

Gity talk at ARM opening 2nd October 2017 .

## 1. Introduction

All protocol observed

Good morning Ladies and Gentlemen – Mwasuze Mutya Bayabo ne Basbo ( MOAsuze Muttiya banyabo ne basebo )

I bring many greetings form the Swedish Embassy to the Makerere-Sweden community and welcome all Swedish partners and guest to Kampala and this important week ahead of us.

Prof. Barnabas congratulation and welcome onboard! This time as VC for Makerere University, we know each other from 2000 , Phase I of the program and looking back indeed we have had a very successful cooperation.

I'm convinces that we can continue to have a direct line of communication with you to overcome some of the main obstacles that hindering the effective implementation of this cooperation.

## 2. The Annual Review Meeting

We kick start the ARM today with specific Science event in the program, which have become a much appreciated routine at the Annual meetings .

This year organized by the College of Social Sciences and Humanities. We have great expectations of hearing important research results coming out of the research at Uganda in this important filed.

Later tomorrow and the rest of the week we shall continue the ARM with college meetings. In these meetings we are focusing on research results and **ask each research group to present 3 Science results and any possible example on use of research or policy connection to these results.**

As my ambassador highlighted Sweden remains the largest funder to research capacity strengthening in Uganda . The lesson learned here is that funding of universities cannot be a lesser priority for a nation. Further, "funding cannot be left to international donors, it is not sustainable." The issue of funding universities is a matter of development *of and for* a country, and needs to be steered nationally.

To end poverty and boost shared prosperity, Uganda has to address the overarching challenges facing higher education sub- sector.

### **Research uptake:**

In this final Phase of the program Makerere in collaboration with , 4 regional Universities ( Busitema , Gulu , Kyambogo and Mbarara) and , 11 Swedish universities are increasing Ugandas production of knowledge. Through your joint investigations you are defining local problems, and through your hard work, inventing, finding and creating solutions for these.

Doing this long term work it is critically important that the results coming out are being presented and used. Results and innovations should reach beyond the university. And importantly, *researcher should not only* inform already existing policies, but critically appraise those, and formulate policy alternatives based on knowledge produced.

Your achievements so far are results of quality work!

There are positive examples of this from the past , such as results from College of health sciences, regarding “Care of new born”, which are impressive. We look forward to seeing more uptake of the excellent research ongoing in this country.

*I´m looking forward to discuss this with you during our project meeting this week.*

As I mentioned this phase of the program is a network between 5 Ugandan and 11 Swedish universities with emphasis on local PhD training. We believe this triangulation of south-south – North collaborative network is an effective way of building sustainable research capacity in Uganda.

The shift of focus from Sandwich training to local postgraduate training is an important step towards building the Institutional capacity for quality postgraduate training at Makerere in cooperation with the partner universities.

In addition this is also about collaboration across disciplines, among scientists from different universities is an effective way to overcome limited national resources (financial, human, material) and to pool assets and expertise to ensure that Ugandan researchers have the **full capacity** to conduct locally-relevant, high- priority research on areas important for national development, and thus contribute to national system and policymaking process..

Please be reminded that during this final phase of the program you need to find possibilities of establishing synergies and cooperation with other bilateral, regional and international program funded by Sida.

I'm very pleased to note that during 2016/2017 A joint regional PhD curriculum in mathematic has been developed and approved by the National Higher Education Council.

I urge you to explore synergies and broaden the collaboration with other Sida funded programs. This will further strengthen your existing network, in terms of enhancing and fortifying effective and efficient use of human potential and other resources.

### **Quality education and Supervision**

#### *Focus on Outcomes , Not Inputs and Outputs*

The purpose of HE Institutions is not simply to admit students; it is to provide them with a quality education, and graduate them into meaningful employment, and this should be the focus rather than inputs.

Let me turn to the aspect of **quality and productivity of the postgraduate training in this program** –

During this Phase you have planned for local PhD training and only 21 PhD students are under so called sandwich training. This brings me to emphasis on the matter of quality **Supervision that is in** the heart of successful research capacity building.

Here, I want to highlight one of the findings of the external evaluation of the Swedish research cooperation with Uganda made in 2014. The Evaluation brought forward the role of Swedish Partners:

*“The role of Swedish partners was important for **quality and productivity of students**. Without the sandwich arrangement, which enabled students to focus on their studies even for short periods of time, the outputs would have been lower and of poorer quality.”*

In the past Swedish universities have been playing a central role in the cooperation through training and hosting PhD students in Sweden annually, but also working with quality assurance, and guidance to reform processes.

When I look at the list of enrolled PhDs with no supervisors/mentors assigned to it – Then I really question the quality of training - especially in the case of student enrolled under the common pool managed by DRGT. Makerere must take this matter seriously and find a solution for it.

In addition, The Swedish collaborators shall be engaged as “ Academic Advisor “ to the local PhD students and in addition shall play a critical role in Curriculum development, program design, teaching and mentoring.

It is very important to regularly monitor the quality of supervision and the regular interactions between the scholars at different level and I welcome the discussions with the Quality Assurance Directorate on the institutional arrangement for strengthening the system for regular monitoring and evaluation of this important element on research capacity building.

This is even more curricula in this Phase.

Coming back to the college meetings ahead, I encourage students and supervisors to bring up both successes and challenges with current supervision. We can never put too little emphasis on supervision.

- Let me also touch upon the importance of **Study leave**.

To ensure speedy completion for students, the agreement between Makerere University and Sida as well as the MOU between Makerere and other public universities required that Uganda partner universities ensures study leaves

for students involved. Unfortunately, I have observed that, not all the scholars involved have received a formal letter from their respective institutions.

As per our agreement- I urge all the Vice chancellors from the 5 public universities to full fill your commitment and facilitate the process at your respective institutions for **providing formal study leave** to the staff member involved in this program- please be reminded that this is an agreement condition and hence not open for discussion.

### **C) Research Environment: long term Sustainability**

From 2000 the Swedish research funding has a component of institutional support, which is organically linked to support for graduate training. The one cannot function without the other. Institutional building, postgraduate training, and the existence of an environment that is conducive for research and research training are part of one single effort.

This is the reason behind our support to Strengthening the University Library, Labs, ICT, GIS, gender mainstreaming, cross cutting courses and quality assurance system and the effective research management system.

**Prof. Nawangwe** I welcome our renewed discussions on **strengthening the ownership and securing the suitability aspect** of these important services that are essential for a well-functioning research led university. As a research led institution, Makerere need urgently address the inefficiency on **procurement** processes (delays and issue of sub-standard item being delivered to the project). This is actually one of the main reasons behind the low absorption capacity and delay in program implementation ( only 55% of the allocated funds has been absorbed) .

I look forward to being involved in finding solution for this.

**In conclusion**, I would like to thank all of you for timely submissions of the annual reports; it has been a very exciting reading. This has laid a good ground for our work during this Review Meeting.

I now wish everybody good deliberations during the 5 days ahead and look forward to our discussions.

Thank you! *Basebo Nabanyabo Mwebale*