



Mount Kigali University

Empowering Generations Through Quality Education

A Publication of the Office of the Vice-Chancellor



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Vice-Chancellor, Message



Dear Reader,

A warm welcome to the first edition of our newsletter, which we plan to publish regularly. I am delighted that the Mount Kigali University fraternity can now conveniently and widely share major events and milestones with diverse audiences who may be interested in developments at the institution.

We recognise that our various stakeholders are keen to know what is happening at our campus. We're happy to have them all on board, and look forward to remaining connected with them. This newsletter is for students and staff, and then more. There are many people outside our campus who are interested in what's happening at

Mount Kigali University. Our extended audience includes alumni, prospective students, parents, partners, the surrounding community, educationists, employers, government entities, and all people of goodwill. The newsletter highlights recent developments at our institution.

Foremost is the appointment of our new Chancellor, Professor Egara Kabaji, alongside the deeply saddening news of the sudden passing of one of our devoted staff members, Mr Ndayizige Marcel. Mr Marcel was more than just a member of staff — he was a pillar of our institution. For ten years, he served faithfully in the Transport Department, carrying out his duties with

remarkable honesty, integrity, and dedication. He was a true gentleman — approachable, kind-hearted, a friend to all, and a calming presence who brought light wherever he went.

There's much more. We consider the newsletter a valuable communication platform. We look forward to hearing from you as we work together to make Mount Kigali University even more successful. Mount Kigali University is a progressive higher education institution focused on nurturing learners to drive human development.

Dr Martin Kimemia
Vice-Chancellor,
Mount Kigali University

Big boost to Digital Learning as University upgrades ICT labs with modern amenities

Mount Kigali University has announced a significant upgrade to its ICT laboratories, a move aimed at enhancing digital learning experiences and equipping students with cutting-edge skills for the evolving job market. This investment underscores the university's commitment to providing a high-quality, technologically advanced educational environment.

The comprehensive upgrade includes the installation of new, high-performance computers, state-of-the-art networking equipment, and updated software licenses across all ICT labs. The university has also invested in faster internet connectivity to ensure seamless access to online resources, digital learning platforms, and collaborative tools. This initiative is expected to directly benefit

thousands of students across various disciplines, particularly those in technology-focused programmes such as Bachelor of Business Information Communication Technology (BBICT) and Computer Science. The Director of ICT at Mount Kigali University David Kariuki, highlights the strategic value of these enhancements: "Our goal is to ensure that every student at Mount Kigali University has access to the best possible technological resources.

This upgrade is not just about new hardware; it's about creating an environment where our students can innovate, collaborate, and develop the practical digital skills that are essential for success in today's global economy." The upgraded labs will support a wider range of academic activities, including advanced programming, data analytics,

cybersecurity simulations, and multimedia production. They are designed to foster a more interactive and hands-on learning approach, allowing students to apply theoretical knowledge in practical settings. This investment aligns with Rwanda's national vision for digital transformation and its commitment to becoming a knowledge-based economy. By providing students with access to modern ICT infrastructure, Mount Kigali University is actively contributing to the development of a digitally literate workforce capable of driving innovation and economic growth in the country and beyond.

The university anticipates that these enhanced facilities will also boost research capabilities and attract more students interested in technology-driven careers.



Mount Kigali University Pays Tribute to radio Journalists on **World Radio Day**



On February 13, the world came together to celebrate World Radio Day, an occasion first proclaimed by UNESCO in 2011 and later adopted by the United Nations

General Assembly in 2012. Mount Kigali University Vice-Chancellor Martin Kimemia took this occasion to extend his appreciation to radio stations and journalists for

their dedication to informing and educating the public. "Radio remains one of the most influential and accessible forms of media, providing a voice to communities, fostering

dialogue, and shaping public opinion. We recognize and celebrate the incredible work of radio journalists who uphold professionalism, integrity, and the responsibility of delivering accurate information to society,” Kimemia stated. As radio enters its second century, it remains one of the most reliable and widely accessible forms of media. In Rwanda, radio broadcasting dates back to the 1960s with the establishment of Radio Rwanda, the country’s first state-owned station. Over the decades, radio has played a vital role in disseminating news, government policies, and cultural programs. However, the past 30 years have posed significant challenges for Rwandan media, particularly radio stations, as they worked to rebuild public trust following the dark legacy left by certain broadcasters during the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi. Today, Rwanda has made remarkable progress in media development, with 34 FM radio stations operating nationwide, a testament to the country’s commitment to fostering responsible journalism.

This progress has been driven by government initiatives aimed at strengthening the media sector and by academic institutions such as Mount Kigali University, which has played a crucial role in shaping the next generation of ethical and professional journalists. Since its establishment over 12 years ago, the School of Journalism at Mount Kigali University has played a pivotal role in shaping Rwanda’s

media landscape, producing skilled journalists who now contribute to major local and international media houses, particularly in radio. Since its establishment over 12 years ago, the School of Journalism at Mount Kigali University has played a pivotal role in shaping Rwanda’s media landscape, producing skilled journalists who now contribute to major local and international media houses, particularly in radio.

According to Mr. Festus Irungu, Head of the Department of Journalism, Media, and Communication Studies, the university is committed to fostering ethical journalism through practical training and industry collaborations. “Our goal is to equip students with practical skills in a professional learning environment. With state-of-the-art facilities like our on-campus radio station, Royal FM, we provide students with hands-on experience, allowing them to understand the realities of working in a live broadcast setting. Beyond classroom learning, we have also established strong partnerships with leading media houses and key industry players such as the Rwanda Media Program and Fojo Institute to elevate journalistic standards. Through mentorship programs, specialized training, and real-world exposure, we ensure that our graduates enter the media industry with confidence, competence, and a strong ethical foundation,” Irungu said. For media professionals like Pendo Anita, a journalist at Kiss FM, institutions like Mount

Kigali University have played a key role in nurturing radio talent. “The training we receive from journalism schools helps shape us into well-rounded professionals. Radio is fast-paced, and having a strong academic foundation prepares you to adapt, think critically, and engage audiences effectively,” she said. Echoing this sentiment, Tuyishimire Yassini, a radio journalist at Isango Star and a graduate of Mount Kigali University, emphasized the importance of journalism education in strengthening the industry.

