
The Kyambogo Years (1990 – 1993)

My Years as Principal of the Institute of Teacher Education – The Unplanned Training for the Big Shoes

Soon after the departure of Professor Kajubi, the first Principal, ITEK plunged into a serious crisis, the cause of which seemed to have been staff agitation for a living wage and the subsequent death of one of them under mysterious circumstances. As a result of those incidents, the institute had been receiving bad press for a good part of 1990. Apparently, some disgruntled staff had taken a leaf out of MUASA's book and had formed an academic staff association they decided to call Institute of Teacher Education Academic Staff Association (ITEASA), which was quite a militant group. When Professor Kajubi left for Makerere after serving for two years as Principal, his deputy, Dr John Bigala remained acting in his stead. Hell broke loose when the acting Principal received a request from the National Police Commissar to nominate some members of staff of ITEK to participate in a political education course, popularly known as the cadre course, at Kyankwanzi in Kiboga District.

At the time, it was routine for Government to direct civil servants to go for the cadre course at Kyankwanzi or at some other location. Regardless of rank, all Government officials had to attend the cadre course. The courses were numbered and the course number appeared on one's certificate of attendance. In what I think was a rushed judgement, the ITEK Administration decided to select some of the more militant members of ITEASA for the course, perhaps in the hope that, after attending the cadre course, they would tone down their militancy. As expected, those selected refused to go. The acting Principal and the Secretary/Registrar who was also doubling as the acting Deputy Principal, the late Jonathan Rusoke, insisted that those selected had no choice than to comply with the order, which had come from the Ministry of Education. Any member of staff who refused to abide by the order would face disciplinary action. This was construed

by ITEASA as coercion. Still, they refused to go. One of the members of staff who had been selected for the course, George Kyamuhangire, happened to be the Warden of one of the male students' halls of residence called Nyerere Hall. One day, Kyamuhangire went missing. No one seemed to know where he was, not even members of his family. After three days of searching, he was found dead at his office in Nyerere Hall under dubious and unexplained circumstances.

As expected, accusations started flying. The acting Principal, Dr Bigala, was the first Institute Administrator to be implicated in what ITEASA termed the cold-blooded murder of one of their prominent members. The ITEASA leadership accused Dr Bigala of having been excessively hard on Kyamuhangire for refusing to go to Kyankwanzi. The acting Deputy Principal was also not spared of ITEASA's wrath. What followed was mayhem. Members of ITEASA ran amok. They were determined to see both Bigala and Rusoke dead too. Bigala was chased out of his office with stones flying behind him. He had to take cover in the house of a staff member he was sending to Kyankwanzi.

Jonathan Rusoke had to flee for his life too. Suddenly, the death of Kyamuhangire had turned ITEK into an ungovernable institution. To calm the situation, the Minister of Education set up a Committee of Enquiry, chaired by the former Principal of the National Teachers' College at Nkozi, Emmanuel Kiwanuka, to probe into the circumstances which had led to Kyamuhangire's death, and other issues, such as how the Administration had used the funds Government had been providing to the institute. The Committee's terms of reference also looked into all staff grievances. While the Kiwanuka Committee was probing into the affairs of the institute, the task of keeping it running was assigned to Faustin Epeju and Innocent Byuma. Byuma had been acting as the institute's Secretary/Registrar while Epeju came from the Department of Agricultural Education and had been acting as the institute's Dean of Students. After an exhaustive inquiry, the Committee could not establish what had actually led to the death of George Kyamuhangire. However, according to the post-mortem report, the death appeared to have been an act of suicide.

Many good things came out of this tragic incident. Among other things, ITEASA had also been agitating for the legal status of the institute to be formalised through a statute enacted by the National Resistance Council, which was acting as the national Parliament at the time. ITEASA also wanted ITEK to have similar governing structures as Makerere University, such as the Academic Board, the Appointments Board and the Institute Council. Government conceded to all these demands.

In this respect, ITEK fared better than its neighbour, the Uganda Polytechnic, Kyambogo, which was never legally established until it became part of Kyambogo University in 2002. The ITEK Statute was modelled along the lines of the Makerere University of 1970, and only differed in a few aspects. However, the

Statute of 1990 had several lacunae, the most significant one being the silence on the institute's titular head. The Makerere Act was specific; it named the Head of State as the university's Chancellor. The ITEK Statute had no such provision. Perhaps, this was because ITEK was not a degree-awarding institution; therefore, it could not enjoy the same privileges as Makerere University, to which it was affiliated for the purposes of awarding the degree of Bachelor of Education. In other words, the BEd degree offered at ITEK was a Makerere qualification. It was left to the institute's Governing Council to sort this out. I also remember, as a member of the University Senate in 1988/89, how we had struggled to approve of the many BEd programmes ITEK had submitted to the university through the School of Education. The many voluminous documents made the approval process extremely slow; so, naturally, it took the Senate a long time to approve all of them.

Unfortunately, the Senate's dilemma was not appreciated by ITEK. ITEK perceived the slow pace at which Makerere was approving its programmes as a deliberate effort on the part of Makerere to frustrate, and even kill, its programmes. But in my view, Senate had a point; many important aspects of the programmes were either missing or inadvertently omitted, which called for substantial revision of some documents. In fact, several of the proposed programmes had been rushed through. In most instances, when Makerere rejected poorly drafted documents, the action did not please staff and management at ITEK, but because Senate insisted on the correction being made good before approving the programmes, ITEK had no choice but to comply. Eventually, most of the programmes were approved. The BEd degree was approved as a two-year programme as ITEK had requested and justified. Thanks to Professor Kajubi's skilful negotiation, the BEd became the first two-year undergraduate degree at Makerere. In fact, by the time Professor Kajubi left the institute, most of the programmes had been approved by Senate and the University Council.

Besides the Makerere BEd degree, ITEK had its own Diploma programmes. Some of them, like the two-year Diploma in Teacher Education which was the equivalent of a Grade Four teacher's qualification, were inherited from the National Institute of Education which had been transferred from Makerere. Holders of this qualification trained as Grade Three Primary Teachers College tutors. ITEK was also responsible for administering and managing the Grade Three Primary Teachers' examinations. There were also some residual Grade Five Secondary Diploma programmes which the institute inherited from the old National Teachers College, Kyambogo which, because of their specialised nature, could not be transferred to any of the ten National Teachers Colleges. Disciplines such as French, Fine Art, Music, Agriculture, Home Economics and technical subjects like Carpentry and Joinery, and Metal Work were retained. Some of the residual disciplines were being offered as part of the BEd degree as

well. ITEK was also responsible for supervising all the Primary Teachers Colleges in the country which, at that time, stood at 65 in number as well as all the ten Grade Five National Teachers' Colleges. Besides being the examining body, it was also responsible for the curriculum. However, ITEK was not responsible for the day-to-day administration of the colleges. In this aspect, the colleges were independent of ITEK.

With the Statute in place and after the Emmanuel Kiwanuka's Committee of Inquiry into the affairs of the institute had submitted its report to Government, it was time for the Minister of Education and Sports to implement the recommendations and operationalise the ITEK Statute. According to the Minister, the appointment of the institute's top management; the Principal, Secretary, Registrar, Dean of Students and Bursar was the appropriate starting point. Incidentally, the Statute of 1990 had split the post of Secretary/Registrar into two separate positions of Secretary and Registrar. In fact, members of ITEA wrote the original draft Statute, which they then submitted to the Solicitor-General. Naturally, as one would have expected, some of the authors of this important document would have had their eyes on the institute's top positions. Unfortunately, the Minister of Education thought otherwise.

The Kiwanuka Committee had been very critical of the previous management team, made up of professional teachers and teacher trainers. So, as far as the Minister was concerned, the institute needed a capable manager as Principal to get it out of the crisis it had been plunged into. The Principal did not have to be a professional teacher. For advice on a suitable candidate, the Minister turned to his old friend, Dr Katebalirwa Amooti, a Lecturer in the Department of Literature at Makerere and a member of Kiwanuka's Committee. I do not know how my name came up in one of their discussions but it did. It turned out that Katebalirwe Amooti knew a lot more about me than I imagined. I knew Amooti reasonably well as a colleague at Makerere, but not that intimately. I suspect most of what he knew about me must have come from his sister, Mrs Betty Musoke, who worked under me as Senior Technician in the First Year Laboratory in the Chemistry Department and was a strong trade unionist too. In the later years, she was promoted, becoming one of the two Chief Technicians in the department, and possibly the first woman to hold that position in the Department of Chemistry.

Apparently, Dr Katebalirwe Ammotti was strongly convinced that I had all the attributes the Minister was looking for in the new institute's Principal. I was later told that when Katebalirwe mentioned my name, the Minister remembered his impromptu visit to the university and the Chemistry Department, where he had found a man cooking herbs. As I learnt later, the herbs and what he had seen in the department generally made a good impression on him. As aforesaid, the Minister rated our department as the best managed department he had seen on his tour earlier in the year.

The Minister could have announced my appointment over the mass media without consulting me first, because he had the powers to do so. Instead, he decided to invite me to his office, which by then was on the top floor of the short tower of the Crested Towers building. The meeting was very friendly, brief and to the point. He told me that, after exhaustive consultations, Government had decided to appoint me Principal of the Institute of Teacher Education Kyambogo. The appointment would take immediate effect. There are times when crazy things you least expect happen and you are just left agape. For me, the Minister's decision was certainly one of those very crazy things. I did not know how to react. Going to ITEK, for whatever reason, was something that had never crossed my mind. It was not a place where I would spend part of my career. I knew ITEK as an institution for teachers and although I had been teaching for many years, I had never bothered to study for a formal qualification in Education. Now here I was, being asked to go and head a teacher training institution, moreover an institution in a serious state of turmoil.

A member of staff had died there in mysterious circumstances and the acting Principal had narrowly escaped being hacked to death by an angry staff mob. Did the Minister wish me an early death? That was not the place for a right thinking person to go. One had to be out of his mind to accept this appointment, so I thought. Besides, it was an appointment, which would take me away from my Chemistry. Unfortunately, I had not realised that Minister Amanywa Mushega had already made up his mind and there would be no negotiations; chapter closed! However, to be fair to him, he took time to explain why he thought I was the right person for the job, in spite of the fact that I had no formal qualification in Education. He allayed my worst fears, saying that he was fully aware of the possible risks, but the situation at ITEK had been sufficiently brought under control and, therefore, there was nothing to worry too much about. He further assured me of his support and cooperation, and the fact that I was going to ITEK on promotion.

After my usual due consultations with my family and a few friends, I accepted the appointment, although my family also had fears and reservation about going to ITEK at such a time. This was the first time I was leaving Makerere for a totally new place.

My immediate concern was my acceptance by the ITEK community. Would the staff welcome another Principal from Makerere after what they believed was a disastrous performance by the previous administrators from Makerere? I had to wait and see.

Although the Minister had said that my appointment took immediate effect, I had to wait for an appointment letter. This took a while to come and, actually, I had started hoping that the Minister had changed his mind. I did not tell the Vice Chancellor about my impending new appointment and subsequent transfer

to Kyambogo, for the simple reason that I did not know how to introduce the subject to him. I was also still unsure whether the Minister really meant what he said; so it could turn out to be a premature disclosure. I thought the Minister was in a better position to tell him, so I left it at that. The cat was let out of the bag late one evening in September 1990. It was on my normal routine to stay working until late in the evening. Professor Lutalo Bosa, the Deputy Vice Chancellor had been my Dean and knew about my long working hours. My appointment letter written by the former Permanent Secretary, Fr Tebenderana, was routed through the Vice Chancellor. It was delivered to the Vice Chancellor, Professor Kajubi late in the evening. Professor Kajubi and Professor Lutalo Bosa, like me, were also in the habit of working late. So, when the letter arrived, Professor Kajubi called Professor Lutalo Bosa and after some discussion over my abrupt appointment as Principal of ITEK, he asked him to find out whether I was still at my desk in the department. Indeed, I was still working. Professor Bosa said the Vice Chancellor had an important message for me and that I should report to him immediately. At first, I did not figure out what this important message could be. However, when I entered the office, the Vice Chancellor congratulated me on my new appointment as Principal of ITEK. He further commented that, apparently, I had also been appointed Professor. He handed the letter to me and expressed his disappointment at losing me. He thanked me for a job well done, adding that the university had appreciated my enormous contribution. He then asked whether I had been consulted before the appointment was made. The question took me unawares. I had to tell a white lie that no such consultations were made. He was amazed but not very surprised. This used to happen so often. Nevertheless, I suspected he did not really believe me.

Now that my appointment had been made official, it was time to inform my colleagues in the department that I was no longer part of them. I further told them it was not a choice I personally made; rather, fate had once again intervened in my career path. I assured them, as I had assured the Vice Chancellor, that although I would be gone, I would continue to assist the department with some teaching and supervision of postgraduate students. In fact, this I did religiously all the three years I was at ITEK. Every Saturday I would go to Makerere to teach a final year course on Group Theory, Molecular Symmetry and Electronic Spectroscopy – a subject I enjoyed teaching free of charge.

It was time to say goodbye to the department and the people who had become very much a part of me as I had also probably become a part of them. Dr Sam Mukasa, now deceased, was a colleague I had known right from my undergraduate days in the 1970s when he used to supervise us as a part-time demonstrator in the Physical Chemistry practical. He was a person I had come to admire as an assiduous worker and for his high integrity and astute intelligence. He was also one of the members of staff at the Department of Chemistry students

loved to hate for his difficult examination questions which were not the recall type, but which required logical thinking. Students used to fail these exams, and they loathed him for it. Sam was always there whenever you needed him and judiciously did whatever he was asked to do. Therefore, when time came for me to make a choice for a successor who would take over the headship of the department, in an acting capacity until a substantive Head was elected, I did not have to look far. Dr Mukasa was my obvious choice. I communicated my preferred choice for a successor to the Vice Chancellor and asked him to appoint Sam as Acting Head.

