and effective systems in place.

On the onset, applicants applied for student loans using hard copies that were deposited in any branch of the Centenary bank, followed by a tedious process of manually capturing and processing the applicants' information which presented lots of challenges.

With the support of the Ministries of Education and Finance, Planning and Economic Development (MFPED) we development of the Integrated Loan management

information system (ILMIS) that was very pivotal in managing the loan application process. Several services such as the loan application and loan allocation process are carried out online among others.

Regarding the core business of the Board to disburse and recover matured loans, to-date the Board has awarded loans to a total of 12,780 students spread in 22 Universities and 33 Other Tertiary Institutions having started with only 1,201 in 2014. This represents 33 % of the total number of applicants. 10, 839 are pursuing undergraduate degree programmes while 1,941 are doing diploma programmes.

Of the successful 12,780 applicants 8,780 are male while 4,000 are females, all admitted in both public and private higher education institutions. These are all disadvantaged learners who would not have accessed higher education.

While we have recorded the



increasing number of applicants joining institutions of Higher Learning, the Board has always optimally used the available resources and channelled it to the neediest deserving applicants.

The Covid-19 pandemic presented the need for additional support for students we support to have laptops and other tools to be able to learn online. The Board is also grappled with insufficient funds to support a sizable number of continuing students who fail to raise fees to complete their studies and failure to support post graduate studies.

There is also need to scale up the funding of the TVET sector as a key to industrialization of the nation. The TVET students get lifetime skills that enable them to contribute to economic development and also gainfully employ themselves.

I offer my sincere compliments and deepest gratitude to the Board members for the invaluable support and dedication to their job and selfless service to the Government of Uganda.

To the exiting Board members, I take a quote from William Shakespeare's book, As You Like It that "This world is like stage," and indeed the Higher Education Students Financing Board is a stage upon which you appeared and have played your part. We shall remain indebted to

**“ The Covid-19 pandemic presented the need for additional support for students we support to have laptops**

each one of you for the individual and collective efforts in supporting the needy students in this Country.

I am particularly thankful to the Staff of the Board who have worked tirelessly in a coordinated manner to ensure that the mandate of the Board is achieved. It is a committed team that is result oriented and have been behind the success of all the achievements of the Board

We thank all our stakeholders especially the Minister of Education and Sports together with the State Ministers and the Ministry staff headed by the Permanent Secretary for the support given to the Board especially approving the Board budget and for policy guidance.

I thank the members of Parliament especially on the Education Committee and the Budget Committee for the role played in ensuring budget support to the Board.

I thank the Tertiary Institutions for the good working relationships with the Board.

*The Writer is the Executive Director, HESFB*



# The HESFB Timeline

The Higher Education Students Financing Board (HESFB) has evolved over time. Mandated to provide loans and scholarships to Ugandan students joining Higher Education Institutions in 2014, the Eight years' journey has resulted in 12,780 students supported with study loans.

This timeline takes you back on how this journey started and it has evolved over the years.

It all started in the year 2011.



**June 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2014**

The 1st call for Student Loan Applications for the Academic Year 2014/2015 is advertised. Applicants were to join in 26 undergraduate degree programmes from 9 disciplines and running in 12 Universities.

**September 8<sup>th</sup>, 2014**

The pioneer Student Loan Beneficiaries' list is released by the Minister of Education and Sports, Hon. Major (Rtd) Dr. Jessica Alupo (MP). The Board awards 1,201 Loans of which 298 (22%) are female and 1,027 (78%) are male

**May 8<sup>th</sup>, 2014**

The First meeting of the Board establishes two working committees; The Loans and Scholarships Committee chaired by Prof. Christine Dranzoo, the Vice Chancellor, Muni University and the representative of the Vice Chancellor's Forum on the BOD. The Finance and Administration Committee was chaired by Mr. William Ndolerire, Assistant Commissioner Social Services at the Ministry of Finance Planning and Economic Development (MoFPED).

**September 8<sup>th</sup> 2014**

The pioneer Student Loan Beneficiaries' list is released by the Minister of Education and Sports, Hon. Major (Rtd) Dr. Jessica Alupo (MP). The Board awards 1,201 Loans of which 298 (22%) are female and 1,027 (78%) are male.

**April 9<sup>th</sup>, 2014**

Cabinet approves the pioneer Board of Directors (BOD) for the Higher Education Students' Financing Board (HESFB) headed by Rev Fr. Prof Callisto Locheng AJ (PhD)

**April 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2014**

The Board of Directors is sworn in by the Minister of Education and Sports, Hon. Maj. Rtd. Dr. Jessica Alupo Epel (MP)

**April 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2014**

The President of Uganda, HE Yoweri Kaguta Museveni launches the Higher Education Students Financing Board (HESFB) at Kyambogo University.

**February 2014**

The President of the Republic of Uganda, HE Gen Rtd. Yoweri Kaguta Museveni signs the Higher Education Students' Financing Bill, 2013 into Law, consequently, Higher Education Students' Financing Act, 2014. The Law establishes The Higher Education Students Financing Scheme, The Higher Education Students Financing Board (HESFB) and the Secretariat to the Board among others.

**December 2013**

Parliament passes the Higher Education Students Financing Bill, 2013.

**August 2011**

The Students' Loan Task Force Registers as a member of the Association of African Higher Education Financing Agencies [AAHEFA]

**May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2011**

The Students' Loan Task Force of the Ministry of Education and Sports in Established. A team of three headed by CPA Mr. Michael Wanyama as Project Coordinator, Ms. Peace Bategeka as Administrations Officer and Mr. Timothy Ojara as the Legal Officer is composed. The team coordinates the drafting of the Uganda Higher Education Students Financing Policy

**January 2012**

Cabinet approves the Uganda Higher Education Students' Financing Policy. This paves the way for the drafting of the Bill.

**May - August 2016**

The 3rd call for student loan Applications, 3,764 Apply, 1,325 are awarded (403 Female, 922 Male).

Soroti University and Kampala University are added. Board increases courses to 50 degree and 62 Diploma programmes.

**March 2016**

HESFB ED, Mr. Michael Wanyama is voted as the Secretary General of the Association of African Higher Education Financing Agencies [AAHEFA]

**June - August 2015**

- 33 Diploma awarding institutions under National Teacher Colleges, Uganda Technical Colleges, Uganda Allied Health Institutions and Nursing & Midwifery Institutions added.
- Kabale University, Muni University and Bishop Stuart University were approved to participate in the Students' Financing Scheme for the academic year 2015/16.
- The 2nd Call for Student Loan Applications, 4,657 applied, 1,273 awarded (410 Female, 863 Male).
- The Online Loan Application Module of ILMIS starts Operation.

**May - August 2018**

- 5th call for Student Loan Applications to 20 Universities (Mountains of the Moon University & Makerere University Business School are added) and 36 OTIs (Uganda Wildlife Training Institute Kasese, Uganda Fisheries Training School and Nyabyeya Forestry College are added).
- Approved courses increase to 130 degree and 76 diploma courses
- 4,881 Applications received; 2,943 Awarded (769 Female, 2174 Male)

**April 2018**

The tenure for the 1st BOD expires.

**July 2018**

Hatika Namyalo, a Diploma graduate in Nursing from Jinja School of Nursing and Midwifery, becomes the first Beneficiary to fully pay her Student Loan amounting to US\$ 3,821,000

**June - August 2017**

4th Call for Student Loan Applications to 74 Degree and 63 Diploma Programmes. Humanities Programmes are considered for PWDs.

4,218 Apply, 1,448 are awarded (388 Female, 1060 Male)

**April 25<sup>th</sup>, 2019**

The First Lady and Minister of Education and Sports, Mrs. Janet K. Museveni launches the HESFB Student Loan Management System, the Integrated Loan Management Information System (ILMIS) and can be accessed on [www.ilmis.hesfb.go.ug](http://www.ilmis.hesfb.go.ug)

**September 4<sup>th</sup>, 2018**

The 2nd BOD of the HESFB is approved by Cabinet.

**November 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2020**

The President of Uganda, HE Yoweri Kaguta Museveni launches the Higher Education Students Financing Board (HESFB) at Kyambogo University.

**November 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2020**

HESFB Launches Student Loans for Continuing Students

**October 2021**

Students Loan Applications go fully online

**April 13<sup>th</sup>, 2022**

The 2nd term for the Board of Directors Expires

## TIMELINE EVENTS KEY

- 2011 - 2014 Events
- 2015 Events
- 2016 Events
- 2017 Events
- 2018 Events
- 2019 Events
- 2020 Events
- 2021 Events
- 2022 Events





# Members who Served on the Board in the Last 8 Years



**Rev. Fr. Prof. Callisto Locheng, A.J. (Ph.D.)**

**BOARD CHAIRPERSON**  
(April 2014 – April 2022)

Rev. Fr. Prof. Callisto Locheng, A.J., is the pioneer Board Chairperson and holds, HRC in Nairobi University, B.Ph., in Philosophy, P.Urbaniya University, B.A. in Theology, M.A., in International Law and Relations

from the University of the State of New York – USA and M.A., Ph.D from the Pontifical Gregorian University, ILC from the University of Perugia. He is an Educationalist and a Priest with National and International exposure. He is also an Associate Professor of Research.

Fr. Prof. Callisto Locheng A.J., taught at the Catholic University of East Africa from 2001-2010. He was also as member of the University Council for Seven years, member of the University Senate, Chairman University Doctoral Committee, Member of University admission Board, Dean of the Faculty and Head of Department, Member of the University Planning and Development Committee, Member of Academic programme design and revision, Member of Affiliations committee and member of the University Board. He also lectured in other nearby universities/university Colleges and middle level colleges.

In 2011 Fr. Prof. Callisto Locheng A.J was requested and tasked by the Archbishop of Gulu to help in establishing the University of the Sacred Heart in Gulu where he now lectures. He also lectures Philosophy at Alokolum National Major Seminary. Fr. Prof. Callisto Locheng A.J is a member of the Board of Consultants Gulu Archdiocese; External examiner at the A.J., University School of Philosophy; A.J University School of Theology; Catholic University of East Africa and Chairman Board of Governance of Lacor Minor Seminary in Gulu.



**Mrs. Solome Mayinja Luwaga**  
**BOARD MEMBER**  
(April 2014 – April 2022)

Mrs. Solome Mayinja Luwaga has been the representative of Employers on the HESFB Board of Directors having been nominated by The Federation of Uganda Employers (FUE).

At the time of appointment she was the Corporation Secretary, Statewide Insurance Company and Executive Council Member, Federation of Uganda Employers. She has recently moved into private practice with M/s

Sempasa, Luwaga, Muwemba & Co Advocates where she is a Partner.

She holds a Masters of Arts in Human Rights (Distinction) from Uganda Martyrs University, Nkozi, a Bachelor of Laws from, Makerere University, and a Post Graduate Diploma in Legal Practice from the Law Development Centre, Kampala. She has practiced law for over thirty years.

Solome is a Chartered Secretary (Governance Institute, UK) and Associate of the Chartered Institute of Arbitrators– UK. She is a member of the Uganda Law Society, East African Law Society and the Uganda Association of Women Lawyers (FIDA-Uganda).



**Prof. Christine Dranzoo**  
**BOARD MEMBER**  
(April 2014 – April 2022)

Prof. Dranzoo is the Vice Chancellor of Muni University and the representative on the Board of Institutions of Higher Education nominated by the Vice Chancellors Forum. She is the Chairperson of the Loans and scholarship committee of the Board.

Prof. Dranzoo holds a B.Sc. in Zoology (MUK), a Master's of Science in Zoology, a Diploma in Modern Management and Administration from Cambridge Tutorial College and a PhD in Zoology (MUK).

She also holds various Certificates in; Conservation Genetics (MUK), Conservation Biology (University of Illinois, USA), Financial Management and Accounting for non-accountants, Project Planning and Management (UMI), Social Skills (Rockefeller Foundation-MUK), International Women's Leadership, New York and a Certificate in PhD Supervision.



**Ms. Esther Kyozira**  
**BOARD MEMBER**  
(April 2014 – April 2022)

Ms. Kyozira is a female with visual impairment representing persons with disabilities on the Board of Directors of the Higher Education Student's Financing Board (HESFB).

She is the Chief Executive Officer of the National Union of Disabled Persons of Uganda

(NUDIPU) and previously worked as the Country Programme Officer for the Disability Rights Fund in charge of funding organizations of persons with disabilities to engage in advocacy. She chaired the National Council for Persons with Disabilities 2008-2012.

Ms. Kyozira holds a Diploma in Law (LDC), Master of Arts in Human Rights, (MUK) and a Bachelor of Arts with Education (MUK). She was once a Project Coordinator – Uganda National Association of the Blind and a language teacher – Jinja Senior Secondary School.



**Mr. Sserwadda Muhamed**  
**BOARD MEMBER**  
(April 2014 – March 2017)

Mr. Sserwadda was the representative of students nominated by Uganda National Students Association.

He was the Executive Secretary, Uganda National Students' Association and holds a Diploma in Building and Civil Engineering and Bachelor of Science with Education from Ndejje University.



**Mrs. Elizabeth K.M. Gabona**  
**BOARD MEMBER**  
(April 2014 – March 2017)

Mrs. Gabona is a Ugandan educationist and the Deputy Chairperson of the Education Service Commission. Mrs. Gabona was the Director, Higher, Technical, Vocational, Education and Training in the Ministry of Education and Sports and represented the Ministry on the HESFB's Board of Directors.



**Prof. John Opuda – Asibo**  
**BOARD MEMBER**

(April 2014 – April 2018)

Prof. Opuda – Asibo was the representative of

the National Council for Higher Education on the Board He is a member of the Finance and Administration committee as well Loans and Scholarship committee.

Prof. Opuda-Asibo was the Executive Director of National Council for Higher Education. He holds a Bachelors in Veterinary Medicine (MUK), Masters in Veterinary Public Health and Epidemiology and a Ph.D in Microbiology and Public Health from University of Minnesota, USA.

He was the Deputy Vice Chancellor Finance and Administration Kyambogo University; Deputy Vice Chancellor Academic Affairs (Provost) and a Professor of Epidemiology, Public Health and Preventive Veterinary Medicine (MUK).



**Mr. Ongwen Alfred**  
**BOARD MEMBER**

(September 2018 – January 2020)

Mr. Ongwen was National Speaker

at the Uganda National Students' Association (UNSA) representing the Students' body. He was a member of the Loans and Scholarships Committee as well as the Audit Committee.



**Mr. Legesi Stephen Mwanika**  
**BOARD MEMBER**  
(April 2014 – April 2022)

Mr. Mwanika is the Treasurer General,

National Organization of Trade Unions and is the representative of the workers nominated on the Board of Directors. He holds a Bachelor's Degree in Education from Ndejje University and



**Mr. Robert Odok Oceng**  
**BOARD MEMBER**

(April 2017 – April 2020)

Mr. Oceng was the Director, Higher, Technical, Vocational, Education and Training in the Ministry of Education and Sports and represents the Ministry on the Board of Directors.

a Diploma in Education (KYU).

Mr. Mwanika has specialization in Education Administration and Planning, Labour and Industrial Relations, Performance Management, monitoring and evaluation, Policy Planning, Professional governance, analysis and advocacy, strategic planning, including Financial Management of Union funds. He was a Secondary School Teacher at Kyambogo College School teaching Math and Physics.



**Rev. Canon Dr. Alex Mugisha Kagume**  
**BOARD MEMBER**  
(April 2018 – April 2022)

Alex Mugisha Kagume is the

representative of the National Council for Higher Education on the Board. He is a member of the Finance and Administration Committee

as well as Loans and Scholarship Committee.

He is the Deputy Executive Director of National Council for Higher Education. He holds a Bachelor of Divinity (ATIEA), a Diploma in Theology (MUK), Post Graduate Diploma in Education (MUK) a PhD (University of Bristol, UK).

