

Infrastructure, staff gaps stifle Busitema growth

Authorities at the institution say, despite a steady rise in student enrolment over the years, facilities across the university's campuses have not expanded at the same pace.

BY MUDANGHA KÖLYANGHA

The management of Busitema University has said inadequate infrastructure, coupled with staffing gaps, has stifled the growth of the institution.

Authorities at the institution said despite a steady rise in student enrolment over the years, facilities across the university's campuses have not expanded at the same pace.

Prof William Bazeyo, the university council chairperson, warned that unless these challenges are addressed, the institution may struggle to meet expectations.

"These are urgent and needed for institutional development in order to improve academic excellence. Most of these campuses are located in rural areas, compounded by a lack of accommodation for students and staff who may wish to rent out," Prof Bazeyo said.

He made the remarks during a tour of the university campuses by officials of the institution led by the chancellor, Prof Badru Kiggundu, on Tuesday.

The officials started their tour in Namasagali before moving to Pallisa, Mbale and Arapai. The vice chancellor, Mr Paul Wako, said the main purpose of the tour was to assess progress on the ground and identify the challenges.

Mr Bazeyo urged the government to provide more resources towards the development of the institution so that it can match other universities.

He also called on private investors to construct structures that could be rented out to students and staff to address the accommodation challenge.

"We have to identify partners who are willing to partner with the university towards its growth," he said.

"As a university, we are totally happy



Busitema University Chancellor Prof Badru Kiggundu (centre) and other university officials tour the Pallisa campus on Tuesday. PHOTO/MUDANGHA KÖLYANGHA

ACHIEVEMENTS

The dean of the Faculty of Management Sciences, Mr Abbey Kalenzi, however, said the university has registered some achievements, including increasing the number of programmes offered, expanding student numbers from 20 to 600 students, and research and publication.

He also outlined plans to increase the number of programmes, as the current uptake is low and also strengthening research and innovation activities, which are currently low.

He said they intend to increase student enrolment by 40 percent in the next five years, and also raise the establishment of academic staff, with a focus on PhDs.

that communities are extremely benefiting from the establishment of these campuses to the extent that more scholarships are being given out in each dis-

trict," he added.

Prof Bazeyo said the staffing level stands between 10 percent and 12 percent, which is quite low compared to the

number of students.

He cited the Pallisa campus, which he said has 600 students, but only 26 staff.

Prof Kiggundu said: "The inadequate infrastructure, compounded with low staffing, needs to be addressed to measure up to the student enrolment. Even what is on the ground needs a lot of rehabilitation."

He added: "We are aware that Busitema may not be the only university in dire need of support, but it needs special attention. If there are such facilities in place, it could be much easier to increase the number of students."

The chancellor also raised concerns about the procurement process, saying it takes too long.

He cited Pallisa campus, which received Shs1.2 billion in government funding in October 2025, but the money has not yet been committed due to these procedural delays.

"The university could be behind schedule to commit such funds, reasoning that the university has to get clearance from the Solicitor General, Attorney General, and all these process has taken time and delayed the resuming of the construction of some structures," he added.

He, however, applauded Pallisa District for surrendering land to the university to establish a campus.

"The land given to the university is like they gave us a debt to transform the community through the provision of excellent and relevant courses to Ugandans," he said.

The dean of the faculty of management sciences, Mr Abbey Kalenzi, said the Pallisa campus was established in 2014, and the enrolment has reached 600 students pursuing different courses.

He said of the 26 academic staff, 16 are full-time, whereas 17 are part-time lecturers.

He added that the university mainly relies on graduate fellows, part-time staff, and visiting lecturers.

"We conduct regular staff interviews based on workload, implement policies that encourage staff retention, and lobby for a wage increase from the government," Mr Kalenzi said.

He also said there is difficulty in keeping up with frequent curriculum changes, especially the need to strictly follow announcements from the National Curriculum Development Centre (NCDC) while at the same time engaging a wide range of stakeholders.

The vice chancellor, Mr Paul Wako, said: "Several departments operate with fewer lecturers than required, causing a heavy workload on the available staff."