The Vice Chancellor did not doubt my judgement; he simply endorsed it and did what was needed. This made my handing-over easy and straightforward. However, as I handed over to Dr Mukasa, I could not help thinking about the many things I had started but were still unfinished. For instance, I had thought that the European Union-sponsored renovations in the Faculty of Science would begin with the Department of Chemistry, but the University Secretary decided otherwise; Chemistry was to come last. This was a project on which I had spent a lot of my time and energy planning, but could not see through to the end. The time had come for me to leave my comfort zone at Makerere for the uncertainties of Kyambogo.

It is often said that certain things are easier said than done. My move to Kyambogo bears ample testimony to this old adage. The appointment was relatively easy to accept but it was proving a lot harder for me to pluck up courage and go. I did not know where to start. I hardly knew anybody at Kyambogo beyond some casual acquaintances. I had no idea what skeletons were lurking in ITEK's cupboards, awaiting my arrival before starting to wreak havoc all over again. To complicate matters further, I guessed the ITEK community had not been prepared for me. Frankly, very few people at ITEK knew me. It was like I was taking a leap in the dark. I was frightened. I also feared for my children. They were still young; the youngest was only three years old. They were about to leave all their playmates behind. The prospect had saddened them. For that reason, I was holding back until I convinced myself that it was pointless to continue procrastinating. I had accepted the responsibility and that was it – *fait accompli*. At the time, I did not even have a personal car. I could not afford one. Worse still, I had only a few worn-out suits which were possibly out of fashion; yet as Principal, I was expected to be formally dressed all the time, something I was not used to. This inevitably meant buying new shirts and new suits. Makerere had spoilt many of us with its casual wear culture.

Since I left Belfast in July 1979, I had never bought a new suit. Besides, the years of hard work without a break had begun to take their toll on me. I was constantly feeling fatigued. I wondered whether I was really up to the task! Instead of arriving at ITEK with a bang, I chose to make it a low-key affair. I wore

my usual casuals and took a *matatu* taxi from Kampala to Banda. I then walked on foot all the way to the reception in the Administration Building. I asked for the Principal and the young woman at the reception directed me. I think she wanted to ask me why I wanted to see the Principal, but changed her mind and instead asked me to proceed.

I remember arriving at the acting Principal's office a few minutes after 10 o'clock on August 18 1990. The acting Principal, Mr Epeju, was not in the substantive office of the Principal but in the Dean of Students' office. That was where he had decided to work from. When I arrived, he was busy attending to a few people, so I decided to take my place in the short queue. When he finally beckoned to me, I pulled out my letter of appointment and handed it to him. I am sure it must have come as a big surprise to him. The Ministry of Education and Sports had not officially communicated my appointment to him or made it public. Poor Epeju quickly pulled himself together and apologised for keeping me waiting. I assured him that he had nothing to apologise for, because I had not made an appointment with him and that it was not my habit to jump queues. He called in Innocent Byuma and showed him my letter of appointment. Both welcomed me but wanted a bit of time to wind up whatever they were doing. I also thanked them for maintaining the institution at such a difficult time, and told them to take their time, as I was also not yet ready to take over from them, and with that, I left. I felt a sigh of relief, because finally the ice was broken.

It is another common saying that "first impressions matter". I must admit that my impressions of ITEK on my first day quickly dispelled all the fears and prejudices I had about the institution. I found the place calm and buzzing with normal activity. It seemed to me that the ugly episodes of the past few months were almost behind them. Epeju and Byuma had pacified the place. However, I could not help thinking that sometimes appearances can be deceptive, neither was I naïve to believe that all the ITEK troubles had vanished overnight. I had to cautiously wait and see whether this apparent calm was real.

Earlier, the Permanent Secretary had handed me a copy of the ITEK Statute, 1990 and the Kiwanuka Committee report, which he urged me to study carefully, because it was now my responsibility to actualise the Statute and to implement most of the recommendations in the Kiwanuka Committee report. It dawned on me that I had taken on a mammoth task. Nevertheless, I was fortunate. I was not going to do the job alone. The Minister had appointed my undergraduate classmate, Avitas Mitoma Tibarimbasa, as Institute Secretary and had retained Innocent Byuma as Registrar in an acting capacity. Farouk Mukasa, recruited from the Bursar's Department at Makerere during Professor Kajubi's time was still there as Bursar. The only top position, which remained unfilled, was that of the Deputy Principal. Therefore, I had a team to start with in the arduous task of rejuvenating the institute. Soon, I was to discover that indeed ITEASA was still alive and

well, but a bit subdued. There had been some recent changes in the association's leadership. The new leadership appeared to be taking a less militant stance and was in a lull. I guess this was partly because Government was addressing their grievances. It was now a game of "wait and see". It was also possible they were just watching to see how another bunch of administrators from Makerere was going to mess up things before they acted. To be fair to ITEASA, they gave us the benefit of the doubt, which we badly needed at the beginning of our administration.

When Dr Bigala and Mr Rusoke abandoned the institute for their own safety, staff recommended Epeju and Byuma should act as Principal and Secretary/Registrar respectively until Government sorted out the problems which had led to staff strife. The Ministry of Education and Sports accepted the recommendation. Within that short time, Epeju and Byuma had actually done a commendable job. By and large, they had managed to bring back a semblance of normalcy to an institution reeling from the effects of a serious crisis. By the time we took over, the situation was no longer so tense, and teaching had resumed in earnest. What made life a bit easy for me was the fact that the new Institute Secretary, Mr Tibarimbasa was a person I had known from our undergraduate days, and over the years we had become friends. He had just returned from the University of Manchester with a Masters degree, specialising in higher education financing. I had had the privilege of attending his public lecture organised by MUASA at Makerere in late 1989 and I was impressed by what he had had to say. Armed with the Statute and the Kiwanuka Committee report, we were ready to work. It was not long before we settled down to the administrative routines. Sarah Wamala, a seasoned secretary, who later became Mrs Sarah Lubaale, was assigned to me as my Personal Secretary. She was the best secretary the institute had at the time. She was very well organised. Her shorthand was excellent, her transcription and typing were, more often than not, error free. I must admit that when it comes to perfection, I took a thing or two from my father: I can be irritatingly demanding; therefore, I was lucky to have a Personal Secretary of her caliber.

We spent most of our first year at Kyambogo trying to actualise the provisions of the 1990 Statute. The institute's Governing Council was one of most urgent provisions we had to implement without delay. As I have pointed out, ITEK's Council was a mirror image of Makerere University Council in structure and composition. With nine members, Government had the largest share of seats on the Council. Fortunately, ITEASA and the students were represented too. Unfortunately, the Statute did not make provision for the representation of the administrative staff and workers. I figured that the administrators were few; their representation on Council could be ignored for the time being, but the workers were many and unionised, a force that could not be ignored. Fortunately, the Statute provided for two seats for the Council to fill. I made a proposal to allocate one of them to the workers. My proposal was accepted.

I was fortunate to have had Mr Basil Kiwanuka as Chairman of Council, with Mr Albert Brewer Abaliwano as his deputy. The two were men of vast experience in the public and private sectors respectively. Mr Kiwanuka, a graduate of the University of Wales, had been a high school teacher and an inspector of schools for many years. He was the first and the last Secretary of the defunct East African Examination Council, the fore-runner of Uganda Examinations Board (UEB). Although he did not serve for long, Basil Kiwanuka was also UEB's first Secretary until the late Eriaku took over. Mr Abaliwano had distinguished managerial experience in industry to his credit. By the time he was appointed to the ITEK Council, he was the Managing Director of Nile Breweries at Jinja. In a rare gesture of goodwill, and as a way of cementing the relationship between staff, Administration and the Institute Council, he invited all academic staff and senior administrators and hosted them to a get-together party at the Nile Breweries.

Other renowned public figures who served on the first ITEK Council included the former Vice Chancellor of Makerere University, Professor Salvia Wander, and the former Editor-in-Chief of the *Weekly Topic* newspaper, Wafula Ogutu. Ogutu later left the *Weekly Topic* and started his own newspaper, *The Monitor*, but continued to serve on the Council. The other important organ we had to put in place was the Appointments Board which, like that of Makerere University, ran parallel to the Institute Council, with nine members who were all appointed by the Minister of Education and Sports. This was the first time for ITEK, which had been in existence for four years, to have such an organ whose sole purpose was to recruit, appraise, promote and discipline all categories of the institute's staff. Professor Jacayo Ocit, former Dean of the School of Education at Makerere University, was appointed its first Chairman with Mrs Faisi Barlow as Deputy Chair. Other members whose names I could find included the former Headmaster of Kibuli Secondary School, Abbas Mukasa Kawase, a Makerere undergraduate year mate and friend, Professor Victoria Mwaka, Head of the Department of Geography at Makerere at that time; Chango-Macho and Angello Okello. Mr John Ntimba, the Minister of State for Higher Education, inaugurated both the Institute Council and Appointments Board on the same day, 2nd November 1990. The two bodies were soon at work as a considerable backlog of business had accumulated and had to be disposed of immediately.

Before long, we realised that the volume of work the Institute Secretary was handling was growing and growing fast. There was need for an assistant. All this time, he was almost alone save for his personal secretary, Ms Beatrice Anyango who, for lack of space worked from the Principal's office. This in a way made communication between the two rather awkward. There were also a few clerical officers who, for historical reasons, carried the old civil service titles of Higher Executive Officers. Elijah Lweterokedde, transferred from the former NTC Kyambogo, was one of them. To help Mr Tibarimbasa run the Council and its Committees, as well as

the business of the Appointments Board efficiently, we recruited a young man, Vincent Okoth Ogola as Assistant Secretary. As we have seen, when ITEK was created out of NTC Kyambogo and NIE, the majority of the academic staff of the old NTC Kyambogo did not qualify to teach degree programmes. They were either retired or redeployed to other National Teachers' Colleges. However, a sizeable number was retained at ITEK. This group included one of the long-serving Mill Hill Catholic missionaries of Scottish descent, late Father Kevin McKee, who was in charge of Religious Education and the Chaplain of the Catholic community of all the educational institutions at Kyambogo and Nabisunsa. One of the first tasks of the Institute Council was to formulate policies and new terms and conditions of service for staff, to guide the Appointments Board in its work of regularising old staff taken over from NTC Kyambogo and NIE, as well as for staff recruitment, promotion and discipline of staff. The Institute Council quickly passed the policies and guidelines, and the Board began its job of implementing them straight away. This was a time of extremely hard work for the Institute Secretary and I, but then I was much younger, I could take the enormous pressure of work quite easily.

The staff that were on the ground before the 1990 Statute came into effect were not considered employees of the Institute Council, but of the Teaching Service Commission, the Public Service Commission and other Government bodies that had recruited them.

Those who came with the National Institute of Education were recruited by Makerere University. According to the new Statute, ITEK was now a corporate body and was, therefore, fully responsible for all its employees. It meant that their appointments had to be formalised and staff issued with new letters of appointment and new terms and conditions of service enacted by the ITEK Council, their new employer.

The Institute Council asked the Appointments Board to regularise the appointments of the old staff into the ITEK service first, before going out to recruit new staff. This was the Board's first assignment and because of its sensitivity, its handling required considerable tact. The Board asked all old staff to re-apply for their posts and to submit their papers to the Board afresh. As I expected, some staff questioned the rationale of being asked to re-apply for jobs they had been legally recruited to in the first place. Was this another ploy to get rid of them? They had seen what happened to their colleagues, who had to leave the institute because of inadequate academic qualifications. They were not keen for a repeat. In fact, I was concerned tempers would flare again. After some careful explanation that the exercise had no hidden motive, they eventually complied with the directive. Before the Parliament of Uganda granted ITEK a legal status through the Statute, all staff were either employees of both the Ministry of Education and Sports or belonged to Makerere University. Now that the institute was no longer under the direct control of the Ministry of Education and Sports, it had to own its

employees, hence the need for appraisal. We further told them that, since we were now at university college status, we had to satisfy Makerere University to which the institute was affiliated that our teaching staff met its minimum qualification requirements. With this explanation, we were able to convince staff to comply with the Council's order.

The new terms, including the new salary scales, were similar to what was obtained at Makerere at that time and were considerably better than those of Public Service. The exercise, tedious as it might have been, was handled well and ended peacefully. We had passed the first test. From this exercise, I learnt the value of good communication. If we had not taken trouble to explain the exercise well, or if staff saw no additional value in what the Institute Council was asking them to do, I am sure the exercise would have been a failure.

The new salary scales, although pegged to the Makerere M scales, were given a different code – the IT coding. Like the M scales of Makerere, they run from IT-1 to IT-15. The Principal was on IT-1, the equivalent of the Vice Chancellor's M1 scale, the Deputy Principal was placed on IT-2, a Professor on IT-3 and so on. The old members of staff that the Appointments Board found deficient in some aspects were asked to make good the identified deficiencies through further training and upgrading of their qualifications. According to the new Council policy, promotion was dependent on externally vetted publications. It was no longer dependent on the number of years one served in a particular position. Staff had to engage in serious research that led to publishable results, preferably in peer-reviewed journals. Grey literature was no longer acceptable as publications for the purposes of promotion. At first, this looked like an unrealistic demand, as there was no culture of serious research at the former NTC Kyambogo. The college was primarily a teaching institution. Wasn't the Appointments Board attempting to squeeze blood out of stone? Apparently not, as staff slowly adopted the new publish- or-perish culture. Staff just wanted to be helped to identify journals where they could publish their academic works. At the end of the exercise, all old staff retained their jobs. This made everyone happy. Their struggle, which had led to the death of one of their colleagues, was beginning to bear fruit. For us in administration, it was the first real serious test and we had pulled it off without much ado. It was now time to move on to other things. A lot was waiting.

