# Makerere students win Shs4.8b Google fund

**Excelled.** Makerere University's project is the only one that was selected in Africa for the said funding.

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**KAMPALA.** Makerere University has won a $1.3m (about Shs4.8b) grant from the Google AI Impact Challenge to scale up air quality monitoring in the country.

The milestone, Prof William Bazeyo, the Makerere University deputy vice chancellor for Finance and Administration, said the American technology company made the right choice to select the university's College of Computing and Information Sciences project to be among the 20 projects that will share the $25m (Shs94b) grant.

"Google has not made a mistake [to select Makerere].

Their efforts to serve the world will be realised in this project," Prof Bazeyo said.

Currently, there is no proper mechanism to measure of air quality in the country due to lack of equipment.

In 2010, the College of Computing and Information Sciences started an AirQo Monitor project– a low-cost air pollution monitoring technology, to enable get real data about the quality of air in se-

## UNIQUE FEATURES

**About the monitor.** One of the most innovative components of the project is that it can amenably attach a device onto a boda boda. As the boda boda rider traverses the city, the device records the air quality in areas that do not have static monitors.

lected major towns.

But the project did not have enough resources. Prof Engineer Bainomugisha, the leader of the AirQo Monitor project, said they applied for Google grant challenge, placing them in the crowded 2,600 competitors but they were happy to be among the best 20 projects to be supported.

Makerere University's project is the only one that was selected in Africa for the said funding.

"We realised that there was no official monitoring of air quality [in Uganda]. The idea was to solve the problem of air pollution but to solve it, you must first measure it," Prof Bainomugisha said.

Much of the air pollution in the country, Prof Bainomugisha said, comes from unpaved roads in form of dust, rubbish burning, and