HELPING UNDER-RESOURCED STUDENTS OF BUTALEJA DISTRICT MAKE ONLINE

UNIVERSITY ADMISSIONS APPLICATION

A PROJECT REPORT SUBMITTED TO THE INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR

COLLEGE ADMISSION COUNSELLING

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Executive Summary

i). Butaleja District is located in Eastern Uganda, Bordered by Budaka District to the North, Mbale District to the East, Tororo District to the South East, Bugiri District to the south, and Namutumba District to the west.

ii). Butaleja District faces several challenges, with education being our major point of discussion for this particular cause. Each year, the number of students applying and admitted for higher education is so low. These Rural areas have a high population of students with over 6,000 (six thousand) students graduating from high school each year but only 5% of the students get a chance to apply for university admission. My major concentration was supporting these rural, under-resourced students of Butaleja District to make online university admissions applications. Students in these rural areas had no hope of support in terms of university application. A major problem was posed when the Universities in Uganda introduced online admission applications. Over 95% of students in these areas did not know how to use a computer or any gadgets that could help them connect online and make online university applications. Students in these rural areas were marginalized with no hopes of joining any higher institution of learning. The majority of them could drop out of High School and look for other means of Survival.

iii) The main objective of this project was to curb the challenge of a limited number of students applying for university admissions and indeed this project was a solution to student's problems. With the university admissions application centers that we created to enable these students to make online University applications, we were able to improve the number of students who applied for university admission by at least 30% this year. We also extended advisory support to these students while choosing the right courses that match the ever-changing Job market needs both within Uganda and outside Uganda. A total of 1,928 students turned up for the event and they were all helped to apply to the universities of their choice. Students were helped to apply to; Kyambogo University, Makerere University, Uganda Christian University, Gulu University, Mbarara University of Science and Technology, Iganga Technical Institute, Kampala International University, Victoria University, Busitema University, and Sai Pali Institute of Technology and Management. These students came from different schools all over Butaleja.

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Some of these Schools include; Butaleja Secondary School, Bugwere High School, Butaleja Modern Secondary School, Hasahya Secondary School, Town View College, Kangalaba Secondary School, Busaba Seed Secondary School, Bukedi College KACHONGA, Kaswabuli Secondary School, Bright Light College, Busolwe Secondary School, Mulagi Girl's Secondary School, Mulagi High school, Namutumba Modern Secondary School, and Busolwe Students' Centre.

iv). Almost all the project activities were carried out as planned; we just had a small adjustment on the activities and the budget. We aim to make this same project each year until the students of Butaleja District and Eastern Uganda at large can make online university applications without being supported. We also go ahead to help these students learn computers so that in the coming years they will be in a position to join us to help their colleagues apply for university admissions. By 2027, we hope to achieve at least half of our target. By that time we hope to have at least half of the students of Butaleja District able to make online university admissions applications without being helped.

v). Through implementing this project, the following lessons were learned; First and foremost, there is a need to consider people with special needs. While taking the project study, we forgot to plan for this group of people who also turned up for the event, thanks to the organizing committee who made sure we got a sign language translator who helped us through the whole project.

Project Identification

After careful study, I learned that a very small number of students from the Butaleja District apply for university admissions after completing high school. With over 6,000 (six thousand) students graduating from high school each year, only 5% of these students could apply for university admissions

1.1 Context

With the ever-changing technological needs, Students of Butaleja District were left behind following the introduction of the online university admissions application, replacing the paper application that students were comfortable with.

Project Location

The project was located in Eastern Uganda, Butaleja District. Approximately 250 kilometers from the capital city of Uganda.

