



Republic of Uganda

## Office of the President

### Opening Remarks by the Hon. Minister of State (Economic Monitoring) – Office of the President at the Evidence 2023 Conference at Protea Hotel, Entebbe on the 13<sup>th</sup> September 2023.

All Conference Delegates from your respective Countries,

Protocal Observed

On behalf of the Government of Uganda and on my own behalf, I warmly welcome you to the Pearl of Africa and to the **Evidence 2023 Conference**.

It is an honour for us in Uganda to host this Evidence Conference. I understand several of these Conferences have been taking place in South Africa over the past decade and to this effect I would like to thank the Organizers for choosing Uganda as your host.

I am particularly happy, that as a person who uses evidence to inform Cabinet submissions to see that we gather here in this Conference to discuss topical issues on using information, data and other forms of Evidence for decision making.

This Conference is held at a time when the World is increasingly threatened by common social, economic, and health crises, such as the worsening food insecurity, changing weather patterns, epidemics and pandemics, all leading to widening inequalities and inequities within communities which is more true on the African Continent. This conference provides an opportunity for you delegates to deliberate on what needs to be done differently based on evidence, to make Africa safer for us, our children, and the future generations.

As you are aware, we live in times where access to information is defining our existence. One may even say we are experiencing information overload. I therefore salute you for driving the idea of pushing for utilization of information and data to inform policy processes for evidence-based decisions. Koffi Annan, once said, and I quote, *"Knowledge is power, Information is liberating"*.

The COVID-19 pandemic, which is still very fresh in our minds, revealed and confirmed our vulnerabilities as Africans and the need to invest in research, data and information to address our socio-economic challenges. The need for more research and generation of evidence on our indigenous knowledge in addressing some of our health challenges cannot be underated. I want to challenge you that at the end of this Conference you would have come-up with deliberate actionable resolutions on utilization of indigenous knowledge. There are missed opportunities when we do not use what is readily available to us locally.

Furthermore, this Evidence Conference bring together Policymakers, Scientists, and Civil Society Organisations to engage and collaborate on best practices for using information in Policy Processes. It is important that in the spirit of Pan-Africanism and Ubuntu we learn together, share and support each other to build a knowledge base for evidence-informed decision-making for Africa as a Continent.

To appreciate use of Evidence in Policy processes, the Government of Uganda established a framework for Oversight Monitoring and Evaluation for the Executive (APEX Platform) one of the first in Africa domiciled in the Office of the President and Department of M&E under the Parliament of Uganda.

Allow me recognize Prof. Nelson Sewankambo and Dr. Rhona Mijumbi among other researchers here with us, for their unrelenting efforts towards evidence generation and sharing. I commend the "Uganda's Center for Rapid Evidence Synthesis" (ACRES) for the initiatives aimed at ensuring access to high-quality and relevant information in a timely manner, to support informed decision-making.

I applaud your every effort in trying to make a better World for us all through data, information and research.

I once again welcome you to this Conference and the Pearl of Africa. I invite you all to take time off after the conference to enjoy the beauty in Uganda.

Thank you.

I declare the Evidence 2023 Conference Open.

For God and My Country.