

(PIASS)



REFERENCE UNIVERSITY

NEWS LETTER 2022 - 2023



Those who hope in the LORD will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint [Isaiah 40:31].

STEPS OF FAITH WITH SEASONAL GREETINGS

As we look back to the year 2022 – 2023, and steadily starting the 2023 – 2024 academic year, we thank God for his blessings upon PIASS. We extend our greetings and best wishes for the Christmas season to all our partners, students and staff and mostly for the community achievements. PIASS community also sends its wishes for the coming year of 2024 to be even more successful, more productive and healthy for the great mission that we all have on earth. This year that we are about to end, has marked our minds with some success and exciting stories. It is with great pleasure and a sense of profound gratitude that we reflect on the collective journey we have undertaken, notably as and with the new leadership of the institution. With some uncertainty feeling of being new in the office of the Vice Chancellor together with two new Deputy Vice Chancellors (the Vice chancellor in charge of Academics and the Vice Chancellor in charge of Administration and Finance), business was not as usual. But, we are profoundly grateful to the PIASS community including council members for encouragements and close collaboration throughout the whole year.

The year registered a lot of activities, including normal teaching and learning, Scientific Week, conferences and seminars, graduation ceremony and the 53-year anniversary of our institution. The year marked with challenges and triumphs, has yet showcased resilience, dedication, and extraordinary commitment of our staff community. We commend all significant achievements in teaching, research, and community engagement. Thus, the office of the Vice Chancellor extends its deepest gratitude to each member of our community; faculty staff, students and our partners for their dedication and contributions. Your efforts have played an integral role in making PIASS the dynamic and inspiring community it is today. As we begin the new academic year 2023- 2024, we carry with us the lessons learned, the successes achieved, the gaps to be bridged, and the bonds strengthened. We are confident that the coming year will bring new opportunities for growth and more collaboration, and eagerly anticipating the continued efforts to make PIASS a reference university. Thank you for being an essential part of the Protestant Institute of Arts and Social Sciences.

Prof. Dr. Penine UWIMBAZI

Vice Chancellor of PIASS

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PIASS BACK VIEW

Ending the academic year 2022 – 2023 and starting another one 2023 -2024, we look back to evaluate ourselves, we see more blessings than challenges. Starting from 26 October 2022 with the installation of PIASS new leadership; the new Vice Chancellor, Prof. Dr. Penine UWIMBABAZI; new Deputy Vice Chancellor in charge of Academic Affairs, Rev. Dr. Viateur HABARUREMA; and new Deputy Vice Chancellor in charge of Administration and Finance, Rev. Emmanuel MUHOZI; and the inauguration of the New Education building of Architecture and Green Technologies funded by Bread for the World, indicates a lot of dedication from our partners and PIASS leadership then led by Rev. Professor Elisée MUSEMAKWELE before his humble retirement on 25th October 2022.

We are grateful for the ending of the academic year, and beginning of 2023 – 2024 academic year which started on 20th October 2023. Even more grateful that this academic year begins with opening up a 4th faculty, a Faculty of Architecture and Green Technologies with sophisticated lab materials. We have started the academic year gratefully with a number of new programs: Water Resources Management, Urban Planning and Management, and Master Program of Education in Quality Education Management. The latter remains an outcome of the ongoing International Master Program in Educational Quality (IMPEQ) run in collaboration with the University of Bamberg which is now in its 6th cohort. The beginning of the new academic year was indeed marked with the joy of the graduation ceremony for the 5th IMPEQ cohort that took place at Bamberg on 29th September 2023.

INSTALLATION OF PIASS NEW LEADERSHIP on 26 Oct. 2022



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EDUCATION

VOYAGE INTERFACULTY

Our work through the four faculties has been both an exciting and learning journey. Currently PIASS has four active faculties: The Faculty of Theology and Religious Studies, the Faculty of Education, the Faculty of Development Studies, and the Faculty of Architecture and Green Technologies. We have a multi-intake practice throughout the year, and the office of the registrar is always open to provide any information related to registration.

➤➤➤ FACULTY OF EDUCATION-FED

The Faculty of Education remains the largest one with three departments: Sciences and Humanities, Business Studies, and Languages. They host a variety of undergraduate programs where education is applied to different subjects like business studies, history, geography, mathematics, Kinyarwanda, and English. Thanks to deserving efforts of its staff, the faculty is also running a Postgraduate Diploma in Education and a Master program of Education in Quality Education Management.



