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AFTER BEIJING:**

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Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) Highlights March 1-12, 2010

- 15 years after landmark gathering, women still lack equal rights



Left: Some of the CSO and government representatives at the 54th session of the CSW at a cocktail party organized by Uganda House in New York. Right: Uganda's Permanent Representative to the UN, Dr. Ruhakana Rugunda and Ministry of Gender's Mubarak Mubuye at the cocktail

Thousands of government officials, activists and women leaders from all over the world gathered in New York from March 1—12, 2010 to assess the progress and challenges in women's empowerment at the 54th session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW).

The meeting took place at the United Nations Headquarters 15 years after the milestone gathering in Beijing when governments pledged to advance equality for

“At least one in three women is beaten, coerced into sex or abused by an intimate partner and one in five women will become a victim of rape or attempted rape. The number is higher during periods of armed con-

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A Feat Born Out of Diligence: Uganda celebrates her 11 female professors

15 years after the Beijing Platform for Action was made with a commitment to better the lives of women and girls through education among other things, Uganda has only 11 female professors. In 2008, the ratio of female to male professors at Makerere University was at a staggering 1:43. Two years down the road and it is at 1:9 thanks partly to the spirited work by Makerere University Mentoring Initia-

tive that nurtures and motivates their 94 female staff to advance in their career path and personal growth. And well, Makerere University is not just sitting back, watching and taking stock of the improving female numbers. They decided that the Gender Equality Awards this year would go to the six female professors at the university and to some four

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Uganda's brainy women



Prof. Victoria Mwaka

Clad in a black and white striped gomesi, Prof. Victoria Mwaka walked forward to receive her award. She was one of the 10 women who were recognized for their academic excellence, which enabled them to climb the ladder to rank of professorship, an achievement that had, until recently, been held by only men.

In her acceptance speech, Prof. Mwaka noted that “women are socialized into mediocrity, never to be ambitious and they settle for so little in life.”

She grew up in a polygamous family. Her father was strict and reminded them that whoever would fail a class would not be given another chance. The girls who failed would marry while the boys would were advised to join the labour force.

“My father was proud of me because I could speak English. I could read for him the newspaper in the evening. He could introduce me to visitors and tell me to talk English. He always told us never, never to fail,” she reminisced during her speech shortly after receiving the award. “I made friends with colleagues I considered brighter than me. When I did my Masters’ it was upgraded to a PhD. My husband was very supportive. One time I weaned my five month old baby at the airport be-

cause I had to go and study. When I returned, the child couldn’t remember me. “With a supportive spouse, a woman can climb to the top, with a bad one, they forget you,” she said.

While at Makerere University, Mwaka realised that many girls were unable to pursue higher education. Many were victims of domestic violence. “I started the department of women and gender studies to address their plight,” she says.

“Today, I speak for the department of women and gender studies and for Mwaka as an achiever. But the struggle continues as we build for the future.”

Prof. Josephine Namboze



Being a pioneer at a medical school and Mary Stuart Hall means you are a trail blazer. While at medical school, I noticed there was no provision for female students. I had to leave with an Indian woman who stayed near Mulago Hospital so I could access the hospital. I was lucky to graduate at a ceremony presided over by Queen Elizabeth while Makerere was still under London School.

My life was of great interest to the media something that I wasn’t ready for. It made me media shy. During my internship at the hospital, women came to me. They would not go to my male colleagues. Later while at Makerere, I conducted a static and outreach clinic. I used to drive an old fashioned Land Rover that made many people look at me in silent wonder. After two years at Kasangati Health Centre, I joined Makerere University and went through the ranks to become professor. Occasionally, I had to travel to other countries at short notice, wrote papers and worked at odd hours to finish a paper or complete work. The workload affected my marriage. I persevered and I thank the Lord, I became a professor of Public Health.

Prof Mary Okwakol



This award is important to me because gender equality is close to my heart. This is not recognition for me but those female academicians devoted to gender equality. Instituting the gender equality award is very significant. My long journey to professorhood started by my parents decision to take me to school at a time it was thought educating girls was a waste of resources. My greatest achievement is that I ever went to school at all. I joined Makerere in 1970 – 1973 and was called back in 1974 – 1976 for my Masters Degree. In

1977, I joined as a lecturer and became a senior lecturer in 1988. I feared to go to Oxford for my PhD at the time because my girls were moving into teenage years. In 1992, I completed my PhD studies and was promoted to Associate Professor and later full professor in 1999. I did my doctorate research in Mabira Forest. My greatest challenge was balancing family, work and study. I never got leave for study and I missed many opportunities because of family considerations. To all aspiring professors, the difference between possibility and impossibility lies in the level of determination, discipline, focus, and diligence. You can achieve and I urge you to go for it.

