**Panelist Prof. Maggie Kigozi**

I thank Charles for accepting to read this as he has been part of my journey with Women Entrepreneurs and I am excited about the work he is planning to do through the Knowledge Platform.

I will simply share my experiences as a Woman entrepreneur, Farmer, Investment Promoter and Facilitator and a Feminist.

Broad Advocacy issues for Women owned enterprise include:

1. Networking - women are time constrained as care givers and do not find time to network.

2. Access to Information - women are affected by cultural, religious and time constraints. Research findings never reach the women. Informed women are confident women and will fight for their own rights.

3. Administrative barriers in government trade support institutions and banks. Corruption affects women more as they are perceived as soft targets by corrupt officials.

4. Access to finance as women lack information and collateral.

5. Access to land and property - patriarchal systems work against women.

6. Achieving 50% Female Leadership in both government and private sector. 30% was achieved through the MDG's but only in government and only in some countries. The SDG's 2030 and AU's Agenda 2063 must achieve parity in all leadership positions including the private sector. This will require affirmative action through Laws, regulation and policy. Research on data on the status must be carried out to inform the necessary changes.

7. Academia Private Sector Partnerships as in the Knowledge Platform are very limited. Academia must provide the knowledge and data required to drive economic development and community involvement especially women economic empowerment. I myself advise the University Council of East Africa and A number of Universities in Uganda. We had put in place the Makerere University Private Sector Forum which is struggling. More recently we are working on the Civil Society Public Private Sector Forum where academia and research play a key role in informing advocacy to acheive economic Social Economic Transformation.

Success Story

Let me share one success story - The Uganda Investment Authority Women Entrepreneurs Network. Charles has presented this. We provided:

1. Networking opportunities through meetings, international exposure and conferences.

2. Capacity building. Women entrepreneurs were exposed to the best in Uganda in business areas like audit, management, marketing etc. They were encouraged to seek skills eg UIA through their Entrepreneurship Skills Training project trained thousands of women entrepreneurs. We encouraged women to join private sector associations and to access government programs and institutions. In partnership with Academia UIA worked on a Cluster program in line with Basil's value chain presentation in another project.

3. Advocacy. Partnering with IFC and Civil Society we researched and collected data on the women entrepreneurs(GEM Gender Economic Monitoring study). We identified their challenges and advocated to the relevant institutions like Government, Uganda Revenue Authority, Banks, Police etc. We advocated better customer care eg a special women's desk in all institutions(Team Uganda), engendered laws, no corruption etc. Engendered data collection now continues under the World Bank Doing Business Report following the GEM.

4. UIA WEN partnership with media. Media capacity was built to report and advocate on women issues. Women were featured and have become role models for other women. They are winning numerous awards both local and international and have grown their enterprises eg. Julian Omalla is the 2014 Commonwealth Woman Entrepreneur. We started with her in 2000 running a small juice business. She now employs 600 people including seasonal workers and has diversified into poultry, Milling, Bakery, Commercial Tree Farming and has invested in a bakery in South Sudan UIA WEN continues to evolve with new products such as the Brilliant Entrepreneurs - a Dutch partnership project.

I thank all of you who are working on the various researches that will evolve into concrete improvements for Business. As an entrepreneur myself I will be a direct beneficiary of your work.