Community University Engagement and Higher Education: the case of Gulu University in Uganda

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• Gulu University is a public institution of higher education established by Statutory Instrument No. 31 of 2003.
• The University was set to serve as a launch pad for equitable development of Uganda providing knowledge and skills and stimulating innovations in education, technology, economic advancement and social development.
• The university was established as part of the restoration efforts in Northern Uganda after the long war that lasted for over 30 years, and if you factor in the Idi Amin Era then we can talk of over 50 years of trauma in the region.
Vision; Mission and Motto of Gulu University

• Vision:
  • To be a leading academic institution for the promotion of rural
    transformation and industrialization for sustainable development.

• Mission
  • To expand access to higher education, provide quality professional training for
    the delivery of appropriate social services and conduct research geared
    towards rural transformation and sustainable development.

• Our motto is
  • “For Community Transformation”
Current Academic Units at Gulu University

• Currently, we have six faculties and two institutes informed by our Vision; Mission and Motto and stated above, these are:
  • 1. Faculty of Agriculture and Environment
  • 2. Faculty of Business and Development Studies
  • 3. Faculty of Medicine
  • 4. Faculty of Science
  • 5. Faculty of Education and Humanities
  • 6. Faculty of Law
  • 7. Institute of Peace and Strategic Studies
  • 8. Institute of Research and Graduate Studies
COMMUNITY UNIVERSITY ENGAGEMENT IS NOT NEW IN AFRICA

• CUE was talked about in 1963 by Julius Nyerere, who made a plea to African universities to shake off their elitist colonial mentality and contribute to society:

• ‘...let us be quite clear; the University...has a very definite role to play in development in this area, and to do this effectively it must be in, and of, the community... The University of East Africa ... must direct its energies particularly towards the needs of East Africans...it’s in this manner that the university will contribute to our development ...In this fight the university must take an active part, outside as well as inside the walls,’ (Nyerere,1963, cited in Mwaikokesya, 2012).
Community University Engagement at Gulu University

• At Gulu University this is not the 3rd Mission of the University but one of the three mission of the university because they are all of equal importance to the university.

• The University has a policy that guides and inform Community University Engagement. This makes engagement a core focus of the university.

• Note that in our formulation COMMUNITY come first and not University because the university exist for the community and not the other way round. University Community Engagement.
Key areas for CUE Activities at Gulu University

• Tradition Medicinal Knowledge
• Climate Change initiative through addressing the national energy challenges for domestic cooking in Uganda.
• Indigenous Knowledge Systems. This one works in tandem with the traditional Medicinal Knowledge
• Conflict Resolution and reconciliation including Human Animal Conflicts, land conflict, including promotion of traditional justice system that focus on reconciliation and not the western retributive justice system.
• Issues of mental health care at community level.
• Improved farming practices