He has a wealth of experience in the teaching and management of higher education. He is the founding Deputy Vice Chancellor for Academic

Affairs of Uganda Christian University and was a member of the first Council of National Council for Higher Education representing Senates of Private Universities in Uganda.

He served a full term as a member of the Board of the Inter University Council of East Africa, and on its Quality Assurance Committee, representing the Senates of Ugandan Universities.



**Mr. William Ndoleriire**  
**BOARD MEMBER**  
(April 2014 – April 2022)

Mr. Ndoleriire is the Assistant Commissioner/Social Services Ministry of

Finance, Planning and Economic Development. He represents the Ministry of Finance,

Planning and Economic Development on the Board. He is the Chairperson of the Finance and Administration Committee of the Board.

Mr. Ndoleriire holds a Master's degree in Economic Policy Management (MaK), Post Graduate Diploma in Education (MaK) and a Bachelor of Arts in Economics (MaK).

Mr. Ndoleriire is the Head of the Social Services Division, Infrastructure and Social

Service Department of the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development. He is a Policy Analyst and Oversees the preparation of the Sector Budget Framework papers, budget estimates and analysis of releases and budget performance, undertakes appraisals and evaluation of projects, coordinating the design and execution of the country programmes.



**Dr. Jane Egau Okou**  
**BOARD MEMBER**  
(July 2020 – April 2022)

Dr. Jane Egau Okou is the acting Director of Higher, Technical, Vocational

Education and Training (HTVET) at the Ministry

of Education and Sports. She has a PhD in workforce Education and Development from Pennsylvania State University, a Master of Education (Economics of Education) and a Bachelors of Education (Business Education) from Makerere University.

She has served as a member of different Governing Councils including; Uganda Wildlife Research Training Institute (UWTI), Mulago

School of Nursing and Midwifery, Mulago Paramedical School, Health Tutors College-Mulago and Jinja School of Nursing and Midwifery among others.

She is a Member of the UNESCO International Task Force on Teachers and a Member of the Education Sector Policy and Management Committee at the Ministry of Education and Sports among other responsibilities.



**Mr. Michael O. Wanyama (CPA)**  
**Executive Director and Secretary to the Board (Ex-Officio)**



# Is HESFB Achieving Its Objectives?

By Bob Nuwagira

The Higher Education Students' Financing Board was created with a functional mandate to increase equitable access to higher education. At 6.3%, Uganda had been one of the countries with a low enrollment ratio into tertiary and higher education.

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), describes "Gross Enrolment Ratio" as the total enrolment within a country "in a specific level of education, regardless of age, expressed as a percentage of the population in the official age group corresponding to this level of education"

According to statistics, in 2014, about 180,000 learners could make it to various higher education institutions across in Uganda an approximate 8 million pupils who enrolled into primary education and over 2 million learners in secondary education. The graduates of Government's free mass education initiatives, UPE, USE and UPOLET needed a lease at tertiary and higher education.

Meanwhile increasing numbers of students were failing to complete their studies in many higher education institutions because of financial challenges.

The Higher Education Students' Loan Scheme was a timely intervention. The Higher Education Students' Financing Policy of 2012 established key objectives for the Board that was set up two years later and these focused on; Increase equitable access to higher education in Uganda; Support qualified students who may not afford higher education; Ensure regional balance in higher education services in Uganda; Develop



**12,780**  
**Beneficiaries**



**22 Universities &  
36 Other Tertiary  
Institutions**

and support courses which are critical to national development and Ensure a sustainable revolving loans fund.

## Increasing Access to Technical and Higher Education

Starting at 1,201 beneficiaries in 2014, the Board has cumulatively awarded loans to a total of 12,780 beneficiaries (10,839 undergraduate degree and 1,941 undergraduate diploma students for the eight academic years of operation. This represents 33% of the total number of applicants. Of these, 4000 are female while 8,780 are male and 120 are continuing students.

In the area of Technical, Vocational Education and Training (TVET) in Uganda, the Students' Loan Scheme has supported over 1,000 students in Technical, Agricultural and Conservation Colleges to study various Diploma programmes. These are students who would otherwise fail to access higher education without the Loan Scheme support.

Recent statistics assessing a three year period, for the Financial Years of 2015/16 to 2018/19 show that the overall enrollment in Higher Education Institutions went up by 8.3% (that is 21,211 students) from 254,043 students in the FY2015/16 to 275,254 in the FY2018/19. In the same period, HESFB had offered loans to 10,041 beneficiaries (about 50%) to study Higher Education programmes. It is no doubt that we are therefore increasing access to higher education.



## Supporting Programmes Critical to National Development

The subsequent National Development Plans (I, II and III) have always highlighted programmes that have a human resource gap and programmes that the education sector should focus on to foster national development. Health and Science education have consistently been highlighted as service gaps while Engineering and Agriculture are key to the national development agenda targeting the oil & Gas sector, mineral development and agro industrialization.

In the last eight years, the Students' Loan Scheme has prioritized support for Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) programmes and this has added to the national stock of applied scientists in the four major areas of the Economy where in Health, the Scheme has supported the training of over 3,600 Health and Medical personnel, over 2,200 Science Teachers, over 1,000 Agricultural Experts, over 3,600 Engineers and an additional 2000 in other science disciplines.

## Affirmative Action

In the awards of the study loans, the Board has been applying a selection criterion that identifies those who have the biggest need and with a good academic performance. The Board has from time to time considered issues of affirmative action and inclusivity in the Loan award process which has benefited a great number of beneficiaries as per the established clusters.

## Supporting Girls in Science

In line with other Government policies and the need to increase the participation of the girl child in Higher Education, female applicants are awarded Seven point score in the selection process. Despite the low number of female applicants, the Board has been able to achieve the 30% threshold for female beneficiaries, currently at 33%. In the AY2020/22, 42% of the selected beneficiaries were female.



**71**  
**PWDs**



**8,780**  
**Male Beneficiaries**



**4,000**  
**Female Beneficiaries**

## Prioritizing Persons with Disabilities

PWDs are a special category under the Students' Loan Scheme with a special affirmative action programme aimed at picking out all who apply. This serialized affirmative action is among the best programme based currently in the country.

Applicants with a verifiable disability are advantaged with 15 points in the Means Test. This too has an extension to the applicants' nuclear family, and for each parent with a disability, the applicant gets an extra 5 Points.

To supplement this consideration in the means test, PWDs are the only category of applicants allowed to the scheme on any programme of their choice including Humanities and Economics.



## Consideration for Special Needs Education

Starting with the Academic year 2017/ 2018, the Board also approved three humanities programmes on affirmative action targeting PwDs and can be offered by any applicant. These are Bachelors of Speech and Language Therapy, Bachelors of Education with special Needs Education and Bachelors of Teacher Education with Special Needs Education. These are aimed at supporting the education of PwDs learners.

## Regional Balance

The framers of the Students' Financing Scheme desired to create equity in access to higher education with all regions in the country represented. The Board has been steadfast in promoting regional balance and the Board in 2019 passed a resolution to set aside 100 slots for applicants from the Northern Districts of Uganda including the Acholi and Lango sub-regions, the West Nile sub-region and the Karamoja region.

This support would later be extended to the islands districts of Kalangala and Buvuma given their low numbers. With this affirmative action in place, the number of applicants from the Northern region has more than doubled with 347 successful beneficiaries in the AY2021/22 up from 159 in the AY2020/21. The successful rate was the highest in compared to other regions at 52.3%.

To enhance support for schools in the Northern region, applicants who hail and have studied from the Region offered five extra points in the means test.

In the AY2021/22, the Board launched an awareness campaign in the Karamoja Region having only registered only 86 Students to apply and benefit from the Scheme. As a result, the Board received 146 applicants from the Karamoja region and 131 (89%) were awarded study loans. This is the highest recorded number of applicants and Beneficiaries from the region in the last 8 years.

## Ensuring a Sustainable Revolving Fund

The Board's fifth objective is to create a revolving fund that is based on the recoveries from students that have completed studying. The Board disburses fees to the successful Needy Students on a straight line basis and upon Completion of Studies, there is a Grace Period of 12 months intended for the Students to find income generating activities and thereafter start Loan Repayments.

According to the HESF Act, 2014, the maximum repayment period is twice the study period, though there is also room to negotiate favorable repayment terms, including early repayments.

Every student loan is repayable with a value retention fee and upon recommendation by the Board, the Minister of Education and Sports in consultation with the Minister responsible for Finance determined the currently rate at 7% per annum charged on reducing balance.

As of February 2022, the Department had recovered a total of UGX 580 million in a period largely affected by the Covid-19 pandemic. The funds have mainly been recovered from the Loan Recovery Portfolio of 4,680 Graduate Loan Beneficiaries worthy UGX 46 billion and recoverable in a period of three (3) years up to eleven (11) years. These funds are re-invested in the lending function.

## Institutional Framework to Manage the Scheme

These achievements were achieved by a Secretariat which had spearheaded the operations of the Scheme. With a staff of 26 out of the approved 65, the Board has been hitting these milestones with skeleton staff to which the efforts are attributed. These have been realized by the development of policy documents and operational manuals which have directed work processes in the last eight years.

The Board is gradually increasing equitable access to Higher Education while helping thousands of young people to achieve their dreams.

*The Writer is the senior Communications officer, HESfBe*







## HESFB Is Vital For National Human Resource Development

By Prof. John Opuda-Asib.

**BOARD MEMBER** – (April 2014 – April 2018)

**T**he Board started its work with a skeletal Secretariat staff and steadily increasing their number and capacity, enabling work to be done effectively and efficiently, in a conducive environment. Working Committees were developed to do most of the deliberations and report to the Board for final ratification and approval.

The Secretariat generated the work plans, the Board developed policies, approved the work plans, the operational budget and the financial loan budget every financial year. The Board supervised the implementation of the policies and decisions, by the Secretariat. In my view this was well done.

As a representative of National Council for Higher Education (NCHE), I brought into the Board, my many years of experience in Higher Education, to include University teaching, research, management, administration, quality assurance, financial mobilization, regulation and graduate human resources training and development, in Uganda, East Africa, Africa and globally. Some of the values from me personally and NCHE included: -

1. Higher Education has a central role to play in creating sustainable human civilization, development and transformation in an inclusive way, by harnessing all human capital.
2. Knowledge is essential for all humanity (inclusivity).
3. Gender equals humanity and Higher Education must be all inclusive.
4. Disability affects all humans and therefore Higher Education must be inclusive of people with disability.
5. Variability, variety, places of origin and genetic heterosis all spice life.
6. Problem solving is for local and global benefit and Higher Education provides avenue for this.
7. Government is responsible the education of her citizens and has to finance it and regulate all players including the private providers.
8. People and their young, are the future and must be knowledgeable, educated, motivated and guided or supported when they have made their desired choices of study and life careers.
9. Financial capital is the engine of human development through Education, especially higher Education.

Therefore, HESFB is vital to national human resource development.

## Students' Loan Scheme Is The Hope Of Thousands Of Students

By Alfred Ongwen.

**BOARD MEMBER** – (September 2018 – January 2020)

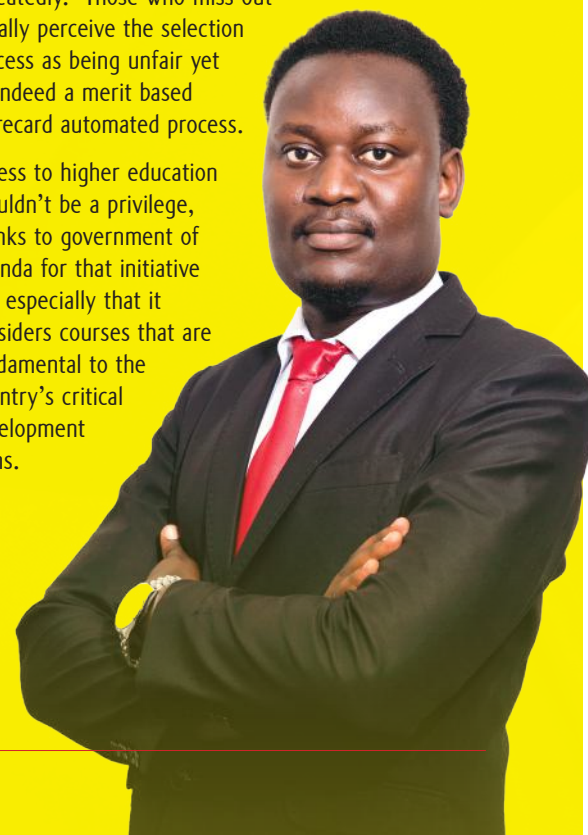
**I** joined HESFB on 6th September, 2018 and served for a year, up to the 6th of September, 2019. I was a students' representative on the Board nominated by the Uganda National Students' Association (UNSA).

Serving on the Board was a memorable experience. Being the youngest Board member and serving with distinguished senior citizens and persons of great responsibility was a very big learning experience. I learnt a lot about corporate governance, the relationship between the Board and the Secretariat, let alone the public.

HESFB is one of the greatest initiatives implemented in our education sector as a Country. To-date, we have very many teachers, pharmacists, engineers, doctors among very many other science professionals serving our Country who would never had got the opportunity had it not been for the Students' Loan Scheme Initiative. Equally the Country would have missed out on their service. Many more are still at school and very optimistic about the future. HESFB has touched many very lives positively and the country will benefit long term.

However, HESFB is still underfunded. By the time I left, the applications were increasingly overwhelming yet funding is fluctuating every year. Due to the increased publicity, the number of applicants has grown exponentially. HESFB can hardly award loans to even half of its applicants due to resource constraints, this in turn causes a public outcry due to the very many applicants that unfortunately miss out, some repeatedly. Those who miss out usually perceive the selection process as being unfair yet its indeed a merit based scorecard automated process.

Access to higher education shouldn't be a privilege, thanks to government of Uganda for that initiative and especially that it considers courses that are fundamental to the Country's critical development plans.



## A Permanent Mark On Lives Of Youthful Ugandans

By Elizabeth.K.M. Gabona.

**BOARD MEMBER** – (April 2014 – March 2017)

**A**s we mark eight years of life of the Governing Board of the Students Financing Board in Uganda, I look back with joy and pride. I am happy to have been associated with it.

It took wide consultative process and careful strategic planning to get the scheme to where it is today. At operational level, the programme has been skillfully, strategically steered by a committed team led by the Executive Director, Mr. Michael Wanyama and I congratulate them.

As the then Director of Higher, Technical Vocational and Teacher Education. I was nominated to the Board as a representative of the Ministry of Education and Sports.

I must congratulate the Board members for being among the ffounding Board, that has ably supported the technical team and ably representing their respective constituencies. The Students and Financing scheme has left a permanent positive mark on the beneficiaries by enabling them to complete the degree and diploma programmes.

Networking with sister Boards in the region (Kenya, Tanzania, Rwanda) broadenned the Board's outlook and strengthened performance of the technical team. Useful experiences were shared.

We look into the future with optimism and look out for more resources so that many more learners may benefit and complete their studies.

Moving forward, we need to look at possible sources of funds to expand the scheme in terms of number of students and the number of critical programmes offered. The Scheme should consider periodic tracer studies of loan funded scholars. Success stories need to be heard and this will contribute to subsequent planning process.

I wish to conclude by assuring all readers of this magazine that investing into the Students Financing Board is a sure way of tangible outcomes for building a stronger human capital for our mother land Uganda. Congratulations to the Board and staff of the Board for a job well done over the years.

Long live Uganda's Students Financing Scheme.

## We Set Up Strong Linkages For Loan Recovery

By Stephen Legesi.