1.2 Origin and Problem

i) Origin

The project was introduced following the change from paper application to online university admissions application. This posed a great challenge to students of Butaleja District who lacked computer knowledge to make online university applications.

ii) The main problem addressed

A limited number of students applying for university admissions each year in Butaleja District was the main problem that this project addressed. As mentioned earlier, each year, the number of students graduating from high school is over 6,000 and only 5% of these students could get a chance to apply for university admission. This is because the majority of these students do not have any computer skills and they did not have anyone to guide them through what to do next after high school. Thanks to this project the problem has been solved by at least 30%

Generally, the main problems dressed are

1. Limited number of students applying for university admission
2. Lack of computer knowledge by Butaleja Students

Project Objectives and Implementation

i) Project Objectives

The main objective of the project was to curb the problem of a limited number of students applying for university admissions in Butaleja District. The project therefore aimed at creating five different university application centers in the areas of Busolwe, Busaba, Budumba, Somba, and Butaleja.

ii) Implementation

The first step of implementing this project was to identify the most underserved villages and secondly to identify suitable venues in these areas to carry out this project. After identifying

them I made sure that the facilities and booked and paid for. Everything was done as planned and the project started the 22nd of July and was completed on the 9th of August, 2024.

iii) Assumptions and risks

This project involved collaboration with both domestic and international institutions and there was a risk of delayed cooperation and responses. Since I needed to pay for the services upfront, there was a risk of taking a personal loan to make sure that the problem was implemented with hopes of getting additional funding from the international ACAC. I had to interact with several institutions and stakeholders soliciting support to carry out this project, however, some of them turned me out, especially in the financial support.

1. **Project Performance**

So far, I would say the project has been a tremendous achievement. We had an overwhelming turnout of students coming to the application centers to be supported with online university applications and counseling on the right courses to take at the university.

1. **Specific Objective**

Specific Objectives	Status
Helping rural, under resourced students of Butaleja District to make online university admissions applications and advise them on the courses to take at the universities that match the current and future job markets demands.	Project Complete

1. **Schedule**

Start date: 22nd July, 2024

End Date: 9th August, 2024

1. **Total amount of expenditure**

The Total amount of expenditure was $5,452.7USD. The overall project budget was spent as planned.

**4. Project outcome, Target Beneficiary involvement**

i) The extent to which the project-specific objective was achieved

This project was purposely meant to help under-resourced students of Butaleja District based in remote areas to apply for online university admissions. The turnout was great with a Total

number of 1,928 students. Students were helped to apply to different universities of their choice as follows in the table below

University	Number of students who applied
Kyambogo University	540
Makerere University	289
Uganda Christian University	231
Gulu University	192
Mbarara University of Science and Technology	176
Iganga Technical Institute	154
Kampala International University	135
Victoria University	96
Busitema University	77
Sai Pali Institute of Technology and Management	38

All the students who turned up for the event were supported to apply to the universities and courses of their choice. The Chart below shows the number of students who applied to different universities by percentage.

Percentage of students by University

- Kyambogo University
- Makerere University
- Uganda Christian University
- Gulu University
- Mbarara University of Science and Technology
- Iganga Technical Institue
- Kampala International University
- Victoria University
- Busitema University
- Sai Pali Institute of Technolgy and Management
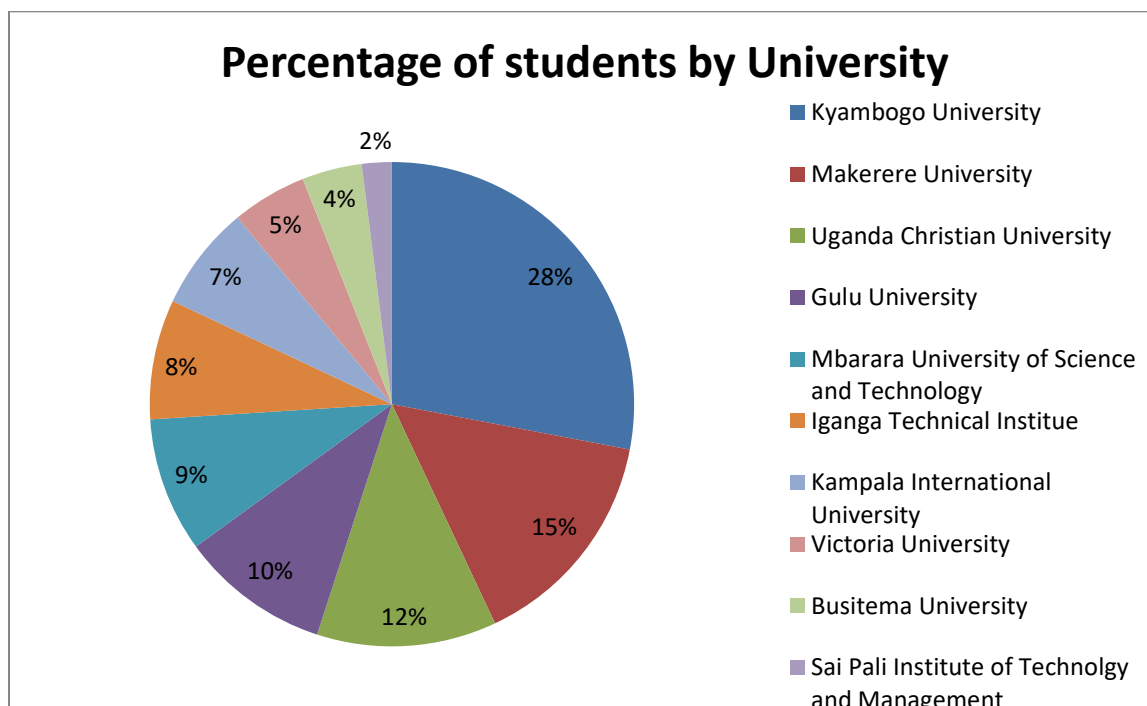
Courses applied for include; Bachelor of Medicine and surgery, Bachelor of Pharmacy, Bachelor of Law, Bachelor of information Technology, Bachelor of Bio-chemical engineering, Bachelor of Civil engineering, Bachelor of telecommunication engineering, Diploma in telecommunication