“Many of us entered the field with raw passion, but journalism schools refine that passion into a professional skill set. From ethical reporting to technical production, the knowledge we gain enables us to contribute meaningfully to Rwanda’s growing radio industry,” he noted. The university aims to become a leading center for media training in the region, strengthening its programs with the introduction of a Bachelor of Arts in Film Production and Animation Studies. This new program is supported by state-of-the-art studios and advanced equipment, providing students with a hands-on learning experience. Additionally, the university is constructing a new campus block, which will feature a theater where students can showcase their acting skills to live audiences, further enhancing their practical training.

Dons Call for Closer Academia-Industry Ties to tackle Skills Mismatch Challenge



The Inter-Universities Council of East Africa's (IUCEA's) biennial Academia-Public-Private Partnership Forum (APPPF) has earned the praise of the vice-chancellors of two regional universities. The latest edition, the 13th APPPF, took place in Kigali on March 12-14, 2025, bringing together a wide range of stakeholders. Mount Kigali University Vice-Chancellor, Dr Martin Kimemia, described the forum as a vital gathering key to finding solutions to challenges facing the region. He said: "IUCEA has been at the forefront of enhancing partnerships to address the persistent skills mismatch between university education and the evolving demands of the job market." His Mount Kenya

University (MKU) counterpart, Prof. Deogratius Jaganyi, said the top minds gathered at the forum shared important ideas on how to tackle this problem. Chair of the Education Sector at the Kenya Private Sector Alliance (KEPSA) and Chairman of MKU's University Council, Dr Vincent Gaitho, emphasised the need for higher education institutions to develop curricula in direct collaboration with industry stakeholders.

The three dons said it was time to cultivate closer academia-industry partnerships. They urged the region's universities to collaborate with industry when developing curricula. Additionally, they underscored the role of industry

in dual training, internship, and apprenticeship. "There are many highly qualified experts in the industry, including PhD holders, who can contribute significantly to academic training. We need to involve them to make education more practical and aligned with real-world demands," Gaitho said. He argued that universities must serve as solution providers to businesses and employers. This is especially ensuring graduates are well-equipped for the job market.

During the forum, MKU's principal for corporate services and director linkages and partnerships, Prof. Peter Wanderi, said the institution was walking the talk on academia-industry collaboration. He

highlighted the initiatives both MKU and Mount Kigali University were involved in that are helping to produce graduates fit for the job market. Prof. Wanderi explained how universities can promote Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through the United Nations Academic Impact (UNAI) initiative. As a long-standing UNAI member, MKU previously served as the SDG 10 Hub on Reduced Inequalities (2021–2024) and has now been selected as the SDG 9 Hub Chair (2025–2027), emphasising industry, innovation, and infrastructure.

The university aligns its policies, research, and community engagement with the SDGs through various initiatives. The MKU Innovation and Incubation Centre, co-sponsored by the European

Union through the Erasmus Plus Programme, plays a crucial role in fostering entrepreneurship and technological advancements. The Annual Research and Innovation Week at the university provides a platform for students and faculty to engage in industry-driven research, ensuring that academic work contributes to practical solutions. Additionally, the African Center for Career Enhancement and Skills Support (ACCESS) Project, a DAAD-funded programme, is instrumental in equipping students with job-ready skills to meet the demands of the evolving job market. The SDG Champions Programme has appointed 50 student leaders across various campuses, including Mount Kigali University, to promote sustainable development efforts within their

academic communities. In a major expansion, Mount Kigali University has on its part embarked on two ambitious projects to enhance practical training for students.

The Kigali Paramount Hotel, projected to be a four-star training facility, will provide hands-on learning opportunities for students pursuing careers in hospitality and tourism. Meanwhile, the University Medical Centre is being developed as a teaching hospital designed to offer real-world experience for medical and healthcare students. These initiatives reflect Mount Kigali University's commitment to bridging the gap between academic knowledge and industry needs, ensuring graduates are well-prepared for the job market.



Kigali Paramount Hotel

Joins Vibrant Tourism Scene



Rwanda's tourism and hospitality landscape continues to evolve rapidly, with both public and private sector players investing in ambitious projects aimed at transforming the country into a regional hub. Among the most exciting additions to Kigali's hospitality scene is the newly opened **Kigali Paramount Hotel**, which officially began operations in **March 2025**. Nestled in Kagarama, right beside **Mount Kigali University**, the hotel is more than a destination for leisure and business travelers; it is also a living laboratory for the university's

hospitality and tourism students. The facility, with its elegant 42-room capacity, was established to serve dual purposes: to welcome guests in style and to shape the next generation of industry professionals. Speaking on the hotel's significance, **Dr. Martin Kimemia**, Vice Chancellor of Mount Kigali University, revealed that they "see it contributing significantly towards Rwanda's tourism and hospitality sector. It will play a big role in developing a competent workforce with market-relevant skills."

The Kigali Paramount Hotel

has already begun attracting attention with its striking architecture and high-end finishes. Positioned along the Bugesera highway, which leads directly to the upcoming international airport, the hotel is strategically located to serve both tourists and business travelers, while offering students invaluable exposure to real-world hospitality standards.

Dr. Kimemia emphasized the broader vision behind the project, noting that Rwanda's tourism sector requires a balanced blend of both skilled and unskilled labour.

“Strong communication and interpersonal abilities are essential across the entire tourism and hospitality value chain,” he said. *“This facility will ensure our graduates are not only academically prepared but also practically competent.”* The hotel’s opening aligns with ongoing national initiatives designed to elevate the tourism experience across the country. Rwanda’s major infrastructure projects, such as the **new international airport in Bugesera, the expansion of the Giporoso-Masaka road, and the restoration of Kigali’s wetlands,** are all expected to enhance access, reduce travel friction, and promote sustainability. The Bugesera airport, which is under construction approximately 25 kilometres from the capital, is projected to be operational by 2026. When completed, it will significantly expand Rwanda’s aviation capacity. Meanwhile, the 10-kilometre Giporoso-Masaka road is being widened to four lanes, a move expected to reduce traffic congestion

on one of the city’s busiest routes. Additionally, the **\$80 million wetland restoration project,** led by the Rwanda Environment Management Authority (REMA), aims to rehabilitate Nyabugogo, Gikondo, Rugenge-Rwintare, Rwampara, and Kibumba swamps—turning them into ecological attractions for tourists and locals alike. A Kigali resident commented, *“As a parent, the construction of this facility is a relief to me, as my dream was to send my son to study overseas. Now, he can study locally, I congratulate the government for attracting such investors into the country.”* Mount Kigali University tourism and hospitality students are excited.

