Leadership, Gender and Research Excellence in African Universities: A Conversation with Higher Education Institutions, Science Granting Councils and Funding Partners in Africa

Background

Research excellence has become a high-profile feature of the African science landscape during the last decade. When the gender of African based researchers are considered the evidence shows that research outcomes are frequently worse for women than for men; that is, women have less research outputs and are promoted at a lower rate than their male counterparts in most African universities. This would indicate that the initiatives to improve women’s access to science and technology and research in a number of key areas in Africa is still a major challenge for the research community and that still more needs to be done to attract and retain women based in Africa in doing and producing high quality research.

Purpose of the Side Event

This forum will provide an opportunity for the leadership in Higher Education Institutions, Science Granting Councils and Funding Partners that work in Africa and internationally to initiate a dialogue and co-create a transformational program to enhance research excellence contributions from female researchers. It is expected to provide a mechanism for linking individuals and communities in and across different regions and science sectors to engage in joint and transformative actions targeting shared needs and should also generate open discussion based upon the available research evidence; identify desired improvements and outline next steps.

Approach and Methodology

The side event will take the format of a ½-day workshop that would attract researchers, higher education administrators, and funders of research internationally and in Africa. The workshop will begin with welcome remarks by the Director of the AAP Secretariat followed by remarks from the guest speaker who will share findings from her recent commissioned publication on research excellence in Africa. The Panel Discussion that will follow will attempt to link gender, science, technology and innovation (STI) and research excellence in Africa from the perspectives of Higher Education, African and International Funding agencies, and Civil Society. Their contributions will
address specifically the programs available to strengthen gender, STI and research excellence, what else is needed and whose role it is to establish these programs. The workshop will end with a small group brainstorming discussion and report back about the elements of an African Focused Research Excellence Transformational Program for Female STI Researchers at HE and Research Institutions in Africa.

Participants to be invited (those paid for by AAP in italics):
1. Jose Jackson-Malete, Associate Director Alliance for African Partnership, Michigan State University
2. Amy Jamison, Associate Director AAP & Gen-Cen, Michigan State University
3. Erika Kramer-Mbula, Professor STI Policy Analysis, University of Johannesburg (SGCI)*
4. Richard Mkandawire, Director AAP Africa Secretariat
5. Wenda Bauchspies, Co-Director, Gen Cen, Michigan State University **
6. Thelma Awori, Founding Chair and President Emeritus, Sirleaf Market Women’s Fund
7. Penina Mlama, University of Dar es Salaam
8. Isaac Minde, Professor, Sokoine University of Agriculture
9. Thom Jayne, Professor, Michigan State University
10. Jamie Monson, Professor, Michigan State University
11. Anne Ferguson, Associate Dean, Michigan State University
12. Titus Awokuse, Chair AFRE, Michigan State University
13. Aggrey Ambali, NEPAD
14. Candace Keller, Michigan State University
15. Paul Zeleza, United States International University – Africa
16. Lucy Irungu, Vice Chancellor, Machakos University
17. Molapo Qhobela, CEO National Research Foundation, South Africa (SGCI)*
18. Caroline Langat Thoruwa, Chair, African Women in Science and Engineering
20. Andrea Johnson, Program Manager, Carnegie Corporation
21. Rose A. Mwonya, Vice Chancellor Egerton University
22. Benjamin C. Ozumba, Vice Chancellor University of Nigeria, Nsukka
23. George Kanyama-Phiri, Vice Chancellor, Lilongwe University of Agriculture and Natural Resources
24. Barnabas Nawangwe, Vice Chancellor, Makerere University
25. David Norris, Vice Chancellor University of Botswana
26. Macki Samake, Recteur, Université des Lettres et des Sciences Humaines de Bamako
27. Ibrahima Thioub, Rector, University Cheikh Anta Diop of Dakar
28. William-Andey Lazaro Anangisye, Vice Chancellor, UDSM
29. Boniface Wanyama, Principal Science Secretary, Head, Physical and Nuclear Sciences
30. Anthony Muyepa, Director General, National Commission for Science and Technology
31. Mbonye Manasse, Director General, National Commission for Science and Technology
32. Peter Ndemere, Executive Secretary, Uganda National Council for Science and Technology
33. Alfred Sumani, Executive Secretary, National Science and Technology Council
* Paid by the SGCI Project

Expected Outputs

The major outcome of the side event would be engagement of stakeholders on gender, STI and research excellence in Africa and co-creation of a transformative program including the roles and responsibilities of the different stakeholders in the implementation of these programs.
Draft Programme:

Session Chairs:
Jose Jackson-Malete, Co-Director Alliance for African Partnership, Michigan State University
Amy Jamison, Co-Director Alliance for African Partnership, Michigan State University

9:00AM: Introductions of speakers and objectives of the workshop
9:15AM Welcome Remarks: Richard Mkandawire, Director AAP Africa Secretariat
9:30AM Overview of Research Excellence in Africa Erika Kramer-Mbula, Professor STI Policy Analysis, University of Johannesburg
10:15AM Panel Discussion on Gender, STI and Research Excellence Programs in Africa – What is there and What is needed?
Lucy Irungu, Vice Chancellor, Machakos University
Molapo Qhobela, CEO National Research Foundation, South Africa
Caroline Langat Thoruwa, Chair, African Women in Science and Engineering
Jemimah Onsare, Acting CEO National Research Fund Kenya
Andrea Johnson, Program Manager, Carnegie Corporation

11:15AM Refreshments

11:30AM Session Chair: Dr. Michèle Mbo’o-Tchouawou, AWARD Deputy Director for Programs
Small Group Discussion and Report back on an African Focused Research Excellence Transformational Program for Female Researchers at HE and Research Institutions in Africa

12:45PM Closing Remarks
Wenda Bauchspies, Co-Director, GenCen, MSU

1:00PM Lunch