



Makerere University
College of Health Sciences
SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH

Gender Equality and Women's Participation in University Leadership in East Africa



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Gender Equality and Women's Participation in University Leadership in East Africa



Implementing Institutions and Partners



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Implementing Partners

1. Makerere University (Uganda)

- School of Public Health
- Gender Mainstreaming Directorate

2. Higher Education Resource Services– East Africa (HERS-EA)

Gender Equality and Women's Participation in University Leadership in East Africa.

Background

Gender inequality in university leadership persists despite previous interventions across universities in Africa.

Gap in SSA

Although women are slowly advancing, higher education leadership is still dominated by males, e.g., 2.5% of vice-chancellors are women (UNESCO, 2019).

Intersectional Barriers

Women's (lack of) progression in academic/research careers is shaped by intersections between gender roles and social power relations of gender within the family, wider society and academic institutions.



Goal of the Landscaping...



- To establish the prevailing landscape/status of gender equality and women's participation in university leadership in East Africa.



- Inform the design of a **robust and feasible context specific program** that will enhance gender equality and women participation in university leadership in East Africa.



Study objectives



- 1) To assess completion rates of women in selected academic programs in universities in East Africa for the period 2012-2022.
- 2) To establish the status of female academic staff engagement in academia and research and **leadership in universities** in East Africa for the period 2012-2022.
- 3) To examine existing mechanisms for promoting gender equity and women leadership (e.g., university-wide policies, practices, services); success factors, challenges and barriers to gender equality in universities in East Africa.

Data Collection

1. Scoping review of existing literature

- 7 Universities in East Africa (1 per country)
- Status of GE in university leadership
- Existing policies/practices that promote GE

2. Key informant interviews

- 30 universities in East Africa
- 70 KII with University staff
- 07 KII with HE regulators and agencies

3. Online surveys with female academic staff

- E-Survey with 207 respondents

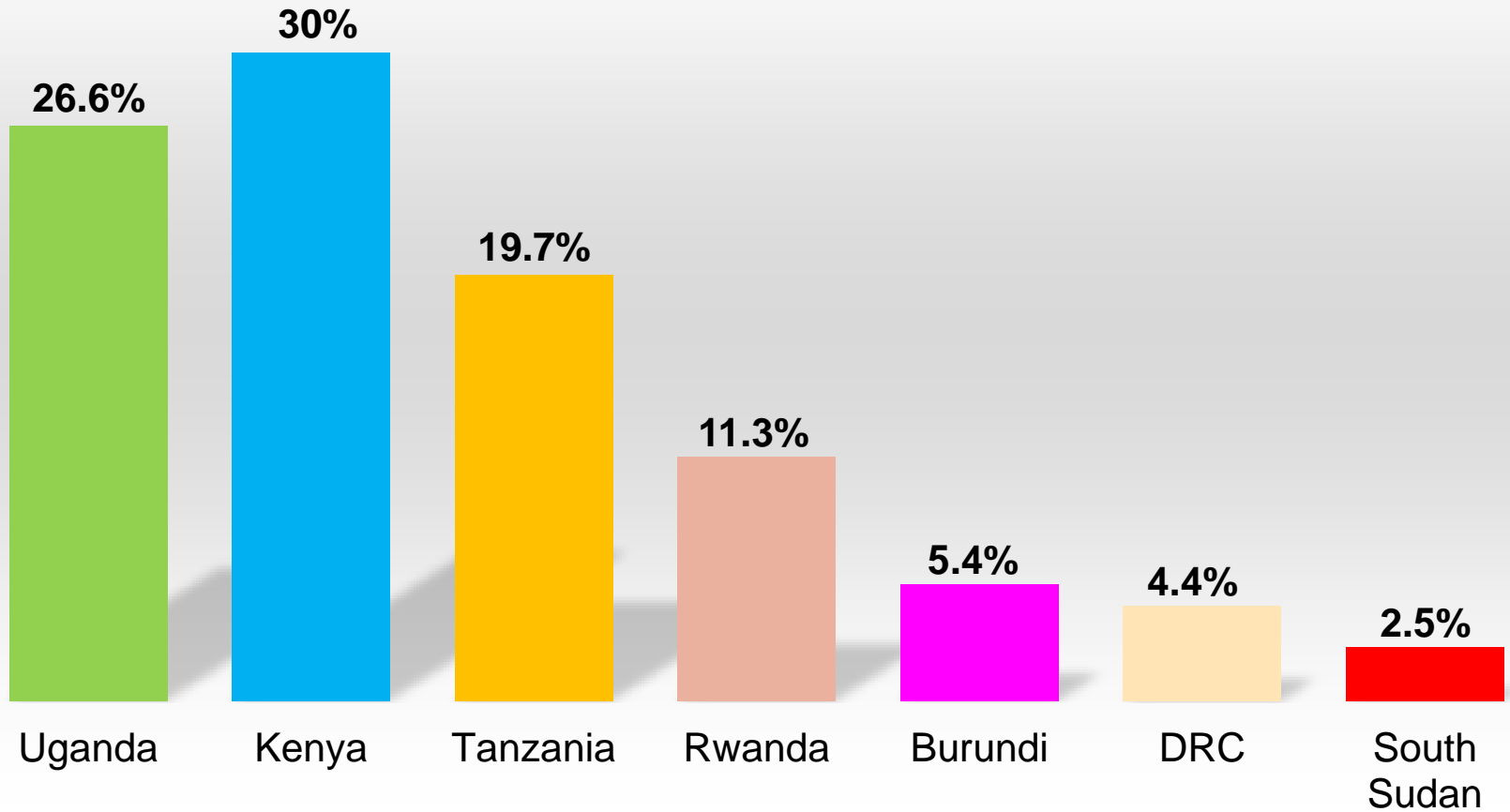
4. Benchmarking with exemplar institutions