“The hotel is huge and will be a good place for hands-on learning. I look forward to learning service and culinary skills,” says Umtoni Grace, a first-year Bachelor of Science in Hospitality Management student. On his part, Stanley Muvunyi a first-year Diploma

in Culinary Art student says to those who wish to pursue careers in the hospitality, tourism, and travel industry, *“Mount Kigali University is a place to be. The university keeps on expanding its infrastructure and invests in marketable programmes. A good example of such investments is the Kigali Paramount Hotel.”* Dr. Kimemia reveals that the university is expanding and is constructing a new tuition block that will house offices for faculty and associate staff, lecture theaters, recreational rooms, and a student cafeteria. It is also planning to build more hostels. These upgrades are designed not only to enhance the quality of services and the overall student experience but also to elevate the university’s visual appeal. The new structures will contribute to a more vibrant and aesthetic environment, perfectly complementing the beauty of the university’s neighborhood.



8 NURSING GRADUATES SECURE JOBS IN AUSTRIA AFTER Completing the University's German Language Program

8 nursing graduates from Mount Kigali University, have started working in Austria after completing the University's German language program.

Mount Kigali University has established partnerships with reputable international organizations, including Austria's Lebenshilfe Tirol, to expand its students' job prospects. This collaboration has opened doors for graduates of the university's Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BScN) program, allowing them to explore promising careers abroad, provided they meet specific requirements. Eligible graduates must have completed the BScN program, undergone a one-year internship, learned German, and obtained a valid nursing practice license.

Mount Kigali University is committed to ensuring a smooth transition from academic life to professional careers, according to Dr. Kimemia.

Annie Gaelle Gwiza described her opportunity to work in Austria as life-changing. "This was an opportunity I knew I had to seize," she said. "Learning German was challenging at first, but with determination and support from my lecturers, I managed to push through. Now, I'm excited to start this new chapter in Austria."

She encouraged fellow students to take language courses seriously and embrace opportunities beyond their



home country. "To my fellow students, I would say: don't be afraid to step out of your comfort zone. Learning a new language and adapting to a different culture takes effort, but it's worth it. The doors that open because of these skills can change your life."

Gwiza also expressed gratitude to Mount Kigali University for its support in helping students transition into international careers. "I am thankful to Mount Kigali University for not only providing quality education but also for connecting us with such incredible opportunities. Without this program and the guidance from my professors, I wouldn't be where I am today." Nicas Ntagwabira, Head of the School of Nursing, expects even more graduates to secure fulfilling careers worldwide.

"We are currently training many students, both local and international, who have come from different parts of the world to receive a high-quality education," he noted. "Those

heading to German-speaking countries are a testament to our collaborations with international institutions. However, we anticipate even more opportunities in other regions, as our graduates are well-equipped to excel in any environment."

Echoing this sentiment, Dr. Ruth Thinguri, Deputy Vice Chancellor for Academic and Research Affairs, highlighted the university's focus on language proficiency as a key enabler of global employability.

"We are prioritizing language courses such as German, Kiswahili, and English because we want our students to succeed anywhere in the world. We cannot let language barriers limit their opportunities," she affirmed.

With Mount Kigali University's strategic partnerships and emphasis on skill development, more students are expected to find rewarding careers beyond Rwanda's borders, reinforcing the institution's reputation as a gateway to global opportunities.

ECDC Funded by Imbuto Foundation,

Mount Kigali University set to Open Soon

The Masaka Early Childhood Development and Family (ECD&F) Center is closer to the official launch. A team of Imbuto Foundation and Mount Kigali University officials who visited the construction site in March, and May expressed their delight at the progress.

The two institutions have partnered to build the centre. The centre is being established to support the holistic development of children aged 0 to 6 years. It will offer a range of services, including early education, health, nutrition, hygiene, and child protection. Additionally, a comprehensive parenting program will be implemented to promote a nurturing home and community environment for children. On March 4, officials from Imbuto Foundation,

Mount Kigali University, and Kicukiro District visited the construction site to assess the progress. During the visit, Mr. Aaron Ndizeye, Head of Finance & Administration at Imbuto Foundation, commended the partnership's positive impact on the community. "This centre will benefit the people of Masaka, especially young children," he said, acknowledging Mount Kigali University's contribution to community development. He also expressed gratitude for the university's ongoing support and reaffirmed Imbuto Foundation's commitment to further collaborations that benefit the community.

Dr. Martin Kimemia, Vice-Chancellor of Mount Kigali University, emphasized the far-reaching impact of the

centre on children's well-being and the broader community.

"This initiative is a game-changer for the Rwandan child. By providing quality early childhood education and essential services, we are not only shaping their future but also addressing critical issues like nutrition and health," he stated.

Dr. Kimemia further stressed the importance of investing in early childhood development, saying, "Young children are the foundation of society. Nurturing them from an early age ensures a healthier, more knowledgeable, and more prosperous future for our nation." Dr. Kimemia also called for similar projects to be established across Rwanda.



“This centre is a model that should be replicated in other parts of the country to give every child an equal opportunity to thrive,” he urged. Monique Huss, Deputy District Executive Administrator of Kicukiro, reaffirmed the district’s commitment to supporting early childhood development.

“This centre will have a transformative impact on families in Masaka and beyond. Investing in young children is investing in the future of our district and the nation,” she said. She also praised Mount Kigali University and Imbuto Foundation for their involvement in community development and expressed the district’s willingness to strengthen the partnership.

“We appreciate Mount Kigali University’s dedication to impactful initiatives, and as a district, we are open to continuing this partnership to support more projects that benefit our people,” she added.



A second round of inspection in May left the officials convinced that the centre is in line to begin operations as early as possible. The Masaka District Model ECD&F Center is the latest in a series of collaborative projects undertaken by Imbuto Foundation and Mount Kigali University to unlock growth opportunities for Rwandan children. The two institutions began collaborating in February 2018 when they signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU).