The institute had neither official seal nor logo. Some people had expressed the opinion that, like Makerere University, ITEK should have an anthem. We thought hard about who would design the seal and the logo and who would compose the anthem. One advantage of being in an academic institution is access to a wealth of talent. We had some of the best artists on the staff; it was just a matter of identifying them. Mr Norbert Kaggwa, a renowned Ugandan artist at the Art and Design Centre was identified and asked to design the seal and the logo. Mr. Kaggwa had to produce a write-up on his design, as well as an

appropriate institute motto. Mr. Kizza, a Kyambogo veteran and Head of the Department of Music, composed the anthem. They amazed us by the speed and the quality of their work. Both the Academic Board and the Institute Council had no difficulty approving their works. With a logo and a motto, we could start printing official letterheads. However, the seal was not yet ready. We wanted a professionally crafted seal. So, when Mr Kaggwa travelled to Canada, we asked him to have it cast there, to which he kindly obliged. On his return from Canada, he presented the seal to the Institute Secretary who, by law, was its custodian. We were now in a position to issue certificates with an embossed stamp. Mr Kizza and the students of Music staged the first public singing of the new anthem at the first ITEK Graduation Ceremony in 1992.

We hardly made any progress in resolving the mysterious death of George Kyamuhangire. The Criminal Investigation Department failed to come up with a water-tight conclusion as to the cause of his death. Literally, the case went cold in the files of Ugandan Police. It was one of those unfortunate episodes in the history of our country. There were a few other deaths which occurred during my time. Fortunately, they were all due to natural causes. We lost Faustine Jaunu (an energetic and resourceful Head of the Department of Technical Education), the Head of the French Department, and a Trade Union official and deputy branch chairman of the National Union of Educational Institutions by the name Zabose. At about this time, we were also beginning to see the devastating effect and havoc of the HIV/AIDS pandemic, particularly amongst the lower cadres of workers.

Many ITEK staff of every rank and status socialised in Banda, a slum dwelling very much like Katanga Valley near Makerere. In the wee hours of the night and in such places where at such a late hour, logic and common sense take a back seat and *prima instincts* take over, especially after one too many beers, anything goes in that world of merry-go-round. We believed that many unsuspecting members of staff acquired the virus from such places by indulging in unprotected sex with high-risk groups; the most devastating and costliest epidemic African academic institutions ever faced was knocking at our doors.

By the time I took over as Principal, the institute's finances were in bad shape. It was, indeed my number one headache and remained so until I left the institute. Those who were there before me faced the same problem. Although the story, which appeared in *The Monitor* sometime in 1991, alleged that over two billion shillings had been embezzled, the truth was that from its inception in 1988 up to the time *Monitor* published the embezzlement story, ITEK had never received anything close to that figure. The problem was that for ITEK, like other public academic institutions, Government was not giving it enough money to cover all its operational costs. There was always a marked mismatch between the two. Perhaps, the journalists from *The Monitor* saw what was approved on paper but not what Treasury was actually releasing over the last three years.

The biggest expenditure item in the budget was students' food. The inability to access the little funds available was always a problem, and this was sometimes compounded by creditors who threatened to take you to court for defaulting on your payments. Worse still, the institute was not yet self-accounting and, therefore, did not have a vote of its own from the Ministry of Finance. This meant we could not access funds directly from the Treasury. Since we were a part of the Ministry of Education and Sports' vote, the Ministry of Finance channeled our funds through that ministry. In turn, we would account for the funds through the Permanent Secretary of our mother Ministry. It also meant that it was the Ministry of Education and Sports which decided what to allocate to ITEK. I found this arrangement very cumbersome. It also consumed a lot of my valuable time and energy. In effect, the system was almost unworkable. I remembered how Makerere University had fought hard to break away from the Ministry of Education's vote and eventually became a self-accounting centre in 1988. How I wished that ITEK could enjoy the same status! I literally spent many hours of my valuable working time in Crested Towers, chasing either the Permanent Secretary (or his Under-Secretary for Finance and Administration) for a signature on a cheque or simply to inquire how soon the next cheque would be ready. If I were not looking for one of the Ministry's senior officers, I would be moving from one office to another, moreover on different floors of the building, looking for accountants who were supposed to write the payment voucher for a promised release. If not, I would be in the cashier's office, waiting for the good news that our cheque was ready for collection or for the bad news that the cheque was not ready, and to be told to try again next day or the following week, or whatever waiting period they could think of.

Apparently, this was the surest way to get money out of the Ministry. If you did not chase it, you would be in for a rude shock because, as soon as Treasury released money to the Ministry of Education, there would be many people waiting for it. The risk was that in your absence, your allocation would go to someone else. Money was always in short supply and there were too many competing demands for it. I used to have pity on the Directors and Principals of upcountry institutions such as Ngetta, Waggoner and others, who had to spend many nights in Kampala, chasing their capitation grants. On most occasions, I used to take the Institute Bursar or his assistant with me to help me sort out some paperwork. The Assistant Bursar, Stephen Mulish, had accumulated a lot of experience working with the finance officers in the Ministry of Education and had learnt the intricate workings of the system, so it was advantageous to have him around.

Unlike the system operating at Makerere University, at ITEK the Principal was the accounting officer. At Makerere, the University Secretary was, and still is, the accounting officer. Therefore, whenever there was a financial crisis – and there were many such occasions in my time – it was the Principal they looked

up to for a solution. There were occasions when we would really get stuck and the only way would be to talk to the political leadership of the Ministry, the Minister, who in most cases would be equally helpless, because he had no direct control over the Ministry's financial management system. If we pulled a blank there, the alternative would be to persuade our Bank Manager to honour all the cheques we issued, even when the money on the institute's account was not enough to cover them. This was an indirect request for an overdraft. Under normal circumstances, we would need the Minister's approval to negotiate an overdraft, but these were not normal circumstances. I used to put my neck on the line to avert impending crises, especially when it came to students' food. It was always at the back of our minds that these crises had the potential to explode into full-blown chaos and a possible return to the problems of the past. Therefore, we had to avoid them, no matter what it took. Fortunately for us, this arrangement worked beautifully most of the time. I must also admit that most of our suppliers were understanding people, who had faith in us, and accepted our explanations for delayed payments.

Mr Faouruk Mukasa resigned as Institute Bursar in my second year as Principal and we had to find a replacement in a relatively short time. Among the candidates who responded to the advertisement, the Appointments Board identified George William Kakooza. He had been working as Chief Accountant with TUMPECO at Port Bell and held a Master of Commerce degree from Australia. We were not so lucky with the Internal Auditor. We were looking for a person qualified in Auditing at degree level, with a clean record of service. We failed to find such a person, so we had to do with John Namoma, a non-graduate accountant but with a lot of practical experience in Auditing. Initially, we had brought him in temporarily to help us put the institute's books of accounts in order. A few more young accountants were recruited to assist Mr Kakooza with the increasing volume of work in the Finance Department. We had initiated many reforms on how the institute's funds were managed and accounted for. For example, by the time I was posted to ITEK, students going on teaching practice and members of staff supervising them used to receive cash. The Bursar or his assistant used to collect the money from the bank and pass it on to the member of staff who was in charge of the exercise. In turn, the latter would act as the cashier, paying both the staff and students. In most cases, returns were never submitted to the Bursar to enable him account for the money in time. Besides, the sums of money involved were substantial; running into hundreds of millions of shillings. The fact that the Assistant Bursar used to carry the sacks of money in his own car without Police escort or security of any kind was very scary. The risk of being abducted and killed by highway robbers was extremely high. The Institute Bursar had also abdicated his responsibility as the Institute's paymaster and, as the institute's accounting officer, I saw no reason why somebody else who had nothing to do with money matters should take over the functions of the Bursar. This was one of the abuses of public funds at ITEK identified by the

Kiwanuka Committee, which we had to stop in order to bring some sanity in the Finance Department. I instructed the Bursar to stop the practice of paying cash to any member of staff going for teaching practice. My directive covered everyone who had anything to do with the exercise and that included the Teaching Practice Coordinator and students. Under the new procedures, the teaching practice cheque from the Ministry of Education had to be banked first and all payments had to be done by cheque, which the individual payees would then cash at the Kyambogo Branch of Uganda Commercial Bank. Payments to staff were to be in agreed instalments, upon verification by a teaching practice logbook, and not in one lump sum at the beginning of the exercise as had hitherto been the practice.

The new procedure did not go down well with some members of staff. Many perceived my actions as interference in their annual spoils. I had received information that some members of staff would collect their allowances at the beginning but would not supervise students. Even, members of staff who had nothing to do with teaching practice used to join in for the sake of receiving allowances. I was prepared for a possible rebellion over the new changes. Fortunately, instead of the confrontation I anticipated, the majority of staff saw nothing wrong with the new measures; after all, corruption and financial mismanagement were some of the accusations staff had levelled against the previous administration. According to the feedback I received, the members of staff who grumbled most were those who had made it a habit to abuse the exercise. Later, we decided to eliminate all cash payments, with the exception of petty cash which the Bursar had to keep for the unexpected emergency.

Another rampant abuse of the exercise was transportation for the supervisors. The institute had no vehicles of its own for Teaching Practice. Transportation for the exercise had to be outsourced. The practice was that any member of staff who had car could put it up for hire for the duration of the teaching practice at a negotiated fee. The trouble was that even those members of staff who had no vehicles of their own would put in a bid. I later learnt that the trick was to find a friend or some business person willing to lend out a car. Once secured, the car would be presented to the Teaching Practice Coordinators. Moreover, in all cases, the arrangement was accepted as normal. The member of staff would then split the rental payment with the car owner. In some extreme cases, there was no car presented at all but money would be paid out to the member of staff. This used to be easy, because the Coordinators did not insist on a physical examination of the vehicles. They just assumed that whoever claimed to have a car for hire actually had one. In order to stamp out such malpractices, we needed a competent Transport Officer. We found one – Jairus Bwanika. Among his technical qualification, he had a Higher Diploma in Mechanical Engineering from the old Uganda Technical College, now Uganda Polytechnic Kyambogo, and he underwent further training in automotive engineering in Japan.

Besides taking charge of the institute's vehicles, the Transport Officer's other responsibility was to verify vehicles hired for Teaching Practice. First, the authenticity of ownership had to be established. Second, each vehicle had to undergo a thorough mechanical examination to ensure it was in sound condition for the exercise. Hire charges had to conform to the Institute Council approved transport payment rates, based on cost per kilometre. The driver had to log the kilometres travelled, which the Transport Officer had to verify before the Bursar effected payment. If one did not log or did not present a verifiable logbook or the logged mileage was found suspicious, the Bursar was under instruction not to pay. By implementing these measures, we began to realise substantial savings. As a result, we decided to buy two vans, both Toyota Townaces, popularly known as *Dudu*, to help with the transportation of staff during Teaching Practice. When they were not required for this purpose, the vans provided transport for the Principal and Institute Secretary, as the two senior officers had no official cars assigned to them. I suspect we were able to implement these rather difficult and seemingly unpopular measures and get away with them because the measures were seen as remedy to the abuse and excesses that had been going on for some time. The Council comprised a representative body of all sections of the institute, including the academic staff. It was tricky, and perhaps would have been outright dishonest, for staff representatives on Council to have participated in the approval of the policies and then disown them outside. This helped to reduce tensions between staff and management over such difficult decisions and, for me, the outcome was a good learning experience.

As I have pointed out before, the institute was chronically short of money and, if we had to succeed in running it with as few problems as possible, we had to be very frugal in the way we used the little we received from Government. At the time, there were no other significant sources of revenue for the institute. We were totally dependent on the Government Treasury. In fact, we were operating on a shoe-string budget most of the time. Under the 1990 Statute, the institute's Council was responsible for preparing its annual budget, which included income and expenditure estimates, for onward transmission to the Ministry of Education. Despite the meticulous budgeting, we hardly ever realised more than 50% of the budget of the three years I was there. Incidentally, the bulk of the recurrent budget went to salaries, wages, students' ration and teaching practice. This left very little for other things. The chronic shortage of money called for innovative ways of generating more revenue. One way was the cost-cutting measures through good financial management. We had to minimise waste but without stifling the institute's operations. One important thing that worked in our favour was the Bursar who was not only a qualified accountant, but also a man with wide experience in financial management. He knew how to prioritise expenditure.

The more I grappled with the problem of money to run the institute, the more I thought of sharing the burden with all senior colleagues in administration.

Hitherto, I had been working with the Institute Secretary, Mr Avitus Tibarimbasa, the Bursar and Assistant Bursar. There had been moments I could not agree with the Bursar on what we should, and should not, spend money on. By now, Innocent Byuma had been confirmed in his job as Institute Academic Registrar and a new Deputy Academic Registrar, Ms Goretti Katusabe, had been recruited from Trinity College, Nabbingo, where she had been a teacher for some years. We had also persuaded John Kasule, now deceased, who was the Warden of Northcote Hall at Makerere and one of the survivors of Dr Philemon Mateke's axe in the 1980s, to apply for the position of Dean of Students when it was advertised.

Except for the Internal Auditor, the administrative team was complete. It was beginning to look more and more like a dream team. All I needed now from them was team work, their technical expertise, experience in problem solving and results. To build the kind of management team I needed, I decided to establish an Executive Committee of which I was the chair. Like the Central Executive Committee of Professor Kirya at Makerere, its major role was to provide the Principal with advice on the administration of the institute, including financial management, and help him in times of crisis. The Executive Committee met weekly or as often as the situation warranted. We had to make sure that the Dean of Students was always given priority on funds, because we understood very well how volatile students could be if they missed a meal. However, our cost-cutting measures were not enough to enable us to balance the budget. Nevertheless, every time we received a release from the Ministry, I would call the Committee and it would allocate the little we had received for that period. The system worked beautifully and made our financial management much more transparent. In addition, the Executive Committee helped solve several difficult problems.