Uganda's brainy women



Prof Harriet Mayanja

Learning English was a path to success. I had a traditional mother who taught me to recite the Creed (ekiziriza) and so on. Education was important to both my parents. Primary school was tedious. Secondary school was challenging. I couldn't revise. In senior two I learnt to revise by chance. Teachers thought I was wild and easily excited. While at university, I balanced books and parties. In medical school, initially it

was boring because I had to cram and reproduce what I had crammed though it changed with time. I was the first female physician in Uganda in 1981. While pursuing my masters abroad, I became a telephone mother. I counseled my children over the phone. I joined Makerere in 1992 as a lecturer. I have done a lot of my research in Tuberculosis. Teaching is my passion. I was promoted to senior lecturer in 1998, Associate Professor in 2005 and became a professor in 2008.

Prof. Joyce Kikafunda - "One should be resilient and avoid being selfish".

Impact: Nurtured the department of food and nutrition.

Trains rural mothers on best practices for feeding children. Mentors girls to do sciences

As a woman, Prof. Joyce Kakuramatsi Kikafunda has been a pioneer in many things. She was the first woman to get a first-class degree in agriculture at Makerere University.

She is also the only female professor in agriculture, food science and nutrition in Uganda. She was also the first woman in her district to get a PhD — but that is not why the food/nutrition scientist is viewed as a national achiever. Some people want her name to be inscribed on the walls of the state-of-the art faculty of food science and technology. She is the brain behind the multi-million dollar complex. And, to the illiterate

mothers in the districts of Rukungiri, Kanungu and Kabale, she is the reason why the malnutrition levels have slumped from 21% to 11% in only four years.



Professor Ruth Mukama receives a gender equality award from Hon Jane Alisemera the chairperson of the Uganda Women Parliamentary Association as Catherine Kanabahita the head of the gender ministry main streaming division looks

Prof. Ruth Mukama

By the age of 26, I had a doctorate. I got many openings after graduating in linguistics but chose the university of Zambia. What worked for me is that I got qualifications early, enhanced

mobility and networking, my father encouraged me to aim high. I never got below 50%. He (father) taught me to be assertive, competitive and career focused. Setting clear career goals worked wonders for me. The challenges included heavy workload. After three years of health threatening workload while at the University of Zambia, I left and joined Dar-el-salaam University.

There is also a lot of male resistance to women's uplift. My promotion to senior lectureship was delayed by three years. I appealed to the appointments board. The Vice Chancellor at the time sought to block my appointment as Associate Professor in favour of older male staff. This promotion was also delayed by three years. The problem was lack of support networks.

Other Professors Include

Other professors including Professor Grace Bantebya, Prof. Joy Constance Kwesiga (Vice Chancellor, Kabale University), Prof. Maria Musoke (Makerere University Librarian) and Prof. Lillian Tibatemwa Ekirikubinza (Deputy Vice Chancellor, Makerere University) Joyce Kwesiga were not available to share their stories.

For details visit

[http://www.observer.ug/index.php?](http://www.observer.ug/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=7954&Itemid=106)

[option=com_content&task=view&id=7954&Itemid=106](http://www.observer.ug/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=7954&Itemid=106)



Singer Juliana Kanyomozi performed at the dinner

Some of the professors dance to celebrate their feat



A sumptuous dinner was served to crown it all

Highlights from the CSW

From Page 1

women everywhere.

“Progress towards gender equality has been uneven and slow, making it more difficult to meet the Millennium Development Goals,” said UNDP Administrator Helen Clark. “To meet the MDGs by 2015, we must all work harder on the empowerment of women, gender equity in education, and on improving maternal health. These are not only critical in their own right, but will underpin progress on other MDGs too.”

At the 1995 gathering, 189 countries unanimously recognized gender equality and the empowerment of women as fundamental for development, peace and human rights, adopting the Beijing Declaration.

