



FIDELIS LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE



AMBASSADE  
DE FRANCE  
EN OUGANDA

*Liberté  
Égalité  
Fraternité*

# ADVOCACY AND LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT TRAINING REPORT

## FOR FINAL-YEAR STUDENTS AND RECENT GRADUATES OF THE INSTITUTE OF GENDER AND DEVELOPMENT STUDIES, MAKERERE UNIVERSITY

**Organized by:** Fidelis Leadership Institute (FLI)  
**In Partnership with:** The French Embassy in Uganda

**Theme:**  
“Amplify Your Voice, Shape the Future:  
Empowering Emerging Leaders”

**Date:** 25th September 2025  
**Venue:** Avoda Entrepreneurship Institute

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# Executive Summary

The Advocacy and Leadership Development Training was a one-day intensive program designed to equip final-year students and recent graduates of the Institute of Gender and Development Studies, Makerere University, with practical advocacy, communication, and leadership skills.

Organized by the Fidelis Leadership Institute (FLI) in partnership with the French Embassy in Uganda, the training aimed to empower young leaders to amplify their voices, influence public policy, and drive gender equality and social justice. The program provided participants with actionable tools in public speaking, advocacy writing, storytelling, strategic management, and personal goal mapping.

The day's sessions were highly interactive, blending theory with practice to build confidence, sharpen influence, and foster leadership clarity. By the end of the training, participants developed personalized advocacy roadmaps and identified practical steps for their professional and civic engagement journeys.

The program underscored FLI's ongoing mission to cultivate ethical, visionary, and effective African leaders capable of driving inclusive transformation in their communities.

## Background Our “Why,” and “What We Do,”

Young people constitute a significant proportion of Uganda's population, yet their voices often remain underrepresented in governance, policy formulation, and broader development processes. Final-year students and recent graduates, particularly those in gender and development studies, stand at a critical transition point between academic study and active participation in civic and professional spaces. While they bring fresh ideas, creativity, and energy, many lack the practical skills, mentorship, networks, and confidence needed to influence decision-making, champion social transformation, and advocate for equity and justice.

Without targeted support, these emerging leaders risk being left out of conversations that directly affect their future. Limited exposure to advocacy strategies, weak leadership mentoring, and inadequate access to policy spaces often result in disengagement, underutilization of talent, and perpetuation of social inequalities. Recognizing this gap, the Fidelis Leadership Institute (FLI), in collaboration with the French Embassy, initiated an Advocacy Training for final-year students and recent graduates of the Institute of Gender and Development Studies at Makerere University.

### **Guided by the theme:**

“Amplify Your Voice, Shape the Future: Empowering Emerging Leaders,” the training sought to equip participants with the knowledge, skills, and confidence to engage in meaningful advocacy, promote gender equality, and influence inclusive development. It aimed to nurture youth who are not only employable but empowered, articulate, and ethically grounded to drive systemic change.

# Fidelis Leadership Institute's Role

FLI exists to cultivate a generation of ethical, visionary, and transformational leaders across Africa. Anchored on its F.A.T. values — Faithfulness, Availability, and Teachability, the Institute develops leaders ready to take on responsibility, influence, and institutional impact. Through strategic partnerships with embassies, universities, and civic organizations, FLI delivers programs that shape mindsets, strengthen moral character, and expand advocacy capacity.

This collaboration with the French Embassy underscores a shared commitment to raising youth voices for social justice and equality, fostering a generation of socially conscious, ethically grounded, and visionary leaders who can contribute to building a more just and inclusive future for Uganda and beyond.

## 1. Program Intent

The one-day training was designed to:

- Equip participants with advocacy communication tools for policy influence and civic engagement.
- Build public speaking and storytelling skills for impact and credibility.
- Strengthen participants' ability to write persuasively for advocacy and social change.
- Instill confidence and ethical grounding in emerging leaders.
- Guide participants to develop personal leadership and advocacy roadmaps for continued growth.

## 2. Opening Session

### Remarks by the Executive Director – Ms. Pheona Nabasa Wall

The Executive Director of Fidelis Leadership Institute Opening Remarks;

The Executive Director emphasized that the Fidelis Leadership Institute (FLI) exists to nurture a new generation of leaders whose voices, values and vision will transform Uganda and Africa at large. She added by saying, We believe that communication is power and when used with integrity and courage, it becomes a force that can change communities, institutions and nations.

This partnership with the French Embassy reflects our shared conviction that young people, especially advocates for gender equality, deserve platforms to sharpen their voice, strengthen their leadership, and step forward with confidence. At FLI, we are intentional about preparing emerging leaders to not only succeed in their careers but also to become catalysts of justice, equality and lasting impact.