As I have pointed out, cost-cutting measures alone could not help us realise all the money we needed to run the institute efficiently. The funds provided by Government were simply not enough to go round. Alternatives had to be sought. Mr Tibarimbasa had studied alternative ways of financing higher education as part of his MA at the University of Manchester; it was now time for him to put theory to practice. We asked him to come up with some ideas. ITEK had a 100-hectare mixed farm inherited from the NTC Kyambogo. It was primarily a teaching farm under the Faculty of Agriculture and Vocational Education. Nevertheless, Tibarimbasa soon saw its income-generating potential without compromising its primary core function. Indirectly, he was advancing the idea that students ought to know that there was money in farming, that Agriculture makes money. Students should be taught not only the science of Agriculture but also the business side of it. The farm had a herd of five pure ex-Germany Fresians cows and a variety of food crops and vegetables. There was a qualified Farm Manger, Mr Sam Muhereza, and a Deputy Farm Manager, Ms Sheila Namusoke Giibwa. It had just acquired a new Massey Ferguson tractor with all accessories. Since its primary role was not commercial,

members of staff of the Faculty of Agriculture and Vocational Education consumed most of the milk, gratis. Very little of it was sold and as a result, nearly all the farm's operating cost had to be met from the institute's budget. In spite of the fact that qualified people were running the farm, I found it in a neglected state. The Farm Manager's explanation was that the previous administration had not allocated sufficient funds to run it properly. He wanted to do a better job but was frustrated. To complicate matters further, some top administrators at the institute, including those who had transferred their services from ITEK, were keeping their personal cows on the farm at the expense of the institute. This was a problem which required an immediate solution. By the time I took over as Principal, the farm had received assistance in terms of implements, acaricide and other inputs from the World Food Programme. As far as we were concerned, this was a good starting point.

Some of the first things we did on the farm was to rehabilitate its structures that included the cattle dip, the perimeter fence, the access roads and the water reticulation, to ensure a constant supply of water to the cows' watering points. There was no crush for treating cows; we constructed one. We had also to construct a calf pen. The aim of all this was to reduce the calf mortality, which was abnormally high, causing a lot of money to be spent on veterinary services. Sadly too, the herd was not growing. The Dean of the Faculty of Agriculture and Vocational Education had always wanted a piggery on the farm, despite the fact he was a Muslim. I also knew that there was money in a well-managed piggery with popular thoroughbreds. The idea behind a piggery was to sell weaners to interested farmers. I looked for the money and we built one. We had a few large-whites and land-races kept at the periphery of the farm. This was our starting parent stock.

A poultry farm was another idea that had been on the shelves for some time. It had to be a mixture of broilers and layers. Again, I looked around for money and we put up the poultry structures next to the calf pen with a capacity of 1,000 birds. However, we insisted on good record keeping. We had to know if the farm was making profit. To improve on its management further, we split the managerial work into two. We had noted that Mr Muhereza's interest was in livestock, so we asked him to concentrate on the animals. Ms Giibwa took over crop husbandry. The division of labour worked. However, Mr Muhereza remained in charge. By now, our farm was beginning to look modern. Even Makerere University final year Agriculture students specialising in Farm Management and Agricultural Economics had started using it for their project work. I have been a passionate gardener all my life, so I could not help feeling proud of our achievements on the farm. I visited it regularly and often, to exercise, I would walk its entire perimeter in the evenings when I had less work to do in the office.

To make the farm fully self-sustaining, the Dean of Students had to pay for the food, mainly green maize cobs, sweet potatoes and vegetables like cabbages,

carrots, tomatoes and onions supplied to the students' kitchen at full market prices. The farm was slowly paying its way, including the wages of its workers. The cows stopped dying and the herd multiplied. In 1992, the population had exceeded the carrying capacity of the farm. We asked the Institute Council to sell off some cows by auction, but giving priority to staff who wanted to buy. Several members of staff took advantage of the auction and bought themselves good breeds of cows from the farm. It had never happened before. Milk production shot up from less than 50 litres to over 200 litres per day and, by the time I left ITEK in 1993, it was still rising. At the beginning, it was difficult to sell all the day's milk production, but slowly the marketing improved. Initially, we were selling around Kyambogo and Banda, but later we went beyond ITEK's neighbourhood to far off places like Kireka and Kampala. In 1993, the revenue from the farm was over one hundred million shillings. The milk sales alone were bringing in some seventy million a year. Not a great deal of money, but still better than nothing. One important thing we were attempting to demonstrate was that, given good management and some seed money, the farm had the potential to make a significant contribution to the institute's income.

There was still unused farmland below the Kabaka's Banda Palace, amounting to almost three hectares. It had been left under fallow for years, so we decided to put it to good use. We instructed the Farm Manager to open it and plant more pasture grass. We had conceived an idea that we could provide beef for both staff and students' consumption on a regular basis by bringing in young cows from Mbarara to fatten them up on the farm. We wanted to try out the experiment and assess its feasibility. The institute's truck which was still new and in good condition transported the animals from Mbarara. The first batch of about twenty animals came in during the Christmas period in 1992. We supplied beef to both staff and students and made a good profit. The venture had potential to succeed. The poultry and piggery were making progress too. One day, I was pleasantly surprised to receive Mr Ojambo Were, a school and housemate at Namilyango College in the 1960s. He told me he was developing a piggery at Seeta-Mukono, and had received information that we had good breeds of pigs for sale, and wanted to buy as many as were on offer. I asked him to see our Farm Manager who sealed the deal there and then. He took virtually every weaner there was in our piggery at the time.

We continued to explore other non-conventional ways of generating extra income. Mr Tibarimbasa suggested we open a café in one of the students' halls of residence. The idea sounded far-fetched but he was undeterred, as he was convinced his idea would work. Everybody was skeptical, except him. I recall Mr Abaliwano teasing him for mispronouncing the word café, which he kept pronouncing "kefu" when he first introduced the idea to Council. I am a strong believer in experiments and I did not like to see my colleague's idea killed before it was tested, especially when it made sense to me. So we convinced Council to allow

him to try it. However, this project was not going to be an easy one to implement. For a start, it required a manager experienced in the catering business. The Home Economics Department did not have much experience in catering, so it could not be of much help; but Abaliwano persisted and eventually found a retired caterer, one Mr Katto who had worked with Uganda Hotels, as well as the White Horse Inn, Kabala. Next, he had to find suitable premises, properly furnished in a way befitting a café. Republic Hall for men had an under-utilised canteen which we thought was good enough for a start, but it was in need of a coat of paint and some repairs. Eventually, the café idea became a reality, albeit with a slow start. Members of Council were pleasantly surprised when, at one of the meetings, they were served tea and delicious snacks made from the café. The café thus became another non-traditional revenue source for the institute. I did not stay long enough at ITEK to assess its success and contribution to the institute's coffers; but by the time I left, it was flourishing and attracting a reasonable crowd of clients, thanks to Mr Tibarimba's perseverance and foresight.

We also, discovered that ITEK and UPK staff residing in the upper estate and some in the Kyambogo lower estate had no quick access to good grocery stores nearby. The nearest trading centre with reasonably stocked grocery stores was Banda, nearly a kilometre and a half away. We mooted the idea of erecting well-designed stalls, popularly referred to as kiosks, along the main access from the south end to the institute's main administrative building, which we could rent out at a fee. We wanted to be sure that, before we invested any money in the project, it was viable and there were people out there willing to rent the stalls we were about to build. The response was poor. We then modified the idea a little bit. Instead of the institute building the stalls, we would rent out space in the form of plots. People could then put up their own stalls according to our design and specifications.

The Estates Engineer was assigned the task of demarcating the plots. That did not work either. We attracted only one member of staff who was running the Child-to-Child Project at the institute. What we had not taken into account was that the salaries of staff were too low to enable them accumulate enough savings to invest in such projects. Unlike the academic staff at Makerere, ITEK staff had very limited moonlighting avenues. They were literally living from hand to mouth. That, in my view, was one of the reasons this project failed. The other reason I could think of was that we did not give the project enough publicity. Whatever the case was, we abandoned the project altogether.

I had heard from my old friend from the Makerere days, Mr William Rwambulla, who was then the Principal of National College of Business Studies at Nakawa that his institution was running a fee-paying parallel programme outside the Government quotas. It was an evening programme. Lectures used to begin at five o'clock and end as late as nine in the evening. The fees paid by the students were

used to supplement the lecturers' salaries and the meagre Government's subvention grant. In fact, I had the privilege of travelling to Canada with Mr Rwambulla in 1992 for an official visit to the Grant McEwen Community College at Edmonton, Alberta. While there, we shared a room in the hotel. This gave me ample time to share my thoughts with him. Upon returning to ITEK, I introduced the idea to some of my colleagues and the Institute Council. The response was very positive, which encouraged me to go ahead. Mr Rwambulla had advised me that it was better to start with courses that have a general appeal to the students. Business Education and Computer Science were two of such courses. Having talked to Francis Onyango who was then Head of the Department of Business Education at ITEK and Ben Enjiku, in charge of the Computer Centre, we were ready to start our own version of evening certificate and diploma programmes. To give our students more confidence, we decided that some of the courses should be examined by the Uganda National Examinations Board. We recognised that members of staff asked to teach in the evenings were doing so in their spare time, and we had to compensate them for their time. We worked out a formula for sharing the income accruing from these programmes. In most instances, the revenue generating units kept up to 70 per cent of the income and only 30 per cent was remitted to the Centre. After a slow start, the programmes became popular and the demand grew. The initial success prompted the units offering them to broaden the scope of courses on offer. For me, this was another shot in the arm. We were slowly bolstering the institute's income and reducing our total dependence on Government subvention. We tried other initiatives in our quest to raise more money such as renting out the halls of residence and catering facilities for conferences. The income from these initiatives was not that significant, but "half a loaf was better than no bread". In later years, I was told that people at Makerere claimed credit for pioneering evening programmes in public higher education institutions in Uganda. In all fairness, that credit belongs to the defunct NCBS. In fact, the Principal was once castigated by the Minister of Education for failing to declare the income from the evening programmes in the college's budget. That was long before Makerere had started offering evening programmes.

As the income-generating activities picked up, the institute's Secretary came up with a suggestion that the Council should have direct control over all the institute's revenue-generating units, and should regularly monitor how much money each unit was generating and how the revenue was used. Although there was now a flurry of activities involving moneymaking, the whole enterprise lacked proper coordination. We also wanted to enforce proper accountability on the part of staff running the income-generating units, because we needed every coin of the money they were able to generate. Therefore, we had to guard against any possible abuse or mismanagement of the funds generated by the units. He suggested that the best way to do it would be through a standing Council committee. This way, the units would be fully integrated into the institute's legal framework. He

even coined a name for the committee – the Commercial Units Committee – which was a new language in an institution accustomed to regarding anything commercial as alien to good academics.

Many people used to argue that “business had no business in the academia, and academia had no business in business”. However, at the ITEK of my time, that kind of stereotypical thinking had become part of a past, a past that was disappearing fast into oblivion. The reality was that, in order to survive, academic institutions had to reduce their dependence on national governments, which were broke and dependent on donors. I remember attending a UNESCO conference in Accra, Ghana in 1992, where such issues were seriously debated. Everyone recognised that higher education institutions in Africa were in a financial quagmire, with no easy way of getting out. I shared my experiences at ITEK with the conference participants from all over Africa. Some were sceptical that such initiatives actually worked, while others strongly believed in the old school that business and academics were incompatible. But many thought my ideas made some sense. Finally, the Institute Council accepted Timbaribasa’ proposal and created a Commercial Units Committee as one of its standing committees, with Wafula Ogutu as its first chairperson.

I have devoted a considerable amount of time to explaining at some length how we tried so hard to raise funds in order to keep the institute afloat. This was the only way we could turn a few things around for the better. It was not easy and much of it was by trial and error. None of us had ever had the experience in raising funds, however, we were confident and determined to succeed. We used to hear such over-used clichés like, “it can’t work”, but we were undeterred. With more revenue coming in, we embarked on the rehabilitation of the physical plant and its infrastructure. Apart from the Administration Building, the Art Design Centre, the Library and Main Hall, some male hostels and a few staff houses built in the 1970s with USAID grant; Africa Hall for girls built with funds donated by the British Government, most of the buildings and other infrastructure ITEK inherited from NTC, Kyambogo were old, small, and in varying states of dilapidation. Many of these buildings were in dire need of serious and urgent facelift. One way we raised more money for the renovations involved reworking the budget to realise more savings.

The Estates Department did most of this work and, where they needed some extra hands, we were allowed to outsource labour and expertise. One of the people who worked closely with our Estates Department was Haj Yusuf Musisi. He was an excellent painter and a good supervisor. Before long, the old ugly looking buildings were shining again. The Main Hall that had been vandalised, with the main stage curtain ripped off, was put into tip-top shape. Soon, it was attracting wedding parties, which provided income for the institute. The lack of water was another big problem I inherited.

The reticulation system had literally broken down due to years of neglect and lack of proper maintenance. Members of staff collected water for their domestic use from a spring well known in the valley below as UPK. This was the first time my children had to collect water from a spring well. As one would expect, the well was always overcrowded. People were spending hours waiting for their turn. Something had to be done, and pretty soon too. Pit latrines were everywhere and the stench in some places was unbearable. The cows on the farm also needed a constant supply of water. To ease the situation a little, we purchased a tractor-drawn 2000-litre water bowser. This was a tremendous relief but to satisfy the big demand for water, the tractor had to make several daily trips to Lugogo. In fact, we were diverting it from its core job at the farm which was also expanding. It was not long before the bowser developed mechanical problems. When the Estates Engineer, Edward Turyomurugendo examined it, he discovered that although the bowser was made of new steel, the wheel axle was a cannibalised part from an old Land Rover. The constant wear and tear was too much for it. We attempted to find a new axle without luck. Since it had become our life-line, we had no choice but to keep on repairing it.