- Policies and practices that have produced good outcomes in Gender Equity
 - South Africa (n=2)
 - USA (n=2)

University Participation In The Quantitative Online Survey (N=207)



Percent University Participation by Country



Key findings from the landscaping study

Low representation of women in top leadership.
The higher the position the fewer the women.



Underlying Issues

- 1) Personal and domestic** (e.g., difficulties with work-life balance, socio-cultural demands)
 - 2) Institutional barriers** (e.g., gaps in policies, implementation, and accountability, institutional culture, gender biases, inadequate capacity development, limited PhD training opportunities, age restrictions on PhD scholarships).
 - 3) Policy-related challenges** (gaps in sector policies and accountability frameworks, good practices that are not institutionalized and GE policies not implemented).
- ** Cross-cutting challenges** e.g., sexual harassment and bullying



Gender composition of staff in some top administrative positions

Position	University						
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
Chancellor / Rectorate / Rector	M	M	F	F	M	M	M
Vice Chancellor / Vice Rectorate	M	M	M	M	M	M	M
Vice Chancellor (Academic Affairs) / Academic Secretary General	M	M	M	M	F	M	M
Deputy Vice Chancellor (Finance and Administration) /Sec. General	M	M	F	F	M	NA	M
University Secretary / Admin and Finance Registrar /Budget Admin	M	M	X	NA	M	M	M
Academic Registrar	M	X	M	NA	M	M	X
Director Research and Graduate Training	M	M	F	NA	M	M	X