Since our establishment, we have walked alongside many leaders young and seasoned on their journey of self-discovery, clarity of purpose and growth in influence. We have seen lives transformed, and we remain committed to a leadership philosophy anchored on our core values of Faithfulness, Availability and Teachability.

To each of you participating in this training, I welcome you wholeheartedly. This is more than a workshop, it is an invitation to find your voice, to shape your future, and to stand as an advocate for those whose voices may not yet be heard. Approach this space with openness, courage and determination.

Together let us build a community of leaders who communicate boldly, lead ethically, and act with vision. The future belongs to those who are willing to rise, speak and serve.

She also ended by welcoming the students to this transformative journey.

# One-Day Training Program Overview

The training unfolded through six thematic sessions, each facilitated by experienced professionals, offering participants practical knowledge, group exercises, and reflective assignments.

## Personal Mapping by Pheona Nabasa Wall

### 1. What is Personal Mapping?

A tool for self-discovery and goal setting. Helps students understand their strengths, weaknesses, passions, and opportunities. Serves as a roadmap for both personal and professional growth.

### 2. Steps in Personal Mapping

Identify Your Core Values – what drives you? (e.g., integrity, service, excellence).

Recognize Your Strengths and Talents – skills you excel at and enjoy using.

Acknowledge Weaknesses/Limitations – areas for growth or improvement.

Set Clear Goals – short-term (1–2 years) and long-term (5–10 years).

Align with Opportunities – link your skills and passions to real-world opportunities.

Create an Action Plan – specific steps, timelines, and accountability.

### 3. Exercise Pheona Gave

Students were asked to draw a simple personal map with four circles:

Who am I? (values, identity, passions)

What do I have? (skills, education, networks)

Where am I going? (career/life goals)

How will I get there? (strategies, mentorship, continuous learning)

### Takeaways

Personal Mapping: Students gained a structured way to reflect on their personal journeys, set realistic goals, and align their strengths with opportunities.

## Power Writing for Advocacy by Mark Muganga

Mark Muganga emphasized the importance of Power Writing which endeavors to persuade, mobilize and drives change. Power writing turns ideas into action for social, political, or organizational impact.

Mark also emphasized that power writing amplifies your voice to shape the future.

He further stated why writing matters for leaders which is to clarify your thoughts and vision, builds persuasive arguments to influence others, creates lasting impact through shared ideas, supports the company's strategic goals and also empowers you to advocate for change.

He further outlined the key principles of power writing which include; clarity which entails simple direct language, persuasiveness which entails structure arguments with a clear ask, authenticity to tell stories to connect emotionally, Audience focus which entails tailor writing to readers (officials, public or donors), ethical impact to influence with truth, not manipulation.

### Mark also educated the Students on structuring their advocacy writing by;

- starting with the Ask; this means what change do you want?
- Support with facts; this means use data, examples and evidence.
- End with a call to action; this means inspire leaders to act.

### Mark also highlighted on the common pitfalls and fixes which include;

- Use of jargon or vague language. This can be fixed by simplifying the language and being specific
- Weak structure. This can be fixed by use of Ask facts
- Ignoring audience. This can be fixed by making research about your audience.
- Overloading with data

### Key takeaways

- Writing amplifies your voice.
- Use clarity, stories, and structure to advocate
- Practice makes you a stronger leader.

## **Storytelling For Impact By Precious Collette**

Precious Collette shared an example to the students that when she shares data with them, only the language processing parts of your brain activate. But when she tells them a story describing running through the rain, the smell of wet earth, the fear in my chest your brain literally experiences it with me.

Your motor cortex activates when I talk about running, your sensory areas light up with the feeling of rain. This is called neural coupling, our brains synchronize.

### **Precious elaborated on the essential stories every leader needs and they included;**

- The Original Story- why I'm here, your passion spark moment.
- The transformation story- how I grew, a challenge that changed you.
- The Impact story- what I have changed, concrete positive change example.
- The vision story- where we are going, future you are creating.
- The values story- what I stand for, standing for principles moment.

### **Precious also elaborated taught the students about the STAR formula to help them structure their story for impact which is as follows;**

- S- SITUATION which stands for setting the scene, be specific about time/place, paint a picture.
- T- TASK which stands for defining the challenge, show complexity and clarify stakes.
- A- ACTION which stands for your specific actions, obstacles overcome, decision process
- R- RESULT which stands for measurable outcomes, broader impact and lessons learned

Stories can be used in a number of spheres which include professional interviews, reviews, networking, leadership, motivating, change, trust-building. In advocacy; policy, media, grants

Precious ended by quoting a saying from Rebecca Solnit which stated that "if you don't tell your story, someone else will tell it for you."