Mount Kigali University, which was then known as Mount Kenya

University Rwanda, pledged to contribute \$150,000 to Imbuto Foundation over a five-year period. The funds were allocated to educating 100 vulnerable children in secondary school. Additionally, under this agreement, the university offered scholarships to five young girls who excelled in their studies. The two partners renewed their agreement in February 2022 following the expiration of the initial one. Mount Kigali University raised its five-year contribution to \$175,000.



KWIBUKA 31:

Mount Kigali University Fraternity Commemorates 1994 Genocide



In solemn remembrance of the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi, during which more than a million lives were lost, the Mount Kigali University community gathered for Kwibuka 31 to reaffirm their commitment to the “Never Again” call. The event that took place in May 2025 was held in collaboration with the university’s Igitego Family, and brought together students, staff, and leadership. The commemoration began with a visit to the Kigali Genocide Memorial, where members of the university laid a wreath at the final resting place of more than 250,000 victims. This

symbolic act of remembrance set the tone for the day’s events, reminding participants of the tragic cost of hatred as well as the enduring strength of survival. Speaking during the event, Mount Kigali University Vice-Chancellor, Dr Martin Kimemia, said: “We acknowledge the resilience of the survivors. Rwanda has walked a long path of healing and reconciliation, and we are part of that journey.” Dr Kimemia emphasised that Kwibuka was not just a remembrance but also a moment of reflection and responsibility. “The purpose of our gathering today is to unite

as we remember. We are here to pay respect to the victims and honour the memory of over one million lives lost. We also reaffirm our solidarity with the survivors,” he said.

He urged students to actively learn from survivors’ testimonies, and encouraged them to become guardians of peace and truth. “Young men and women, please listen to the testimonies. Learn from them and say with conviction: Never again, in our nation, in our generation,” the VC stressed. Highlighting the role of academic institutions, Dr Kimemia noted that



universities were essential spaces for fostering moral responsibility. “As a university, our role is not only to remember but also to encourage critical thinking about our history. Kwibuka helps us come to terms with the truth of our past, and that’s an important part of education.” He went on: “I call on all students to resist genocide ideology, hate speech, and discrimination in all forms and colours. Let us stand for compassion, integrity, and civic responsibility.”

President of Ibuka in Kicukiro District, Kabandana Felix, commended Mount Kigali University for instilling the values of unity and reconciliation in its students. He then added: “Kwibuka is

a good time for us at Ibuka to show survivors they are not alone in their grief. It is also a moment to restore the value and dignity that were stolen from the victims before they were killed.” Kabandana emphasised that the period of remembrance was also an opportunity to replace hatred with love, saying: “We honour the bravery and sacrifice of those who stopped the genocide against the Tutsi, and we appreciate the government’s efforts to reintegrate communities, restore dignity to survivors, and ensure justice for the victims.” On his part, Division Manager for Corporate Services in Kicukiro District, Murenzi Donatien, said: “Kwibuka isn’t about keeping

a grudge; it’s about learning from our past and taking the right precautions. The existence of institutions like Mount Kigali University is proof of the brighter future we are building together.” The President of Mount Kigali University’s Igitego Family, Ntamvutsa Chelsea, highlighted the role of the youth in building a united nation. “As young people, we must carry the torch of remembrance. We must be the generation that chooses peace, truth, and unity over hatred and division. Kwibuka is not only a moment of sorrow, but a call to action. We remember so we can protect the future. Let our actions reflect the lessons of the past.”



Expect Higher Operational Efficiency

as Varsity Migrates to new, more Robust ICT Platform

Mount Kigali University has commenced a significant technological transition, migrating to a new digital platform known as the University Integrated Resource Platform (UnIRP). This comprehensive system is set to replace the current Student Management Information System (SMIS), ERP, and My.MKU platforms. The phased roll-out, which began on February 15, 2025, is expected to substantially enhance the university's academic, administrative, and financial operations, marking a pivotal moment in its digital transformation journey.

The migration to UnIRP is a core component of the university's broader digital transformation strategy, and is being implemented in partnership with Marwadi Technologies, a leading technology firm based in India. The new platform is meticulously designed to consolidate all of the university's core functions into a single, integrated system, fostering greater efficiency and streamlined processes. The Vice-Chancellor of Mount Kigali University, Dr Martin Kimemia, highlighted the strategic importance of this shift. "This move to UnIRP is a critical step in our digital transformation journey. It will significantly enhance our ability to manage information efficiently and deliver faster, more reliable services to our students, staff, and administrators. We anticipate

that this integrated system will simplify daily tasks, reduce paperwork, and provide real-time access to crucial data, ultimately improving the overall university experience." UnIRP is engineered to combine academic management, financial processing, and customer relations into one cohesive platform. It automates routine workflows, facilitates accurate and instant reporting, and offers a user-friendly experience.

This robust system is already successfully deployed in several institutions in India, including Marwadi University, National Forensic Sciences University, Chandigarh Group of Colleges, and Gujarat Biotechnology University, among others. The Director of ICT at Mount Kigali University David Kariuki, elaborated on the implementation process. "We are meticulously managing this phased roll-out to ensure a smooth transition

for everyone. Our focus is on empowering our users to gradually adapt to UnIRP.

We believe this platform will be a game-changer in how we operate, fostering greater collaboration and operational excellence across the university." To ensure a seamless transition and minimise disruption, the university is allowing the old systems to run concurrently with UnIRP during the initial stages of the migration. Staff and students have been actively encouraged to adapt gradually to the new platform, with support mechanisms in place to facilitate their learning and integration. This strategic upgrade positions Mount Kigali University at the forefront of digital education, preparing its community for the demands of a rapidly evolving technological landscape.



Not Yet Done: Mount Kigali University

to Deliver more Impact in Rwanda as Expansion Continues



Rwanda is fast becoming a regional hub for higher education, with increasingly more foreign students choosing to study here. Mount Kigali University, offering quality programmes and currently on a rapid infrastructure expansion drive, has contributed significantly to this development.