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engineering, Bachelor of Accounting and finance, Bachelor of Banking and Microfinance, Bachelor of science with Education, Bachelor of Arts with Education, Bachelor of Human Resource Management, Bachelor of Marketing and Management, Bachelor of Science in Data Science and Artificial Management, among many more. Students came from different Schools namely; Butaleja Secondary School, Kangalaba Secondary School, Bukedi College KACHONGA, Busolwe Secondary School, Hasahya Secondary School, Town View College, Butaleja Modern Secondary School, Busaba Seed Secondary School, Bugwere High School, Kaswabuli Secondary School, Bright Light College, Mulagi Girl's Secondary School, Mulagi High school, Namutumba Modern Secondary School, and Busolwe Students' Centre.

ii) The existing situation

Butaleja district has a limited number of college admission counselors to support the large number of students graduating from high school each year. From this project, I realized that students are so eager to learn how to do things and also know what step to take next after high school but they do not have people to help them through.

5. Assessment and Analysis

i) Project rationale and identification process

The identification of this project was based on the low turn-up of students applying for university admissions from Butaleja district over the past years. Identifying the project was not hard because it was an open problem seen by everyone. Our students could only study up to an 'A' level and end from there. There was no support offered to them to enable them to transition from high school to higher levels of education.

ii) The result from the identification process

From the realized project outcomes and performance, it can be seen that the project was designed through the correct definition of the problem, the accurate identification of the project objectives, and a viable choice of implementation strategy. At the same time, the identification process was closely linked to the problem.

iii) Time and Project input

During the implementation of the project, we used 15 laptops to carry out the overall project activities. Several dedicated admissions counselors from Kyambogo University, Busitema

University, Kampala International University, and Gulu University dedicated their time to come and offer help to these underprivileged students of Butaleja District.

iv) Project beneficiaries

The immediate project beneficiaries were the rural, under-resourced students of the Butaleja district who needed help in making online university applications and guidance on what courses to take at the universities that meet both the present and future job market demands.

6. Lessons learned

While carrying out the project study, I did not take into consideration the disabled students who also turned up for help. Thanks to the well-wishers who quickly looked for a sign language translator who helped us throughout the whole project. I also learned that there is a need extend more of this service to other sub counties because we received students from other sub counties are very far away from where we conducted this project.

7. Conclusion

The project was finally completed on the 9th of August,2024. A great appreciation goes to the international ACAC, all the stakeholders, and University counselors from Kyambogo, Gulu, Busitema, and Kampala International University.

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