There was an elderly handyman in the Estates Department called Clospus Nyamungu, of Kenyan origin, recruited way back in the 1950s when the Government Teachers' College opened at Kyambogo. He was an all-round handyman who used to handle virtually everything, from electrical to plumbing problems, he was good at whatever he did. He had also seen the good and bad days at Kyambogo. We had also recruited a bright young engineer, Edward Turyomurugendo, as the Institute Engineer. Frustrated by the never ending water problem and the huge sums of money we were spending on water, one day I called Nyamungu to my office and asked him whether he was in any way able to help me solve the water problem. He said that he was indeed able and that he wished the past Directors and Principals had had the wisdom to ask him to fix the problem before it had deteriorated to the point it was now. At first, I thought the old man was showing off his technical prowess as a super technician. Nevertheless, I was prepared to give him the benefit of the doubt. I was desperate for a solution. I told him that I was going to discuss the matter further with the Institute Engineer and that I would get back to him in due course. I called the Engineer and, after discussing the technical pros and cons, we agreed that we should look for money and facilitate Nyamungu to do the job, under the supervision of the Institute Engineer. We got permission from the Institute Council to proceed and we started mobilising the necessary funds. It turned out that Nyamungu was rather resourceful, in spite of his age. He did most of the hard work such as trenching alone, and in three months, our water was flowing again.

Nyamungu had done it. The little problem was that the two old lines from Nabisunsa and Kyambogo were not pumping enough water into our reticulation all the time to meet the institute's daily requirements, which included the farm.

The institute's reticulation was connected to two main lines, one at Nabisunsa and the other at Kyambogo, along the Kampala-Jinja Highway. Unfortunately, the pressure at the two connection points was insufficient to pump the water to our storage tanks located on top of Banda Hill, a distance of almost two kilometres from the highway. Another high pressure point had to be found.

The Institute Engineer carried out a survey with the National Water and Sewerage Corporation, and the Martyrs' Way at Ntinda was identified as a good point for the new connection. Pipes were purchased to lay the mains from there to Kyambogo, a distance of over a kilometre from UPK. When the engineers tested the line, they discovered that it carried very little water. They linked the problem to the absence of a non-return valve at its junction with the old Kyambogo line. By this time, we had almost exhausted all the funds. Our consolation was that, at last, there was some water flowing constantly. While we waited to boost the volume by installing a non-return valve in the new Ntinda line, we had to use the little that was coming in sparingly. The project was completed with funds provided by DANIDA as part of the assistance to the Government of Uganda towards the establishment of the Institute of Special Education at Kyambogo. Staff and students at ITEK and UPK had something to celebrate. Because of the importance we attached to this achievement, I invited the Minister of Education and Sports, Mr Amanywa Mushega, to inaugurate the renovated water reticulation. He too was equally amazed by what we had accomplished and thanked us for a job well done. It was a moment of pride for me. We had done all this difficult work at a fraction of the cost, by utilising our own in-house technical expertise. It was no small achievement by any means, given the fact that most of the taps had been dry for almost fifteen years.

When Adonia Tiberondwa went into exile, following a tip-off that he was about to be killed by Amin, Mr Michael Brua was appointed the new Director of NTC Kyambogo. Very little is known about Mr Brua. He vanished without a trace during the liberation war of 1978-79, which toppled Idi Amin's Government. Those who worked with him give him credit for his hard work and development-oriented mind. As a way of recognising his contribution and as a living memory to his exemplary leadership, one of the men's halls of residence was named after him. In spite of the economic hardship, Mr Brua was able to mobilise funds for new buildings. There were several buildings started during his time. By the time war broke out, the buildings were at various stages of completion. After his abrupt departure, construction stopped. All building projects were left unfinished, and remained so for over ten years.

Over time, some of them developed severe structural defects which rendered their completion too expensive. Others were still in sound structural condition and could be completed without much difficulty. We soon realised that the academic programmes as well as staff and student numbers were expanding rapidly but

space was not. In fact, in some departments, we could not provide staff with office space. When the Government of Uganda created ITEK through a merger of NTC Kyambogo and NIE from Makerere, it did not provide new buildings. The new institute had to do with what I had inherited from the NTC, which was totally inadequate to meet its entire space requirements. I was constantly under pressure to provide additional teaching and office space. I could neither find the space in the old small buildings nor the money to construct new buildings; ITEK had no Government budget for capital development. After discussing the problem with my colleagues in the Executive Committee, we decided to look for money to complete one of Brua's unfinished buildings; a two-storey structure on the west side of the Administration Building. By the time construction was abandoned in 1979, it was at due for roofing and was therefore the cheapest and easiest to complete. We requested the Bursar to find some money for timber and Grade 1 corrugated iron sheets. Fortunately, there was some money in the internally-generated revenue account. It was not long before a roof went up on the structure that had been standing there unfinished for over a decade. I didn't however see it completed because of my new appointment at Makerere. Again, this was another unfinished business I had to leave for my successor to complete. The new Principal successfully completed it, and it now houses the Faculty of Arts. Our original plan was to use the upper floor as general-purpose lecture rooms, serving all departments, and the ground floor for offices for the academic staff who had nowhere to sit.

As we tackled the management and infrastructural problems, we were also making good progress on the academic front. The Academic Board, comprising the Principal, Deans and Heads of Departments was in place and functioning. Departments were re-organised and the semester system revised to allow students who were already qualified teachers to spend their two years at ITEK more profitably by giving more time for the content subjects. First-year BEd students used to spend the whole of the first semester of the academic year on professional subjects like Education Psychology and Foundations of Education. We reduced the time the students spent on these courses to one-third of the semester. We had to make this adjustment, following reports coming from the schools where the ITEK graduates were employed as teachers. The concerned headteachers were complaining that our graduates knew how to teach and had good classroom control but their subject content was weak. A repeatedly cited example was that of Mathematics. School heads were saying that ITEK BEd graduates were incapable of teaching Advanced Level Mathematics. We had to think of a prompt and appropriate response to the employers' concerns. There was a real danger that, in future, our graduates would find it very difficult to get jobs in schools. For a while, I taught Molecular Spectroscopy at the final year BEd level to help alleviate staff shortage in the Chemistry Department but that was not enough, as I did not have time to teach on a regular basis. I was too busy with administration and

fundraising. The Appointments Board was also busy recruiting new staff and, for the first time, ITEK was attracting PhD holders. Dr Kasasa was a Ugandan with a PhD in Education. He had spent many years in Liberia, and decided to come back home when the civil war broke out there. We were very pleased to have him on the staff of the Faculty of Education.

I was extremely happy to have recruited a female PhD holder in Fine Art. In our part of the world, PhDs in this discipline are quite rare, even at Makerere. This qualification is even rarer amongst women, but here we were with Dr Catherine Gombya, who came to ITEK from Kenyatta University in Nairobi, Kenya. A few years later, Dr Lawrence Kanyike, with a PhD in Education, who had also taught at Kenyatta University for many years, followed her. My old friend from the Makerere days, Jesudas Mwanje, a PhD holder in Solid State Physics was next to join the newly established Department of Physics. We were further fortunate to have a Jesuit priest, also with a PhD in Physics. Even Mr Kinyera whom we had asked to act as Head of Department had also acquired a second MSc degree in Physics from the U.K. When ITEK was created, Physics, Chemistry and Mathematics were lumped together in the Department of Physical Sciences. Much as I wish to believe that I am a progressive thinker, there are things that I believe must be properly demarcated, and scientific disciplines are some of them. For starters, if you lump such disciplines together under one department, chances are that they miss out on the establishment of academic leadership among other things. Science is general but it is also one of the most highly specialised disciplines. If it has to be taught as it should, you must allow for the recruitment of staff of varied specialisations. This was one of the reasons in favour of going back to the old traditional approach.

In time, we began to receive inquiries about job opportunities at ITEK from well-qualified Ugandan academics abroad, as well as non-Ugandans. This was further testimony that the institute was beginning to have a positive impact around the world. Some of the older members of staff who were teaching in the content departments such as English Language, Geography and others but with only a Master of Education degree which, by design, was low on content had decided to go back to Makerere to register for Masters degrees in content disciplines. The intention was to get either a Master of Science or a Master of Arts degree to beef up their teaching subjects. Those going back to study were sponsored by the institute out of the internally-generated income. However, as ITEK was slowly stabilising, Government decided to implement the Sam Turyamuhika Public Service Review Commission Report, which had recommended the retrenchment of some civil servants.

The retrenchment exercise was across the board. One morning in 1992, I received several sealed letters from the then Head of Civil Service and Permanent Secretary to the Ministry of Public Service, Mr Martin Orech, with instructions

to deliver them to the addressees in person. There was also a separate letter for me. Its contents were explicit; it was a list of retrenched members of ITEK staff. I could only imagine the impact the retrenchment exercise would have on the affected staff when they received the letters! I remembered the meeting I had attended in the Ministry of Education, chaired by one of the Assistant Commissioners. The Minister of Education was expected to address us, but he was delayed. As we waited for him, the Assistant Commissioner decided to get started. Soon after he had declared the meeting open, his Secretary came in and asked him to see her for a moment, because she had an urgent letter for him. He left the meeting and after some minutes, came back and said: "Ladies and Gentlemen, I am sorry I cannot continue chairing the meeting, I have been retrenched. Good bye!" And he left. This sad episode was still fresh in my mind when I received the letters from the Ministry of Public Service. Since I had no choice in the matter, I called the affected members of staff and gave the letters to them individually. As I expected when some of them read their letters, they broke down in tears. Some had spent all their working life at Kyambogo, and now they were being asked to leave under what, in the military jargon, was called a "dishonourable discharge", with no explanation given. It was painful. The only consolation, however, was that they were not leaving empty-handed. They were to be paid reasonable severance packages, which could keep them going for some time after retrenchment.

Before Professor Kajubi became Vice Chancellor of Makerere in early 1990, the British Government, through its Overseas Development Agency (ODA) had given a grant to Uganda Government to improve the quality of Science, English Language and Mathematics education at ITEK and at the National Teachers' colleges. The assistance was executed under a five-year Secondary Teacher Training Project (STTP). Besides forwarding five technical experts for Biology, Physics, Chemistry, Mathematics and English, the British Government constructed five new houses in what came to be known as Spring Gardens Village for the experts, because ITEK did not have suitable accommodation for them.

This was an exception to ODA's policy of not supporting infrastructure development. Ms Maggie Quinn, who had worked in Uganda before as School Mathematics teacher for many years in places like Kigezi College, Butobere and Gayaza High School, was the Project's Team Leader and Mathematics specialist. The project also provided a lot of scholastic material to ITEK and the National Teachers' Colleges. In addition to other project activities, the specialists also carried out full-time teaching. It was quite tough for them but they managed very well.

One aspect of this Project that fascinated me most was the new approach to science teaching, which made extensive use of materials readily available in the local environment. For example, the Chemistry specialist had identified the blue flowers of the morning glory plant, a common creeping weed, as a source of universal indicator. One of the experts extracted the pigment from the flower and

used it to measure the acidity and alkalinity of acids and bases. This is referred to as the pH scale. The morning glory flower had a reasonably long pH range and could be substituted for the imported universal indicator in the acid-base titrations. This approach was reminiscent of the School Science Project the Government of Uganda had initiated in the late 1960s but which stalled when Idi Amin came to power.

When the Project ended in 1993, most of specialists, including the Team Leader, Ms Quinn, decided to stay on local contracts; except for the Physics specialist, Dr Underwood, who chose to return to Britain. To me, their decision to stay on was a blessing. I had a serious shortage of lecturers in the Science and Mathematics disciplines, and fortunately, there was accommodation for them. At the end of the Project, the British Government, through its High Commissioner to Uganda, turned over the entire estate and the project Land Rovers to ITEK. The Biology specialist, Ms Anand Nair, who had accepted a local contract, resigned soon afterwards and left for South Africa. An avid flower grower, she had become a good friend of my wife.

There were also other international members of staff who were working on local contracts. The Biology Department, under the headship of Ms Robinah Ddumba, had Sister Calder Dennis, a Catholic nun from Ireland who was living in a Convent at Gaba because the institute could not provide her with accommodation. In spite of the distance, she commuted to Kyambogo daily in her car at her own expense. Her presence somewhat relieved the Biology Department of the acute staff shortage. Biology was one of the most popular subjects, so it had a relatively higher enrolment than the other science disciplines.

Sports Science also benefited from international volunteers. Ms Paula Turpenin was a Finnish volunteer sent to Uganda by a religious organisation based in Finland. When she joined the department, she soon realised how inadequately equipped it was. She made contacts in Finland and mobilised funds, which she used to purchase equipment to improve the institute's playing fields located below the Sports Science Department, at the south end of the institute's Administration Building. Working together with the Head of Department, Mr Semakula, a US-trained sports scientist who had become somehow disabled as a result of a road accident, they came up with a suitable design for the new sports field. It involved merging the two old and smaller fields and closing off the access road from the main ITEK campus to the Design Centre to the east. Even the power line had to be shifted to make room for an enlarged field. The tennis courts on the west side of the main field had been worked on earlier with funds Professor Kajubi had solicited. The original clay courts were given an all-weather asphalt surface, which made them available for play even in the wet season. With the project completed, we were ready to host the All Universities Games in Uganda for the first time in 1992.