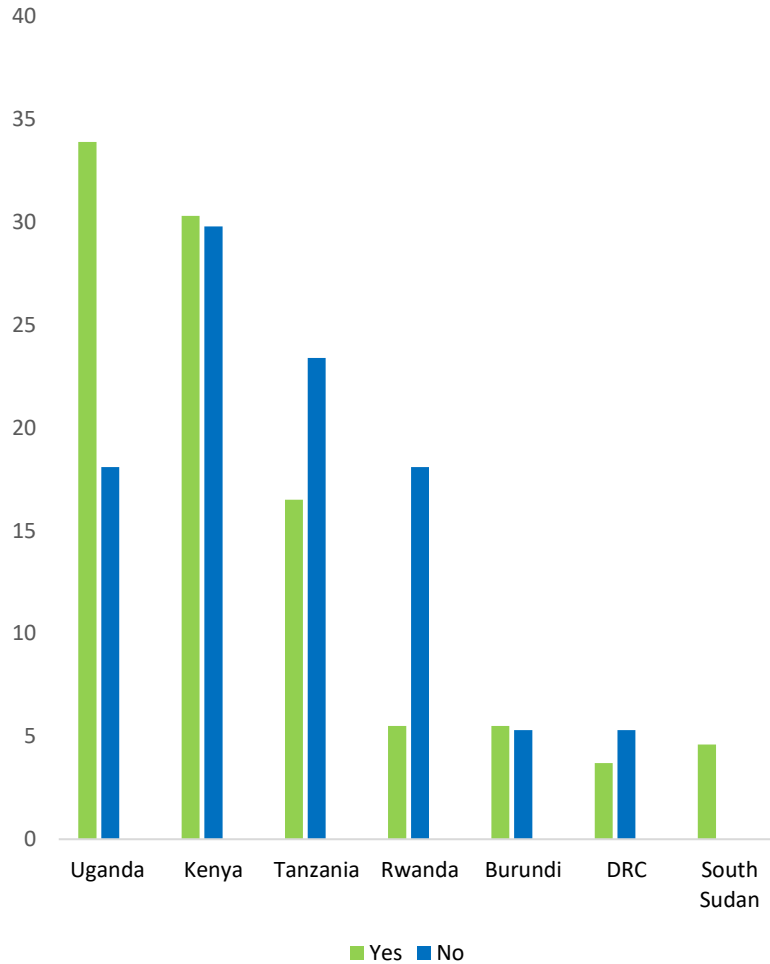
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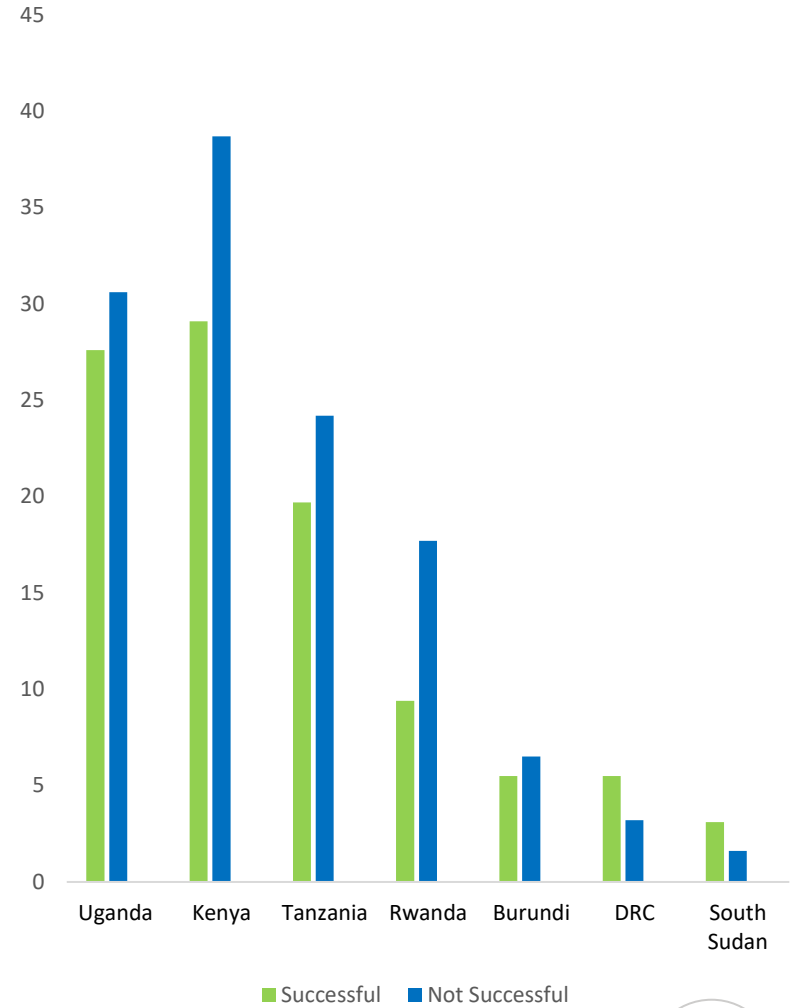


Women Participation in University Leadership

Ever offered yourself for an administrative position



What was the outcome?