**Degree awarding to
FED graduates**

➤➤➤ FACULTY OF DEVELOPMENT STUDIES- FDS

The Faculty of Development Studies has been hosting three major departments: Rural and Community Development; Urban and Environmental Management; and Peace and Conflict Studies. The following undergraduate programs are so far delivered in these departments: Rural and Community Development; Peace and Conflict Studies; Natural Resources and Environmental Management; and Urban Planning and Management.



AVP
Workshop

➤➤➤ FACULTY OF THEOLOGY & RELIGIOUS STUDIES

The Faculty of Theology and Religious Studies has two departments; the Department of Protestant Theology and the Department of Religious Studies. It is now running two Masters programs, one in Christian Ethics and Leadership and another one in Community Care and Development. The faculty has been working so hard in developing two new programs; these are a Postgraduate Certificate of Theology in Biblical Interpretation and Christian Worship; and a Postgraduate Diploma of Theology in Ministry.

The FTRS is a long and well-established faculty since 1970 with a strong and qualified academic staff, though still aiming at acquiring more and more local academic staff in different fields of theology and connected areas of social sciences to enhance interdisciplinary spirit in teaching and research.



Lecture on Memory
work in Rwanda

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THE FACULTY OF ARCHITECTURE & GREEN TECHNOLOGIES-FAGT

This new faculty has already started with the program of Water Resources Management, while Urban Planning and Management will highly benefit from its modern lab materials. Architecture is still undergoing the process of accreditation. It is expected that more new programs will be developed and hosted in this faculty and that community members will benefit from its unique practical programs.



Water Testing Practice

INAUGURATION OF NEW LABORATORIES

On 8 August 2023, Mrs. Alice KAYITESI The Governor of Southern Province inaugurated 3 new laboratories which were built in partnership with Bread for the World. These labs are; Water testing lab, Surveying lab and Soil testing lab. They are all located in the Green Technologies Building. These labs were inaugurated during the celebration of PIASS Triple Anniversary.



The Governor of Southern Province inaugurated new PIASS Labs on 8/8/2023

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RESEARCH & PUBLICATIONS

►►► SCIENTIFIC WEEK

Among many other achievements for 2022 – 2023 are such as the 10th Scientific Week, habitually taking place every year, and this time took place on 9th -10th December 2022 under the theme “The Impact of Covid-19 on the Sustainable Goals: Challenges and Opportunities for the Future of Higher Education.” This Scientific week was a hybrid event which included different scholars both from Rwanda and abroad.



Scientific Week
December 2022

►►► PUBLICATIONS

The launch of volume 3 of home-grown initiatives (Home Grown Initiatives and Nation Building in Africa: The Dynamics of Social and Cultural Heritages in Rwanda [ISBN 978-3-643-91423-1; 978-3-643-96423-6]) which took place on 21st April 2023, was an exciting milestone of yet another informative book volume of scholarly analysis on how home-grown initiatives have contributed to the state building and Rwanda’s social economic development. The launch of PIASS monograph under the title “Seeds of Blessings from ETB to PIASS: History, Institutional Development and Achievements of PIASS” ISBN 978-99977-0-449-8) was possible due to the laudable efforts of PIASS and its international partners which illustrates our institution’s ecumenical character.



Different
Publications of ours

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LECTURES, WORKSHOPS & SEMINARS

PIASS also organizes regularly seminars where different governmental and nongovernmental individuals or institutions are invited to present on an identified interesting topic. Questions and discussion always present a form of learning ground to both PIASS community and the community outside PIASS. As part of its academic activities, PIASS conducted lecturers, workshops, and seminars on various topics.

➤➤➤ SUPERVISION OF MA THESIS

This Master Thesis supervision workshop was organized for academic staff who are involved in MA thesis supervision. This workshop served to enhance their capacity in supervising MA thesis & helping students to write good thesis. It was organized in collaboration with University of Bamberg and it was facilitated by Prof. Dr. Annette Scheunpflug. Participants shared experiences on best practices that are being done to make MA students enjoy their writings.



MA Supervision
Workshop of March 2023

➤➤➤ YOUTH RADICALIZATION SEMINAR



In order to deal with radicalization & violent extremism, the Faculty of Theology & Religious Studies organized a one-day seminar on “The dynamics against youth radicalization in Rwanda” for students and staffs of this faculty. The seminar aimed at training theologians & pastors to enable them to address radicalization among youth and reflect on the way to promote values of tolerance & mutual respect between religions mainly Christianity & Islam. It was facilitated by Dr. Mbarushimana Djibril, Rev. Dr. Olivier M. Ndayizeye & PIASS Deputy Vice Chancellor for Academics, Rev. Dr. Viateur Habarurema.