They also adopted the Platform for Action, an internationally agreed plan for achieving equality for women across critical areas ranging from education and economy to armed-conflict, power and decision-making. The landmark conference was the largest-ever gathering of governmental and non-governmental representatives at a United Nations conference, with around 47,000 participants, men and women.

Challenges ahead

Looking back, it is clear what were once called ‘women’s issues’ have been transformed into matters of primary national and international significance. Stronger women’s networks and alliances have taken shape, across

issues and borders. But many challenges remain.

Education – Around 60 per cent of countries have achieved gender parity in primary education, 30 percent in secondary education and only 6 per cent tertiary education. Gender disparities in education are clearly evident in some regions. Sub-Saharan Africa and Oceania, for example, have the largest gender gaps in primary enrolment. The gender gap in school enrolment is more evident in secondary education, where many more countries are falling behind. At the current rate of progress, the target of eliminating gender disparity in all levels of education no later than 2015 remains far from being achieved.

Women in politics - The global average of women holding parliamentary seats (18.6 percent) is far from the target of 30 percent set in the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. At the present rate, it will take another 40 years to reach gender parity. By March 2009, 15 women were serving as heads of state or government, up from nine in 2000. Gains were made in Latin America and the Caribbean, where women hold 22 percent of all legislative seats, the highest regional average.

African Women Launch the Beijing +15 Shadow Report in New York

African women are not victims, but solutions to the problems on the continent” said Hon. Gertrude Mongella, first President of the Pan-African Parliament during the official launch of the Africa Women’s Regional Shadow Report on Beijing +15. The launch took place in the margins of the 54th Session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women in New York. Hon. Mongella also stated that the Beijing +15 shadow report is a big achievement for the women’s movement in Africa. However, she noted that there are two gaps with the Declaration and Platform for Action, which are: No Timeframe and no sanctions on States that do not implement.

For details visit the *Icon* blog on www.iconwypa.org
Click on blog

Left: Pictures from selected events during the 54th session of the CSW, in New York



L-R: Icon’s Deborah Kaddu-Serwadda, Esther Nasikye and Isis WICCE’s Ruth Odhiambo



Some of the African Women who attended the launch of the African Shadow Report on Beijing +15



Some of the participants from Teso Region, Eastern Uganda at the 54th session of the CSW



The Ugandan Delegation was hosted to a cocktail party at Uganda House. Uganda’s Permanent Representative to the UN, Dr. Ruhakana Rugunda attended

CSW Highlights Cont.

Resolutions from the 54th session of the CSW

The resolutions from the 54th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) on HIV/AIDS, Maternal Mortality and Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) are now available. You can download them from the Icon blog <http://www.iconwypla.org> click on blog.

Icon Women and Young People's Leadership Academy and the Uganda Beijing +15 Review Working Group in partnership with the East African Sub-regional Support Initiative EASSI and other partners is planning a post CSW debriefing meeting for women and young people from Uganda on 30th April, 2010.

Visit

<http://www.iconwypla.org> and download you copy of the resolutions on

- **Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)**
- **Women and HIV/AIDS**
- **Maternal Mortality**

Women Hold the Solutions



"Women Hold the Solutions" session was one of the parallel sessions organized at the 54th session of the CSW by the Global Fund for Women's Corporate Leadership Council in New York. This is a group of women from the corporate sector who play a significant leadership and support role to the Global Fund for Women (GFW).

Icon's Northern Uganda Transformational Leadership Program kicks off in high gear

- 20 women selected as fellows in Northern Uganda
- 47 young men and 27 young women are the latest fellows to join Icon's Program in Northern Uganda

Over 20 women and 70 young men and women passed a rigorous selection process to be the first Icon Fellows from Northern Uganda. Icon through its Northern Uganda Transformational Leadership Enhancement Program will hold the first seminars for the selected women and young people (both male and female) starting 19 -23 April, 2010 at the Gulu Sunset Hotel and St. Monicah's Tailoring School, respectively. Fellows will be introduced to Icon's Self Help and Empowerment Leadership Approach (SHELA). The SHELA is actually the Icon curriculum that helps a leader to grow from an individual person in the first year to a stage where they are confident enough to think beyond themselves and the community they live in and build a coalition or movement in the next couple of years.