Gender distribution of the numbers of students in selected STEM disciplines graduating with Masters and PhDs: The case at University A.

Year	Masters						PhDs					
	Natural Sciences		Veterinary Medicine		Engineering		Natural Sciences		Veterinary Medicine		Engineering	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
2012	12	6	16	5	10	3	1	0	1	1	2	0
2013	13	3	19	11	33	7	1	1	1	0	1	0
2014	15	3	29	10	28	8	0	3	0	1	1	3
2015	26	10	34	11	25	3	1	1	2	2	11	3
2016	26	15	22	12	26	10	3	3	10	5	1	0
2017	27	8	39	16	28	12	6	4	2	2	4	0
2018	25	11	10	3	37	9	1	2	0	0	3	2
2019	21	7	22	4	56	13	1	2	2	0	2	0
2020	22	11	8	5	49	13	2	2	1	0	2	1
2021	16	6	41	17	74	22	3	3	1	0	2	1
2022	17	4	20	4	57	27	12	5	2	1	5	1
2023	31	8	27	17	51	25	4	3	5	3	4	1



Key Qualitative Findings (N=77)

	Pipeline Issues
1	Limited number of women in the pipeline: <u>Few women entering</u> and across departments
2	PhD requirement pre-entry and for promotions—limiting women
3	Too few universities running PhD programs in some countries (<u>age caps on PhD scholarships</u>)
4	Limited research capacity building and support
5	Career & socio-cultural Issues
6	Cultural demands e.g. ‘When will you get married, have children’? Work-life balance is tough e.g., career vs. raising children
7	Women are comfortable being led by men. i.e., “submission”
	Institutional culture and implementation
8	<u>No policies targeting recruitment of female graduates</u> or policies not institutionalized.
9	Balancing the roles between Administrative and Academic work
10	Institutional culture – favors male leaders and <u>leadership style</u>
11	Insubordination by male colleagues towards female leaders Stereotypes e.g., will that woman deliver?
12	Women work so hard to be accepted as leaders
13	Sexual harassment





Key Qualitative Findings...

	Networking (Individual and Institutional)
14	<u>Limited networking platforms</u> : In some cases, women form associations to encourage each other e.g., in Burundi
15	In some universities, women join as faculty by supporting mentors
16	<u>Limited institutional exchange and learning</u>
	Measurement and Accountability issues
17	In several universities, policies exist but are not fully implemented
18	The <u>30% rule is on paper</u> in several countries: Not implemented
19	Lack of operationalization of M/E framework for Gender policies: <u>Limited data to track participation of women in research, funding, research outputs</u>

Most interventions were individual level—focusing on the women, with limited interventions focused on the structural barriers (policy, implementation, data, institutional culture).



Benchmarking with Exemplar Universities (N=4)

Activity objective: To identify policies and practices that could be adapted.

Africa: Among top 100 globally
(Times Higher Education 2022/23)

University of Johannesburg (Ranked 17/100)

University of South Africa (Ranked 95/100)

USA: We leveraged on existing
partnerships and ongoing work on
gender equality between
Makerere University and these
universities.

University of Wisconsin-Madison

Michigan State University (MSU)





Lessons learned from case exemplars in South Africa...



- National-level policies on gender equality are adopted and cascaded to universities for both students and staff.

Best practices

- Equality, equity and non-discrimination institutionalized
- **Leadership commitment** to gender equality
- Deliberate talent management for women and early career academics – discussion fora, mentorship
- Community and industry engagement on topical matters
- **Allyship** with male champions
- Bi-directional engagement on gender equality at institutional, national and regional levels; discussions and debates, and position papers.





Lessons learned from case exemplars in USA...

MSU received ADVANCE grants-NSF:

- Advancing Diversity Through Alignment of Policies & Practices (ADAPP)
- From ADAPP: **MSU created five toolkits:**
 - (i) Faculty Search tool kit
 - (ii) Faculty guide for reappointment, promotion & tenure review tool kit.
 - (iii) Faculty Mentoring tool kit
 - (iv) Graduate Student Mentoring and Advising tool kit
 - (v) Annual Performance Review toolkit
- STEM Intersectional Equity in Departments (SIEDS) program.
- Faculty Excellence Advocates (FEAs)
- Diversity Equity and Inclusion (DEI) scorecard
- Annual Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Report
- A Climate Assessment Toolkit created to track progress





Lessons learned from case exemplars in USA...