When the founder and chairman of Mount Kigali University, Prof Simon Gicharu, recently paid a courtesy call on Rwanda's Minister of State for Foreign Affairs in charge of Regional Cooperation, Gen (RTD) Kabarebe James, investments in higher education featured heavily in their discussion. The two discussed ways to strengthen the higher education sector

as a channel for attracting more foreign students to Rwanda. The minister assured the Mount Kigali University chairman that the Government was committed to providing a conducive environment for investors. He pointed out that Rwanda looked forward to attracting more foreign students as it gears up to become a hub for university education in Africa by 2035.

Prof Gicharu revealed that the university planned to expand its infrastructure within the next one year, adding to recent investments it had made. Over the last two years, Mount Kigali University has constructed both a medical centre and a hospitality training hotel at its campus in Gatenga Sector, Kicukiro District, Kigali. The

University Medical Centre (UMC), the first to be opened two years ago, supports the practical training of health sciences students. It has a community pharmacy, which serves both as a healthcare provider and a clinical training site for students in nursing, medical laboratory sciences, and dental therapy.

The 4-star Kigali Paramount Hotel, opened recently, provides hands-on training for hospitality students, offering a local alternative to otherwise more expensive foreign programmes of similar standing. The completion of the two facilities marked the end of a phase that has seen the university invest in two additional significant facilities to support practical training.

Mount Kigali University has made substantial investments in Rwanda, so far amounting to RWF 30 billion, contributing notably to the strengthening of the country's higher education and service sectors.

A significant portion of this capital has been directed to the development of modern university infrastructure, which includes state-of-the-art laboratories, administration offices, advanced teaching and learning facilities, a fully equipped library, and a comprehensive online learning system that supports flexible, digital education. The university also boasts student hostels and recreational facilities, such as a swimming pool, all designed to promote an enriching academic environment.

Earlier investments include the setting up of Royal FM Radio

- a practical training ground for journalism and mass communication students. Currently, Mount Kigali University is undertaking a major infrastructure expansion project valued at RWF 10 billion. This involves the construction of a seven-storey classroom block on land behind the existing campus. The facility is scheduled for completion within one year. Thereafter, the university will proceed with the construction of a six-floor administration block, further improving its capacity to deliver quality education and services to both local and foreign students.

According to Rwanda's Higher Education Council (HEC), the number of foreign students studying in the country has grown from 1,400 in 2017 to 9,109 in 2024. Mount Kigali University is a

significant contributor to this dynamic, presently hosting over 700 foreign students, mostly from other African countries. This highlights the institution's growing reputation as a preferred academic destination within the continent. With expanding academic programmes and infrastructure, including preparations to offer Doctor of Philosophy studies and construction of additional modern facilities to support learning, Mount Kigali University is strategically positioning itself to attract even more learners from within and beyond Rwanda. Its more than 10,000 alumni so far, are making significant contributions in Rwanda and beyond through various positions in both public and private sectors.



Prof. Gicharu Announces US\$40,000 Grant for Gorilla Ecosystem Publication



Professor Simon Gicharu, a prominent figure in academia and the founder of both Mount Kenya University and Mount Kigali University, has announced a grant of US\$40,000 to fund the authorship and publication of a scholarly book on the mountain gorilla ecosystem in Rwanda. The initiative aims to provide a comprehensive educational reference, and is inspired by Professor Gicharu's commitment to conservation. The project will be managed by Kigali Paramount Hotel, a high-end application and business hospitality facility tied to Mount Kigali University. The successful applicant(s) will be awarded payments tied to project milestones. The deadline for submitting proposals is July 30, 2025, and the maximum duration for carrying out the research and completing the publication is five months. This book will

serve several important goals, among them to educate readers about the biology, behaviour, and natural habitat of Rwanda's endangered mountain gorillas; showcase the country's progress in conservation and the vital role played by local communities; promote ecotourism and responsible travel to gorilla habitats; document the history, achievements, and ongoing challenges of protecting gorillas; and celebrate Rwanda's rich biodiversity and its deep cultural connection to these iconic animals. Explaining the genesis of this endeavour, Professor Gicharu says: "When I recently visited Rwanda and had consultations with my contacts at the Rwanda Development Board regarding the gorilla publication that we were interested in publishing, first, they acknowledged that a lot has been documented

about the gorilla as an animal. There have been no changes to the animal itself worth new documentation. However, they noted that the gorillas themselves live within an ecosystem that has been evolving over time. They recommended that Kigali Paramount Hotel, being part of an academic institution, conducts a scholarly publication on the gorilla ecosystem, and I bought in."

This call for proposals is open to academic scholars, research institutions, writers, and researchers with expertise in natural history, ecology, conservation, and biodiversity. Interdisciplinary teams, especially those combining scientific, cultural, and tourism perspectives, are highly encouraged to apply, with a specific emphasis on women researchers. The selected author(s) will be responsible for conducting literature reviews, field visits, and interviews, developing the book structure, writing original, engaging, and scientifically accurate content, submitting a final printed manuscript ready for publication, and publishing a peer-reviewed paper derived from the book's content. The initiative is testament to Prof Gicharu's commitment to education and promotion of ecotourism, and to inspiring future generations to be part of telling Rwanda's greatest conservation story.



RGB officials visit Mount Kigali University to assess Media Training Facilities, leave impressed

The Rwanda Governance Board (RGB) has called on media students at Mount Kigali University to fully use the state-of-the-art facilities available at the institution to sharpen their practical skills and meet the evolving demands of the modern media industry. Board officials made this call during a formal visit to the university's Department of Mass Media, Film and Communication on June 19, 2025. The visit was part of RGB's ongoing nationwide engagement with journalism training institutions and media houses, aimed at gathering facts towards building a more professional, free, and sustainable media sector in Rwanda. Led by Head of the Media Sector Coordination and Monitoring Department, Mr Jean Bosco Rushingabigwi, the delegation interacted with students, faculty members, and university leadership, to assess how the institution prepares future media professionals.

The team toured the department's advanced training facilities, including the media labs, audio-visual editing suites, and radio and TV production studios. These facilities, according to the university, were established to bridge the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical media skills, a concern often raised by media employers across the country. Speaking during the engagement, Mr Rushingabigwi said: "Mount

Kigali University is among the few institutions in Rwanda with such a well-equipped media training environment. However, it is not enough to have equipment. Students must actively use these tools, engage in hands-on learning, and innovate, especially in a digital-first era."