Youth Radicalization
Seminar of March 2023

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➤➤➤ TRAUMA HEALING & PEACE BUILDING WORKSHOP

The Faculty of Theology and Religious Studies at PIASS organized 3 days (22-24/03/2023) workshop on Trauma Healing and Peacebuilding for all students and staff of this Faculty. The seminar was facilitated by Mrs. Jane Snaith (the Chairperson of Family for Each Child/Igale Lapsele Pere in Estonia). By keeping in their minds that "trauma healing is a long journey", participants got an opportunity to discuss and share experiences on different subjects including but not limited to; Meaning, Causes, types, symptoms and effects of trauma, Brain development, Risk factors (of traumatic experiences) for emotional and behavioral problems, Early childhood adversities and impact of traumatic experiences on development and the whole life Span, and Therapeutic approaches for healing from childhood trauma- children and adults. Trauma Healing from Biblical perspective and the role of the church.



Trauma Healing & Peacebuilding Workshop

➤➤➤ GENDER BASED VIOLENCE WORKSHOP

On October 2-3, 2023, PIASS organized a training on Gender Based Violence and Alternative to Violence Program as a solution, in which pastors from the Protestant Churches in Rwanda including Presbyterian, Baptist, Anglican and Pentecostal churches attended. The training was held in Kigali at Bethany Investment Group Isano Branch.

The training aimed at elaborating contextual understanding of violence. It was highlighted that violence takes many forms such as verbal insults, violating others' rights, and other misbehaviors. The training raised awareness on/of different types of violence including gender based violence, violence based on property, physical violence, verbal and psychological violence.

The participants shared experiences from their respective contexts, and appreciated that this training raised their understandings and awareness different types of violence which is being practiced in their areas. Participants committed themselves to help their communities to know the existing violence and to fight against any kind of violence.

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PUBLIC LECTURES

As a university, organizing public lectures for students is our concern. These lectures, provide our students with the opportunity to hear from experts in a field, and they are able to make connections with factual knowledge. This year we have organized lectures on various and crosscutting topics which made out students to reflect on different issues that are happening in the world of today.

»»» RELIGION: THE OPIUM OF THE PEOPLE OR A FACTOR OF DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA?

In collaboration with PIASS Peace Club, on 3 September 2023 we organized a public lecture on "RELIGION: The Opium of the people or a factor of Development in Africa. Perspectives from Judeo-Christian traditions and African Traditional Religions."

The speaker was our DVCA Rev. Dr. Viateur HABARUREMA who shaded light on how different societies understand the concept of religion. The main question of reflection was "How does African Community oriented mindset affect both positively and negatively personal and communal socio-economic development in their countries?"



»»» WOMEN LEADERSHIP & GENDER JUSTICE



Rev. Dr. Jeaneth Faller

In Collaboration with the Faculty of Theology and Religious Studies, on 13 November 2023, we had a lecture on Women Leadership and Gender Justice offered by Rev. Dr. Jeaneth Faller from Silliman University (Philippines). Through her experience, she reflected on how the power of words can change someone either negatively or positively. Emphasizing that gender equality and women empowerment require someone to believe and transform one's thinking from "I am not able" to "I am able", and hear that "I am worthy". Believing that anyone is a leader, we are called to empower and transform others to believe in themselves. That is what Dr. Jeaneth calls transformational leadership.

»»» THE EFFECTIVENESS OF REGIONAL & INTERNATIONAL CONFLICT RESOLUTION MECHANISMS

Prof. Dr. Penine Uwimbabazi, an expert in conflict transformation and policy analysis, discusses regional insecurity and the mechanisms for resolving regional and international conflicts. She examines the successes and challenges of organizations such as the UN, AU, and EAC in their diplomatic interventions. The lecture, organized by the PIASS Students Union, provided an opportunity for participants to ask questions and engage in a round table discussion on the effectiveness of conflict resolution mechanisms. The lecture offered valuable opportunity for staff, students, and community members to come and learn together.



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Huye Campus: 0788310811, Karongi Campus: 0783720580

IMPORTANT EVENTS

COMMEMORATION OF 1994 GENOCIDE AGAINST THE TUTSI



Mayor of Huye District Laying a wreaths on PIASS' monument

On 20 & 21 May, 2023 we held the 29th commemoration of the genocide against the Tutsi in 1994. At the same occasion, we paid tributes to the staff and students of the Faculty of Theology who were killed during the genocide. This event was started with a commemoration evening on 20 May. On the following day, we had a walk to remember and different messages from officials about the commemoration theme "Remember - Unite - Renew." #KWIBUKA29.