- ❖ **Numerous programmes** that promote gender equity and inclusion:
 - **The Faculty Diversity Initiatives**: salary and research support, supplement recruitment packages for new faculty.
 - **Recruitment or retention funds**
 - Post doc fellowships, flexible research funds
 - Leadership development programmes for Department Chairs
 - **Dual Career Couple Programs**

- ❖ **Grant programs and scholarships** for underrepresented staff and students in STEM:
 - **Celebrating Women and Gender Diversity in Science & Engineering**:
A fund for departmental workshops that promote diversity .
 - **Denice Denton Scholarship Program** for undergraduate students underrepresented in the College of Engineering





Lessons learned from case exemplars in USA...



- ❖ The **WISELI** (UW In Science and Engineering Leadership Institute):
 - **Workshops for Faculty Search Committees** to conduct effective searches and to recruit and hire excellent and diverse faculty
 - **Breaking the Bias Habit (Implicit Bias Workshops)** for awareness about issues of implicit biases about race, ethnicity, and gender.
 - **WISELI Vilas Life Cycle Professorships** - a fund for special needs categories whose academic careers were interrupted by unintended events (e.g., illness, childbirth).

- ❖ The **4W Initiative** for Women & Wellbeing at the UW-Madison
 - Mentorship & career support e.g. 9-month mentor-match program

- ❖ A **robust data management** and accountability mechanism.
 - Available, accessible, usable, gender disaggregated data

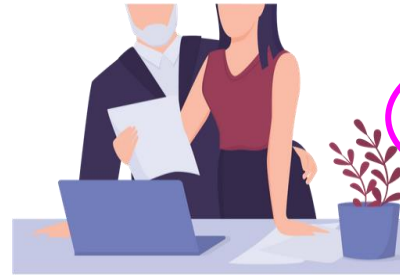




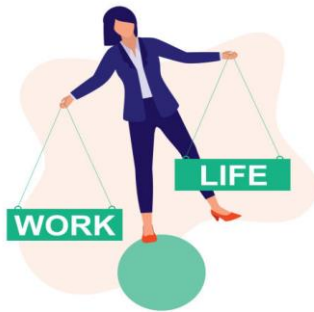
Work In Progress Across All Benchmarked Institutions...



Backlash



Sexual Harassment



Work-Life balance



Bullying



Lessons learned from the Athena Swan Charter in UK

A framework to support and transform gender equality within higher education (HE) and research.

Established in 2005 with focus on Science, Technology, Engineering, Maths, and Medicine (STEMM) and expanded to all disciplines and beyond UK.

Has a sliding award from Bronze, to Silver, to Gold.
An institution can slide downwards, depending on performance.

Institutions apply and get recognition for their efforts in gender equality.