**BOARD MEMBER** – (April 2014 – April 2022)

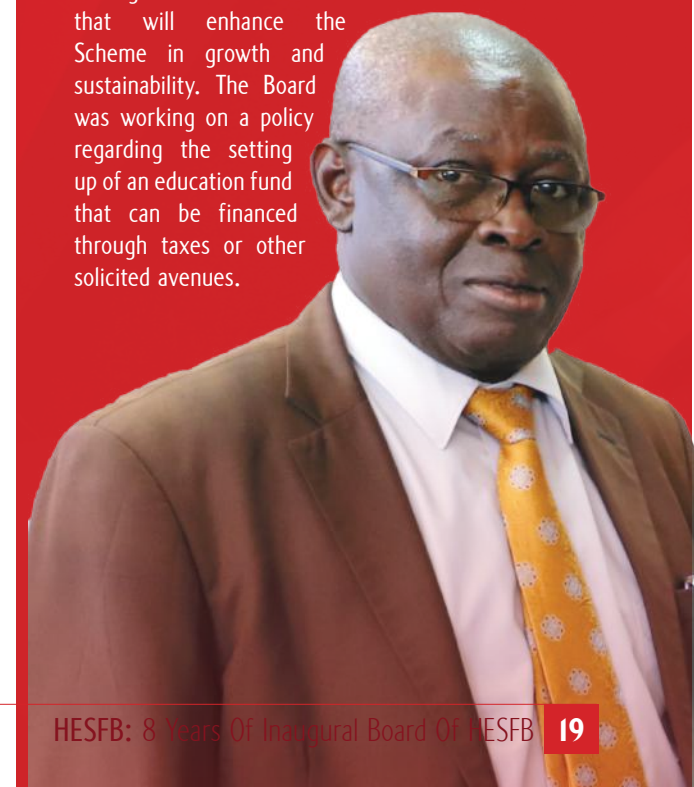
**I**t has been eight years of service as a member of the Higher Education Students' Financing Board of Directors, representing workers. Serving as a Chairperson Audit Committee on the Board, I had the opportunity to work with highly knowledgeable and smart individuals on the team. I appreciate the effort we as a team has put in on the ongoing projects of the Board despite the critical challenges encountered.

It has been able to attain our target of over 10,000 students in higher education institutions trained. As a team, we have been putting in a lot of extra time above and beyond the call of duty and this has truly helped to ensure that we meet our benchmarks promptly. Thus, am so happy to see our hard work resulting in such success.

To ensure sustainability, the Board through collaborations and networking has constructively engaged the Federation of Uganda Employers an umbrella association for all employers in Uganda to support their cause to smoothen loan repayments.

We have also formed linkages with public services, the Uganda revenue authority for those in private businesses, and the Ministry of internal affairs for those in the diaspora. The Board is exploring other cheaper and flexible repayment platforms for example mobile money, and Airtel money, to ease the repayment process.

The limited resources limited our ability to fund expensive university programmes and other activities such as accommodation, meals, industrial training, and other benefits, but the Board put in place necessary strategies to mobilize and fundraise for resources that will enhance the Scheme in growth and sustainability. The Board was working on a policy regarding the setting up of an education fund that can be financed through taxes or other solicited avenues.





# Loan Scheme Graduates Impacting Their Communities

**We have so far transformed boda-boda riders into engineers. We have educated medical doctors, nurses, teachers and many others. Over 12,000 youths have been supported and are now change makers and have supported lives significantly in their communities.**

**By Prof. Christine Dranzoa.**  
**BOARD MEMBER** - (April 2014 – April 2022)

I want to express my sincere appreciation to the Government of Uganda for the establishment of Higher Education Students Financing Board (HESFB) that commenced in 2014. I congratulate the Government, The First Lady & Hon Minister of Education and Sports because in my opinion, HESFB has become one of the successful Government Schemes. The impact of the Scheme is very significant.

I want to appreciate the Uganda Vice Chancellor's forum for trusting me to represent them effectively.

As Board member my colleagues nominated and elected me to chair the Loans and Scholarship committee as a founding Chairperson. It has been a rewarding experience serving for transformation of the needy youth.

As a Board, we are very grateful for the cooperation of the Management team that worked effectively and efficiently with us as well as the students, beneficiaries, beneficiary institutions and other stakeholders. This is the spirit of service above self in which we can all build transform our Country. Keep

We have so far transformed boda-boda riders into engineers. We have educated medical doctors, nurses, teachers and many others. Over 12,000 youths



have been supported and are now change makers and have supported lives significantly in their communities.

I am very humbled by the impact of this Scheme so far. The Loans and Scholarship committee which I chaired realized support for over 44.4% females in the last academic year (2021/22) and I pray in the shortest time possible we will match the percentage of both genders in loan awards.

I am also very proud that the beneficiaries are paying back loans faster. I would like also to encourage beneficiaries who are gainfully employed to pay back their loans so that opportunity is given to others who are equally needy. This will give sustainability to HESFB Scheme.

It is my prayer that when the economic situation improves, Government will consider increasing the finances to the Scheme.

I would like to appreciate my colleagues, the Board members for being cooperative and I appeal to the Management to remain a trustworthy team.

I want to welcome the incoming Board members who will succeed our team. I encourage them to be very committed. We have set a strong system, built trust in the stakeholders, addressed cross cutting issues such as gender and regional equity, although some issues still need strengthening. Feel free to consult us because eight years has given us enormous experience.

*Prof. Dranzoa authored this article in April 2022. She passed away on June 28th, 2022 before this magazine could be published.*



## The Scheme Is Currently Overwhelmed

**By Mr. William Ndoleriire.**  
**BOARD MEMBER** - (April 2014 – April 2022)

The Student's Loan Scheme came as a blessing to the poor who were and are unable to access higher education.

I represented the Ministry of Finance Planning and Economic Development (MoFPED) in the core part that involved addressing issues like the interest and inflation rates on the loan to be awarded to the students. We also needed clearance from the MoFPED to fix the 1% Loan Protection Fee that has now become a resource for the Board.

One of the core roles of the Board was to evaluate the statistics on what was required for the students to attain degrees and diplomas, the various ratios guided us on how to finance the different categories.

While evaluating the statistics, the Board came to a realization that PWD's were at a disadvantage if they had to compete with the rest. We therefore came up with measures to give PWD's a fighting chance. Furthermore, as a Board, we also realized that some regions like Karamoja were still at a disadvantage despite Government efforts including the District Quota Scholarship Scheme. The Board therefore made a decision to set aside slots for the Karamoja region.

On the flipside, over the years, the Board has been very overwhelmed with the number of applications. There is an increase in the numbers each year and the Scheme is unable to absorb all due to minimal resources.

There is also a mismatch in the admission process by higher education institutions which is affecting the award of the loans. In some instances, some eligible applicants have missed out due to delays to release admissions while others start the academic semester before the loan award process is complete.

There is also a challenge with the different variations when it comes to cut off points for different universities. Cut off points for Public Universities are higher than those in private universities, so poor students that didn't score highly because of their education background and other factors stands no chance at going to Public Universities. In the long run Private Institutions have more loan Scheme beneficiaries than Public Institutions.

The new Board should continue the drive to clearly mark transcripts of Loan Scheme Beneficiaries with special identifiable codes for employers to enforce recovery.

In conclusion, I would like to thank my colleagues for the hard work and team spirit, the efficiency feedback on both policy and technical. I wish the next Board the very best.

## Great Strides As A Students' Loans Board

**By Dr. Alex Kagume.**  
**BOARD MEMBER**  
(April 2018 – April 2022)



I joined the Students' Loan Board in 2018 as a representative of the National Council for Higher Education. It has been an educative,

instructive, and challenging four years.

By the time I joined the Board in 2018, it was fairly formed and had been in existence for four years. Having joined the second cohort of the Board, the institutional framework was in place and fully functioning.

Over the years, I have watched the Board consolidate and fill the gaps in staffing, and witnessed the growth and an increase in the number of loan scheme applicants. Every year, the Board keeps falling back in terms of satisfying the need of the applicants. The volume of applicants is overwhelming and I must note that the institutions of higher learning have also increased but this area of need hasn't been matched.

During my term on the Board, we made a shift from the manual application of loans by students, to the digital platforms. The Students Loan Scheme now considers final year students which is a big development. We have also had a change in staffing and restructuring of the Board from an administration unit that was very stagnant.

One of the successes of the Board has been the increased visibility of the Board. There was a gap in getting students from some regions which gap has been bridged. It, however, comes with a challenge because the Board can no longer satisfy the need due to limited resources. Going digital has been yet another success because we had reservations about the those in remote locations accessing the services but the numbers speak for themselves. It was also timely that by the time the COVID-19 pandemic hit, we were already prepared otherwise we would have been challenged.

The Board mainly focuses on science subjects yet some districts barely have any science students. This makes regional balance difficult to attain following the provisions of the Act. Due to demand, the selection becomes difficult because the needy are much more than the Board can finance. The Board is therefore not adequately fulfilling the objective of providing for needy students.

Lastly, the fees paid by different institutions vary greatly. Some private universities are extremely expensive. The growth of programmes and institutions is not proportional to the fund. The fund is not growing yet the institutions are. Government needs to capitalize the Scheme until it reaches a stage of sustainability.

I hope the new Board evaluates what we have done and finds solutions to the challenges we have met. I wish the old and new Board the very best because it has been a pleasure serving on the Board.



# I'm Proud Of Our Contribution To Uganda's Needy Students

**By Solome Mayinja Luwaga**  
**BOARD MEMBER** - (April 2014 – April 2022)

I am truly privileged to have been on the inaugural Board of Directors of the Students Higher Education Financing Board.

I would like to thank the former Chairman of the Federation of Uganda Employers, Nicholas John Okwir, and the Governing Committee Members for giving me the opportunity to serve on the Board as the representative of Employers. To the Chairman of HESFB, fellow Board Members, Executive Director, Management, and staff, it's been a true pleasure serving with you. I have learned a lot from each one of you.

As I exit, it is my pleasure and delight to share some thoughts on "The right to education". International human rights law guarantees the right to education. This is proclaimed in the Universal Declaration on Human Rights, adopted in 1948. Since then, the right to education has been widely recognized and developed by a number of international normative instruments elaborated by the United Nations, including the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1966, CESCR), the Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989, CRC), and the UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education (1960, CADE).

Education is a powerful tool in developing the full potential of everyone and ensuring human dignity, and in promoting both individual and collective wellbeing. Education lifts marginalized groups out of poverty and it is an indispensable means of realizing other human rights.

I would like to quote Nelson Mandela who said "Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world. No country can really develop unless its citizens are educated." I wish to thank the Government for taking the initiative, through The Higher Education Financing Board to progressively increase equitable access to higher education.

UN Special Rapporteur on the right to education, Katarina Tomaševski developed the 4As that were adopted by the Committee

on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights in its General Comment 13 on the right to education. To be a meaningful right, education shall be Available, Accessible, Acceptable, and Adaptable. Accessible means the education system is non-discriminatory and accessible to all, and positive steps are taken to include the most marginalized. The Board has made good progress since its inception but considering the demand, the journey is still long. Due to financial constraints, the Board is unable to meet this standard. There are elements of discrimination namely limitations to particular courses of study and years of study. The number of applicants for loans has grown over the last eight years. Sadly, for some of those left out, it is the end of their academic journey, and are very likely doomed to a lifetime of poverty and struggle.

My thoughts go back to 42 years ago. A month before I was due to start University, my father passed on (RIP). My mother was a housewife and we were a family of six children, the oldest being in her third year at university. Life was not the same, we did struggle but our education was guaranteed. I shudder to imagine where I would be today if I had dropped out of school at that point.

It is therefore my greatest hope that HESFB will progressively achieve the Mission "To provide sustainable financing for equitable access to higher education to all eligible Ugandans". Aggressive public awareness campaigns have led to growth in the number of applicants. The number of girls benefitting from the scheme has increased through affirmative action, thus achieving gender parity. By removing course limitations for persons with disability, the number benefitting from the scheme has grown. Loan recovery is critical to the successful execution of the Board mandate. The Board has therefore established relationships with organizations that have the capacity to assist in the area of loan recovery. Among them is the Federation of Uganda Employers [FUE] with whom a Memorandum of Understanding was signed. FUE is playing a leading role in sensitizing employers about the need to recover loans so that employers make it their responsibility to deduct and remit loan repayments from their employees who benefited from the scheme.

Going forward Government should increase funding to the Board. The target should be that every student qualifying and admitted to a qualifying University or tertiary institution should automatically qualify for a loan. More sensitization should be done on the responsibility of beneficiaries to pay the loan so that the revolving fund grows from which others can benefit.



# Allowing Humanities Courses For PWDs Is Remarkable

**Ms. Esther Kyoziara served on the Board of Directors of HESFB for two terms 2014-2022) and she shared her experience in an interview with Bob Nuwagira**

## **Tell us about yourself.**

My name is Esther Kyoziara, I am a person with visual impairment. I have served on the Board since 2014 and I represent persons with disabilities (PWDs) on this Board.

## **What are your recollections of your time serving on the Board?**

We were appointed to the Board when there was only the Act that establishes the Board. We had to build the human resource manual, the finance manual, the credit manual, and the structure and Secretariat among others. We started with 13 staff. It was not an easy beginning but I'm happy to note that we are leaving the Scheme with a well-built staff, several policies in place, and many tools developed.

The Students Loan Scheme came as a saviour and at a time we needed it. It has been a valuable asset to the government, students, parents, and communities. The Board has helped students achieve their dreams. It is even more rewarding to witness students pay back the loan because it is a revolving fund and can only be a success if the beneficiaries payback. With continued sensitization and mobilization, I believe students will continue to pay, which is an indicator that the Board is doing well.

## **What do you consider as the major decisions of the Board?**

I will selfishly but proudly talk about my constituency. In the beginning, the Students Loan Scheme was predominantly aimed at supporting students offering science programmes. Students with disabilities rarely have a chance to pursue most science disciplines because they are practical and this puts persons with disability at a disadvantage. It was therefore a great achievement when the Board took the decision to open up the

**“ I would recommend that assistive devices are given on grant since without them PWDs are not able to easily access education.**



Scheme for PWDs to pursue any programmes of their choice including humanities and social sciences. In the formative years we had no applicants with a disability but the numbers have greatly improved over the years and will continue to grow with the increased awareness and the enabling affirmative action for PWDs.

## **What has been the Board's Linkages to your Constituency?**

The Board has been conducting various sensitization and outreaches to persons with disabilities through their umbrella organisations that the Scheme is now well recognized and the service acknowledged. The Board however needs to make use of structures in lower local governments and communities for a bigger reach.

On the other hand, the current Act stipulates that assistive devices that are provided to PWDs are part of the study loans, making it costlier for PWDs than the rest of the beneficiaries. This disadvantages PWDs. I would recommend that assistive devices are given on grant since without them PWDs are not able to easily access education.

## **Any Challenges Encountered?**

The ratio between the available funds and applicants is continuously growing. Due to limited funds and the overwhelming number of applicants, most of the unsuccessful applicants end up bitter and with a negative attitude towards the Board.

## **Your Message to the Incoming Board.**

The new Board is coming at a point when the foundation work has been accomplished. They should look into laying as many strategies as possible around loan recovery. Equip the loans recovery department so that they can efficiently recover the loans. I urge the incoming Board to be united and support the Secretariat. I wish you the best.





# Tribute to The Late Professor Christine Dranzoa Former Board Member and Chairperson Loans and Scholarship Committee

It was with great shock when we were informed of the death of Prof. Christine Dranzoa on the morning on 28th June, 2022. In April, we had bid her farewell as a member of Governing Board of the Higher Education Students' Financing Board (HESFB). She had actually chaired the meeting that approved the 8th Cohort of Students' Loan Scheme Beneficiaries.

Prof Christine Dranzoa was laid to rest on Wednesday 6th July 2022 in her home District of Moyo. She had a stellar academic journey as Wildlife Ecologist, Conservationist, Educationalist, Facilitator and Administrator who held a Ph.D. in Zoology.

The late made history as the pioneer Vice Chancellor (VC) of the Muni University. Not only was she the first VC but one of the only three female occupying the position of the VC in the Country, the others being Prof. Joy Constance Kwesiga, the VC of Kabale University and Prof. Maud Kamatenesi Mugisha, the Bishop Stuart University, Vice Chancellor.