The idea of all universities games was the brainchild of Mr Ssana and Mr Kadodoba who were both lecturers in the Sports Science Department at ITEK. Mr Ssana introduced the idea to me and asked me, in my capacity as Principal, to sell it to other institutions. I thought it was a brilliant idea, so I decided to discuss it with the Dean of Students, John Kasule, now deceased. He too thought it was a good idea worth trying. I wasted no time introducing it to my colleagues at Makerere, Mbarara and Mbale. They all concurred with us and pledged to participate in the first competition at ITEK. The games were a huge success and this was the genesis of what is now an annual event.

In 1992, four institutions participated in the games. In the same year, the STTP project ended, I received an unexpected inquiry for a lecturer position in Agricultural Education from a young Dutch man who had completed a Masters degree in Agriculture at the University of Wageningen. Initially, I ignored his application, because I did not think he would accept our small salary, but when he kept sending me reminders about his application, I realised he was serious and decided to act. He was interested in coming to ITEK to teach Agriculture, in particular Farm Management. He did not mind a local contract; his only concern was suitable housing on the campus. After some exchange of correspondence, and assuring him of accommodation, he quickly informed me that the small salary did not bother him, because he had found a way of supplementing it and that he was ready to come to Uganda any time with his wife and two little children at his own expense. We were still weak in Farm Management, so I did not want to lose his expertise in this field. After consulting with the Dean of Vocational Education, I decided to present his application before the Appointments Board. The Board appointed him lecturer in Agriculture on local terms. As soon as he received his letter of appointment, he made his way to Uganda. All I had to do was to send a vehicle to Entebbe to pick him up. He came on an early morning flight with his family. Before I showed him their accommodation in Spring Gardens, I invited him for breakfast at my residence. That was their first meal in Uganda. Spring Gardens was still in excellent condition and he quickly settled down to work and the ITEK routine.

The British assistance had come in handy to help revitalise science education at ITEK and in the National Teachers' Colleges. However, besides the STTP, there was a lot more that was happening at the institute. ITEK initiated the specialised training of teachers for children with various forms of disabilities, ranging from mental impairment, impaired sight, hearing and speech difficulties to severe physical disability. In fact, it was the only teacher training institution in the country with a Department of Special Education that offered a Grade Five Diploma in Special Education. The Volunteer Service Overseas (VSO), which had re-opened its offices in Uganda after the fall of Idi Amin, was very helpful in providing the specialist lecturers in such fields as Speech Therapy. The presence of these experts made the institute renowned for speech therapy services. The

young VSO speech specialist was very much sought after by people with speech difficulties. The most common speech defect she used to handle was stammering. She had become so much part of ITEK that when, one day, she came to inform me she was leaving Uganda for good, I almost told her I would offer her Ugandan citizenship. Although she had trained a few people, they had not yet accumulated the wealth of experience she had. I pleaded with her to stay on for at least one more year. Her reply was that she had done enough voluntary work, and she wanted to settle down to a family and a career in the UK. I could say no more, I had to let go. Indeed, her departure was a setback, but we quickly recovered because of the new support the Department of Special Education received from Denmark, in which special education was identified as one of the priority areas.

Shortly before I took up the job of Principal at ITEK, the Head of the Department of Special Education, Mr Ivan Matovu, had initiated exploratory talks with a representative of the Danish International Development Agency (DANIDA) on the possibility of some assistance to the department. The caretaker administration of Mr Epeju had even identified a site below the National Curriculum Development Centre (NCDC) for the construction of the new buildings for the department. The responsibility of concluding the negotiations fell on me. DANIDA fielded a full-time technical expert in Special Education, Dr Kurt Kristensen, who had an office at the Ministry of Education and Sports headquarters. One of the first things he wanted to solve was the site for the buildings. He told me that the plot below NCDC was too small for all the buildings he had in mind. Secondly, the Ministry wanted a full-fledged Institute for Special Education. But that meant that, if it remained within the ITEK structure, it would be an institute within an institute. Frankly, I did not know how we would go around this issue until I was informed that Government was creating a new institution which, for academic awards, would be affiliated to ITEK but, administratively, would independent of ITEK. My proposal, which was accepted and worked well for a while, was to upgrade the Department of Special Education to a faculty status. When the department eventually moved into the new premises, it acquired a status of the Faculty of Special Education, with Ivan Matovu as its first Dean.

Dr Kristensen asked for more land but there was no more land exceeding two hectares available at ITEK, short of clipping some land off the farm. Then I remembered that the Ministry of Education had a lot of land on top of the Kyambogo hill. Much of this land had been earmarked for the future expansion of Uganda Technical College (UTC), which was no more. I sought legal opinion on the possibility of using this land for building the Institute of Special Education. I was informed that since UTC had wound up and its replacement, Uganda Polytechnic Kyambogo (UPK), had not yet acquired legal status, all assets of the defunct UTC belonged to the Government of Uganda.

Dr Kristensen was also satisfied that the land was adequate for the purpose. We approached the UPK administration before talking to Mr John Ntimba who was the Minister of State for Higher Education. I was fully aware that my request to use part of the land in question would be unpalatable to UPK administration. Nevertheless, I was counting on the fact that the new UPK Principal, Dr Abel Rwendeire, was an old friend and colleague in the Faculty of Science at Makerere. I had known Dr Rwendeire as a progressive man, so I expected him to receive our proposal positively. The Vice Principal, Dr Basiima Mpande, was another colleague from Makerere in the Department of Mechanical Engineering. He used to help me teach Engineering Drawing to the Industrial Chemistry students before he left Makerere for Kyambogo. My other trump card was the Institute Secretary, Mr Avitus Tibarimbasa, who was a member of the UPK Board of Governors. He assured me he would defend our request at the UPK Board meeting. I later discovered that I had been naïve and overly optimistic because, when we introduced the idea to the UPK administration, Dr Rwendeire would not hear of it. In fact, he was furious with us. As far as he was concerned, the land we wanted to take over belonged to UPK, period! And he was prepared to fight tooth and nail to keep it that way. UPK was also expanding and needed all the land available, and he was not prepared to see ITEK encroach on it.

At the Board meeting, things were not easy for Avitus Tibarimbasa either. The negotiations with UPK were deadlocked. I needed a way out or risk losing the DANIDA grant. We then turned to our parent Ministry, leaving Avitus Tibarimbasa to conclude the discussion with the Ministry's officials. In the end, the Ministry prevailed and Dr Rwendeire was convinced that it was indeed a good project for the country. We were given all the land we needed. We later learnt that the Government of Uganda purchased the land at Kyambogo for educational purposes and were not restricted to the development of UTC only. In fact, before we made a bid for it, the Kampala City Council, in conjunction with the Ministry of Education and Sports, had already built a modern Primary School there. This weakened any further arguments from UPK.

The Danish grant was quite substantial, covering, among others, the rehabilitation of the students' kitchen, some halls of residence and water supply. At the time the DANIDA grant came on stream, we had already connected the institute's water reticulation to the mains at Ntinda, only a non-return valve was missing to make the system fully functional. The DANIDA grant made it possible to install the missing valve. Ivan Matovu and I spent many hours with architects and other technical experts from Denmark, planning the best way to implement the Project. We had to think through and agree on the design of the new buildings for the proposed Institute of Special Education. We would argue with the Danish architects about the location of some buildings. Their idea was to design all buildings along what they called "a single spine". In the end, we settled for what we thought was the best design, which incorporated a bit

of Danish architecture. Finally, the drawings were submitted to DANIDA, the Institute Council, Ministry of Education and Sports, and Kampala City Council for approval.

Besides the new building for the new Uganda National Institute of Special Education (UNISE) and general renovations, DANIDA also agreed to construct two new water storage tanks at the top of Kyambogo hill, with bigger storage capacity, to improve the water supply to the three institutions at Kyambogo – a free gift to my friends at UPK. However, as we prepared to launch the Project, I left ITEK for Makerere on a new assignment; and the new Principal, Professor Lutalo-Bosa completed the project.

With the completion of the buildings at its present location, what was a small Department of Special Education became the Uganda National Institute of Special Education (UNISE), the first of its kind in the country. After it was inaugurated as an autonomous institute the Minister of Education and Sports, Amana Mushega, appointed Edward Kasolo Kimuli, who was then Commissioner for the Inspectorate, as its first Director. Ivan Matovu became Dean. UNISE, now part of Kyambogo University was certainly one of the big success stories during my time at Kyambogo. I am extremely proud to have participated in conceptualising and planning it. Indeed, I owe a big debt of gratitude to the Government and people of Denmark for this special gift to our country.

After almost seven years of existence of ITEK, we were upbeat. So in 1992, we began thinking of holding the graduation ceremony for our BEd students on our own turf instead of letting them trot to Makerere every year. Besides, we had a big backlog of Diploma students who had not yet graduated. To our disappointment, Makerere University had a statute written way back in the mid-1970s that stipulated where the graduation ceremony would be held. The statute was specific about the venue – the ceremony could only be held on Makerere University main campus. This in effect meant that students who had studied at the affiliated institutions had to attend the ceremony at Makerere. The idea looked a non-starter. In spite of what appeared to be a setback, we decided to press on; after all, the statute was not cast in stone, so we reasoned. Sometimes, it is better to tempt fate than not to try at all. We also knew we had an ally we could count on, in the person of Professor Kajubi, who was the Chairman of Senate – the university organ responsible for the graduation ceremony. We decided to request Makerere to grant us permission to conduct the ceremony at ITEK. However, we were unaware of the hurdles we had to surmount before the university would allow us to host a Makerere convocation at Kyambogo. It would not be easy.

Some members of the Senate were not convinced it was a good idea to let ITEK hold such an important and cherished academic tradition at Kyambogo. That amounted to watering down the ceremony. But after some hard bargaining

in both the Senate and the University Council, Makerere conceded. ITEK could hold the ceremony at Kyambogo.

Although it was the news we had been waiting for, it was not yet time to celebrate. There were more hurdles to jump. The next big task was to convince the President to come to ITEK to preside over the ceremony. In fact, we badly needed to host the President at ITEK to install him as the first Institute Visitor. The President agreed to come to Kyambogo for the ceremony whenever we were ready for him. Once a dream, it was now a reality. We had every reason to celebrate the moment. Makerere was not known for open-ended generosity. No doubt, the Vice Chancellor must have put in a strong word for the institute he founded.

As soon as permission was granted, we set about organising the first graduation at the institute's campus. We wanted it to be a grand and flawless affair. The Academic Board and the Institute Council worked flat out to ensure a successful ceremony. We were ambitious and bold. At this ceremony, we would tell the President that ITEK was now academically and administratively mature and ready for full university status. We would ask His Excellency, the President and his Minister of Education to expeditiously grant us this request. We asked the Chairman of the Institute Council, Mr Basil Kiwanuka, to include our humble, but serious request in his speech. He obliged. Looking back, I suppose this was, in a way, the beginning of the preparatory phase on the road to establishing a full-fledged university. The university status did not come in my time, but much later. Since we had never hosted a graduation ceremony, there was no ready-made site for it. We traversed the entire campus until we found what we thought was an ideal location. However, our ideal site for the venue had to meet tough security requirements demanded by the then Presidential Protection Unit (PPU). Finally, we settled on the space between the lower and upper science laboratories. The PPU inspected the site we had identified and gave it a stamp of approval. We were in high spirits, because the President had agreed to honour our invitation. However, in the midst of the jubilation, serious work was waiting for me and the clock was ticking away. I had never written a graduation speech before, let alone drafting one for the President. Although we had recruited a Public Relations Officer, she too had never written one. Many years of scientific writing had left me with a non-flowery style of writing. Writing a speech looked simple but took me time to get started. Since I had to do it anyway, I settled down to work with my personal secretary, Sarah Wamala.

I had acquired a modern IBM golf head typewriter for the office from the Central Purchasing Corporation. It had a limited memory but was more than enough for the purpose. Sooner than I expected, the first draft was ready. To make sure the language flowed right, I turned to Father Kevin McKee, a native English speaker to "panel-beat" the draft into a fair copy. To my amazement, he came back saying that he thought my draft was fine, requiring minor editing which he had done. I

was relieved. My speech was ready but that of the Visitor had not yet been drafted. It had never occurred to me that the President's speeches had to be written for him. We worked on that one too and soon it was on its way to State House. While I worked on the speeches, the Academic Registrar was busy getting the academic gowns ready. ITEK did not have official colours, so the gowns, the Visitor's mace and other academic regalia had to be designed from scratch. In addition, he had to compile the graduation booklet, which contained the list of names of all ITEK Diploma students who had not graduated since 1988, as well as the 1991/92 BED graduands. He had to send out invitation cards. Unknown to us, some students did not like the idea of attending the graduation ceremony at Kyambogo, they preferred going to Makerere which, according to them, was more glamorous than ITEK. Unfortunately for them, the complaint came too late.

Since the President was coming to the institute in a dual role of Chancellor of Makerere University and the ITEK Visitor, Makerere had to provide the Chancellor's gown and mace. Up to this point, we had seemed to be on top of things. In fact, everything seemed to be going well, with minimal hitches. But as we were putting the final additions to the preparations, I received a call from the President's office. The caller was alerting me that the President might not be able to honour our invitation, because he had to travel to Gulu at short notice to attend to urgent security matters. He was telling me something I was least prepared for. Although I was fully aware that, with the President, nothing was certain until he was with you, I had not given much thought or even contemplated that he would not be able to honour our invitation. Worse still, the message was coming less than a week to the ceremony. However, the caller assured me that, should the President come back from Gulu in time, he would certainly attend the ceremony. I knew he was just softening the blow for me. There would be no Museveni at our first graduation ceremony, period: Murphy's Law was at work! I did not know how to relay the news to my colleagues who were working so hard to complete the arrangements on time.