The university's Head of the Department of Mass Media, Film and Communication Mr Festus Irungu, welcomed RGB's visit and reiterated



the university's commitment to practical learning. "We are proud of the facilities we have, but more importantly, we are proud of the students who take initiative to use them creatively," he said. "We encourage our students to treat this department like a professional newsroom or studio. What they learn and produce here should reflect what they would be expected to do in the real world."

Mr Irungu also highlighted the department's growing focus on multimedia and digital storytelling. "We are constantly updating our approach to keep up with global media trends.

Our students are learning to tell stories not just for radio and TV, but also for digital platforms using advanced editing software and content production tools."

RGB's call aligns with its broader findings from past engagements and media assessments, which highlighted key issues affecting the media sector, including a mismatch between journalism curricula and market demands, poor working conditions for media professionals, and weak financial sustainability of media outlets. Mount Kigali University's Vice-Chancellor,

Dr Martin Kimemia, reaffirmed the institution's commitment to delivering industry-relevant training and acknowledged the importance of practical exposure in shaping competent graduates. "We are honoured by RGB's visit and the insights shared. Our goal remains to produce graduates who are not only theoretically sound, but also practically skilled and ethically grounded," he stated. RGB plans to compile insights from the visits into a comprehensive policy brief with recommendations for improving journalism education and the media sector in Rwanda.

Chancellor Named: It's Prof Kabaji



The Mount Kigali University Board has appointed Prof Egara Kabaji as Chancellor. The appointment marks a new phase of development for the university that has grown from a cross-border campus of Mount Kenya University (MKU) into a fully-fledged, autonomous higher education institution. While making the announcement, Mount Kigali University founder and Board Chairman Prof Simon Gicharu,

explained why they settled on Prof Kabaji. "His scholarly work, administrative experience, and dedication to higher education make him highly suited to leading Mount Kigali University through its next phase of development." The university's Vice-Chancellor, Dr Martin Kimemia, welcomed the appointment, saying: "We look forward to working closely with Prof Kabaji to take Mount Kigali University to even greater heights." Prof Kabaji is an esteemed academic and thought leader, currently based at Kenya's Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology. He holds a PhD in Folk Media and Communication from the University of South Africa, an MBA in Strategic Management from Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology, a Master of Arts in Literary Studies from Kenyatta

University, and a Bachelor of Education in Literature and English from the same university.

"Prof Kabaji, who assumes his new role on August 1, 2025, comes in when the university is on an infrastructure expansion drive. At the same time, we are ramping up our philanthropic effort as an institution," said Dr Kimemia, pointing out that under Prof Kabaji's stewardship, Mount Kigali University will witness further growth by forging more strategic partnerships. Mount Kigali University started in 2010 as a campus of MKU, offering health science, business and social science courses. The new chancellor comes in when the university is planning to offer doctoral courses, adding to its expanding repertoire of highly in-demand programmes.

Mount Kigali University Champions

Cross-Genre Writing to Position itself as a Literary Powerhouse



Mount Kigali University has embarked on an ambitious journey to become a centre of excellence for cross-genre literature, bringing together its diverse pool of writers and academics to build a collaborative literary culture that responds to the changing dynamics of storytelling. From fiction to academia, poetry to children's literature, and from research papers to ghost-writing, the Mount Kigali University community is home to a rich array of creative talent. Students, staff, and management alike are contributing voices in a variety

of literary fields. Recognising this rare mix of talent, the university is now laying the foundation for a unified platform where these writers can collaborate, share ideas, and co-create works across genres. The goal is not only to increase the quality and output of literary work, but also to reduce the burden of solo writing, foster innovation, and nurture a culture of mentorship and idea-sharing. This bold initiative aims to redefine what it means to be a modern academic institution, one that fuses creativity with scholarship and reaches wider

audiences through inclusive storytelling. It recently gained fresh momentum following the visit of celebrated author and professor, Egara Kabaji. His presence has sparked inspiration across campus.

With an impressive record of over 140 published works spanning novels, children's books, academic pieces, and even content adapted for animation, Prof Kabaji is a powerhouse in East African literature. His works have reached over 20,000 readers in Rwanda alone, and his influence extends beyond



books. Prof. Kabaji is also a newspaper columnist in Kenya, a former writer for Kenya broadcast media, and a host of literary podcasts. In his keynote remarks during his visit to Mount Kigali University, Prof. Kabaji emphasised the transformative role of writing in society, saying: “Every writing has an intention to make a difference in the world. Once you hold a pen, you want to make an impact, whether academic, commercial, cultural, or social.” He urged the university community to reflect deeply on why they write. “Writing is a service we are giving to the community,” he said. “And if we do it well, we can offer this service in different genres.”

According to Prof. Kabaji, universities are brimming with intellectual and creative potential, but collaboration is key. “They need to join hands,” he noted. Shifting his attention to writers, he urged them to embrace change, such as the increasing influence of digital platforms on reader habits. “We must ask ourselves: How do we connect with our audiences emotionally

and make them listen to us? Whether it’s through podcasts, broadcast, or the written word, storytelling must evolve,” he said. Several university leaders, many of whom are writers themselves, strongly echoed Prof. Kabaji’s sentiments and emphasised the importance of integrating creative writing into the university’s academic and cultural fabric. Vice-Chancellor of Mount Kigali University, Dr Martin Kimemia, a cross-genre creative writer of several books, praised the initiative as a timely move that reflects the institution’s vision for holistic education.

“Writing is the heartbeat of intellectual freedom and cultural expression. Through this collaboration, we are building a generation of thinkers who do not just consume knowledge but create it, across genres, across boundaries,” he stated. Deputy Vice-Chancellor in charge of Academics and Research Affairs, Dr Ruth Thinguri, an academic writer in educational leadership, highlighted the significance of interdisciplinary writing. “Cross-genre writing allows

us to bridge academic rigor with creative exploration. We want our students and faculty to know that you can be a scholar and a storyteller at the same time,” she said.