She was also the first to represent the Vice Chancellors forum, an umbrella body that brings all the Vice Chancellors in this Country together on the Board of the Higher Education Students Financing Board (HESFB). HESFB came into being in April 2014 after the enactment of the law with the mandate to support brilliant but

**“ During her tenure, the support of the girl child on the Student loan scheme grew from 20% in 2014 to 45 % and her argument was that...**

needy students to access higher education through students' loans.

On the Board, she was appointed the Chairperson of the Loans and Scholarship Committee, a position she held until her death. She served her two terms of 4 years with distinction.

In her inaugural speech as Chairperson Loans and scholarship committee, she spoke of top ethical standards and ensuring transparency in the award of the student loans, equity, uplifting the girl child, creativity and innovation and knowledge sharing between the Board and the staff.

She emphasized that the Country had high expectation in the Board to do the right things and as a representative of the University forum, she would always ensure that transparency is an integral part of our business process and would also steer the Board Committee to ensure that decisions made were evidence based.

She believed that knowledge did not reside in the Board members alone but each employee had a contribution to make for the growth of the entity. She believed in excellent work methods and always advised that excellency was a journey but not a destination so continuous improvement was required in staff performance. She nurtured creativity hence

giving room to staff to explore their talents She was very honest and detested any formal of moral decadence.

She was a pace setter, full of agility and a good listener. As a Chairperson of one of the Board committees who also worked for various other Boards, she was very handy at building corporate governance structures at HESFB and always emphasized collegial leadership.

As a result, the Board worked very well with the staff members to build a cohesive Institution that is now well known as a funding agency for needy students who intend to pursue higher education. As a new entity, the Board embarked on building systems and controls to ensure that the business processes were very effective and efficient.

She personally took off time to read through and make substantial contributions to each policy documents that was developed by staff for the approval of the Board.



The first year of operation 2014 was meant for the development of operational manuals, policy documents and guiding principles for which she is highly accredited. The late Prof Dranzoa was a great advocate for the advancement of the education of the girl child not only in Uganda but worldwide. The academic success of the girl child extremely excited the late.

During her tenure, the support of the girl child on the Student loan scheme grew from 20% in 2014 to 45 % and her argument was that girls are disadvantaged in many ways and require targeted interventions to increase their uptake. She convinced the Board to award girls 7 points above their counterparts in the Score card for the student loans.

A lot of success was registered during her time as the Chairperson the Loans Committee among others increased uptake of students; increased programmes for funding; award of loans to diploma students; increased higher learning Institutions. She was an icon of education and believed that Education is a great weapon we can use to transform our society.

She was talented in managing diversity and closely worked with others without any form of discrimination based on gender, race, religion, Age and education levels. The Board was able to create a culture where every Board member and staff were encouraged to learn from each other because she believed that human beings were endowed with different talents and skills. The Board shall forever miss a transformational leader with Visionary leadership skills.

She was full of energy and emphasized meritocracy. She helped the Board to improve procedures, demanded good decision-making data and clear working methods. In all she did, she offered selfless service and put the Board first.

I will personally miss an educator, a visionary leader, a change Agent and a pace setter. I enjoyed working with you and you have been an outgoing and visible Board member who tackled issues professionally.

Farewell our dear Board member, we shall miss you and rest well on your final journey.

*The Writer is the Executive Director, Higher Education Students' Financing Board (HESFB)*

*By CPA Michael Wanyama*

**“ ... that girls are disadvantaged in many ways and require targeted interventions to increase their uptake.**



# Key Resolutions Of The Board For The Last 8 Years







# The Loan Scheme Helped Me Achieve My Dream

By Nambooze Maliam.

Growing up, I was one of those children that were super-intelligent and progressive in school. I must have skipped about two or three classes, and finished my Primary education at 12 years. For someone who went to a village government-aided school in Sembabule, I must say I performed extraordinarily well. I was the best in my school and village.

I come from a broken and polygamous family. At the age of seven, my parents separated, my mother unwillingly leaving me with my father. I distinctly remember my father leaving me behind in a single room as he went on to start a new family. I was left to fend for myself. Life was hard, I went to bed hungry on many nights. I was at the mercy of strangers, teachers, and neighbors. My safe haven was school. It was the only place I didn't feel alone. Books were my best friend. When I completed my primary seven, my academic progress temporarily stopped because I had no support for secondary education.

I later reconnected with my mother through a friend of hers. She almost collapsed when she first saw me. I was malnourished and looked miserable. After narrating my ordeal and expressing my desire to continue with my

education, my mother quickly suggested that I study a skill rather than follow through with Secondary Education because she didn't have resources.

I successfully trained as a tailor and lost five years of my education progress while my former classmates continued with their education. Every evening, I would sit outside my workplace and stare at students returning from school. I always dreamt of going back to school as this was the only way of attaining my long admired profession of engineering. Every successful Engineer I admired was educated.

One day, I boldly approached my paternal grandfather, and asked for the opportunity to return to school. He was amazed by my resolve and instantly accepted my request. I had, however, lost five years of my education life. I didn't care what kind of school I went to and my Grandfather enrolled me to Lwemiyaga Secondary School. My goal was to study hard, collect excellent report cards and then get a vacancy in one of the prominent schools.

I was not the same little, intimidated, abandoned girl. I returned older, much wiser, and hardworking. I singlehandedly planted a five-acre banana plantation. I worked relentlessly, every morning and evening. When my grandfather passed away towards the end of

my Senior One, my mother sold the Matooke, did some other casual work and reconnected with my Dad to pay my school fees.

By Senior Three, I had collected enough report cards to get me a vacancy at Masaka Secondary School. A month into the new school, I realized I was behind on classwork and had a lot of catching up to do. I also desired to be a leader, contested for a prefect role and went on to win against all odds. I had received favour from both the teaching and non-teaching staff.

I excelled with Division One at Senior Four and returned to the same school for A'level doing Physics, Chemistry, and Mathematics. Once again, I was elected a prefect and was always amongst the best. When the head teacher got wind of my background, I got special meals at school and the school paid my hospital bills when I was sick. Every time, I failed to make the school fees payments in time, the registrar came to my rescue and negotiated with the Head Teacher on my behalf.

During my time at Masaka SS, I served in various positions of leadership. I successfully finished my Senior Six though I was sickly for most of the time and was so proud of myself for finishing secondary education. My hopes of joining the university were very slim as my father and mother's income could not enroll in



any University. The little we had was no longer enough.

With the help of my former school administration, I got a job at Hope Comprehensive High School, Masaka, working as a matron, school counselor, and Physics, Chemistry, and Mathematics teacher. I soon used my experience of being a student leader in my former school to the appreciation of my students and colleagues. I restructured the prefectorial body, made use of the students and everything became more efficient. A few weeks later, my salary was doubled, and I got meal privileges.

Around the same time, we got information of some bursary applications at the District headquarters. When I went to seek more information, I met Mr. Mukasa, who worked at Ndejje University as a Bus Driver. He told us about the opportunity of studying at Ndejje University under the Students' Loan Scheme. Given my combination at A'level, I had an opportunity to study engineering if I was given funding under the Loan Scheme.

I was admitted for civil engineering at Ndejje University and asked to report for school as I waited on Loan Scheme. My parents borrowed UGX 800,000 from a money lender and sent me to University.

Worried about not being a successful applicant, I decided to have a word with the University Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Eriabu Lugujjo. When I succeeded in getting an appointment, I boldly told him, "My name is Nambooze Maliam, I applied for the Student's Loan Scheme and I have come to tell you that whether I am successful or not, I am not going back home." I continued to tell him that my mother had taken a loan to send me to Kampala, and there was no way I was returning home without a degree. I offered to clean the office, wash his car, toilets, or work as a casual laborer as long as I did not return home empty-handed. He was amazed by my bravery.

A month later, the list of successful beneficiaries was released, and behold I had made it. It was unexplainable. I felt elated, happy, and jubilant. I immediately called my parents who were so excited about the news. My mother cried and celebrated. She called everyone she could and told them her daughter was an engineer in the making. Tuition was no longer a problem; my goal was now how to get a first-class degree and become a guild president.

During the first two years of doing Civil Engineering, I had a first-class and maintained it till I declared my interest to join politics. I had a chance on realizing my dream of becoming a Guild President of a top University.

I was the only lady contesting with three gentlemen and had no funds but I had made friends who invested in my campaigns in many ways. God's favor was upon me. Halfway through the campaigns, Corona happened and Universities were closed. By the time

Institutions reopened, all the progress that I had made was forgotten, we had to start afresh.

I wanted to give up but the thought of how much my friends had invested pushed me on. It was a tough and frustrating race but miraculously, I won. It was unbelievable. It was now time to rewrite history. While at Ndejje University, I served as an elder of the ladies of substance club, chairperson disciplinary committee, guild cabinet, head of counselors, wounded healer's forum, and the 28th Guild President.

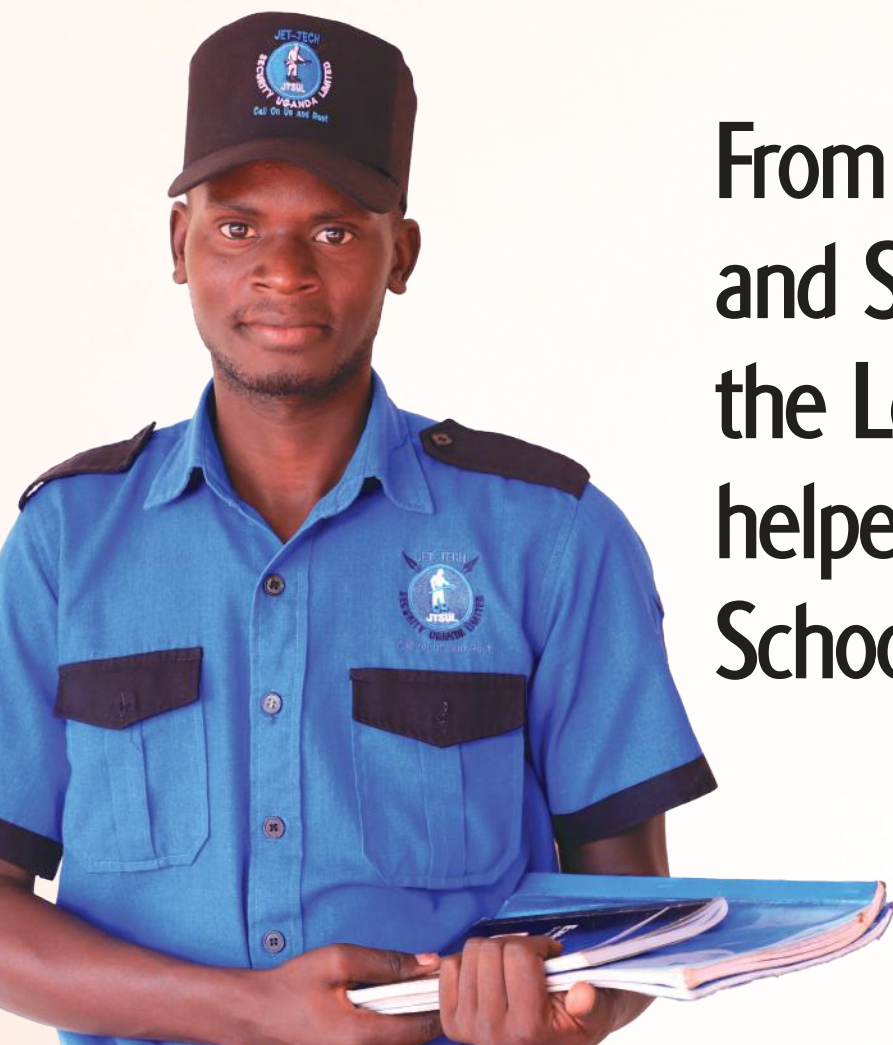
I saved and used my allowances as Guild President to buy a small piece of land and relocated my mother. I graduated on time with a second-class upper and the university treated my family to a luncheon. I am the only engineer in my clan thanks to the Student's Loan Scheme.

The Loan Scheme was nothing short of a savior and no language can explain how grateful I am that I was given this golden opportunity. May God bless them for their transparency and efficiency. No one knew me and I was given a chance, I don't know where I would be without them. HESFB has opened very many doors for me. This is the same story of many of us on the Scheme. I pray Government funds the Scheme to cater for all those who apply. I will eagerly do my duty in paying back this loan to support other Ugandans.

I am looking forward to motherhood, being a CEO, mentor, leader, motivational speaker and so much more. I cannot wait to shake tables and nations. Thanks to HESFB, thanks to Government of Uganda. A person dies the minute they lose hope, without a vision you have no purpose. Hope should never be lost, dreams too. Your neighbor will not dream for you. Let's keep hope alive.







# From a Street Vendor and Security Guard, the Loan Scheme has helped me back to School

## By Aywar Jeremiah Augustin

I'm excited and happy to tell my story about the Students Loan Scheme. From an early age, I was taught that success is for those who work hard and are persistent. God blessed me with many talents and I got to explore and nourish those talents as early as Primary Three. I was an active and great competitor when it came to music dance and drama, an exceptional athlete, a footballer, and an incredible leader. These talents gave me a great boost in life.

I am the second born of eleven children, born in Lemo Village, Pager Sub-county, Kitgum District. I attended Pakwelo Primary school, a government-aided school, and managed to pass in Division One, with an Aggregate 10. My good performance secured me a vacancy at Cleverland Secondary School in Mbarara. I remember, my father, a Primary teacher, could only manage to pay half of the school fees for my first term. It was my great performance and talents that kept me in school after that.

I was active at school in most co-curricular activities and represented the School at various stages, both athletics, music dance, and drama and attained many certificates. I was given a full bursary on the condition that I continued to excel both in class and co-curricular activities.

In my Senior Four, I failed to balance my academics, leadership responsibilities, athletics, and MDD which all needed my attention. I came in third that school term but considering the conditions of my bursary where I had to always take the first position in the class, the bursary was withdrawn. It did not take long before I was sent home for School Fees.

After spending weeks at home with no hope, I knew I had to get out of my comfort zone. My goal was to find work, make some money and return to school. In 2017, after borrowing transport money from my father, I left for Kampala. I knew no one or how I was going to survive. This was my first time away from home.

My first nights were spent on the streets, hungry and cold, I ate leftovers from the oddest places for days. My next move was to find employment. I had no qualifications so construction sites were my only option. I worked as a potter and slept on the streets. It was hard but I had no other option.

I saved my small payments, spent as little as I could, later rented my first house at UGX 20,000 in a slums of Kamwoka, a Kampala suburb. Life was hard, I slept on cardboard boxes, it was always cold but I had to work towards the dream of going back to school.

My next savings were used to start a pineapple business. I would wake up at 5 am each morning, go to Owino market buy pineapples which I would later cut into small pieces, and sell. I made 100% profit on each pineapple. I was a street vendor.

On one of the phone calls to my parents, I was informed that my head teacher had called and asked that I return to school to register for the Senior Four examinations which I did. I used this opportunity to pick my school books to enable me to read as I worked.

I returned to school later in the year to do my final examinations after which, I returned to the streets of Kampala to make some money. I tried selling anything that made a profit, from eggs, cookies, and anything else that came my way. I also worked as a casual laborer at Mukwano Industries Ltd.

I was amazed to receive a phone call from my head teacher telling me my results were back and I had performed better than most of the students that had had the privilege of remaining in school. The headmaster asked me to return to school and gave me a full bursary but with conditions that I would still represent the school in co-curricular activities. I was so happy for the opportunity and was determined to excel and maximize the second chance life had given me.



Since I came from a background of lack, i always admired the Governor, Bank of Uganda, the Late, Emmanuel-Tumusiime Mutebile and desired to be like him, to be the man in charge of monetary policies. I did my research and decided to do Mathematics, Economics, and Geography. I gave my education and responsibilities my all and managed to excel and fulfill my obligations to the school. During holidays, I would return to the streets and work so hard to earn some money for books and other necessities. I successfully finished my senior six in 2019.