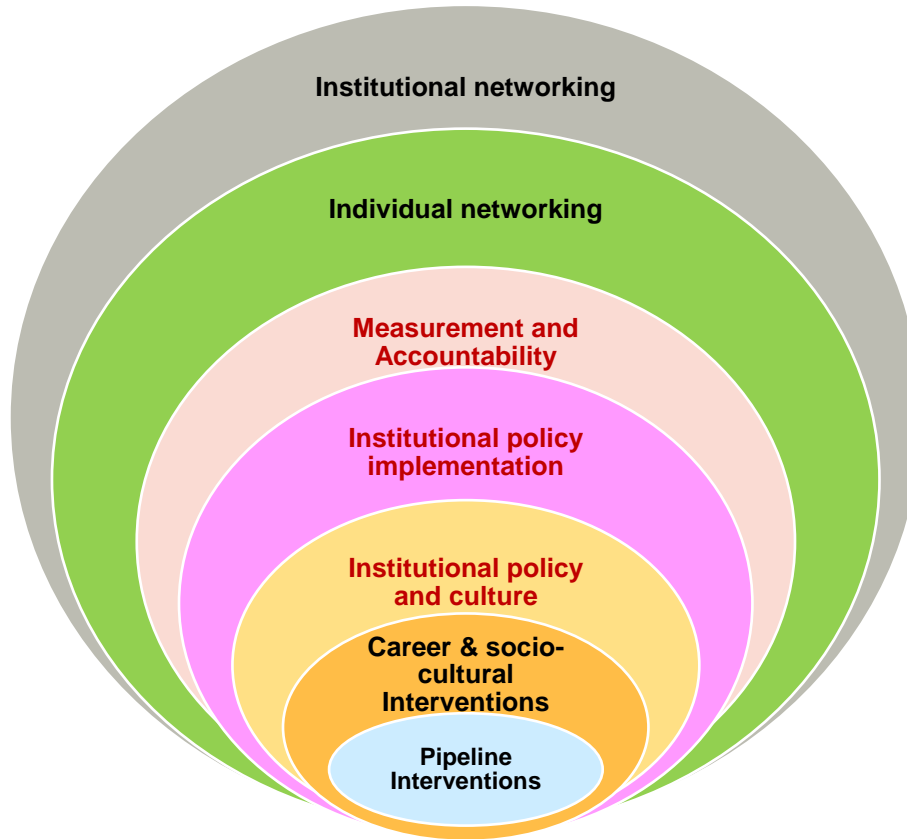
Uses self-assessment framework to identify areas for action and to recognize and share good practice.

Could we create a similar and appropriate tool for our Region?





Way forward: Potential Intervention Areas



Addressing structural barriers with selected individual level interventions using a catalytic, owned and sustained approach.





External Actors: Regional and National Actors, Research and Capacity Building Funding Organizations, among others

Research grants

- Require gender balance of investigators
- Research participation and gender disaggregated analyses

PhD and other capacity development grants

- Balanced gender representation among trainees
- Target female academic staff where the gender balance is heavily skewed towards men

Grant applications: Include section on

- National and institutional gender terrain, policies
- Proposed actions to improve gender equality where there are gaps in representation, policies, and implementation.

Funding for conferences

- Equitable representation of session chairs, speakers, etc.

Advocacy for a coordinated action across various actors





Call for Action!!!

1) On your way home, scribble names of 5 women who are (probably) ready for senior leadership if nudged. Speak to them, allocate mentors/coaches. Steer towards promotional opportunities. TRACK progress.

2) Set a (min of) 30% target for women representation at the highest decision-making organ and committee level, in your institutions. TRACK progress.

3) Invite us to share this presentation with your top management team, at your earliest convenience. Follow the presentation with an action plan. (E.G. Pick three and for each, add interventions and success indicators).

4) Nominate the 5 women to attend the next HERS-EA Academy; registration opens in January 2025.

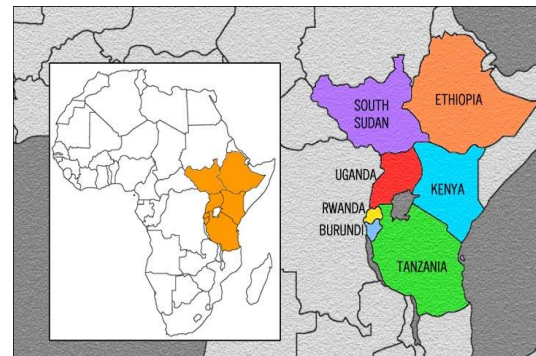


About HERS-EA

[www.hersea.org]

Area of Operation

- A non-governmental educational organization providing leadership and management development training for women at higher education institutions (HEIs) in East Africa.
- Launched and incorporated in 2014, hosted by the Makerere University, in Kampala, Uganda.
- Trained over 200 women from 22 universities across EA and USA





Discussion points

- Thoughts?
 - Suggestions?
 - Comments?
 - Feedback?
- Is there anything sticking out that we could have missed in the findings and interventions?
 - Are there lessons/strategies from other GE programs/policies that would be useful in strengthening potential intervention efforts?
 - How can existing GE scorecards (e.g., Athena Swan Charter) be culturally adapted to fit in the African context?
 - Any other strategies for promoting GE institutionalization and sustainability?





Acknowledgement

All Participating Institutions and Sectors in East Africa



MAKERERE UNIVERSITY

BILL & MELINDA
GATES foundation

