



ERUDITE SCHOLARS INITIATIVE

Email: info.erscin@gmail.com
P.O.Box 109136 Kampala
Tel: +(256) 784 083583

**"EQUALITY BEYOND GENDER ROLES: A GENDER EQUALITY DEBATE,
POETRY, AND PUBLIC SPEECH COMPETITION"**

THEME:

BRIDGES NOT BARRIERS: CHALLENGING THE NORM

MISSION

To empower young people to become advocates for social change

VISION

Fostering Meaningful Dialogs on Gender Equality through Leadership Financial
Inclusion and Economic Empowerment

PROGRAM DATE

21st SEPTEMBER – 2025

VENUE: MBOGO MIXED SECONDARY SCHOOL



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INTRODUCTION

Erudite Scholars Initiative Ltd (ESI) is a registered youth centered organization that was started in 2019 with an aim of developing effective communication and presentation skills of students to become advocates for social change by fostering meaningful dialogs on Gender Equality through Leadership and Financial Inclusion as well as Economic Empowerment.

ESI has established its mission in various schools through training sessions both online and physical as well as the ESI Annual Competitions to assess students' competence. Students engage in activities including debates, speech, writing, and poetry as well as quizzes.

Considering the organization's achievements over the past 4 years, we have established a strong system that will deliver the best service to the youth.

THEME: EQUALITY BEYOND GENDER ROLES

BACKGROUND

"We need to move away from a society where it is generally accepted that family-friendly measures are for women and where men are often looked down upon when they ask, according to their rights, to follow suit."

We need to ensure that children do not internalize gender norms that we adults know are damaging to their development. Creating a fairer society where men and women alike can achieve their full potential is an important goal.

Equality of opportunity can only be achieved if both men and women actively engage in making it a reality as both men and women have much to gain from gender equality. Men are often reluctant to enter 'feminized' spaces for reasons of fear of ridicule, fear of becoming 'tainted' by femininity, and genuine concern that it is not appropriate for them to speak out about gender equality. This is the result of how cultural and social spaces are gendered. Restrictive gender roles and stereotypes harm not only women and girls but also men and boys. Men often miss out on the benefits derived from a whole range of emotions and experiences that are immensely rewarding and socially valued.

Students and youths will be targeted through various activities, namely the online social media campaign, the roving van in various post-secondary and tertiary locations, and the on-campus event for all post-secondary and tertiary students.



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The importance of youth in gender equality is the focus of a new project: **Equality Beyond Gender Roles** – that is being implemented by the ESI. This is a six-year project spanning from October 2024 until December 2030. The main objectives of the project are to:

- Increase awareness on the importance of men's role in gender equality;
- Increase knowledge through various training and outreach initiatives;
- Inform the target groups and society at large about the significance of men's role in gender equality, breaking down stereotypes tied to traditional gender roles, highlighting the benefits of sharing family and domestic responsibilities through the uptake of various incentives by both men and women;

THE SDGS AND GENDER EQUALITY

Spearheaded by the United Nations, the international community agreed in 2015 on 17 Sustainable Development Goals to pursue over the next 15 years. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) reaffirmed and invigorated UNICEF's work on gender equality, especially around the rights and empowerment of adolescent girls.

The needs and rights of girls are encapsulated in **Goal 5: Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment** and cut across the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Other SDG targets and indicators that resonate with UNICEF's gender work are:

- **Goal 3: Good Health and Well-being** – reduce maternal mortality, end preventable deaths of newborns and children under 5, ensure access to sexual and reproductive health and end HIV and AIDS and other diseases.
- **Goal 4: Quality Education** – universalize access to quality education, from preprimary to tertiary levels, with a specific mandate to redress social inequalities undermining access to educational opportunities. Eliminate gender disparities at all levels and making sure education facilities are gender-sensitive to create effective learning environments.

PREVIEW

Our organization, Erudite Scholars Initiative Ltd (ESI), aims to empower young people to become advocates for social change. This competition aligns with your institution's values. By hosting this event, we hope to provide a unique opportunity for students to engage in meaningful discussions, critical thinking, and effective argumentation on gender equality issues.

The competition will feature three categories: debate, poetry, and public speech, with participants divided into juniors, intermediates, and seniors.



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"EQUALITY BEYOND GENDER ROLES: A GENDER EQUALITY DEBATE, POETRY, AND PUBLIC SPEECH COMPETITION" OBJECTIVES:

- a) To provide a platform for high school students to engage in meaningful discussions, critical thinking, and effective argumentation on gender equality issues, fostering a deeper understanding of the importance of gender equality in various aspects of life.
- b) To encourage students to develop well-informed opinions and articulate arguments on gender equality topics.
- c) To promote critical thinking, research, and analytical skills in relation to gender equality issues.
- d) To foster a culture of respectful dialogue, active listening, and open-mindedness.
- e) To empower students to become advocates for gender equality and social change.
- f) To provide a safe and inclusive space for students to share their perspectives and experiences.
- g) To build confidence and public speaking skills through debate, poetry, and public speech.
- h) To recognize and reward outstanding debate, poetry, and public speech skills, teamwork, and dedication to gender equality.