Deputy Vice-Chancellor in charge of Quality Management and Institutional Compliance, Dr Eugenia Nkechi Irechukwu, also a published author, emphasised storytelling as a pillar of national development, and added: “The stories we write today shape the minds of tomorrow. We must write with intentionality and quality. That’s why this initiative is crucial. It ensures that storytelling meets the standards of educational and moral excellence.” The university’s librarian, Muthee Lucy Wangechi, spoke too, to underscore the role of libraries in preserving and promoting cross-genre literature. “Writers need spaces that inspire, support, and showcase their work. At Mount Kigali University Library, we are ready to be that space to preserve the past, encourage the present, and inspire the future of Rwandan and African literature,” she said.

Supporting Public Wellbeing:

Student associations hold Blood donation Drive to boost Country's Reserves

On June 20, 2025, Mount Kigali University hosted a blood donation drive organised by the university's Students Association and the Nurses & Midwives Students' Association of Rwanda (NMSAR), and involving the Rwanda Biomedical Centre (RBC). The day-long event, held to boost blood reserves in the country, saw enthusiastic participation from students, faculty, and staff. The partnership between the student bodies and RBC Rwanda underscored a strong commitment to community health and social responsibility. President of the Mount Kigali University Students Association, Nyemanzi Gloria, emphasised the importance of such initiatives in fostering a culture of giving among the youth. "It's crucial for us as students to contribute positively to society. Donating blood is one of the most direct ways to save lives," she said. NMSAR played a key role in



mobilising participants and assisting the medical teams from RBC Rwanda. Their involvement represented a practical application of their healthcare knowledge and dedication to public wellbeing. The RBC expressed gratitude to the university for the initiative, pointing out that every unit of blood collected would make a significant difference. "Partnerships with institutions like Mount Kigali University are invaluable in ensuring

a stable and safe blood supply for patients across the country," a representative stated. The blood donation drive is part of ongoing efforts to raise awareness about the constant need for blood, and to encourage regular donations. Such events are vital in maintaining adequate reserves for emergency cases, and to support surgeries as well as patients with chronic medical conditions.



COMPASSION BEYOND WORDS:

MKU Alumni Raise Business Capital for Destitute Genocide Survivor



As part of commemorating the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi, the alumni of Mount Kenya University (now Mount Kigali University) have raised business capital for Marie Agnes Nyiramahe, a genocide survivor and destitute mother of three. Marie has been living in extreme vulnerability in Nyabikoni Village, Nyabugogo Cell, Kigali Sector, Nyarugenge District, in Kigali City. She had been born into a family of six, but all had tragically

been killed during the genocide, leaving her as the sole survivor. Today, Marie carries not only the memory of that unspeakable loss, but also the profound weight of raising two daughters and a son by herself. She has endured what locals describe as “Indushyi” – a Kinyarwanda term for describing extreme vulnerability. Jobless, she and her children have been residing in a cramped shelter, sleeping on bare cartons yet

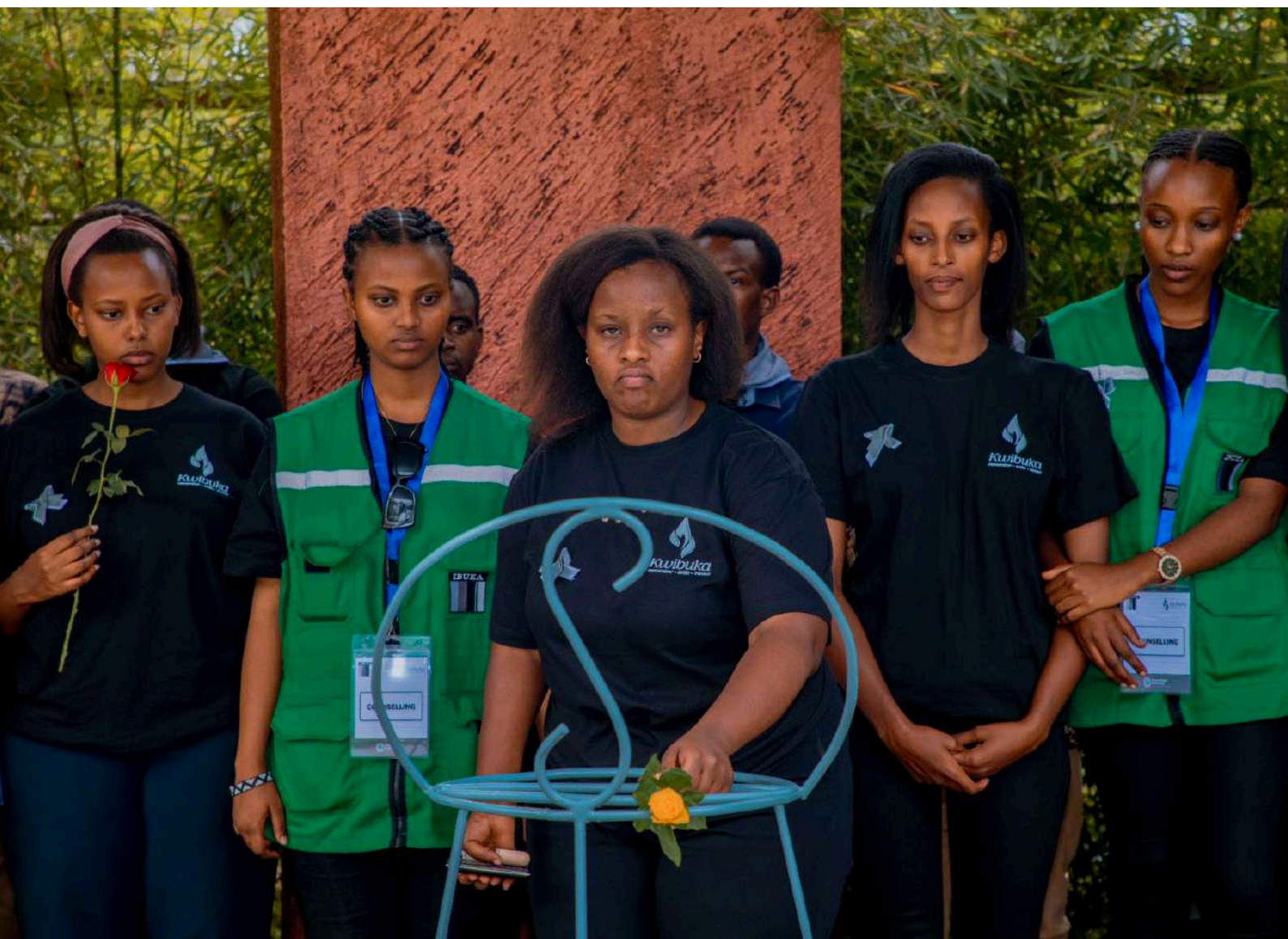
at the same time enduring the threat of eviction for not having paid rent for eight months. Her husband had long abandoned them.