As soon as it was time for my vacation, I returned to Kampala but with different goals. I was very sure university education was out reach for me. My goal was therefore to work hard, and support my siblings and parents as I waited to join either the army or Uganda police. As I worked and waited on the recruitment adverts, COVID-19 sent the country into a lockdown. Life became impossible, and my businesses failed.

While on the street on one of those extremely cold nights, I saw a security guard. I figured he was sleeping on the streets just like me but getting paid for it. That was a job I could do. Sleep on the streets and get paid for it. I approached him and asked what it would take for me to become a security guard and he guided me. We quickly became friends, he connected me to his supervisor who asked for my senior four results. I was recruited, taken for a three weeks of training, and soon, I was a security guard with SENACA Security Company. I was sleeping on the streets, but getting paid for it.

I was deployed at Mabirizi plaza and worked as a security guard at night and a street vendor during the day. I sold pineapples till midday, went to the city square gardens to take a nap, and reported to work later in the evening. All was well until I was deployed to a different location, I had no gun but was guarding one of the most dangerous places. After several attacks, I noticed I was risking my life and had to quit. Homeless and jobless once again.

I soon secured a job at one of the construction sites in Kampala. While working there, one of my colleagues was amazed at my ability to speak good English. He asked about my background and qualifications and I told him my story. He then told me about the Student's Loan Scheme, pointed at the building (Lourdel Towers, HESFB Offices), and said "Go to that building and ask for help." I did not go to work the next day, I walked to the HESFB offices, and asked for help and information about the Students' Loan

Scheme. HESFB staff gave me all the information I needed. I was humbled and grateful that no one chased me or denied me access to the offices.

Due to Corona and the lockdown, life became unbearable and I decided to return to Gulu as I waited for the Students' Loan Scheme to advertise. In 2020, HESFB advertised, I had no money for application fees and missed out. The next year (2021) I saved my money early enough and applied. Education was my only hope, I had waited on the army and police recruitment in vain, and had given up, on the streets. The Students' Loan Scheme was therefore my last option. I had been through it all, the hunger, cold, worries and was tired of life. This was it for me, my last option and saviour.

I checked the list of successful applicants in the newspapers about 10 times before I finally accepted the news that I was not one of them. Many of us had apparently missed because of little funding. I was shattered, helpless, and disoriented for the next few days. What was going to become of me? The streets were no longer an option. This had been my last resort and hope.

Amidst my confusion, I learned about the appeal procedure. That night, I boarded a bus to Kampala. When I reached HESFB offices, i was ushered into the office of the Director Operations, Mr. Bbosa Kizito. I couldn't contain my emotions, I burst into tears, but he was patient and listened to me. After telling him my entire story, he asked one of officers to help me with the appeal process, which she did.

I did not return to Gulu, I joined another security company as I waited for my fate. I was at a point in my life where I had nothing to lose, there is no future without school so I prayed to be successful.

God answered because as I speak, I have just finished signing my loan agreement forms. I was among the successful 142 Beneficiaries out of 1,770 who applied under Appeals. I couldn't believe it. There were Government programmes that were working. I walked into the HESFB offices with no reference or bribe. No one knew me but no one chased me. I was helped, HESFB saved me from the shadows of hopelessness. I have my proof that we have systems that are working. All you have to do is ask for help.

I am currently a student at Makerere University Business School, pursuing a Bachelor of Science in Business Statistics. My role is now to study and make it in life. The key has been handed to me. I am still working as a security guard so as to support my welfare. I am on duty at night, and in the morning I take a bath and head for lectures. It is challenging, but for now, I will do anything to utilize this opportunity; at least I have tuition. I am looking forward to a brighter future, there is no turning back at this point.

Thank You HESFB.



# HESFB IMPACT

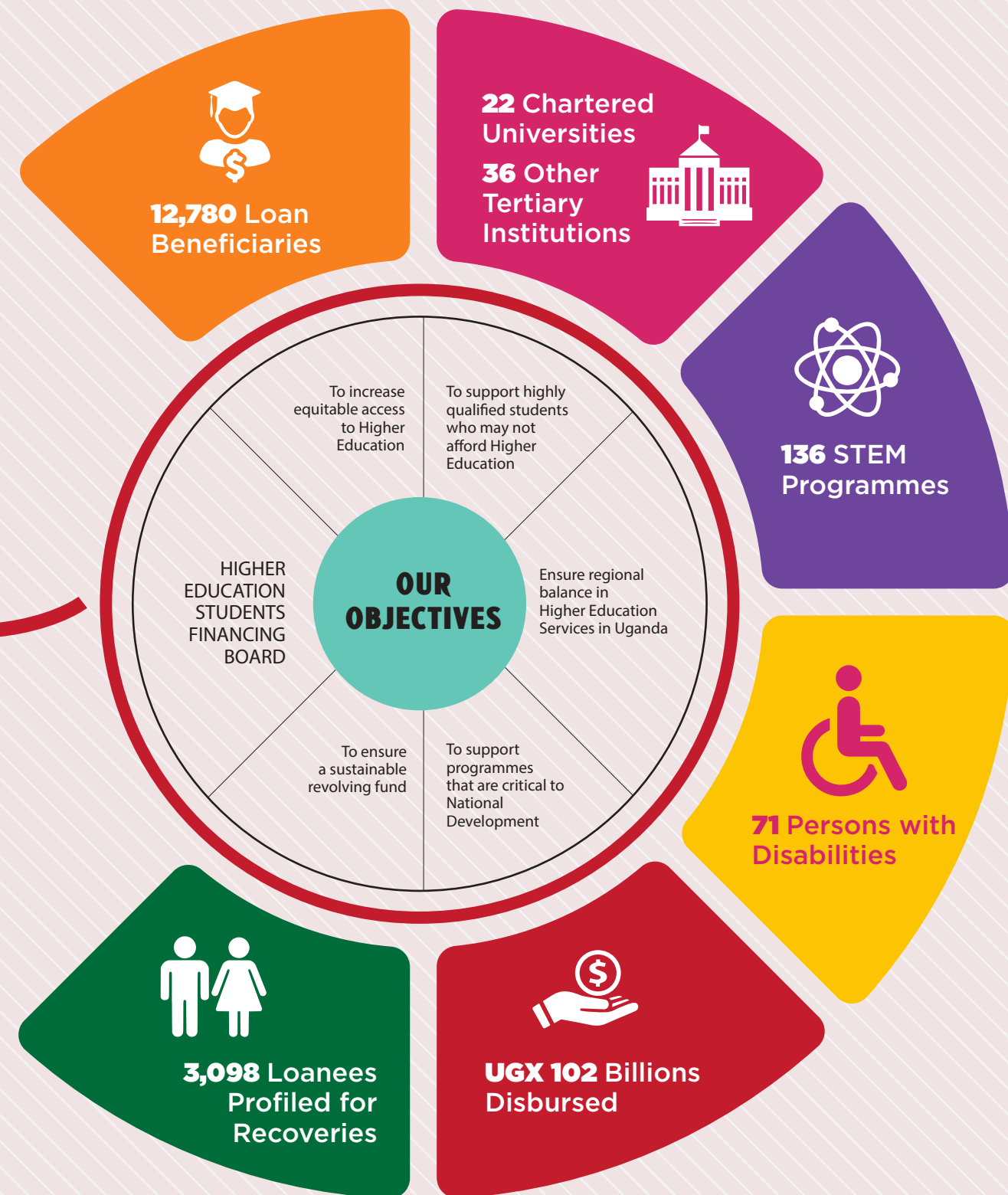


## THE BIRTH OF THE STUDENTS' LOAN SCHEME

2014

**April 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2014**

The President of Uganda, **His Excellence Yoweri Kaguta Museveni** launches the Higher Education Students Financing Board (HESFB) at Kyambogo University.

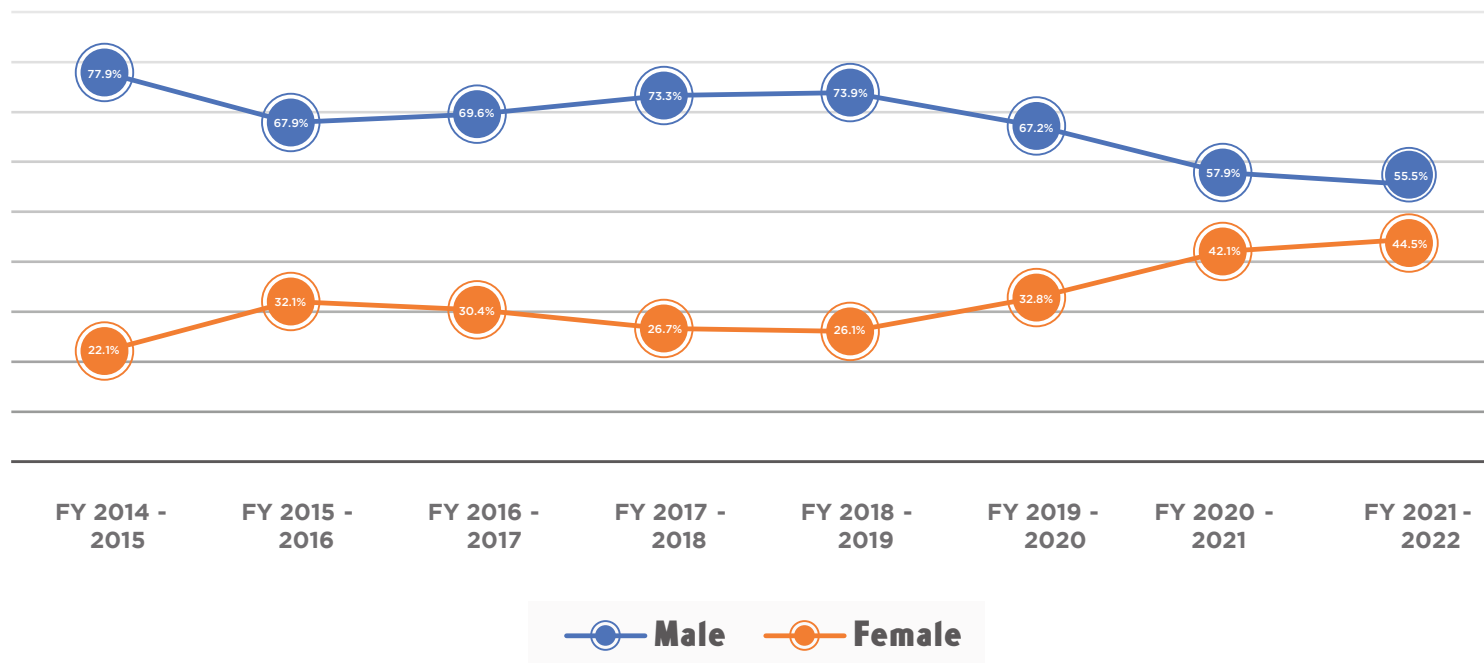




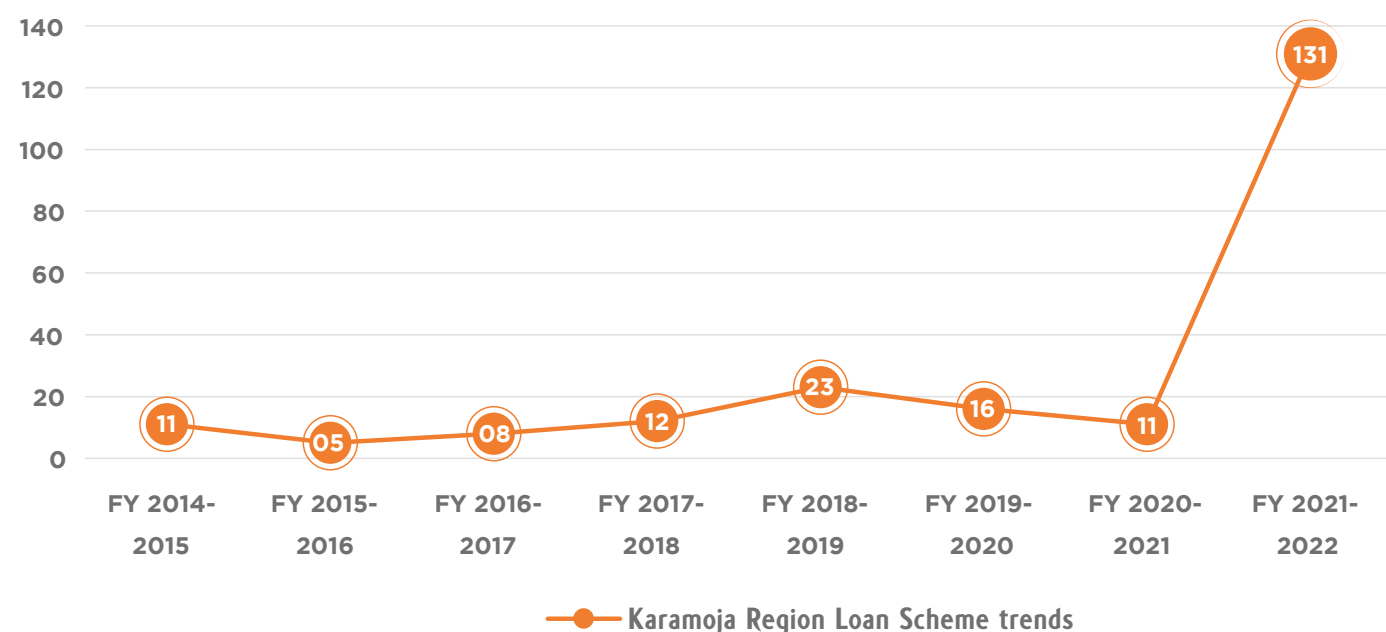
# Strategies to grow funding for the Study Loans



PERCENTAGE SHARE OF BENEFICIARIES BY GENDER FOR 8 YEARS



TRENDS OF KARAMOJA SUCCESSFUL BENEFICIARIES FOR 8 YEARS



## By Christopher Birungi



The study loans model introduced by the Higher Education Students' Financing Scheme was a new phenomenon in Uganda. The Higher Education Students' Financing Policy of 2012 established baseline guidelines on the implementation of the Loan Scheme.

Members of the Board and staff leveraged on visits to countries like Kenya, Tanzania, Ghana, South Africa, and Rwanda on Benchmarking visits aimed at establishing the best alternative method of running the scheme in Uganda. These countries had operated Higher education student financing schemes for several years and each had a unique experience to learn from.

## Choosing the Appropriate Funding Approach

Several countries operate both the Loan and scholarship component of higher education financing while others operate only the loan scheme. Several countries provide loans for both pedagogical and non-pedagogical expenses with Uganda choosing the latter. In some countries whoever qualifies and request a loan can access it while in Uganda this was not possible due to limitation in resources. We had to develop a selection criteria like as observed in other countries thus the means test instrument.

In the first years of our operation (2014/15), the Board was given a seed fund of UGX 6billion to fund 1000 students for undergraduate degree programmes and also support the wage and non-wage expenses. These funds supported 1201 students due to a lower average unit cost at the time. In 2015/16, an additional UGX 6 billion supported 1,273 new beneficiaries and in 2016/17 an additional UGX 6 billion was allocated thus the annual budget growing to UGX 18 billion.

The total funds allocated to study loans has since grown to over UGX 102 billion in the tears of operation ending with the Academic Year 2021/22.

## System Strengthening and Control Environment

A clear tracking mechanism was found to be necessary given that we have three stakeholders (the student, the university or institution, and the Board) in the lending process.

We embarked on the development of the Integrated Loan Management Information System (ILMIS). The system was designed to handle loans from selection to recovery and data management. The ICT infrastructure is very key in our operational processes now.

## Risk Profiling, Identification, and Management

The Board developed the Risk management and procedure manual which provides for risk identification early enough and corrective measures taken, quantitatively measure risk, and fine-tune capital allocation and liquidity needs to match the on and off-balance sheet risks faced by the Board and evaluate the impact of potential shocks to the institution.