FIELDS OF FOCUS:

1. Quality Education for All
2. Leadership and Political Representation
3. Financial Inclusion and Economic Empowerment

Categories of Participants:

- Juniors (Primary)
- Intermediates (S1 – S4)
- Seniors (Classes S5–S6)

Each category will conduct its own competitions in Debate, Poetry and Public speech.



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COMPETITIONS:

1. Debate Competition:

- 1 Teams of three students will represent their schools.
- 2 Preliminary rounds: Teams will debate different topics
- 3 Semifinals: Top teams will debate a selected topic
- 4 Finals: Top two teams will debate a final topic

2. Poetry Competition:

- 1 Students will present original poems related to given topics
- 2 Top poems will be selected for a live recitation at the finals
- 3 Judges will award prizes for content, creativity, and delivery

3. Public Speech Competition:

- 1 Students will deliver prepared speeches on gender equality topics
- 2 Time limit: 3-5 minutes
- 3 Judges will award prizes for content, delivery, and overall impact

PRIZES:

Will have a general awarding ceremony for all categories (juniors, intermediates and seniors) under Debate, Poetry and public speech Competition;

- 4 Champions: Trophies
- 5 Runners-Up team: Medals
- 6 Best Speakers: Medals & Certificates



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2025 TARGETED BENEFICIARIES

The event is organized for both primary and secondary schools with a minimum target of 500 students. Each participating school will be required to send at least one team to represent it in all the competitions. Below is a list of the invited schools;

1. Trinity College Nabbingo
2. Seeta High Schools
3. Gayaza Adventist School
4. Kololo Senior Secondary School
5. Seroma Christian High School
6. Ggombe Secondary School
7. Mount St. Mary's Namagunga
8. Kateta Hill View Secondary School
9. Kawempe Muslim Secondary School
10. Namagabi SS Kayunga
11. ST. Mark's college Namagoma
12. Viva College School
13. Medinahh Islamic Junior School
14. Asifiwe International School
15. Mbogo Mixed Secondary School
16. Royal College Namuongo-Mukono Campus
17. St. Maria Goretti SS Katende
18. Sumayya Girls High School
19. FORT T.V Media Club
20. Lakeside College Luzira
21. St. Catherine SS Nabbingo

NB:

Any of the schools not listed above but wishes to take part in the Competition are as well welcome to register their participation through a link that will be provided.



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PERFORMANCE AND SUCCESS OF ESI SINCE 2019:

ESI has established operations both in Uganda and Africa at large. With operations since October 2019, we have accomplished the following;

- 1 **2024 Debate Poetry & Public speech Championship:** Theme: **Equality Beyond Gender Roles** at Code High School where Mbogo Mixed SS emerged the champions.
- 2 **ESI 2023 High School Championship:** This was organized under the theme: "Achieving Inclusive and Quality Education (SDG 04): Policy Analysis" at Kitante Hill School where Code High School emerged winners.
- 3 **Hope SS Bbira Watoto, October 9th, 2022 – Independence Debates:** These were hosted by Hope Senior School Bbira Watoto with over 200 students where Gombe Secondary School emerged winner.
- 4 **2022 ESI Schools Championship, July 10th 2022 at Cavendish University.** These were held at Cavendish University where Code High School emerged as Champions.
- 5 **23rd December 2021 to 24th December 2021 – The Christmas YS5 (Youths Supporting 5 Families).** This was aimed at providing Christmas packages to 5 families in Makindye with: 1 bunch of matooke, 1Kg of meat, 1Kg of rice, 1 loaf of bread, 1Kg of sugar and ingredients which was successful.
- 6 **21st July 2021 to 16th July 2021 – Erudite Speech Open Season 2.** This was the second season of the Erudite Speech Open with over 150 participants from 10 countries under the theme; "Leadership, Ethics, and Morality." Aloikin Praise Opoloje, a Ugandan student at Makerere University emerged as the winner of the competition.
- 7 **15th September 2021 – Save Charity Outreach to Missionaries of the Poor Busega.** We collected necessities from our team and students which we took to Missionaries of the Poor Busega, a home for children with disabilities.
- 8 **24th August 2020 to 30th August 2020 – The Erudite Speech Open Season 1.** This was an online Speech Competition under the theme, "Redeeming Africa from the Margin." The Competition gathered 120 participants from 8 different Countries including Ghana, Cameroon, Kenya, Zimbabwe, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Uganda, and Niger.
- 9 **Kings College Budo, October 9th, 2019 – Independence Debates:** These were our first ever organized Independence Debates hosted in the Kings College Budo Main Hall with Dr. Jennifer Angeyo Somali as the Chief Guest. Kings College Budo emerged winner.

Approved By;

MARTIN MUSOKE

Executive Director ESI info.erscin@gmail.com