It was this painful reality that jolted the MKU Alumni Committee into action. Led by Chairperson James Mugume, the committee mobilised the university’s alumni to collectively raise financial support to help Nyiramahe start a small business. “This

is more than a donation. It's a promise of ongoing solidarity," Mugume said. "We want to see Marie developing and living a healthier life. This is not the end. We are just getting started." Mugume credited the university for shaping graduates who are committed to societal contribution. "We thank the university for giving us the tools and empowerment to transform society and become part of the solution." The gesture was lauded by Sanctus Turatsinze, a representative of IBUGA, the umbrella organisation for genocide survivors. Emphasising the importance of such support, Turatsinze said: "IBUGA's mandate is to advocate for, and look after genocide survivors. Seeing

alumni and institutions walk alongside survivors like Marie is a sign that remembrance is not just symbolic. It's practical and life-saving," he said. The Dean of Students at Mount Kigali University, Lucie Uwimana, described the act of compassion by the alumni as an extension of the university's commitment to social impact. "We are proud of our alumni for translating values into real action," she said. Brigitte Gihozo, the Alumni Affairs Coordinator at the university, also noted the strength of the alumni network, saying: "Our alumni have shown that when united by empathy and purpose, they can restore hope where it's been lost. We aim to continue mobilising efforts to uplift lives

like Marie's." Visibly emotional, Marie Agnes Nyiramahe expressed profound gratitude and renewed sense of hope. "I didn't see a future for me or my children," she said. "But today, I feel seen. I feel heard. I feel like maybe things can get better. Thank you for caring." The MKU Alumni Committee extended thanks to all contributors and supporters, including those who stood in solidarity even if unable to donate. "To those who gave and those who stood with us in spirit, we thank you," said Mugume. "Together, we are restoring dignity. Together, we are restoring hope." Mugume also promised further assistance to the family to ensure their life changes for good.



Chancellor Outlines his Vision for Mount Kigali University and how to achieve it

Mount Kigali University is working to place Rwandan learners on a world-class stage, the institution's inaugural Chancellor, Prof Egara Kabaji, has said. The newly-appointed Chancellor vowed to work closely with the university's Governing Council and the Vice-Chancellor to make this happen. This, he explained, will be achieved through "strengthening regional engagement, fostering academic rigour, and cultivating global partnerships."

Prof Kabaji said this during Mount Kenya University's (MKU's) 27 Graduation Ceremony that was also celebrated at the Mount Kigali University campus in Kicukiro District on August 8. More than 1,200 Rwandan students and others from neighbouring



**Jubilant graduands during the procession walk.
More than 1,200 students graduated.**

nations graduated. As he shared his vision, Prof Kabaji delivered a moving speech on Mount Kigali University's journey from a campus of MKU to a fully-fledged, autonomous institution. He paid tribute to the Higher Education Council (HEC) and the Ministry of Education for nurturing the university through structured guidance. "Rwanda," Prof Kabaji asserted, "has demonstrated its capacity to host and sustain

world-class institutions of higher learning." He added: "Mount Kigali University is poised to live out its national calling as a university shaped by Rwanda for Rwanda, and respected around the globe." In his speech, Vice-Chancellor Dr Martin Kimemia described the graduation as "a powerful pause – a moment between achievement and ambition." Reflecting on the theme, 'Innovation and Artificial Intelligence: Shaping the



Dr. Martin Kimemia first from right (second row) followed by Prof. Egara Kabaji, with council members and staff of Mount Kigali University pose for a photograph with the best performing students.

Future of Higher Education’, Dr Kimemia emphasised the need for transformation in academia. “What we teach, how we teach, and why we teach must evolve,” he said. “Innovation must become the everyday language of universities... The question is no longer if we use AI, but how wisely we do.” He praised students as innovators, not just learners, and reaffirmed the university’s commitment to academic excellence. “Excellence isn’t what we aim for. It’s what we expect,” he declared, and added: “Degrees must be engines of innovation, not just credentials for employment.” The voices of students also resonated throughout the celebration. Mr Ngabo, representing the Master’s graduates, shared a message of reflection and hope, stating: “It is a profound honour to stand before you on behalf of the graduating class of 2025. We’ve come a long way – from nervous introductions to becoming accomplished graduates. This is not an end, but a magnificent beginning. Let’s go make a difference.”

Undergraduate speaker Mr Clement echoed this sentiment. “Our relentless hard work, dedication, and perseverance have shaped who we are today,” he said. “The future belongs to those who believe in the beauty of their dreams.” This year’s cohort was especially notable for its strong female representation, with 70 percent of the graduates being women – a milestone hailed as a step forward for gender equity



Happy faces of Graduands. This year’s cohort was notable for its strong female presence.

in education and leadership. Looking ahead, Mount Kigali University is expanding its postgraduate offerings and investing in innovation, entrepreneurship, and digital learning, positioning itself as a key player in Rwanda’s Vision 2050 and the broader East African academic landscape. Mount Kigali University is on a steady path to becoming a research-led institution. In addition to a Medical Centre, the institution recently opened a training hotel – Kigali Paramount Hotel – which will serve as a hands-on learning facility for the university’s

students in hospitality and tourism.

Dr Kimemia said the university is also investing in infrastructure that promotes a conducive learning environment. A new student housing block is currently under construction, and it will feature modern accommodation, a cafeteria, and common areas designed to encourage community and collaboration. In addition, plans are underway to acquire more land to expand hostel capacity and meet the growing demand for on-campus student accommodation.



A new tuition block under construction



Mount Kigali University

Empowering Generations Through Quality Education



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