



INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS WORKSHOP

MUST IUC-UCoBS PROJECT

To: IUC Project 6 Team leaders

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Date of submission: 10th August 2023

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1.0 Introduction

On the 5th of August, 2023, the International Relations Office of Mbarara University of Science and Technology (MUST), convened a workshop titled “Thriving away from home.” The workshop aimed to empower international students at MUST, providing them with tools to seize opportunities and effectively navigate challenges associated with studying abroad. Participants hailed from 11 different countries, including Kenya, South Sudan, Tanzania, Somalia, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Rwanda, Ghana, Nigeria, Cameroon, India and the USA.

The workshop was facilitated by the VLIR-OUS Institutional University Cooperation titled “University as a Facilitator for Community Based Sustainable Solutions to Demographic Challenges in South Western Uganda” (UCoBS) under project 6 which is aimed at improved institutional and community ICT capacity to access and utilize information and focuses on enhanced internationalisation at MUST.

The workshop's keynote speaker was Dr. Fred Kaggwa, UCoBS Project 6 Team Leader. Dr. Kaggwa's presentation focused on enlightening students about the diverse opportunities available to them, including networking and employability enhancements. He encouraged the participants to explore the vibrant tapestry of Uganda, often referred to as the "pearl of Africa," and make their study periods in the country memorable. Drawing from his own experiences, Dr. Kagwa shared personal anecdotes and insights on various opportunities while studying abroad. He also acknowledged the unique prospects offered to international students at MUST.



Dr. Fred Kaggwa – Project 6 Team leader giving a presentation

Delivering a presentation titled "Reassessing Stress as International Students" Mr. George Byagagambi, MUST University Counselor provided valuable guidance on effectively managing stress while studying abroad, highlighting the dedicated counselors available at MUST who attend to students' general well-being, including psychological needs. Mr. Byagagambi shared instances where the university intervened in students' lives, preventing harm and offering assistance. He reassured the students that his office as the University Counselor remains open and accessible to them.

Ms. Sheila Niinye Twinamatsiko, MUST's International Relations Officer, gave a presentation on "Building a Personal Brand for a Successful Career." Her talk emphasized networking, capacity enhancement, dedication to studies, and time management. Ms. Niinye encouraged students to leverage social media, reshape their personal brand, participate in skill-enhancing workshops, engage in tourism, and cultivate good character. These qualities, she emphasized, would enable them to become exemplary ambassadors of MUST, their host country, and their home nations. Ms. Niinye appreciated the University leadership for their commitment to supporting international students' welfare and noted the increased number of students now exceeding 170 students.

Followed by a discussion, students testified to their positive experiences at MUST and how they can be supported to be more fruitful in their academic journey. The shared experiences are a testimony to MUST as being a home away from home for the international students.

As the workshop came to a close, plans were set in motion to establish a community comprising representatives from various countries at MUST. This initiative aimed to improve the effective coordination of international students, orientation of new students and maintaining connections with international alumni.

Succeed we must.

Pictorial

Below: Slyvia Achieng a 3rd year student from Kenya undertaking masters in Medical Laboratory Science giving a comment





Above: Students listening attentively during the workshop

Below: Students having a light moment during the workshop

