



SPEECH BY

THE GUEST OF HONOUR, PROFESSOR JOHN DDUMBA-SSENTAMU, VICE CHANCELLOR- MAKERERE UNIVERSITY, AT THE LAUNCH OF FAMILY HEALTH RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT CENTER (FHRDC)

ON

FRIDAY 14<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2012

- Honourable Members of Parliament present,
- Stakeholders and partners in Reproductive Health and Family Planning
- Our hosts: The Chief Administrative Officer and the District Health Officer, Wakiso District,
- Representatives of Local Council 3 and 1 – Nangabo Sub County
- My Colleagues: The Principal College of Health Sciences, the Deans, Chairs of Departments, Members of staff of Makerere University,
- Members of the Kasangati community
- Ladies and Gentlemen

I have the pleasure to officiate at this historic event, at which we are launching the Family Health Research and Development Center (FHRDC). This is yet another landmark development at the Makerere University College of Health Sciences. In particular, I take this opportunity to thank the School of Public Health for spearheading this development.

This launch is in line with the three core mandates of Makerere University namely teaching and learning; research; and knowledge transfer partnerships and networking. Through our knowledge transfer partnerships and networking mandate, we reach out to the communities and seek their involvement in coming up with programmes that best address the respective needs.

Established in 1922 as a humble technical school, Makerere University has expanded over the years to become one of the leading universities in Africa. The Medical School, which was founded in 1924 and later, came to be known as Faculty of Medicine and in 2007 became Makerere University's premier constituent college, the College of Health Sciences (CHS). This College as one of the oldest academic units of Makerere has greatly contributed to the history of this institution.

Ladies and gentlemen, it is impossible to talk about the achievements of Makerere University, without recognizing the significant breakthroughs in

health and human medicine achieved over the years by the dedicated team from the College of Health Sciences.

I am therefore extremely happy to note that as we celebrate the 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Makerere University, the College of Health Sciences and its constituent schools, have continued to conduct research aimed at improving the health sector at both national and international levels.

I would like to appreciate the tremendous work done by the College of Health Sciences and the School of Public Health whose efforts have resulted in the following key developments;

1. The Family Health Research and Development Centre (supported by the Bill and Melinda Gates Institute), which we are launching today.
2. The Centre for Tobacco Control in Africa (a WHO-supported centre, funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation) providing support to governments in Africa to develop sustainable anti-tobacco legislation.
3. Infectious Disease Institute, which conducts research and offers HIV/AIDS care and treatment at Mulago Hospital.
4. The Demographic Surveillance Site in Iganga/Mayuge.
5. Makerere University Walter Reed Project, which is spearheading vaccine trials for HIV, Marburg virus and related diseases.
6. Medical Education for Equitable Services (MESAU) consortium, which brings together universities with health training programs in Uganda working with Northern partners.
7. THRIVE - which is a consortium bringing together research and academic institutions for excellence in health-related research in East Africa.

Furthermore, the increased utilization of the Kasangati facilities by the School of Public Health strengthens the linkages between research and community service, and keeps Makerere relevant to the communities it exists to serve. I am also glad to note that the School of Public Health is already involved in community initiatives in areas such as;

- Intervention research for example, the Voucher scheme for improved maternal health in Eastern Uganda,
- Safe Male Medical Circumcision trial for HIV Prevention in Rakai district,
- Safe Newborn Practices in Iganga/Mayuge Health Demographic Surveillance Site,
- Nevirapine study which, has significantly reduced mother to child transmission of HIV.

As we launch the Family Health Research and Development Centre today, I am pleased to learn that the Centre is already conducting a study in Kyengeru, Wakiso District, examining the role of family planning on the wealth and health of families.

I am very grateful to our development partners for supporting the various projects at College of Health Sciences. Through the various collaborations, you have enabled Makerere University to fulfill its mandate. We certainly need more support and therefore I am appealing to you, development partners and Government, for more support to our College of Health Sciences.

Finally, as we launch the Family Health Research and Development Center, let us always remember to conduct research and come up with innovations, which are relevant to the needs of our society. I thank you all for kindly according me your attention, as ***We Build for the Future***.