**Gender and Identity Week2020-Generation equality**

**Purpose:**Panel Discussion / Conference

**Location:**Auditorium COBAMS- Pool Rd

**Date & Time:**2thMarch 2020, 8:00 am

**Contact:** Prof. Consolata Kabonesa, Principal Investigator , Makerere- Sweden Bilateral Research Program : 0772512455 *or* 0752359772

**Vice Chancellor – Prof. Barnabas Nawangwe**

**The Dean – School of Women and Gender Studies**

**Makerere University Staff and Students
Participants,**

**Ladies and gentlemen,**

Good morning everyone. I’m really happy to be at the launch of the 2020 Gender Identity Week together with you all.

As we celebrate this year’s women’s day with the theme “generation equality”, we are glad to join hands with the Universities once again to bring light to the challenges around gender equality in Uganda. Issues relating to women, peace and security, as well as women’s sexual and reproductive health and rights, are priorities for Sweden and are especially important to stand up for.

Gender equality has been a focus area for successive governments of Sweden. For many decades, this has been a focus area *both* in our domestic policies *and*in our international cooperation.

In 2014, the Swedish government took the unique step to adopt a Feminist Foreign Policy - **the first of its kind in the world –** thatreally shows that gender equality and women’s empowerment are at the very top of Swedish political priorities at the global level.
The policywas not uniformly lauded. The word ‘feminist’ rattled some feathers and the launch was met with mockery from some quarters. Six years later –as a result of people and countries seeing that Sweden has translated the feminist foreign policy into actions that lead to impact, the initiative is now generally met with respect and even admiration.

The aim of the **Feminist Foreign Policy**is to achieve equality between men and women and to ensure that women and girls enjoy human rights, representation and resources.

Sweden utilizes a number oftools and methods to work on these issues and ambitions. Here in Uganda these include for example political dialogue, media and social events, as well as development cooperation.

Let me give you a few examples.

Two years ago, the Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs initiated an internet campaign called***WikiGap.***  This is global campaign, it takes place on March 8all over the worlds and it aims, as the name suggests to closethe gender gap on the internet*.*

Wikipedia is as you know the world´s largest online encyclopedia with millionsand millions of users. If we take a closer look we see that there are **4 times more articles about men than women** on Wikipedia and **90 per cent of the content is created by men**. We have to change this.

The purpose of the WikiGap campaign is to create Wikipedia pages written **by** and **about** women. Here in Uganda prominent Ugandanwomen from various fields were highlighted last year, as well as their contributions to the world.

This Saturday, we shall hold the third edition of this in Ugandatogether with our partners; Makerere University, the WikiMedia user group andthe Internet Society of Uganda.

We shall host a workshop to train volunteers on how to edit Wikipedia followed by a competitive edit-a-thon that shall run for a month where they shall write and post articles on Wikipedia about remarkable Ugandan women who will be recognized for their achievements. The person with the most edits shall thereafter win a prize.

Gender equality is also about men and men’s engagement. As part of the Gender week we will also be exhibiting portraits showcasing positive masculinity. Thepictures are the result of competitions organized by theSwedish Embassy in 2016 and 2018 on the theme of ***Ugandan Dads***and ***Me and My Dad.***
This photo exhibition includes for example pictures of men as presentfathers, supportive spouses, and non-violent negotiators. We hope that these pictureswill stimulate reflection and discussion about gender roles and stereotypes.

This are two examples of what we do during this year’s gender week.
Sweden has had a longrelationship with Makerere University, Since the year 2000 to be exact, almost 20 years. Over these almost two decades we havesupported the building of **research capacity of Ugandan public Universities**with some 100 MUSD.A long time, a substantial sum, a good partnership.

Gender equality is an important aspect in our support and cooperation. For example, the coordination office of our research support, DRGT, is making sure that all projects are aligned with Makerere’s gender policies, that gender analysis is integrated in the research projects, and that gender responsive methodologies are applied at the University. The aim is to make sure that **at least 30% of the University researchers and students that benefit directly from our support are female.**

Sweden also supports gender focused research, capacity building of women leadership and gender mainstreaming at the five public universities involved. A key objective of the gender focused research project is to increase staff capacity to carry out gender focused research. The project includes training of PhDs, Masters students and post doc fellows and covers dialogue, policy impact, awareness building on gender identity and masculinities, women and girl child’s rights and sexual and gender based violence.

**Ladies and gentlemen,**

As I started with saying, Sweden’s feminist Government is serious about gender equality and women’s rights.As long as gender inequality remains a global problem, we will continue to pursue our feminist foreign policy – with full force, throughout the world.Speaking for myself I must say that I am proud to represent the first feminist government in the world. Women and men should have the same power to shape society and their own lives. I hope, or let me correct myself, I am *convinced* that you in this room share this view. Let’s work together towards also make it a reality, here in Uganda and in the world.

I wish you very good deliberations as we move forward together towards this objective.

Thank you.