10TH GRADUATION CEREMONY

One of the milestones of the celebrations of PIASS Triple Anniversary was the 10th graduation ceremony which was celebrated on 7th August 2023, with 621 graduates who were awarded bachelor's and masters degrees. Among 621 students who graduated on this day, 328 (53%) of them were women, while 293 (47%) were men. These statistics include our first 7 graduates of Master's programs of Theology in Community Care and Development, and Christian Ethics and Leadership, 12 students from the Faculty of Theology were awarded with Bachelor Degree with Honors in Protestant Theology, 43 students from Faculty of Development Studies and 541 graduates from the Faculty of Education.



10th Graduation ceremony of 7/8/2023

TRIPLE ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

From 6th to 8th August PIASS celebrated 53 years of its existence through the TRIPLE ANNIVERSARY ceremonies. On this day, we were celebrating the growth and sustainability of our institution, which humbly and steadily grew from the School of Theology (Ecole de Théologie de Butare, ETB) since 1970s and became the Faculty of Protestant Theology (Faculté de Théologie Protestante de Butare, FTPB) in 1990, then expanded to include other faculties of Education and Development Studies, and it received accreditation as the Protestant Institute of Arts and Social Sciences (PIASS) in 2010.

Our Vice Chancellor Prof. Dr. Penine UWIMBABAZI said that “celebration is a moment to reflect on the last 53 years, learn from both good and challenging times PIASS has gone through, and to recognize men and women who worked tirelessly to make PIASS what it is today.”

During the celebration, we inaugurated 3 new laboratories which will be used for the new programs of Architecture and Green Technologies. The event was also marked by planting 53 trees as a symbol of continuity and prosperity. These consist of fruits & ornamental trees, which will also serve in keeping our Campus green. “Those who hope in the LORD will renew their strength.” (Isa. 40:31 NIV).



Cutting cake for Thanksgiving

PIASS TRIPLE ANNIVERSARY



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STAFF DEVELOPMENT

Over the year 2022-2023 PIASS gratefully received six new PhD holders in its academic staff including three females, namely Dr. Christine Nyiramana, Dr. Fortunée Bayisenge and Dr. Claire Dusabemariya, and three males namely Dr. Bizimana Emmanuel, Rev. Dr. Celestin Nsengimana and Rev. Dr. Rwamunyana. Moreover, we have received three Master' holders in our staff, namely Mrs. Aline Mukanziza, Mrs. Beatrice Mukanyandwi and Mr. Phocas Hagumimana. More staff members are expected to graduate in 2024. We remain committed to sending more candidates for Master's and doctoral studies to equip our staff in different disciplines.

PIASS is thankful to its partners especially Bread for the World, Kerk in Actie, EMW, UEM and University of Bamberg for their support in staff development program(s).



PIASS Huye
Campus library

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PROSPECTS AND PRAYER REQUESTS

For PIASS to keep its vision of transforming people's lives intellectually and spiritually, PIASS wishes and expects to find a helping solution to student mothers who need baby seating support during their classroom sessions.

The Faculty of Theology eagerly wants to start post graduate certificate and diploma programs.

PIASS Karongi campus wishes to strengthen its programs and link it to the community and expand the campus with more big classrooms and library.

PIASS intends to strengthen its green campus as a model for combatting climate change.

Last but not least, PIASS wishes and plans to expand the student's hostels and restaurant.



Planting trees of continuity & prosperity

THANK YOU FOR PRAYING WITH US.

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FOOD FOR SOUL

THOSE WHO HOPE IN THE LORD WILL RENEW THEIR STRENGTH. THEY WILL SOAR ON WINGS LIKE EAGLES; THEY WILL RUN AND NOT GROW WEARY, THEY WILL WALK AND NOT BE FAINT [ISAIAH 40:31].

This was the PIASS verse of the year as we celebrated our 53 years anniversary. Learning from the 53 years' journey, the verse emphasizes and encourages believers to finding strength and renewal through hope in the Lord. The image of soaring on wings like eagles, running without growing weary, and walking without fainting is used to convey the idea that those who place their trust in God will be empowered and sustained.

We at PIASS thank God that He has been the source of our hope and encouragements through the ups and downs on the journey from 1970s to today. Sometimes we plan what to do and plan how to execute it, but sometimes we are very much confused and not sure what and how to do or get out of our confusion. But we are now reminded that relying on God is the best way to go, whether in good or bad times. Very encouraging that through our daily encounters, we will not grow weary but our strength will be renewed day by day if we place our hope in the Lord. He is faithful and worth to be trusted.

May you have hope in the Lord.



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