Certainly, the news was bound to throw everyone into confusion. Morale would simply vanish there and then. I had no choice than to alert my staff to start thinking of a "Plan B". A lot was at stake. We knew from our Makerere days that, in the absence of the Chancellor, the Vice Chancellor acts. We also knew that in the absence of the President, the Vice President acts in his stead. Moreover, the President's Office had informed me that they had alerted the Vice President, Dr Samson Kisekka, and that he was ready to step in if the President failed to make it. So, Professor Kajubi was the man to convince to confer the degrees on behalf of the Chancellor and, although he was taken unawares, he willingly agreed to step in to save the day. Dr Kisekka would award the ITEK diplomas but the law did not allow him to confer Makerere degrees. To go around this rather clumsy technicality, we decided to split the congregation into two. The ITEK congregation would be constituted first, by the Vice President who

would also award the ITEK diplomas and, after a short musical interlude, the Vice Chancellor would constitute the Makerere congregation and proceed to confer the BEd degrees of Makerere University. We had averted the crisis and the nightmare of failing on the first attempt at organising a graduation ceremony.

This was a good exercise in crisis management but we still hoped that the President would come. The day before the ceremony, his Office dispatched the PPU and other security agents to ITEK. They carried out the usual security checks and inspections towards securing the graduation venue and the Administration Building. These were areas the President was expected to spend time during his stay at the institute. To me, these were sure signs that the President was indeed coming. Shortly before nine o'clock on the day of graduation, the PPU left without any explanation. The obvious reason for their sudden departure was not hard to figure out – the President was not coming. We were now on our “Plan B”. Later after the ceremony, we were officially told that the President was still holed up in Gulu. Dr Kisekka was an incredibly punctual man. Even at his advanced age, he was still good at keeping time. He arrived at the institute at exactly ten o'clock. After robing, the academic procession began. The rest was history. However, I had to interrupt my speech because, without realising it, I was reading from the draft. I had mistakingly left the fair copy behind in the seat and picked the draft. Since the draft was full of errors, I could not continue; so I had to stop, go back to my seat and pick up the correct text. This was the only thing that went wrong for me that day! Unfortunately for me, the ceremony was being broadcast live on Radio Uganda. However, I had no choice but to put up with the small embarrassment. After that little hitch, the rest of the ceremony went as planned. For the first time, our Deans had the pleasure of presenting their candidates for the awards and they enjoyed it. When the ceremony was over, we all agreed it had been a successful and colourful ceremony worth every bit of the effort and energy we had invested into it. Thenceforth, students did not have to go to Makerere to graduate.

There is an old Luganda saying that “bad deeds sound louder than the drumbeat, good deeds are not supposed to sound as loud”. Although I was too immersed in my work to notice it, there was some good coming out of our efforts. According to the grape vine, everyone was saying that we were succeeding in turning things around for the better at ITEK. Whether this was true or not about our modest achievements, if any at all, I guess we were indeed beginning to “sound louder than the African drum beat”. I used to be embarrassed whenever people complimented me for a job well done; and I believe that what people did not realise was that, although much appeared to have been done, there was still a lot to be done. I used to think that anything said about ITEK being turned around was premature, but that did not stop people from talking. Compliments were coming from unexpected corners. Soon, I was being asked how I had managed to do it. Interestingly, Minister Amanywa Mushega had become a frequent visitor to

the institute and kept thanking us for helping him sort out the mess there. I did not know what to make of all this. The only one thing I was sure of was that I was not a magician. I suppose whatever we had achieved was the result of team work, imagination, good planning, hard work and a supportive Council – nothing out of the ordinary.

Right from the beginning of our administration, we had decided that ours would be result-oriented management and all we did was to put into practice what we had committed ourselves to do. The compliments were not only embarrassing me, but also making me nervous. I did not know how to respond to such compliments. Many people who know me may not believe this, but the truth is that deep down, I am a shy person and that is why I sometimes talk a lot. Being talkative helps me to hide my shyness. The more I wished people would stop thanking me for what I saw as virtually nothing, the more they did.

As a result of the progress we had made at ITEK, I was given additional responsibilities in spite of my heavy and busy daily schedules I had to carry on as Principal. For instance, I was appointed Government representative on the first Governing Council of the new Mbarara University of Science and Technology. I served on this Council from 1991 to 2001. This was the Council that oversaw the designing of the University's logo and motto, as well as the construction of most of the new buildings, including the new University Library for which we had to fundraise, and many other developments there. I also served on the National Curriculum Development Centre Council, Kyambogo College School Board of Governors (as its chairperson) and St Joseph Secondary School Naggalama Board of Governors. It was increasingly becoming a little too hectic for me.

My colleagues who were more flamboyant than me were beginning to enjoy the nice things being said about ITEK and its administration. Some of them were so carried away by what they heard that they became unguarded and careless in their remarks. Others were often heard bragging, and making such provocative comments like "ITEASA was dead" within the earshot of some prominent ITEASA members. I had never under-rated the power of academic staff associations. During President Moi's rule, academic staff associations almost paralysed the entire public university system in Kenya. Its membership was too radicalised and excessively aggressive in its demands and dealings with Kenyan Government officials. Some of its members had actually turned themselves into the unofficial opposition to Moi's Government. I had also seen Makerere's MUASA transform from a docile organisation into a fire-spitting association which sent chills down the spines of the university administration and government officials alike any time its name – MUASA – was mentioned. At the back of my mind, I knew that ITEASA was far from being a dead organisation. It was alive and well. It had only become a simmering volcano because members of staff were slowly realising the demands they had been making on Government. However, the volcano could erupt any time and, like a Gabon viper, would strike

with a deadly blow. Occasionally, I had to warn some of my over-zealous colleagues that “to proclaim ITEASA dead was self- deception”.

Somehow, we had managed to maintain some semblance of peace and quiet, because we had opened up good communication channels that kept us in constant touch with all sections of the ITEK community, mainly through what we used to call *barazas*. These were essentially regular general staff and students’ meetings. They were intended to be fora for frank exchange of ideas, and for bringing current problems to the attention of the Institute Administration. Possible solutions would be vigorously debated at the *baraza* and later implemented. Sometimes, the Principal would be taken to task to explain certain decisions made by the Council, Appointments’ Board or Management, or why certain problems took so long to solve. The exchanges were candid, and I never felt threatened or in danger of being harmed whenever I was at a *baraza*. Once most people got used to this kind of communication, the initial mutual suspicions died away. In fact, we had succeeded in bridging the communication gap which usually exists between staff and administration.

Another factor which worked well in our favour was the fact that most of the students were mature. Some had families, so their approach to students’ problems reflected this level of maturity. For example, if there was a burning issue which they believed required an immediate response from the Principal, they would not resort to demonstrations, abusive language or stone-throwing. Instead, the Guild President or the Guild Minister concerned would present the problem or grievance to us and a solution would be mutually found. Using this approach and the regular *barazas* helped us solve many problems and we were able to avert students’ strikes. In fact, some of the Guild Presidents, like Ms Lagada and Etuk (now deceased) went on to build very successful political careers based on their experience at ITEK. They were really well-seasoned leaders who were not after cheap popularity. There was a degree of sincerity about them. They were the kind of leaders who would not say one thing to the institute authorities and then tell the students a different story, just to win their favour, as was usually the case with most student leaders I have seen over the years.

We were able to mobilise staff and students this way because ITEK had a small staff and student population. In a very large institution, it is difficult to communicate using this approach. The institution was also reeling from a bad crisis, so most people were open and receptive to new ideas, even if the ideas were untested. It seemed to me that most people wanted to put that dark chapter behind them as quickly as possible. It worked well and, for nearly three years, there was no staff strike until September 1993. In my own personal assessment, what triggered that second staff strike was a combination of external factors and leadership change in ITEASA itself. It was also quite plausible that some sections of the academic staff were not happy with our way of doing things,

but the most important factor was the resurgence of the more militant members of staff in the leadership of the association. In 1992-93, the Ministry of Public Service decided to computerise the public service payroll. This required every Government employee to have a unique identification number code which the computer would recognise. Unlike Makerere, ITEK salary scales were still part of the Government U scales. The IT scales were not yet gazetted, therefore they were not official. When the ITEK payroll came out, it did not reflect the changes in scales from U to IT. The Government's computer was programmed to recognise only the U and M scales and no other. As it turned out, many members of staff found themselves assigned wrong salary scales. Some names were missing or misspelt while some appeared more than once under different unique numbers. In short, the payroll had been dis-organised.

At that time, the computerisation of the Government payroll was the responsibility of a UNDP expert, a woman who had been hired from The Philippines. What followed was uproar. I had to make it a personal crusade to have the institute's payroll cleaned up as quickly as possible. Without an error-free payroll, most members of staff would not get their salaries and I knew very well that was a perfect recipe for a staff strike. Those of us who came from Makerere were more fortunate than our colleagues who were employees of the defunct NTC Kyambogo. The payroll pegged their scale to those of the Teaching Service Commission. When I raised the complaint about our dis-organised payroll with the Ministry of Public Service, I was referred to the UNDP Technical Advisor, who then referred me to the Uganda Computer Services. There, I was told that I should present my problem to the Commissioner for Data Processing in the Ministry of Finance. To my delight, when I reported to the Ministry of Finance Computer Centre, I met people I knew or whom I had taught at Makerere. Mrs Annakabbong, the wife of Professor William Annakabbong (the pharmacologist), was in charge of the Centre which was part of the Uganda Computer Services. She had with her in the Centre Mr Blasio Kigozi, Mr Sempijja and Arthur Kawooya, a former student whom I had taught at Makerere. I thought I had the right people to sort out the mess for me. This was the first time I was in the Government Computer Centre – quite a busy place. The huge ICL mainframe was clattering away non-stop. I explained my problem to the Uganda Computer Services programmers. After listening and perhaps feeling sorry for the mess that had been caused, they promised to do everything possible to clean up the payroll. As it turned out, the problem was more serious than we thought. It took weeks to fix the problem; sometimes, I needed to be around all day with the technical staff at the Computer Centre so they could sort out the information on my payroll.

The computer had to be re-programmed to generate a new payroll, but it still kept rejecting some unique numbers. The whole exercise was frustratingly slow. The technical staff too had to put aside some of their work in order to fix the

problem. After a lot of effort, they were able to clean up most of the payroll, so I thought I had some good news to report to staff. Unfortunately, the system was still rejecting a few names for reasons nobody could explain. When I reported the progress so far made at one of the *barazas*, most staff appreciated my efforts, but the ITEASA Chairperson insisted that everybody had to be on the payroll. I took time to explain the nature of the problem, which required going back to the Ministry of Public Service to cross-check the data. The Chairperson would not change his stance. He wanted to prove a point that even, as a recycled leader, he was not yet a “spent force”; that he had a lot of fire power left in him and therefore had what it took to be a leader capable of delivering a lethal punch. I was disappointed. I thought he would understand the pain I had gone through to get the payroll cleaned up. In fact, it was almost 99 per cent perfect. Since I did not compile it, I could not understand why the system could not accept the identification numbers of some members of staff. The Government computer programmers had informed me that we were dealing with a mis-coding error which had not been detected at the data entry stage in the Ministry of Public Service. To solve it, I needed to go back to the Ministry to have the data checked again, which I was in the process of doing. I thought it was an explanation everyone would understand but I was wrong. The new Chairperson of ITEASA wanted to prove to his constituency that the association had not been written off, that it was still a force to reckon with, and that he was the man who could provide the kind of leadership that could effectively fight for their rights in the old style.

Sadly for me, the problem of the few members of staff remained unsolved for several more days. ITEASA's patience ran out, so they went on strike and vowed not to go back to work until everybody's name was on the payroll and in the right salary scale. Characteristic of all strikes, those who do not agree with the reasons for calling for a strike found themselves having to go along with the majority decision or risk being branded blacklegs. Some members of staff who were not in favour of the strike told me that they thought that the decision of the ITEASA Chairperson to call for strike action was unreasonable and that they would have wanted to defy it, but feared for reprisals. I also told them that it would be unwise of them to be seen opposing the decision of their organization, adding that to go on a peaceful strike was perfectly legal. It was their right to protest injustice. However, I had to remind them that it was the students and taxpayers their action was hurting.

Deep down in my heart, I hated what was going on. We had worked hard together to overcome the problems of the past and here we were, trying to undermine those very gains we had worked so hard for through no fault of ours. Even members of the Institute Council, except the staff representatives, were taken aback. They too found it difficult to understand why the new ITEASA Chairperson was so vicious. It was as if, when he was away in the UK studying, he had been harbouring something nasty things about us and, as soon as he

came back, he badly needed to vent his anger. For him, this was the opportunity he had been waiting for. No amount of explanation by either the Chairman of Council or me would make him change his mind. What made this strike particularly uncomfortable for me was the fact that I was already leaving ITEK before I could solve it. Even with the strike on, I was not making any headway in sorting out the problem of wrong codes at the Ministry of Public Service. I was sorry I was passing the unsolved problem to the new Principal, somehow spoiling what should have been his honeymoon at ITEK. However, what was gratifying was that this strike was a low-key affair. There were no acrimonious statements made against the Institute Administration. All ITEASA was demanding was that, before its members resumed work, all members of staff had to be on the payroll.

Managing an academic institution in a poor country is not easy. Sometimes, challenges come in the most unexpected ways. I may not be practising them all the time, but I am a believer in values such as integrity and uprightness and I think they still have a place in today's society. Nevertheless, I cannot help getting surprised when I see people I expect to have a lot of self-respect indulging in indecent acts, such as cheating at examinations. I thought I had left the ugly vice of cheating at examinations at Makerere. With the exception of the Grade Five Diploma in Secondary Education, ITEK students were by and large mature upgrading teachers. Some of them had been head teachers. These were the role models, at least for their pupils. How wrong I was! In 1992, I saw worse things than I had seen at Makerere. Apparently, the decadence which had its beginnings in the 1970s had gone very far and was now completely eating away at whatever remained of the society's moral fabric. What started as a simple complaint from the Academic Registrar that some Diploma in Teacher Education (DTE) final year examination papers had leaked ended up as the worst and most extensive examination malpractice I had ever unearthed in my entire teaching and administrative career.