Risk management has therefore become a culture and an integral part of the day-to-day management of the Board to improve operational processes and grow the fund.

## Resource Mobilizations

The resource mobilization strategy was developed from the fact that the Board is only able to support less than 30% of those who apply due limited resources. The Resource Mobilization strategy proposes several strategic actions to increase the pool of resources available to the Board.

These include and are not limited to improved collaborative partnerships with funding agencies and donors by writing fundable project proposals, establishing an endowment fund and investment funds, establishing a robust loan recovery mechanism, funds obtained from long-term borrowing, and increasing lobbying from the government to increase funding for the loan scheme.

## Strategic Plan projections

The current strategic plan 2020/21-2024/25, projects that the funds will grow from the current annual budget of approximately UGX 30 billion to about 60 billion per annum at the end of the five-year strategic period. This is an average of UGX 6 billion additional resources for each financial year.

These resources are expected to be generated from mainly government subvention from the consolidated fund, the loan recoveries, and funding from partners agencies or donors through resource mobilization efforts.

*The writer sis the direct finance and administration, HESFB*





# Transiting to Online Applications Accomplished

By Bbosa Kizito.

Following the operationalization of the Students' Loan Scheme, a Loan Application Form was designed and approved for use during the Loan Application. Over the years, the Loan Application Form was updated, amended, and improved to ensure that it seamlessly targets the most deserving students who are socially and economically needy but academically outstanding.

These were distributed and collected through all branches of Centenary Bank across the Country.

## Online Application Module Developed

In 2015, the Board started on a phased approach to build the Integrated Loan Management Information System (ILMIS) initially with the applications module. The migration to online applications was rather slow by the applicants due to active offline module.

In Academic Year 2018/19 a total of 4,881 Loan Applications were received. Of these 603 students who attempted to apply online but only 61 students (10%) successfully submitted their applications. The rest of the 4,542 Applications (98.65%) were received in hard copy.

The following Academic Year, 2019/20, a total of 7,310 Loan Applications were received. The online application mode was boosted by the Launch of ILMIS by the First Lady and Minister of Education and Sports, Hon. Janet Museveni, where 2,301 students attempted to apply Online. In comparison, 603 students had attempted to apply online the previous year. The 2019/20 performance represented a 281% growth in the number of attempts.

On a good note, 216 students applied and successfully submitted their loan applications online that year compared to the 61 students who applied and successfully submitted the previous year, this registered an increase of 254% growth in using the online application mode.

## Applications amidst Covid-19 Pandemic

In the Academic year 2020/21, out of the 5,537 total applicants, 4,063 (73%) attempted to apply online but only 415 successfully completed the process online. This increase was registered amidst the Covid-19 pandemic where issues of social distancing, lockdowns and transition to online education became the phenomenon. The growing numbers were a sign enough that we were ready for a full transition.

In the academic 2021/22, the Board resolved that all Applications be made online. This led to the total transition from the mixed modes to the online Loan Application mode as the sole mode for receiving loan applications. A total of 6,023 applications were received online, representing 100% performance of the online Loan Application Mode, with all the applications coming from all parts of the country.

## Applicants in Control

Engaging applicants through ICT greatly reduced the challenges related to data entry errors and omissions since the Board captured applicant's information directly. Online applications also eliminated the data entry process which was tedious and this reduced the loan appraisal process.

## The Implementing Plan of the Online Loan Application

With the system upgraded to support online applications fully, the HESFB Communications Office launched an aggressive awareness campaign on online applications as the sole mode of applications across the Country.

To enhance the effectiveness of the multi-media awareness campaign, the HESFB website was redesigned to make it more interactive and navigable with a flexible Content Management

## System compatible with modern browsers and devices including Mobile Phones.

The office involved the engagement of Higher Learning Institutions to offer space where HESFB temporary staff would sit in order to provide assistance to the prospective Loan Applicants. In view of this, 18 Regional online Loan Application Support Centers were proposed and operationalized.

These included, Muni University (West Nile Region), Gulu University (Acholi Region), Uganda Technical College Lira (Lango), Soroti University (Teso), Islamic University in Uganda – Mbale (Bugisu), Busitema University (Bukedi and Bugweri), Jinja District Offices (Busoga), Kyambogo University (KMP East – Central Region), Ndejje University – Kampala Campus (KMP – West, Central Region), Makerere University (KMP Central – Central Region), Masaka School of Nursing (Greater Masaka), Bishop Stuart University (Greater Mbarara), Kabale University (Kigezi), KIU – Ishaka Campus (Greater Bushenyi) and Fort Portal College of Health Sciences (Toro) and Hoima District RDC's Office (Bunyoro).

The Board also operated mobile support centers in regions that were targeted under affirmative action including the Karamoja Region and the Island Districts of Kalangala and Buvuma. The digital migration was finally completed.

*The writer is the Director Operations, HESFB*



**38,313**  
APPLIED

**26,319**  
(73.2%) MALE  
APPLICANTS

**11,994**  
(26.8%) FEMALE  
APPLICANTS

**40%**  
INCREASE IN RECEIVED  
APPLICATIONS SINCE 2019

**12,780**  
AWARDED

**1,941**  
DIPLOMA

**10,839**  
DEGREE



**100%**  
ONLINE APPLICATIONS  
IN AY 2021 - 22



**71** PWDS

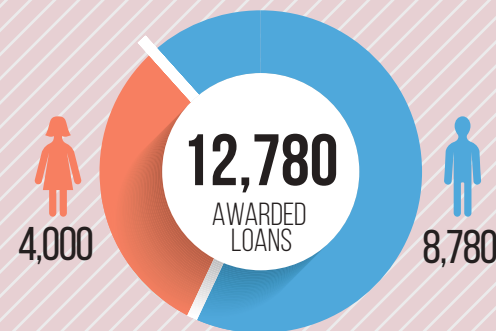


**10,839** DEGREES  
3,403 MALE  
7,436 FEMALE

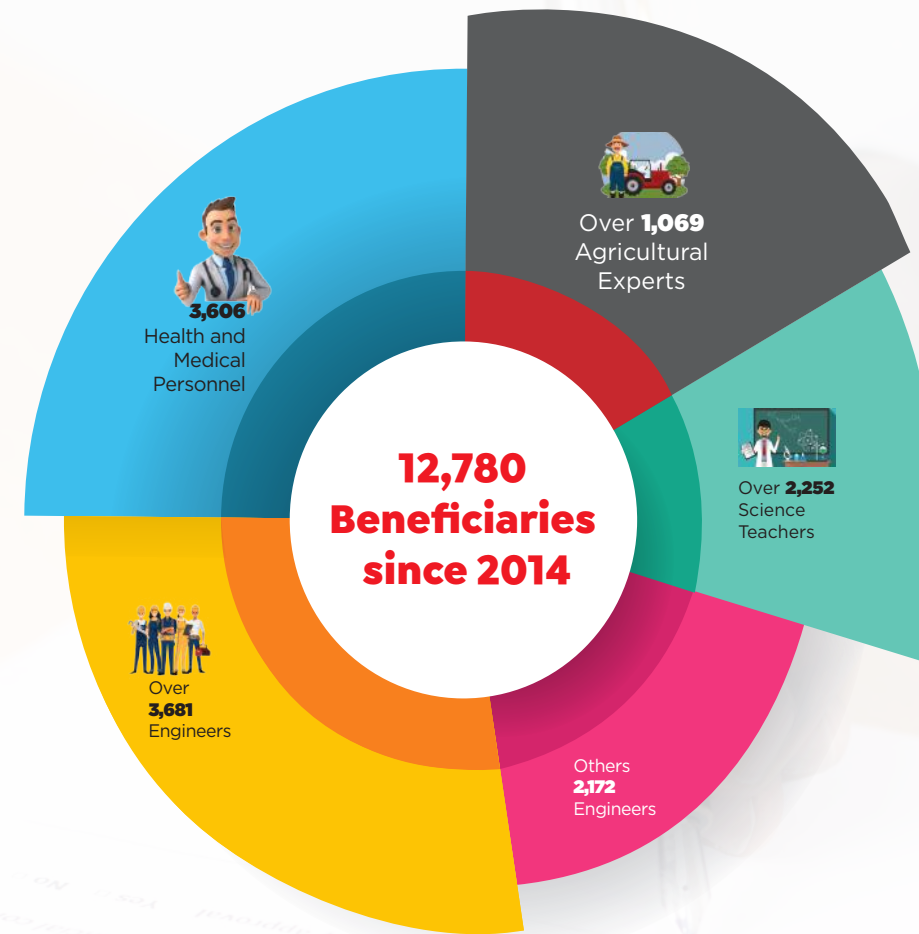


**1,941** DIPLOMAS  
597 MALE  
1,344 FEMALE

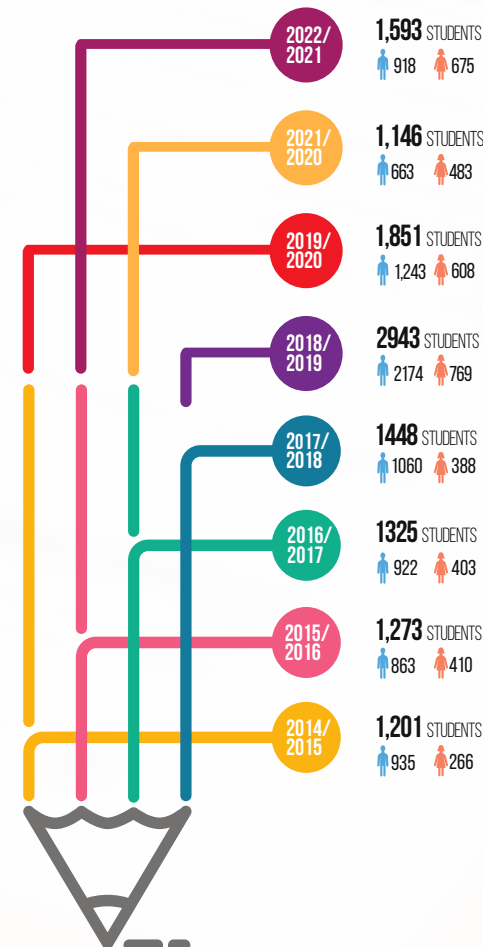
*The 8 years of  
the Students'  
Loan Scheme in  
Numbers*



OVERALL BUDGET  
**120+ BILLION**



*Critical  
Programmes  
of National  
Development  
HESFB is  
Supporting*



**Rehema Nakato**, one of the 2015/16 cohorts graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Public Health from Gulu University



# The Blind Girl whom I met by Chance is being Supported by the Loan Scheme

**Ms. Irene Kharono**

I met Oliver Nabirye by chance. It all started with one of my visits to my former school, Namasagali College. I had just learnt that it was now an inclusive school and that it now catered for persons with disabilities.

I was amazed, and proud of the progress that the school had made to provide education to the PWDs. I immediately picked interest remained in touch with the Head teacher about the progress.

One specific day, I remember calling the headteacher to find out about the school performance. The head teacher went on to tell me that their best student that year was visually impaired. Being a Government-aided school and the fact that she was visually impaired, I was confident that she would be admitted to a university with Government sponsorship or the District Quota sponsorship. I contacted NUDIPU (National Union of Disabled Persons of Uganda) and was told that she qualifies for affirmative action. They asked me to find out which university she had applied to.

To my disappointment, Oliver had not filled the JAB forms for Government

Sponsorship. Apparently, Oliver, just like many PWDs in Uganda was from a broken background. She was raised by a single father who unfortunately died when she was in Senior Six. It was her teachers who had come together to contribute money for her registration fees. When it came to JAB forms, she did not have the money hence missing out on application.

I immediately contacted the Makerere University JAB office and was told that she had to wait for the next year applications. I later contacted Oliver herself and we chatted. I quickly came to the realization that she could not wait home for a year because just months after her father's death, both her little and big sister had been married off. I feared that the same fate awaited her.

I decided to apply on her behalf for private sponsorship, hoping to appeal or find some kind of miracle to deliver her from her situation. Incidentally, not long after that, I came across the Student Loan Scheme advert in the one of the newspapers. I did some research and found out that PWDs were free to do any course of their choice. I applied for her. By this time, we had not yet met, we were communicating through the Chairperson and Headteacher.

When we received a call that she was one of the successful applicants, I asked her to come to Kampala. With no tangible support mobilized, I found myself in a difficult position. I took her for the Loan Scheme meeting at Kyambogo University, consulted with Dr. Lochoro, from the Special Needs Department at the University for a way forward.

Dr. Lochoro, a visually impaired person too directed me to the University accommodation warden and we were directed to a hall of residence for accommodation. By the time we got there, only one space was remaining.

Her financial status challenged me. Personally, I had no extra funds on me, except tuition funds for my son who had just joined University. I immediately withdrew my son's tuition paid for Oliver's accommodation, did for her basic shopping and settled her in. That's how I have become Oliver's guardian. We talk every day and she keeps me posted about her life and needs.

The Student Loan Scheme however, only covers tuition, it does not cover accommodation and student meals. Most of the students it targets are from financially constrained families. How I pray support is extended even for welfare component.

Without the Student's Loan Scheme, Oliver would not have managed to continue with her education. I strongly believe that's the case for most students. The University requires the PWDs to have guide, these guides are paid about sh10,000 a day, luckily, the Loan Scheme covers. The Student's Loan Scheme is genuinely a great project.

I am thankful to whoever came up with this initiative. I appreciate the level of transparency and diligence of HESFB, and its ability to reach out to the vulnerable and poor.

*As told to December Kiconco*

# My Income Could Never have Afforded Me a Student at the University

**By Mutiwa Musa**

The worst thing about being physically impaired is that it is the only thing people see when they look at me. There is more to people with disability than just their impairment. I am a proud father of nine. I am a Muslim and happily married to one woman. She is an amazing wife and mother, a farmer and together we are raising our children the best way we can and know-how.

I have been a cobbler for more than half my life. I did not have the chance to go to school; growing up, schools were very far to begin with but I am also physically handicapped and had no means of getting to school. My income as a cobbler is very little; I make about Shs5,000 a day and as much as I try to save, it is still not enough to put my children through school.

My children have had to attend government-aided schools because I cannot afford the private ones. Providing school requirements is a challenge in itself. My first two children were forced to drop out of primary school because I could not afford the school requirements at the time. One started working as a house help at the age of 15, while the other does odd jobs.

About 12 years ago, I was blessed with the opportunity to work at Islamic University in Uganda. The university needed a good and trusted cobbler because the previous ones would disappear with student's shoes and the girls were using this as an excuse to walk out of the university.

It was a friend that told me about the job. I went for the interview; considering the fact that I am lame and had a stable family, I was the best candidate unlike the other young men. I was asked to present a letter from my Local Council chairman along with passport photos, which I did. I have since been the only cobbler permitted by the university to mend shoes for all the university girls. I mend most of the shoes for about Shs3,000 a pair. In all this, I always admired University students and only wished that one of my children could attain this level.

On one random afternoon, a lecturer came with a torn shoe for me to mend, as she waited, we started to have a small conversation. She asked if I had a child that had just finished Senior Six. I let her know I had one but that was the furthest I would support him and had told him to work and help me support his siblings. She told me about the Loan

Scheme opportunity at IUIU and directed me to where the HESFB representative was helping others register.

At the time, my boy was in the village, I called and instructed him to come immediately. We applied for admission at IUIU and he was offered a Bachelor's Degree in Information Technology since he had scored 12 Points at A'level. While I was skeptical that the Loan Scheme opportunity would materialize for someone of my background, the HESFB officer requested for the applicant's documents and helped him apply.

I will not forget the day we received news that he had been successful. It is the best day of my life. I called my wife to share the good news. I couldn't imagine I would have a student in University Education. I was the only parent that attended the signing of loan agreements between HESFB staff and successful beneficiaries. Ideally, my income could never have afforded me a student at the University.

