

Ambassador's speech for opening of Makerere University-Sida Annual Review Meeting, at Makerere University 10/10 2016.

Vice Chancellor, Prof. Ddumba

Makerere university staff

Regional partner university staff

Swedish university partner representatives

Distinguished participants, ladies and gentlemen,

It is a great pleasure for me to visit Makerere University and address the first Annual Review Meeting in our current phase of research collaboration between Sweden and Uganda.

I arrived in Kampala as Ambassador-Designate of Sweden to Uganda just a week ago. However, I was briefed before coming here about Sweden's extensive support to higher education and research in Uganda. I was pleased to learn how important the cooperation is also for the Swedish universities. The interest is indeed mutual.

While primary and secondary education has been at the focus of donor community attention for decades, higher education and research have been viewed as essential to development only in recent years. However, Sweden has a long history of supporting higher education and research in Africa, actually ever since 1975.

The Swedish research collaboration with Uganda was initiated in 2000 with the objective of promoting research and research training and to develop sustainable institutional capacity in an effort to strengthen higher

education and an autonomous university system within the framework of National policies and plans.

The Annual Review Meeting brings together Ugandan and Swedish partners to assess the past year. I understand that some of you are new to the program, while others have much experience from previous collaboration phases. But what you all have in common is that you have been successful in the competition to get a project approved for this collaboration. In the afternoon, during the Science Day, the results of the work done and challenges that were experienced will be presented.

Indeed, the group here assembled is part of a program that has a history well worth being reminded of.

The Swedish government has supported Uganda, and Makerere University, for 17 years. The support has expanded and today it also includes the four public partner universities here represented.

Since 2000, **325 academics** have been trained, and laboratories and libraries have been equipped. This and other institution building measures have been supported by Sweden through disbursements of totally **73.3 million USD** (515mSEK).

The Swedish funding to research collaboration is unique. Many donors support scholarships, or specific research projects, or funding to scientific equipment. Often in separate efforts.

The Swedish strategy is based on funding institution building, post-graduate education, and research in *one single effort*. No part can function without the others. It is a *holistic approach*.

The Swedish government is proud of the results that have come out of this research collaboration, for examples in the areas of health; renewable energy, pharmacology and food security. Results that also Sweden stands stronger from, both in terms of science discoveries and institutional exchange.

The new agreement has much to offer. In the next four years, the program shall fund **337** academics. For the post-graduate education, research, and institutional support, the Swedish government has committed **32mUSD** (275mSEK).

But the ambitious level of academic training is not the only change in this new agreement. As you are all well aware, all research projects are designed to address multi-disciplinary themes. A route chosen by Uganda, and steered by the Makerere University Strategic Plan.

As mentioned, this program consists of Makerere and four public partner universities. We are happy to note that the partner universities now are firmly on board, assuming a larger role in this phase than previously. This is an important shift. The program also has 11 Swedish universities in a collaborative partnership. This is also a shift from the past. What the cooperation with 5 Ugandan and 11 Swedish universities has in common, is the goal for strategic collaboration over time, beyond development

cooperation.

Out of the 125 PhDs, 105 are locally trained, and only 20 staff members go on sandwich training. This means a significant change for the Swedish partners. New roles are required. More time goes to curriculum development and program design, as well providing coaching in supervision, pedagogics, and research methods - than to supervising students.

The program is a significant investment by the Swedish government. There are high expectations on its outcome. The multidisciplinary approach with emphasis on local PhD training in line with the NDP II and your own Strategic Plan, with the goal to increase the production and use of scientifically based knowledge of international quality, will indeed contribute to Uganda's development.

With this in mind, let me remind you of a pertinent issue, namely the importance of bringing your research results outside the university lecture halls and laboratories. Ensure that your future work will be known by policymakers. Link your innovations to public/private sector efforts, and do this as early on as possible. Forging links outside the university should be part of your long-term planning.

In conclusion, I would like to wish Makerere University and partners much success with the Annual Review Meeting and the Science Day. This meeting will hopefully demonstrate a key Swedish government position: that research cooperation is building a long term commitment

beyond aid - a collaboration focused on scientific cooperation on equal footing between partners.

Thank you very much for your attention.