

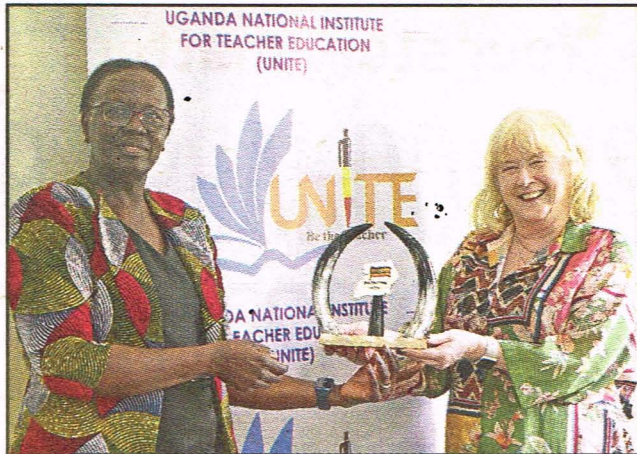
IRELAND, UGANDA DEEPEN EDUCATION PARTNERSHIP

PHOTO BY MARIA WAMALA

By John Masaba

Ireland and Uganda have pledged to deepen cooperation in education, with new areas of collaboration focusing on teacher training, inclusive education, leadership development, digital learning, and modern teaching methods.

The partnership is expected to strengthen teacher education and improve learning outcomes for children across Uganda through collaboration between the Uganda National Institute for Teacher Education (UNITE) and Irish education institutions.



Ezati (left) handing over a gift to Ireland's Prof. Ring, at the UNITE premises in Kira municipality, yesterday

CONTINUOUS LEARNING

The head of the Irish delegation, Prof. Emer Ring, who is also Dean of Education at Mary Immaculate College, Limerick, made the revelation during a meeting between UNITE and the Irish delegation at UNITE headquarters at Kira in Wakiso yesterday.

"We discussed leadership in education, assessment, the role of ICT and pedagogy—which is really about how we teach. We want to ensure teachers receive

the best possible preparation and continuous professional learning," she said.

She emphasised inclusive education as a key priority, noting that schools must be able to support all learners, including those with disabilities and learning challenges.

"One of the lessons from Ireland is that every child can learn if they are properly supported. That challenges

educators to create schools and classrooms where every child is enabled to flourish and achieve their potential," she said.

EDUCATION REFORM

Prof. Ring praised Uganda's commitment to education, saying the country's teachers are highly dedicated and motivated.

"We see enormous potential here. Our role is not simply to come and teach Uganda. We are

Teachers' development

During a meeting with members of Uganda National Institute for Teacher Education; the head of a delegation from Ireland Prof. Emer Ring, noted that Ireland's experience shows that strong education systems depend on sustained investment in teacher development.

"At the heart of all successful education systems is the teacher.

Unless we have teachers who can make a difference, we are really going nowhere," she said.

She added that inclusive education remains central to the partnership, drawing from Ireland's past experiences of exclusion in education, noting that research shows that all children can succeed when teachers are properly prepared and supported.

also here to learn from Uganda because every education system has strengths and challenges," she said.

She added that her engagement with Uganda dates back to 2019, when she first addressed teachers at a national education conference. She noted that experience convinced her that Uganda values education deeply, adding, "And when societies value education, transformation becomes possible."

TRAINING CAMPUSES

UNITE, established on 5 July 2024 under Statutory Instrument No. 53 of 2024, operates multiple campuses in Kabale, Kaliro, Mubende, Muni and Unyama, with its headquarters in Kira Municipality.

It focuses on pre-service and in-service teacher training and Continuous Professional Development (CPD) programs.

UNITE offers programmes in pre-primary, primary and

secondary teacher education, with plans to expand into postgraduate training, including master's and PhD programmes.

The institution provides specialised teacher education for pre-primary, primary and secondary levels, with future plans to introduce postgraduate programmes, including master's and PhDs.

QUALITY TEACHERS

UNITE Vice Chancellor Prof. Betty Akullu Ezati said the collaboration will enhance joint research, student and staff exchanges and co-teaching models.

"We hope this will strengthen teacher education, because students will be able to appreciate global challenges and how we can work together to ensure quality teachers for Uganda," she said.

She added that the partnership could support staff progression to the PhD level through exchange programmes and "sandwich" study arrangements. "We are hoping for collaboration where staff can pursue further studies, she said.