
EDUCATION NEWS

Zimbabwe has high student mobility

Reported by [Peter Banda](#) in Harare

6 November 2014 – Harare, Zimbabwe – Zimbabwe has one of the most highly mobile student populations in Africa, according to the Council for International Schools (CIS). CIS, a global non-profit membership organisation that provides services to higher education institutions and individuals focused on international education, coordinated a visit to eight African countries by 21 admissions officers from universities and colleges in United States, Canada, Switzerland and Spain. Over 630 students from more than 30 high schools visited the two fairs in Harare yesterday.

“We chose countries based on where students show the most mobility for their education,” said Laura Severin, Associate Director of Admissions and Financial Aid at Yale-NUS College. “In addition, we were looking at countries where we have contacts with high schools and work closely with EducationUSA country offices as well as where we see potential for growth,” she added.



In picture: Ambassadors Wharton, Lisa Stadelbauer and Swiss Ambassador Lavizzari at the CIS Colleges and Universities Fair at Harare International School on November 5th

The admissions officers- comprising 14 admissions officers from the United States, five from Canada, and two from Switzerland- arrived from South Africa early morning, shared information about study prospects at their institutions. They will do the same with students in Lusaka, Zambia; Kampala, Uganda; Cape Town and Johannesburg, South Africa; Kigali, Rwanda; Addis Ababa, Ethiopia; Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania and Accra, Ghana until November 18th. The tour doubles as part of activities to mark International Education Week, November 17-21. International Education Week is celebrated globally as an opportunity to celebrate the benefits of international education and educational exchanges worldwide.

In the United States, the number of international students at American colleges and universities during the 2013/14 academic year increased to more than three quarters of a million students. Over 1,100 of these international students are from Zimbabwe.

This is CIS’s first visit to Rwanda, but CIS has coordinated several visits to Zimbabwe. “This tour is the 10th such visit to Zimbabwe organised by the CIS with university admissions officers,” said Rebecca Zeigler Mano, EducationUSA Country Coordinator. “We are very pleased to have them return this year.”

In addition to the mobility, the admission officers cited the strong record shown by Zimbabwean students in academics, sports, extracurricular activities and community projects on campus. "We have one student at the Yale-NUS College and she is so full of energy," said Severin. "I came here to recruit students who can match her enthusiasm."

Alana Stuart, International Admissions Counselor at Michigan State University, said 15.1 percent of the student population at her university was international students. "The Mastercard Foundation scholarships and a long history of collaborative faculty research in Africa are some of the reasons why there are so many African students on campus," she said.

Over 630 students joined by parents and college counselors attended the two fairs held Wednesday at the Harare International School in Mount Pleasant in the morning and Prince Edward School in the afternoon. Ambassadors from the visiting universities' countries also visited the Fair in solidarity. "The visit by the admissions officers is a sign of our commitment to continue engagement with the people of Zimbabwe in the education sector," said Bruce Wharton, United States Ambassador who was accompanied by Swiss Ambassador Lavizzari and Lisa Stadelbauer, the Canadian Ambassador.

Despite the Fairs taking place when most students were in the middle of writing public examinations, there was enthusiastic participation by A level students from schools as far as Mashonaland West and East Provinces. Henry Chitando, a senior master at Moleli High School in Zvimba, Mashonaland West, said his school brought 61 lower sixth students as part of their career guidance. "It gives opportunities to students that would have attained good grades given the limited places for certain fields of study at local universities," said the history teacher.

Students were ecstatic about their prospects of securing an international education overseas and spoke highly of their meetings. Nokutenda Chiyangwa, a lower sixth student at Arundel School, said she attended the fair because she wanted to explore which university would suit her academic and professional interests. She said she was fascinated by the idea of liberal arts education.

The visit comes against a backdrop of sensational coverage of the Ebola virus disease by global media outlets.

"The media has contributed to more than a little bit of hysteria about Ebola," said Severin, who is also the CIS tour leader. "However, we have kept a close eye on the reality of Ebola; we have not included any countries that have known cases of Ebola and we will continue to monitor the situation. We are confident that our representatives are safe. We will take necessary precautions and we are not going anywhere that will cause any danger to our representatives," said Severin - ZimPAS
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