

Good afternoon, everyone, thank you so much for gracing us with your presence at the Sarah Ntiro Lecture (all protocol observed). Before I start my speech, I would like to extend my thanks to the funders of this Lecture and Makerere University, the organiser and host. Akiiki (whom most of you know as Sarah Ntiro) is always with us, but this lecture always makes it feel like she is closer, and it keeps us, as a family, accountable to her legacy.

A very special thank you to Her Royal Highness, the Nnabagereka for gracing us with her presence. We know the Nnabagereka as a proponent for catalysing change and we are constantly awed by her ability to promote culture in a way that doesn't take away from women, something that Sarah Ntiro also believed in. We are grateful that Her Royal Highness could honour us today.

My name is Martha Kiiza Kalema, and the incomparable Sarah Ntiro was my grandmother. And what a grandmother she was! She was a true force of nature, a woman that swept you up into the belief that you **MUST** do better; you could be more; and you are blessed so that you can do more for others. I am standing on this stage because she stood on stages before me and fought for my right to be educated, my right to speak, but most of all, to do the things I love and enjoy. I stepped into her shoes when I did my undergraduate in Mathematics, a role I unwittingly took up without realizing that she had been stopped from studying Math right here at Makerere, so many years ago. It's only when she stood up at my graduation dinner and said "**Martha, my dreams have been fulfilled through you**", that I remembered how I was standing on the shoulders of my own personal giant.

Akiiki (or Kiki as we her grandchildren fondly called her) was a woman who was dedicated to catalysing change in education but also to challenging gender norms. It was important to her that women were not only educated but that they recognized that education was not just a privilege but a right. And it was important for all women to stand in forums with their voices equal to men. She stood firm as a pillar of society and always said. "**If the men can't hear you then speak louder, stand on the table, shout if you must but always make sure you have been heard**".

Despite it being many decades since Kiki attempted to ride her bicycle on the streets of Hoima, something that would have caused indignation among the male villagers, we as women are still struggling to stand firm in society, and to lean into our greatness, rather than simply fit in.

Kiki reminds us to always challenge the status quo, and that staying small and fitting in, is not the safest path. It is always important to speak out, identify the barriers holding women back and come together to find solutions. It is because of her actions and her passion that our family has third and fourth generations of graduates

following Kiki and my mother, Mrs Enid Kiiza. And as a family we continue to work hard on championing her legacy in Girl Child Education.

In life, we were always playing 'catch up' with Kiki and in her death, it seems to have remained the same, especially in trying to immortalise her legacy. Bringing life to the greatness of who she was is a difficult but rewarding role.

Let me take the opportunity to share with this audience what we, her family, are doing:

- Recently, we registered The Sarah Ntiro Akiiki Foundation (The SANA Foundation) whose Vision is '**Inclusive, Equitable, Quality Education in Rural Africa**'. This Foundation will take the lead in all the legacy issues relating to Sarah Ntiro and aims to increase the opportunities for rural children, especially girls and young women, and people with disability.
- We have finalised Kiki Sarah's memoir which will be launched on 24th November 2023. We wish to recognise the support and patience of FEMRITE, the women writers' organisation that spearheaded the writing of this book.
- We have continued to sponsor children who suffer disadvantage, either because of their family's economic or social status, or due to the physical/mental disabilities they face. At the moment the family is supporting over 40 children mostly drawn from the Hoima area but spreading as far as Maracha district in Northern Uganda.
- In collaboration with SPICE FM in Hoima, we are launching a programme named AMARAKA (a runyoro word for voices). We hope to use this programme to '**Amplify Girls and Young Women's Voices**'.
- As a family we are also working on the Sarah Ntiro Centre. The Centre is to be established at Kiki's home at Kiganda in Hoima City. It will house a museum of Kiki and her education legacy, an Art Gallery, and a music room to honour Princess Jane Nsungwa (Kiki's mother) who was a music teacher. The SANA Foundation will unveil the first impression of The Sarah Ntiro Centre on the 24th of November, when we launch Kiki's memoir.

We are hoping that these steps speak to who Kiki was and brings honour to her memory.

As I conclude my speech, I quote from 'Grandmothers', (a poem written by Maya Angelou), which I believe exemplifies who my grandmother was:

**"When you Learn, Teach;
When you Get, Give;
As for me, I shall not be moved".**

Kiki Sarah taught, she gave, but most of all, she would not be moved from what she believed in. Whether it was equal pay for women, education for girls, or equality for women in all spaces, Kiki did not relent.

And as I go forth today, I stand with the thousands of women who owe their education and their places to her and a family who hopes to bring honour to that memory. May the family please stand for recognition.

Thank you.

Martha Kiiza Kalema
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