OVER 1,000 LECTURERS QUIT FOR GREENER PASTURES — REPORT

BY CONAN BUSINGE

In just one year, over 1,000 lecturers have abandoned lecturing in Ugandan universities, according to the latest state of higher education report in the country.

Much as for the last 10 years the number of academic staff in higher institutions of learning has increased from 5,249 in 2004 to 12,638 in 2017; the latest report by the National Council (NCHE) for Higher Education shows that the number is now rapidly declining.

The NCHE report shows that most of the lecturers who quit teaching are at masters' level. Of the 6,515 lecturers who were in service in 2016, only 5,520

are still in service, both in private and public universities. as well as other institutions.

At the same time, there were more PhD holders. from non-academic sectors, who are gradually joining the teaching force on parttime basis, a move President Yoweri Museveni contests. He believes that lecturers and scientists on the Government payroll should be loyal to their institutions and should avoid 'moonlighting'.

If 1,000 lecturers keep leaving the universities, in the next 10 years, the country may be in a crisis for lecturers.

The state minister for higher education, Dr Chrysostom Muyingo, says the attrition of lecturers is linked to the

PRESIDENT ORDERS FOR BETTER PAY

Much as the Public Service and finance ministry hiked the pay of lecturers this financial year, the President early last month. wrote back to Public Service. expressing his disappointment that they had not followed his instructions on the formula of paying university lecturers. Museveni ordered the public service ministry to increase

low pay in the country's universities compared to the East African region and abroad.

funding from the Government

salaries for government scientists and lecturers in public universities.

"I have issued a directive to the public service ministry to conclude the issue of payments to government scientists and university teachers by moving them to the desired levels we previously agreed on," explained the President.

and private partners to keep afloat," he said.

His view is supported by Gulu Universities' vice-

Openjuru, who said public

universities in Uganda are paving less compared to other organisations in the country.

He also said many lecturers quit to join non-governmental organisations and research projects.

The International University of East Africa's vice-chancellor, Dr Emeka Akaezuwa, says quality education in private universities comes at a high cost.

"Our university is lucky to have external funding. Other universities solely depend on tuition to run and that is dangerous," Dr Emeka explained

The new 2019 report on the "Universities need more charcellar Prof. George " - Luvi " shows that most universities status of higher education have 75% of their earnings

built on tuition. When the numbers are low, it means such universities cannot afford to pay lecturers a good salary and they end up quitting.

The vice-chancellor of Team University, Lutalo Bossa, says most lecturers leave public and private universities because of the low pay.

"But private universities suffer more because of their limited resources and overdependence on tuition to pay lecturers and run their operations," he explained.

Prof. Badru Kateregga, the former chairperson of the Vice-Chancellors' Association, said, "There is a high dropout rate in universities, partly because of suition and other economic and social-related issues.