



**OPENING REMARKS BY THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR  
HIGHER EDUCATION STUDENTS' FINANCING BOARD**

**AT THE RELEASE OF THE APPROVED SUCCESSFUL STUDENT  
LOAN BENEFICIARIES  
FOR THE ACADEMIC YEAR 2023/2024**

**5<sup>TH</sup> June 2024**

**Honorable Minister of State for Higher Education,  
Chairperson of the Board of HESFB,  
The Permanent Secretary Ministry of Education and Sports,  
Board members of HESFB,  
Commissioner University Education and Training,  
Representatives of the Ministry of Education and Sports,  
Staff of the HESFB,  
The Press,  
Ladies and gentlemen.**

I welcome you all to the Media Centre and thank you for accepting and honouring our invitation. Hon Minister, I would like to warmly welcome you and thank you for coming to officiate at the release of the tenth Cohort of the Students' Loan Beneficiaries. In a very special way, I would like to thank you for the support and guidance you have continuously offered to the Students' Loan Board and it is because of your immense support, that the Board has been able to make good progress in the 10 years of existence. The Board extends appreciation to the Executive and the Parliament of Uganda that approved the Supplementary budget that enabled the Board to award the Students' Loans this academic year. We say thank you so much.

I would like to welcome all the Board members and thank you for the great progress registered in the two years of your existence. We thank you for the commitment and guidance offered to the Secretariat. In a special way, I welcome the Permanent Secretary; the Under Secretary who is the representative of the Ministry of Education and Sports on the Board and the

Commissioner University Education and thank you for your support and the cordial working relationship being exhibited.

In a special way, allow me recognise the Staff present here and Others who are not here for working tirelessly to come up with the list of the successful Loan Beneficiaries within a very short period of time. Thank you for your commitment and hard work.

I would like to welcome the Press and thank you for being our good allies and for always positively covering issues concerning the Students' Loan Scheme. You have always done a remarkable job for which we acknowledge you.

Hon Minister, this time round, we called for Applicants in a period of two weeks from 4<sup>th</sup> March to 15<sup>th</sup> March 2024, because the target group of first year's in this academic year 2023/2024 were already at the Institutions either in first semester or second semester and were about to sit for the semester examinations. There was therefore, need to hasten the selection process so that the successful Applicants are allowed to sit for the examinations in time. The late advert in March was also occasioned by the late approval of the supplementary budget.

Hon Minister, there is improved awareness of the Scheme by both the Parents and the Learners, as a result of concerted efforts by the Board to sensitize the Public. There has been rigorous efforts in awareness campaigns that has been carried out through the community radio programmes; print media; social media through WhatsApp forum; twitter; Facebook accounts among others.

Hon Minister, the online application process that was launched five years ago has progressively been accepted by the Applicants and is now popularly utilised without any complaints because it is user friendly. Besides, it

quickness the processing of the application and eliminates errors that are prone with the manual system. It offers real time processing of the applications. This also helps the Board to minimise influx of the Applicants at the Office. Hon Minister, the Board rarely interacts with the Applicants until the selection process is over. This has ensured total transparency in the award of the Student Loans. In doing all the above, the Board has ensured that there is efficient allocation of resources. Therefore, today, we gather to mark a significant milestone in our efforts to promote transparency and accountability in our education sector. This momentous occasion is a testament to our commitment to openness and our determination to ensure that the resources entrusted to us are utilised effectively.

Hon Minister, the introduction of the Students' Loan Scheme has created opportunities to the less privileged Learners to access Higher Education at both undergraduate degree and diploma levels. It has availed opportunities to many Ugandans who would otherwise not have had a chance to pursue their academic dreams. To date, a total of 14,601 Learners in 23 Universities both Public and Private and 36 Other Tertiary Institutions have benefitted from the Scheme. The Scheme has increased equitable access to Higher Education; supported qualified students who cannot afford the costs of Higher Education; supported programmes that are deemed critical to National Development and ensured Regional balance in Higher Education services for all Ugandans.

Hon Minister, the Board has observed strict compliance to the Law that establishes the Scheme and in approving the successful Loan Applicants, it takes into account the following:

- i) An applicant must be a Ugandan;
- ii) Admitted for an accredited course or programme of study;
- iii) Admitted in an accredited (Chartered) institution of Higher Learning;

iv) Applied for the loan.

The Board takes into consideration regional balance, gender, socioeconomic status and equity in accordance with the Higher Education Students' Financing Act of 2014. All Applicants were subjected to a uniform score card which considers proxy indicators to arrive at the Lending decision and the various proxy indicators have been factored into the ICT software scorecard. The Student Loans therefore have been awarded to the most deserving Loan Applicants who are the most deserving among those that applied. The good news this time is that 93.4% of the eligible applicants were successful. **The details of the successful applicants will be given in the Chairperson's report.**

I am happy to note that, all the eligible 317 female Applicants representing 24.75% of the Applicants were considered for the Student Loans. The Board continues to register low numbers of the girl child applicants however, those that apply are given special consideration under affirmative action. The Board ensured Gender Equity which is a great milestone for the girl child doing Science programmes which was formally dominated by male. The Persons with Disabilities also continue to enjoy special consideration by the Board as will be expounded on by the Chairperson.

Hon Minister, the budget allocation for the first year Students stands at US\$ 5.2 billion that will be utilised to fund 1,196 students at both undergraduate degree and diploma levels. **(Details shall be given by the Chairperson of the Board).**

The Number of Tertiary Institutions benefitting from the Scheme has continued to grow from 12 Universities in the academic year 2014/15 to currently 23 and 36 Other Tertiary Institutions. The Board welcomes the International University of East Africa that joined other Private Chartered Universities this academic year and call upon other private Universities to

fulfil the requirements for the Charter in order to benefit from the Scheme. The Board has increased on the number of programmes being supported to 136 Undergraduate science programmes and 76 diploma programmes while Persons with Disabilities are supported for any programme they are admitted for in either science or humanity disciplines.

Hon Minister, we continue to receive applications from non-eligible students who fall outside the eligibility criteria. This constitutes students admitted for non-eligible programmes; non-Chartered Universities, those admitted for Masters and Certificate courses; continuing students; those admitted for humanity programmes among others that are not supported. The majority of these are the Continuing Students while the Scheme caters for only first year students. The total number this time was 640 applicants that were rejected on non-eligibility criteria. There is need in future to fund Continuing students who are struggling to cater for their education costs.

Once again I would like to thank you Hon Minister for coming to officiate at this function; thank the Board and Staff that have expeditiously concluded the exercise of awarding Loans to the Student Beneficiaries.

Hon Minister, I now take this honour to invite the Chairperson of the Board to give the detailed report and then invite you to officially release the names of the successful Loan Beneficiaries for the academic year 2023/2024.

Thank you for listening to me.

CPA. Michael O Wanyama  
**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

For GOD and my Country