One day during the annual examination period, the Academic Registrar came to my office to inform me that he had received information from very reliable sources that some members of staff had leaked DTE II examination papers to some students. I asked him to conduct an investigation immediately. He was able to ascertain which examination leaked, including the actual examination papers, but he had no idea who had leaked them, so he continued interviewing as many students as possible. Soon, accusations started flying. Some students claimed that they knew the names of the members of staff who had leaked the examination papers to their female friends and that the females who were beneficiaries of the scam were well-known. Other angry students were willing to give names, but on condition of anonymity.

The Academic Registrar managed to get a few names. Some of the lecturers named were much older people, others were young men with a reputation of enjoying the company of beautiful girls. When the Registrar handed me the

names of the staff suspected to be responsible for leaking the examination, I could not believe what I saw. On the list were names of some of the respected people with many years of teaching experience. How could they have stooped so low as to indulge in something as damning as that at the risk of jeopardising their careers and reputation? I had no way of knowing, but I remained unconvinced that they were really the culprits. I had to investigate further. Nevertheless, when their names kept turning up repeatedly with tell-tale signs of how they had done it, I thought it was time to act. However, I also realised that the allegations against the members of staff had very serious legal implications for the institute; they had to be proved guilty beyond reasonable doubt, and we had to make sure that, in case of litigation against the institute, the evidence we had adduced could stand in a court of law. This was where my scientific training paid off.

As a science student many years ago, I had learnt not to draw conclusions based on insufficient data or on untested assumptions. A Physical Chemistry professor once told me never to draw a straight-line graph through two points. There must always be a third point to ascertain that, indeed, the graph is a straight line. To me, the situation at hand was a typical example of a straight-line graph being drawn through two points when there was no third point to confirm the evidence. Intuitively, I knew that although names had been given, we did not have the whole picture. I also knew a thing or two about *prima facie* statements and their dangers. I needed more evidence and the only way to get it was to continue probing. Meanwhile, the newspaper reporters had got wind of the massive examination cheating at ITEK and were having a field day. They were constantly at the institute, looking for what they considered newsworthy stories. In fact, an article that appeared in *The New Vision* newspaper during that time that almost got me into serious legal trouble with one member of staff. He wanted to sue the institute for defamation because he was named in the article. I was at pains to explain to him that no institute official had given anybody's name to the press. Fortunately, we were able to settle the matter amicably. The most sensible thing to do in the circumstances was to set up a Committee of Inquiry to probe the examination leakage.

Given the fact that some members of the teaching staff were implicated in the malpractice, we decided that the committee of inquiry should comprise only senior members of the administration, with the Principal as its chair. We asked the Academic Registrar to compile all the information and evidence in his possession. After looking at he had presented, we decided to invite everyone who was implicated in the examination malpractice. It was a tricky affair. I actually felt uneasy interrogating the senior staff, but it had to be done to get to the bottom of the truth. As chairperson, I had to devise a way of easing tension because, as we found out later, all those whose names were on Academic Registrar's list had been falsely accused. I told members of the committee, particularly the Academic

Registrar who was up in arms, not to ask intimidating questions or to appear to be biased in any way. We were after the truth. After interrogating members of staff, we turned our attention to the students, mostly the females suspected of having love affairs with some of the lecturers. The interrogations were long and laborious but disappointing. We were pulling blanks. We sat in the Board Room from eight o'clock in the morning up till ten in the night, but none of the hard work was giving us the breakthrough we were looking for. Every lead we investigated only took us to a dead end. No one was willing to admit complicity in the leakage.

The Academic Registrar and his deputy appeared to be convinced that the guilty members of staff were simply denying their roles in the leakage to buy time and save their necks. Frankly, after drawing so many blanks, I was inclined to draw the same conclusion, as the circumstantial evidence against some of them was indeed overwhelming, but not enough for me to institute disciplinary action against any named member of staff. I was not yet convinced. I had a hunch the case had not been made, despite the mounting evidence, which by all accounts looked water-tight. I needed more time, although I could sense that some of my colleagues were getting tired and looking forward to ending the probe. Worse still, the inquiry had brought most of the institute's business to a standstill. I was not about to quit.

As I was about to wind up the committee's work, we received the breakthrough we were looking for. An unexpected clue as to what had happened came from one of the female students we had been interviewing for some time. She was the first person to admit that she actually had access to the questions. She revealed that one evening when she was busy revising with her friends, a male student, who was also a primary school headmaster came to their room with some questions and told them that he had good news for them. What he had brought was the real examination paper and if they wanted to pass well, they should start revising those questions. He further assured them that he had more, which he would share with them later. The student said that at first they did not believe the man; nevertheless, they decided to look at the questions. She told the committee that she knew the man through a friend with whom she studied. She gave us the man's name and said she was ready to testify against him if called. When we asked her why she was giving all this information to the committee and why she had taken so long to do so? Her reply was that at the beginning, she was afraid but when she realised she was one of those being accused of having an affair with one of the lecturers implicated in the malpractice, she decided to come clean. In her opinion, some male students were falsely accusing members of staff because they were jealous and believed they were competing with them. The truth of the matter was that these members of staff had nothing to do with the leakage. We asked her whether she had any idea about the source of the leakage, but she said

their friend said that was his secret. We then decided to interrogate the named student.

The headmaster-cum-student was in his mid-30s, heading one of the army primary schools nearby. At first, he denied knowledge of the leakage. He claimed that he too just heard about it from his fellow students and that it was corridor talk everywhere on the campus. He told us that there was no way he could have been involved in such a terrible act because, as a headmaster, he knew fully well the implications and, secondly, he was a non-resident student. When we told him that we had a witness he had given the leaked examination papers to, who was ready to testify against him, he quickly responded by calling her a liar and that he hardly knew her. As one of his diversionary tactics, he bragged that if he had access to the real examination beforehand, he would be a fool to share such a secret with anybody. We pressed him further by giving him more details about the female student. This did the trick. He broke down in tears and confessed the examination questions had been given to him by a friend, who was also a headmaster at the Seventh Day Adventist Primary School nearby. We called his friend in and pitted them against each other. After denials and claims of malice, the second headmaster admitted that he was the brain behind the leakage. He told us that he was finding it difficult to study and to take care of his office at the same time, so he shared his problem with his friend from the Army school who was in a similar situation. Both realised that there was no way they could pass the final examination, because they had had no time to revise; so they had to think of a face-saving plan. Their scheme was elaborate. As headmasters, they were familiar with the wax stencils on which the examination questions were typed for cyclostyling. They knew about the carbon paper between the stencil and its back cover. Anything typed on the stencil was automatically imprinted on the carbon paper and was legible. What they decided to do was to approach the cyclostyling machine operator in the Academic Registrar's office with money. After getting the man's cooperation, they asked him to collect all the carbon paper from the examination stencils for them for a handsome fee. The cyclostyling machine operator found the handsome cash offer irresistible.

The scheme had gone well without a hitch and it almost succeeded, but they gave away their secret too soon. However, as any crime detective will tell you, every crime leaves a signature and a trail behind, however tiny the signature may be and however careful the criminal tries to cover up his trail. It can be a single strand of hair or very minute drops of blood invisible to the naked eye. These minute details help the eagle eyes of a well-trained and experienced detective to catch the criminal. What prompted those two young men who had scooped gold to share their secret with other people remains a mystery to me. Apparently, they were unaware of the old English saying: "Be careful what you say, walls have ears". We listened to the students' confession in total disbelief. I could see a visibly

shaken Academic Registrar. All along, he had been on a wild goose chase. I was sure he could hardly believe what he heard. How could such a dreadful thing happen in his own backyard and he did not have the slightest clue about it? And how could he be apportioning blame to the wrong people when the actual culprit was in his department.

It took us time to recover from the shock and, as I sat there listening attentively to what the student had to say, I recalled an incident in the early 1980s when Obote became President of Uganda for the second time. Obote was addressing Parliament and attacking the Opposition Leader, Dr Kawanga Semwogerere, for some remarks he had made, criticising the Government for its failings. Obote said, that he had pity on his brother, Semwogerere, who thought that two plus two always equals four, forgetting that the answer depended on the base used. Had I not insisted on continuing with the inquiry would I not have committed the same mistake of drawing conclusions based on wrong assumptions? I thanked my lucky stars for insisting on stronger evidence.

After we had heard the students' testimony, we needed to corroborate it with the cyclostyling machine operator's account. We decided to talk to him too and invited him to appear before the committee. He was an elderly man who had long passed the mandatory retirement age of sixty but, because he had long working experience and was considered trustworthy, the institute had decided to keep him on the job. Like Nyamungu, he too had been transferred from the defunct NTC Kyambogo. He hailed from what used to be East Acholi district, which was now Kitigum and Pader districts. Although he understood English, he was not fluent enough to give his testimony, so we had to find an interpreter for him. I soon learnt that he spoke a Luo dialect few Acholis understood. Although we had several people from Gulu and Kitigum, not everyone from there could comprehend his dialect. We were fortunate to have a member of staff who understood the dialect, and agreed to be the interpreter. The old man narrated how the headmaster from Kireka had approached him and promised a lot of money, and that he was even ready to pay him an advance. The old man had protested, adding that all his working life at Kyambogo, he had never done such a thing. Everyone trusted him that he was worried he would betray the confidence the Registrar had in him and that if he was caught, he would lose his job. The student had assured him that there was no way the Academic Registrar or anybody would get to know of it. The old man proved very cooperative, and did not deny anything. All he was asking for was clemency, because of his previous clean record.

After gathering all the evidence, we had to take our findings, conclusions and recommendations to the Institute Council, the Academic and Appointments' Board for appropriate action. The two students were immediately expelled; the cyclostyling machine operator was also dismissed. The Academic Registrar and the Deputy Registrar were given a serious reprimand for the laxity in handling the

processing of the examinations. From then on, the carbon paper had to be removed from all examination stencils and destroyed before sending for cyclostyling. The Academic Registrar was advised to use only trustworthy secretaries for examination typing and cyclostyling machine operators had to be strictly supervised. We all learnt very valuable but painful lessons from this experience. The hard work and time spent on the probe were, after all, worth the while.

While I kept busy with the management and academic affairs of the institute, my wife Alice was also making modest contributions to the Kyambogo community. She was elected a member of the Kyambogo Resistance Council III executive committee as the Secretary for Women, with Mr Augustine Rugyema, the Head of Electrical and Electronic Engineering at the UPK as Chairperson. As a member of the executive committee, she had to represent Kyambogo Division on the Kampala City Council, KCC. The Institute Secretary, Mr Avitus Tibarimbasa, was also a member of the same executive as Education Secretary. He too was a *de facto* member of Kampala City Council. In fact, the two used to refer to each other as "Fellow Councillor". I could see my wife develop a serious interest in politics; all along, Alice had been apolitical. As we shall see later, I strongly suspect that, for Mr Tibarimbasa, this was his entry point into real politics. Besides representing the Division in the KCC, my wife mobilised the women for productive activities. One of such activities was a day care centre, where working mothers could leave their children under the care of an experienced nanny.

When the Primary School moved from the ITEK campus to the new buildings on top of Kyambogo hill, some of the vacated buildings remained unused. They required renovation to make them habitable again. At the time, the institute did not have money to repair them. The women spotted one of them and asked me to allocate them some space for their Day Care Centre project. They assured me that they would find the money to renovate it. As was my usual practice, I made a few consultations. We all agreed that it was a good idea and, on that basis, we allocated them a room for their project in one of the empty buildings. My wife took a very keen interest in the project and was actually successful in raising funds for it. Mrs Connie Hab'alyaleme of the Literature Department and Ms Anand Noir, the specialist on the ODA Project, volunteered to assist her with the day-to-day running of the centre and in the fundraising activities. With the money they had managed to raise, they recruited a nanny and started taking in babies and infants. To my surprise, the project was an instant success. When the centre was fully up-and-running, Alice invited Dr Specioza Wandira Kazibwe, then Minister for Women and Culture to Kyambogo to have a look at the women's projects, and the Day Care Centre in particular. Dr Kazibwe did come and toured the projects. They made a good impression on her so much that she promised the women support from her Ministry. Apparently, Alice was a good mobiliser and a result-oriented leader, but unfortunately for her, our time at Kyambogo was cut

short by my new appointment at Makerere. So, she did not stay long enough to see her project's progress, but her successors did not do a bad job either. The Day Care Centre continued to thrive and over time, evolved into a kindergarten.

That was our time at ITEK, a place, which had become our beloved home away from our matrimonial home. When I became ITEK Principal, I resigned my position at Makerere and I did not expect to ever go back there. How wrong I was! Apparently, Makerere and I had become an inseparable couple right up to my retirement in 2004. Once again, it was now time to pack our bags and go west. ITEK had proved to be a good training ground for my next job at Makerere. There, I learnt many valuable lessons in institutional management, transformation and development. In one of the courses on institutional management the Ministry of Education and Sports used to organise for us, in conjunction with the World Bank at the Crested Crane Hotel, Jinja, I learnt from practical experience how easily information could be distorted through verbal communication. I have never forgotten that experience. That experience stood me in good stead when I returned to Makerere. The only regret I could think of as I was leaving ITEK was the amount of unfinished business I had to leave behind. However, my successor, Professor Lutalo- Bosa, was a seasoned administrator. ITEK was losing a mare and gaining a stallion.