May Allah bless the Student's Loan Scheme. I know he will work hard because I advise him occasionally to make good use of the opportunity. When the time comes, he will give back to HESFB and the community.

*As told to HESFB Magazine's December Kiconco*







*Nampiima Kakonge Eva  
Principal, Mulago School of Nursing and Midwifery*

# HESFB is Increasing the Stock of Nurses and Midwives in the Country

**By Nampiima Kakonge Eva.**

Warm greetings from Mulago School of Nursing and Midwifery.

I do want to extend my sincere appreciation to the Government of Uganda under the wise leadership of HE President Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, Ministry of Education and Sports and Higher Education Students' Financing Board for giving the under privileged yet bright science students to access Higher Education.

The Loan scheme as a Higher Education Financing Model do provide the disadvantaged students an opportunity to study and qualify in their respective disciplines of Nursing and Midwifery.

With the Nursing and Midwifery qualification the students stand a chance of securing jobs and they are able to pay back the borrowed money which can also be used to support other not well to do students hence achieving the objectives of the Financing Board.

The Board has been very supportive to the students and the administration in the registration of Students and the payment of their Tuition fees. HESFB always makes full payment of the Tuition fees outstanding and this facilitates in the running of the institution.



**3,606 Health and Medical Personnel Supported**

HESFB has supported those students who would otherwise have had no chance of accessing Higher Education. For example there is currently a student by the names of Wanda Judith currently in year I Diploma in Nursing. This student is a total orphan and if it wasn't for HESFB then this future nurse would not have had the opportunity to access Higher Education.

Training a Nurse or Midwife requires some reasonable financial resources. So far the Fifty-two students who have so far been supported by HESFB is a number worth to reckon with. As these former students are already working, this is impacting on the social economic transformation of the nation and contributing to the attainment of the NRM manifesto,Vision 2030 and the SDG's.





Prof. Paul Waako  
Vice Chancellor, Busitema University

## Private Students on STEM programmes Increasing due to the Students Loan Scheme.

### What is your opinion about the Students' Loan Scheme?

This is a very good Scheme that has helped financially challenged brilliant students to access higher education. This definitely is contributing to the social economic transformation of our country by adding to the national labor force Ugandan children who would have never got a chance to attend higher Education.

### How has been the relationship between Busitema University and HESFB?

Busitema University enjoys a very good working relationship with the HESFB. Together we have established an application Centre for the Eastern region at Busitema where students can get information about the Student's Loan Scheme and are assisted in the application process. The HESFB has played its role as per the agreement, and makes timely payment of fees, while the University trains students, and sends academic progress reports in form of statements of results for the students to HESFB.

### How has the Loan Scheme helped in students' enrolment at the University?

Generally, the Scheme has improved students' enrollment however, a decline was registered in the last two academic years, 2020/2021 and 2021/2022 where only 40 and 53 students respectively were sponsored under the Scheme yet the University had 29 Academic programmes listed under the HESFB eligible programmes. It would be very good to expand this Scheme. It is important to note that a number of students have withdrawn from University programmes because they have missed sponsorship.

This Scheme has greatly encouraged and boosted individuals with key interests in Science, Technology and Mathematics. The number of private students enrolled in STEM programmes has continued to increase partly due to the Students Loan Scheme.

### Any recommendations to the Board in the operation of the Scheme?

Yes, I have quite a number of them. HESFB needs to extensively publicize in remote areas as there are several individuals capable of lighting up their talents in STEM and yet were financially disadvantaged.

The Board also needs to consider integrating their information regarding the sponsorship with that of PUJAB and JAB. The PUJAB and JAB handouts circulate across all secondary schools in the country every year hence providing information to rural areas and finally, I recommend that the Board organizes regional workshops to sensitize career masters in secondary schools about this opportunity such that they can guide their learners from lower levels of secondary education.

## The Loan Scheme Has Increased the Enrollment of Students in TVET Institutions



By Jacob Akunobere  
Principal, Uganda Technical College – Lira

We cannot thank Government enough for the Students' Loan Scheme of the Higher Education Students' Financing Board (HESFB). It has enabled students who had fees challenges to graduate with Diplomas in Technical Education. Orphans and needy students who were previously unable to meet their tuition obligations can now complete the course like any other comfortably.

Students' enrollment at Uganda Technical College – Lira has increased so has the numbers in our sister colleges that offer technical and vocational education and training (TVET) because of the Scheme. Many students are now able to acquire skills and graduate in technical education hence supporting technical education

As an Institution, we have been able to meet our financial obligations on time because of the contribution that HESFB sends to the College in form of college dues for the sponsored students. In a recent interaction, we were glad to hear that our graduates are paying the loan faster than their degree counterparts. This is because the TVET graduates are more employable and because they are skilled, they can easily start their own establishments.

My appeal to the Government is to increase the fund to grow the number of sponsored students in technical education and also extending the offer to those at certificate level in the Technical Institutes. This way, we shall reduce the issue of youth unemployment.







*Prof. Mauda Kamatenesi Mugisha  
Vice Chancellor, Bishop Stuart University.*



## The Loan Scheme is the Biggest Sponsor of Students at Bishop Stuart University

Bishop Stuart University (BSU) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with HESFB on 16th April 2015 which is the basis for the collaboration. According to our MoU, Loan Scheme beneficiaries access all our services and to this we invoice the Board which disburses the funds directly to the University accounts. This helps the students to access education uninterrupted.

The Higher Education Students' Financing Board (HESFB) model is an excellent government intervention in the higher education sector. It has enabled many needy students to access higher education which they wouldn't have got. The selection of beneficiaries is by all standards appropriate since it's only the students from the humble back ground that are picked. The model is in line with The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development pledge of ensuring that no one is left behind and to reach the furthest behind first (UNDP, 2018).

The Students' Loan Scheme has supported the development of STEM programmes at BSU. Over the last 8 years, we have introduced several programmes after being accredited with the National Council for Higher Education (NCHE) and we these programmes quickly register applicants especially for those supported under the Scheme.

BSU also carries out effective mobilization and sensitization of both parents and students in regard to the Students' Loan Scheme. We have offered to supplement the work of the Board in our community outreach programmes in local governments, churches, media and during career guidance sessions in schools, among others.

HESFB is currently supporting 24 Undergraduate programmes (16 Degree and 8 Diploma) with majority of the Beneficiaries studying Bsc Education and Bsc Information Technology. Since 2015, when BSU joined the Scheme, HESFB has supported 654 students to study at BSU, making it the biggest Sponsor of students at the University. These students would have missed to attain higher education or in this case, studied at Bishop Stuart University if it was not the Board's support.

I must acknowledge that the Students' Loan Scheme is the only Government Students' Financing Scheme supporting students in both Private and Public Institutions after the State House Scholarships. Tuition is paid as a lump sum and it is this certainty of the consistent funding which helps the university to meet key budget operations. Over Ugx 3 billion has been paid by the loan Scheme in Students' tuition fees. The Scheme is in fact the biggest sponsor of students in Private Chartered Institutions currently in Uganda and this underlines the success of this initiative.

The challenge is that few are taken due to the size of the resource envelope. I request Government to add more funding to this model so that more students can be supported. This will further enhance human capital developed which is one of the major objectives of The National Development Plan III (NDP III) 2020/2021-2024/2025.

*The Writer is the Vice Chancellor Bishop Stuart University*





# 70% of our Engineering Students are Loan Scheme Beneficiaries – Ndejje VC

Since inception, 1,259 Students have been supported under the Students' Loan Scheme to study at Ndejje University. A HESFB News Reporter talked to **Prof. Eriabu Lugujo**, the Vice Chancellor, about the partnership between the two Institutions.

## 1. Personal opinion about the Loan Scheme as a Higher Education Financing Model

Personal opinion about Loan Scheme as a Higher Education Loan Scheme ever since its inception has addressed the plight of capable students but with insufficient or no resources to continue their studies. In this respect the scheme has;

- Reduced human capital resources
- Introduced some equity in higher education
- In particular enabled individuals to pursue expensive STEM programmes.

## 2. Relationship between Ndejje University and HESFB

Ndejje University has enjoyed excellent relationship with the Board and Management of Loan Scheme. This has been reflected in the frequent consultation of our scheme coordinator and the staff of the Board. The Board's response is selection and deployment and timely meeting of financial obligations. All emphasize the harmonious working relationship.

## 3. How the Loan Scheme has helped in Students' Enrollment at Ndejje University.

Ndejje University has its NCHE in Science, Engineering and Medical programmes and as such; it admits a reasonable number of students under the loan scheme. At present about 70% of our Engineering programmes are Loan Scheme students.

## 4. The Loan Scheme's support to STEM programmes at Ndejje University.

Ndejje University welcomed the admission of Physical Scientists especially those pursuing teaching careers to the Loan scheme. This has boosted the quality of STEM graduates who will be deployed to secondary schools to produce better products.

## 5. The Loan Scheme's contribution to Ndejje University's Operational Budget

The Students' Loan Scheme pays an average Ugx. 2.5 billion a year in tuition for its beneficiaries at Ndejje University. Since our total annual operations Budget is Ugx.32 billion, the Scheme contributes up to 8% of the total budget.







# Steady Progress in the Loan Repayment and Recovery Process

By Bbosa Kizito and Bob Nuwagira

The Higher Education Students Financing Board (HESFB) has since 2014 financed 12,780 students to pursue different undergraduate degree and diploma programmes. In 2019, the Board operationalised the Recoveries function following the completion of studies for the 1st cohort of loan beneficiaries. A total of 4,464 beneficiaries have since finalised their studies while others are either in-study or in their grace period.

## A Revolving Fund

The Student Loan Scheme was envisioned as a revolving fund, where funds loaned to students are used to fund other needy students when they are paid back. In essence, for the continued operation of the Student Loan Scheme, those who received funds to support their Higher Education dreams are expected to pay back the funds in small instalments during recovery such that fresh candidates can use the same to further access to higher education.

According to the Higher Education Students' Financing Act, No.2 of 2014, the timeline of a student loan beneficiary falls in three categories; In-study period (when a student is pursuing their studies), Grace Period (a 12 months' period after completion of study programme) and repayment period (offered as twice the study period, a loan is recovered between 4 and 11 years).

The repayment of the students' loan can happen in all categories of a beneficiaries' lifecycle.

## Early Repayment

In line with stipulated functions, the study Loan can be repaid any time after the first disbursement. Loan Repayments while still studying is referred to as Early Repayment. In this category, Beneficiaries commence payment of the study loans in small manageable instalments while still pursuing their studies or before the end of the grace period.

This is a voluntary initiative but very encouraged since it results in a student finalising their studies with a smaller loan balance. To incentivise this repayment option, all payments that are made in this category are do not attract any surcharge or interest and payments can be made without any established schedule.

## Repayment Period

This is the conventional repayment window where a beneficiary is offered twice their study period to pay back the loan. As procedure, the Board amortizes the loan in equal monthly instalments covering the whole loan repayment period and this forms the baseline for a loanee's monthly repayment instalments. These instalments currently range from UGX 50,000 to UGX 200,000 depending on the amount of tuition fees a programme carried.

## Value Retention Fee

The Value Retention fees in the commercial world is also be referred to as Interest. The student loan is repaid from a minimum of 4 years (for 2-year diploma programmes) up

to 11 years for programmes like Bachelors of Medicine and Surgery where students study for a maximum of 6 years after internship. In repayment, any instalment paid after the grace period attracts a Value Retention fee of 7% per annum on reducing balance. This is to cater for the funds' erosion due to inflation given the long repayment window.

## Flexible Repayments

The Board allows Loan Instalment Negotiations and rescheduling in different scenarios such as lack of income or loss of employment. During the Covid-19 period (2020 and 2021), more than 50% of the beneficiaries expressed a strain in repayment due to the shutdown of the economy and lockdown measures. The Board was at hand to accommodate those who sought for reschedules.

Cognizant of the high unemployment in the country, the Board does not restrict Loan Beneficiaries from seeking employment abroad or pursuing careers in professions different from the ones funded. What the Board is keen about is Loan Repayment to ensure a Revolving Fund.

The Loan Beneficiary therefore is obliged to repay all the outstanding loan balance plus related costs except in the event of death or permanent disability.

## Engaging Employers

Section 26 of the HESF Act, 2014 stipulates that every employer who employs a person, whose loan is due for repayment, shall every

month deduct the amount specified by the Board from the salary or income of that person for purposes of repaying the student loan. This Loan deduction should not exceed thirty percent of the net salary or income of the employee but shall take precedence in deduction save for PAYE, NSSF and other statutory taxes.

Loan Beneficiaries for the purpose of Recovery have been clustered under four groups: Government Institutions; Non-Governmental Organization; Self Employed and the Diaspora.

Through our collaboration and networks, we are glad to report that the Board has constructively engaged the Federation of Uganda Employers (FUE) an umbrella association for all employers in Uganda for the cause of recovery.

The Board has also had several engagements with the Ministry of Public Service and discussions are in advanced stages for deduction from source for those in the public sector while Recoveries officers engage the self-employed.

## Dealing with Defaulters

Though none of the Loanees has been categorised to be in default, ensuring sustainability is key to the operations of the Board. Student Loans are registered on the Credit Reference Bureau (CRB) to mitigate against default as this will reflect on the borrower's credit worthiness, with regard to commercial banking guidelines.

The Board is in advanced stages of establishing formal data sharing agreements with other large Government database agencies like the National Social Security Fund (NSSF),

Uganda Revenue Authority (URA), National Identification and Registration Authority (NIRA) and the Directorate of Citizens and Immigration Control among others for tracking those who hit default.

In this case, a Beneficiary's National Identification Number (NIN) will be used to track or escalate to a denial of services since the Board is funded with tax payers' funding. The HESF Act, 2014 also provides for prosecution of defaulters and employers who knowingly fail to remit the student loans.

## Recoveries Status

Having started off on a positive trajectory in 2019, the recovery initiatives were greatly affected by the Covid-19 pandemic with the amounts recovered revolving at less than 30% of the targets in 2020 and 2021. In this same period, many beneficiaries registered a loss of income especially those in the teaching profession.

The Loan Recovery trends have started picking momentum. By end of March 2022 UGX 226 million had been collected out of the total projected UGX 900 Million for the FY2021/22. Over all, the Department had recovered a total of UGX 576 million with about 70 Beneficiaries completely paying off their loans in the first two years of their recovery period.

The current Loan Recovery Portfolio stands at 4,680 Graduate Loan Beneficiaries whose loan amount totals to UGX 46 billion to be recovered in a period of Four (4) years up to Twelve (12) years.

## Prospects in Loan Recovery

Owing to propositions from employers, the Board is mooted a number of initiatives including having a special identifiable mark on the academic transcripts of Loan beneficiaries to enhance deduction at source. The Board will also implement annual recoveries campaigns giving several incentives to early repayment and implementing an ICT platform that to facilitate both employers and Loanees's recovery and repayment options.

The Board has expanded the number of partner banks for purposes of receiving Loan Repayment funds. Currently, the Board has partnered with DFCU and Centenary banks, in addition to the opening up of mobile money platforms to make repayments seamlessly easier and quicker. This is supplemented by annual recoveries sensitisation engagements involving in-study beneficiaries, Loanees, employers and other skills development and entrepreneurship trainings being initiated to help deal with issues of unemployment.

## The Loan Protection Fund

This is a mandatory fee payable to the Board at the beginning of every academic year. Every Loan Beneficiary pays a loan protection fee of 1% of their annual gross approved loan amount. The Purpose of the fund is to indemnify the borrower against payment of outstanding debt as a result of death or permanent incapacitation.

*The writers are Director of Operations and the Senior Communications Officer, HESFB*







# Building a Strong Human Resource for the Board

By Christopher Birungi.

One of the responsibilities of the Students' Loan Task under the Ministry of Education and Sports right from the inception, was the need to establish a specialized human resource with experience in managing finances, credit, and loans management to kick start the Students' Loan Scheme in Uganda.