As emerging leaders, they will be introduced to Icon's individual self discovery and self assessment which will form the basis of their engagement with Icon's Faculty Members (FM) and other fellows through mentoring and coaching.

Fellows will also be given basic skills of gender analysis in order to look at their community, nation's and continent's challenges with gender lenses. Other sessions will focus on Financial Empowerment, Mentoring, Coaching and Communication and Advocacy as some of the catalysts for transformational leadership and development. Fellows will visit some of the Self Help and Empowerment Leadership Groups that Icon is pioneering in Gulu, Amuru and Kitgum Districts.

Look out for details of the first Leadership Transformation seminars fro these fellows in the April Newsletter

Children's Updates

Pupils paint Ntinda-Kyanja zebra crossing



Pupils of Kampala Academy Primary School, Kisaasi and Uganda Red Cross Society workers painting a zebra crossing on Ntinda-Kyanja Road to reduce road accidents, pupils of Kampala Academy Pri-

mary School Kisaasi, have painted a zebra crossing at a dangerous spot on Ntinda-Kyanja road in Kampala. The exercise was spearheaded by the Uganda Red Cross Society. It was conducted on Saturday, following the death of a pupil of the school who was knocked down on the road last year.

The LCI chairman of Kanisa zone in Kawempe division, Benard Walusimbi, said over 10 people had died on the road this year. Walusimbi said the zebra crossing would curb speeding. He appealed to parents to help their children cross the road.

Source: <http://www.newvision.co.ug/D/8/19/714034/zebra%20crossing>

Teacher trainers get motorcycles

MBUYA - The Government has received 39 motorcycles from UN children's agency to help improve the supervision of primary teachers in rural schools.

The motorcycles were handed over to four primary teachers colleges in Moroto, Gulu and Loro at a function yesterday.

The deputy country representative, Dr Karen Allen, said there called for improvement in the supervision of primary teachers, especially in rural areas.

Man jailed for defiling four kids

THE High Court in Fort Portal has sent a porter to jail for 12 years for defiling four children below 18 years. The court, presided over by Justice Akiiki Kiiza, said in 2005, Peter Mugisa lived in Gertrude Bonnabana's home in Masitala village, Buheesi sub-county, Kabarole district where he worked as a porter. Bonnabana was an aunt to the victims who were aged six, seven, eight and eleven.

The court heard that between May and July 2005, whenever Bonnabana was not at home, the convict would force the girls to have sex with him.

Icon's Children's leadership Program (CLP) seeks to nurture tomorrow's Leader's at an early age. For details visit www.iconwypa.org

Up coming Events and announcements

Fourth International confederation of Midwives (ICM) Africa Meeting 4 - 7 May 2010

Organizer: Uganda Private Midwives Association (UPMA) is organizing the fourth International Confederation of Midwives (ICM) Africa meeting in Kampala, Uganda.

Venue: Speke Resort Munyonyo

Dates: Monday, 4th to Thursday, 7th May, 2010.

Details: www.upmouganda.org

Stockholm Challenge Award 2010

Details: <http://www.stockholmchallenge.org>

International workshop on Gender, Economic Integration, and Cross-border Road Infrastructure Development

Details: <http://cambodiajobs.blogspot.com/2010/02/international-workshop-on-gender.html>

National news in summary

United Nations predicted Kasubi fire

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) eight years ago warned that the Kasubi tombs were at a risk of being destroyed by fire, termites or rain. The agency on January 31, 2002 published a spotlight article indicating that kasubi tombs was among several world heritage sites in Africa that were at a risk of destruction. It noted that the traditional methods used for maintenance of the tombs were "losing ground".

"The best way to preserve the kasubi site, which is threatened by rain, termites, fire and even theft of timber, would probably be to revive traditional skills and combine them with modern conservation methods," the authors recommended.

<http://www.newvision.co.ug/D/8/12/713527/kasubi%20tombs>

ActionAid—Uganda launches the We Can Campaign

We Can is a global Campaign to end societal acceptance of violence against women through a Change-makers concept. A change maker is any person who denounces violence against women and commits to talk to ten other people to end violence in the next five years. We Can Campaign is built on the premise that violence against women is acquired and that men and women can change their attitudes towards accepting violence against women as a norm. Violence is a vice that must be eradicated.

For details, visit the ActionAid website