Initially, three key positions kick started the Task Force. The Coordinator, the Legal Officer, and the Human Resources and Administration Officer. The three staff were to be supported by the respective Departments in the Ministry of Education and Sports. The Coordinator worked closely with the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Education and Sports and Heads of Departments to ensure overall coordination of the activities and that the required resources and support are realized in time for the implementation of the Scheme.

The Legal Officer's role was to ensure that a legal framework for managing the Scheme is put in place while the Human Resource and Administration Officer was to handle administrative matters.

The Students Loan Scheme received full support from Parliament and all the other stakeholders.

In the early stages, a lot of benchmarking activities were carried out in Countries that had been financing higher education through loan Schemes to establish which approach fit the Ugandan circumstances.

## Assessing the Human Resource Need of the Board

Among the key and first tasks of the Board was the determination of the human resource needs.

Members of the Board together with the Task Force staff guided by the Department of Human Resources at the Ministry of Education and Sports came up with an organizational structure consisting of two key Directorates to be headed by a person at a level of Director and reporting to the Executive Director.

The two directorates are: Loans and Scholarship being core and of Finance and Administration as a support function. The Directorate of Loans and Scholarships' key role was to ensure that loans and Scholarships are well managed by providing technical guidance to the Board regarding financing higher education through loans and scholarships.

The Directorate of Finance and Administration was to ensure the development, adherence to

financial systems, internal control processes, and compliance with applicable laws and regulations.

For proper operational functionality, the directorates were to be supported by Departments and units headed by managers and senior officers.

## Departments and Units in HESFB

Under the directorate of loans and scholarship, three Departments were foreseen and established and these are; the Department of Loans responsible for loan award, Department of Recovery responsible for Loan recovery and the Department of Scholarship responsible for award and follow up of scholarships.

Under the Directorate of Finance and Administration, three Departments were foreseen, the Department of Finance and Administration, the Department of Human resources, and the Procurement Department each Department was to be headed by a manager.

Three key Departments and units that are stand-alone were also established; the Legal Affairs Department headed by a Legal Manager, the Internal Audit unit headed by a Senior

Internal Auditor, the ICT unit headed by an ICT Manager. The total staff structure established at the time was 36 staff including the Executive Director, two Directors, 6 Managers, 10 Senior Officers, 9 Officers, 3 Assistant Officers, and 5 office assistants.

## Reviewing the Organizational Structure

After three years of operation, more long-term planning became eminent, and thus the Board developed its first strategic plan for the three years 2017/18 to 2019/20. The strategic plan provided a clear strategic direction with clear targets to be achieved and this necessitated the review the human resource requirement for the period and the future.

Given its new strategic importance in our organization, Research, Strategy, And Planning was created as a directorate in the new organization structure, becoming the third directorate. The Directorate was to be headed by a director and three departments were created; the Department of Research and Planning, the Department of Monitoring and Evaluation, and the Department of ICT were moved to this Directorate.

With the number of beneficiaries entering the recovery phase hitting beyond 1500, there was need to increase the number of loans officers, recovery officers, and data entry clerks.

The Directorate of Finance and Administration was also expanded to include the treasury

function to be managed by the Manager Treasury services, Senior Treasury Officer, and Treasury Officer. Consideration was also made for the number of staff in administration and logistics.

Arising from public outcry on the limited information about the Students' Loan Scheme, the Public Relations unit was elevated to the Public and Corporate Affairs Department, with a mandate to improve customer satisfaction, stakeholder engagement, and awareness pillar within the strategic plan. The Department was to be headed by a Manager of Corporate Affairs with two other staff, a Senior Public Relations Officer and a Multi-Media Officer.

At the time, the business of the Board growing tremendously, the Internal Audit unit and the Procurement and Disposal unit were also elevated to Departments headed by an officer at Manager level.

The total approved staff structure to deliver on that strategic plan was 68 staff positioned in the areas that were considered critical at the time. This is the structure that is still being implemented.

To date, a total of 28 staff have been recruited all employed on a contract basis to perform different tasks in the different Directorate and Departments. Important to note is that the Board has managements structures comprising Top Management and Senior management. Top Management comprises of Executive Director and the Directors that head directorates. Senior management comprising of members of Top

Managements and heads of Departments and Units.

## Staff Training and Growth

Over the years, our focus has been to ensure that staff acquire the necessary skills and knowledge that help them to become better at their jobs. We have trained all our staff in loan portfolio management and appraisal skills, and we have trained all staff in customer care skills so that our staff continues to provide exceptional customer service, leadership training, and IT skills training.

Staff have also been allowed to benchmark and learn from Countries that have implemented the Students' Loan Scheme for a long-time including Kenya, Tanzania, Ghana, South Africa and South Korea.

In addition, our organization is a member of the Association of Africa Higher Education Financing Agencies (AAHEFA). Our Executive Director is the current Secretary-General while the Director of Finance and Administration sits on the Legal, Finance, and Staff committee and the Director of Operations sits on the Strategy, Technology, and Operations committee.

In this association, we share experiences and broaden our understanding of higher education financing which has helped to improve the performance of our institution.

*The writer is the Director Finance and Administration, HESFB*







Michael O. Wanyama (CPA)  
Executive Director



Ms. Peace Bategeka  
Senior Human Resources Officer



Mr. Christopher Birungi  
Director Finance and Administration



Mr. Kizito Bbosa  
Director Operations



Mr. Timothy Makokha  
Manager Recoveries



Mr. Moses A. Barisigara  
Manager ICT



Mr. Timothy Ojara  
Legal Affairs Manager



Mr. Hannington Ojambo  
Senior Internal Auditor



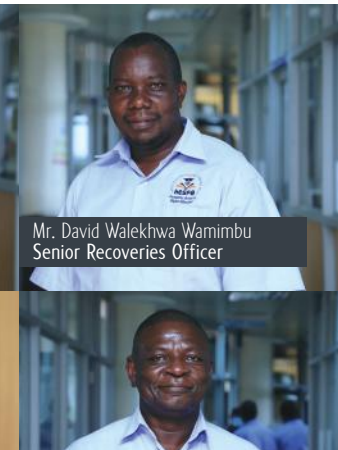
Mrs. Alison Nankunda Akankwasa  
Senior Loans Officer



Mr. Peterson Muhanguzi  
Ag. Loans Officer



Odama Adnan  
Data Entry Clerk



Mr. David Walekhwa Wamimbu  
Senior Recoveries Officer



Ms. Jesca Khayanga  
Loans Officer



Mr. Ronald Odora  
Senior Credit Administrator



Bwire Micheal  
Logistics Assistant



Ms. Teddy Nabachwa  
Database Administrator



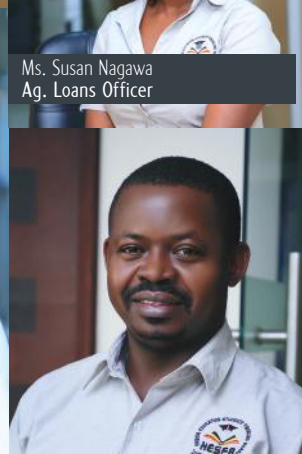
Munga Nathan Gudoi  
Logistics Assistant



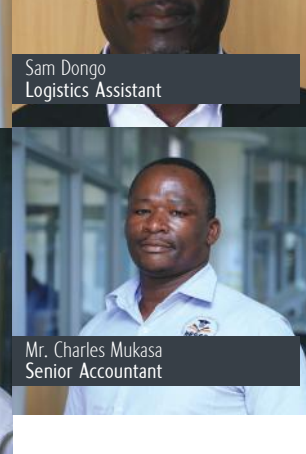
Bob Ambrose Nuwagira  
Senior Communication Officer



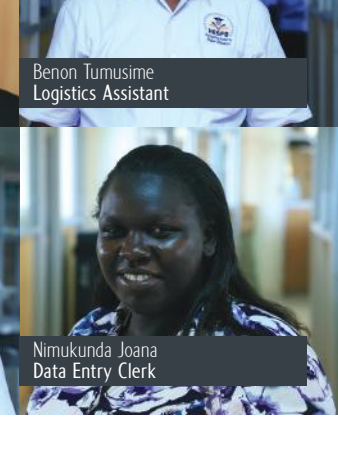
Mr. Okello Francis  
Senior Procurement Officer



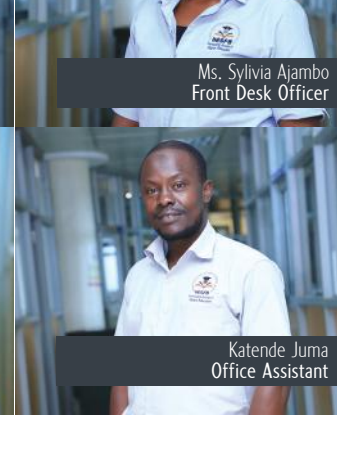
Ms. Susan Nagawa  
Ag. Loans Officer



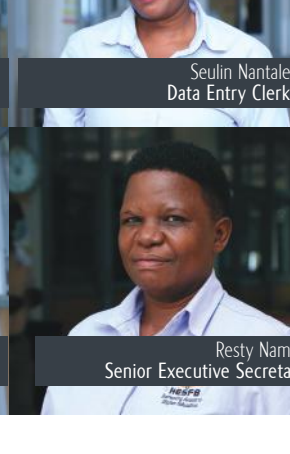
Sam Dongo  
Logistics Assistant



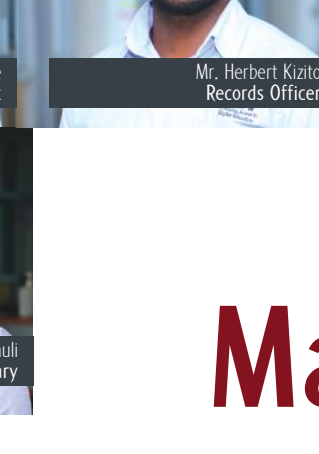
Benon Tumusime  
Logistics Assistant



Ms. Sylvia Ajambo  
Front Desk Officer



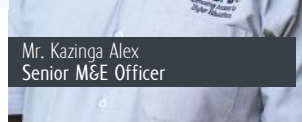
Seulin Nantale  
Data Entry Clerk



Mr. Herbert Kizito  
Records Officer



Mr. Michael Kalibbala  
Senior Recoveries Officer



Mr. Kazinga Alex  
Senior M&E Officer



Mr. Charles Mukasa  
Senior Accountant



Nimukunda Joana  
Data Entry Clerk



Katende Juma  
Office Assistant

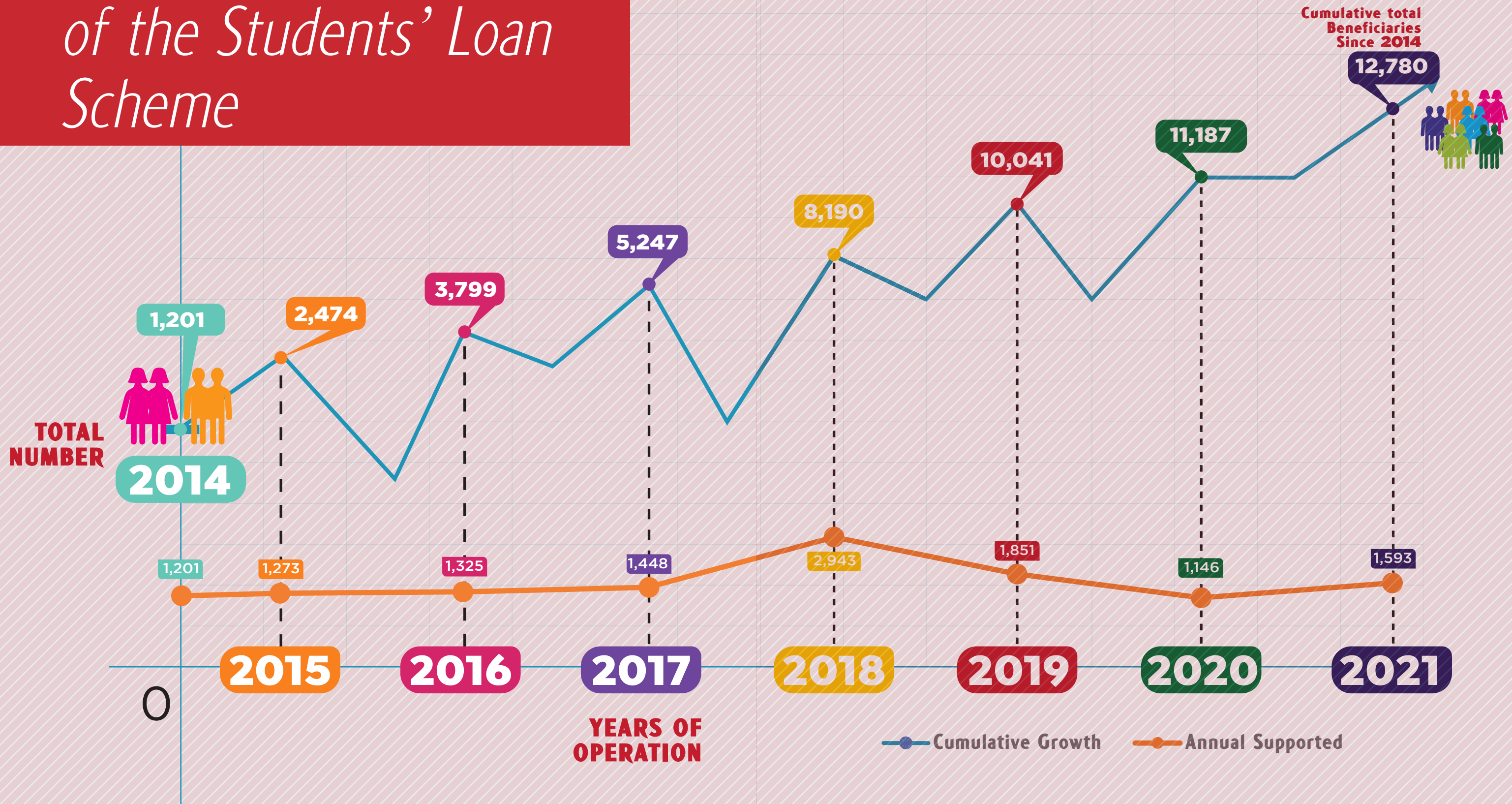


Resty Namuli  
Senior Executive Secretary

# HESFB Management Staff



# The growth and growth of the Students' Loan Scheme







**Prof. Christine Dranzoa**

1965 - 2022



## OUR SINCERE CONDOLENCES

The Board, Management and Staff of Higher Education Students Financing Board (HESFB) extend their sincere condolences to the family of the Late Prof. Christine Dranzoa, the Muni University community, Loan Scheme family and the entire education fraternity.

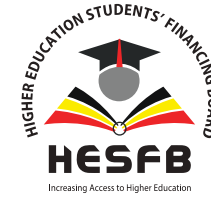
Prof. Dranzoa served the Board as the Chairperson of the Loans and Scholarships Committee from April 2014 - April 2022, that led to increased access to Higher Education in Uganda

**Rest in Peace Prof. Christine Dranzoa.**

#StudentLoans2022

[www.hesfb.go.ug](http://www.hesfb.go.ug) | [@HesfbUg](https://www.facebook.com/HesfbUg) | 0392174999 | 0414255300 | 0761 00 26 00  
info@hesfb.go.ug | whistleblower@hesfb.go.ug

#EmpoweringDreams



**“  
Wherever a  
beautiful soul  
has been, there  
is a trail of  
beautiful  
memories**

**Ronald Reagan**

**Rest In Peace,  
Prof. Christine Dranzoa**

[www.hesfb.go.ug](http://www.hesfb.go.ug) | [@HesfbUg](https://www.facebook.com/HesfbUg) | 0392174999 | 0414255300 | 0761 00 26 00  
info@hesfb.go.ug | whistleblower@hesfb.go.ug

#EmpoweringDreams





# We're **REFRESHING** our **LOOKS**

---

Empowering  
Dreams