## **The Art Of Public Speaking In Advocacy By Belinda Amany.**

Ms. Amany Belinda started by defining what public speaking is and referred to it as the process of designing and delivering a message to an audience to inform, persuade, or entertain.

Belinda told the students that public speaking is not just about talking in front of people; its about communicating with purpose, clarity and impact- whether the goal is to inform, persuade or inspire.

Belinda also emphasized why public speaking is important and why one needs to get themselves into it. One thing that is important in our communication is to communicate and do it effectively which gives one more influence.

### **She also talked of the progression of public speaking which are;**

- Ethos- (credibility)
- Pathos- (Emotions)
- Logos- (Logic)

### **Belinda went further and gave tips on how to deal with fear and nervousness in public speaking and they include the following;**

- Know your audience
- Get organized
- Practice, and then practice some more.
- Visualize your success.
- Do some deep breathing.
- Recognize your success.

She gave the participants a simplified formular to prepare a speech: Introduction, Body, Conclusion and went ahead to give hints on how to always start your speech with an attention grabber which hooks your audience into your speech.

**There are a number of ways of starting your speech but the following are the three best ways of starting your speech;**

- A story
- Facts
- Rhetorical question

She likes to organize her speech body into three basic ideas. These ideas are not mere arguments but are supported by logical reasoning and original thoughts as well as evidence, in form of facts, statistics, examples, illustrations, or even impacts. She went ahead and gave these three criterias;

- Problem Analysis- which entails identifying the problem and why and how it is a problem.
- Solution analysis- how best can you solve the problem effectively and efficiently
- Benefit Analysis- what benefits will your audience receive if they choose your solution to the problem.

In the Conclusion, your speech should summarize your main points and purpose while leaving a lasting impression on your audience. Don't introduce any new points or supportive evidence into your conclusion as it will confuse your audience. Also write your conclusion at the same time as the introduction (after you write the body) so that the introduction and conclusion complement one another.

**She further gave them tips to make their speeches better:**

- Body Language
- Tonation & Pauses in your flow
- Creativity
- Preparation

It was an empowering session; we hope that the students are able to speak up on their ideas and things they are passionate about to create impact and influence in their community.

## **Action Planning & Personal Roadmap Creation by Isabella & Francis**

Isabella & Francis layed down the purpose of this session which is to equip participants with tools for effective goal setting, support creation of personal and professional roadmaps, foster accountability partnerships that sustain growth, encourage commitment to practical, achievable actions.

Isabella & Francis elaborated why action planning matters as laid down;

- Translates vision into practical steps
- Prevents procrastination and unclear priorities
- Creates focus and direction for advocacy and leadership
- Enables tracking of progress and celebrating success

Francis and Isabella encouraged the students to have a smart goal settings where they went ahead to define what SMART means, it's an acronym that stands for Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound. These are criteria that you can use to help yourself set reasonable goals that you'll have a better chance of achieving and can be applied to many areas of your life. SMART goals help you achieve your best and progress in your life and career.

**SMART can also be elaborate as below;**

- Specific- Clear and Precise
- Measurable- Can track progress
- Achievable- Realistic within your capacity
- Realistic within your capacity
- Time-bound- With a clear deadline

Isabella and Francis also implored the students to build their personal road-maps by identifying three (3) priority goals for the next 6-12 months, Break each goal into smaller milestones, Assign timelines to each milestone, Reflect on resources, mentors and networks needed Additionally, Francis & Isabella also implored the students to choose an accountability partner from the training cohort, set regular check-in meetings (weekly/monthly), share progress and

challenges openly and encourage, motivate, and celebrate each other's wins.

Isabella and Francis held a group exercise and paired the students where they were to share with each other one SMART goal, and together, outline the first 3 steps toward that goal, exchange contacts and agree on accountability schedule. Thereafter they had to report back key insights to the group.

Isabella and Francis concluded their presentation by imploring the students to commit today to act, adapt, and achieve. They also told the students that a dream without a plan is only a wish. Francis and Isabella also provided the students with a formula which is; Clear goals + Roadmap + Accountability= Sustainable Impact.

### Strategic Management for Advocacy by Gerald Wall

Gerald listed the key topics he would be covering in his discussion which included;

- The Eisenhower Matrix: Prioritizing tasks in high-stake Advocacy.
- The Promodoros Technique: which aims at boosting productivity without burn-out

Gerald elaborated and gave an overview about the Eisenhower Decision Matrix which is a time management tool created by President Dwight D Eisenhower to prioritize tasks based on urgency and importance. This matrix helps avoid overwhelm in advocacy work, where demands like campaigns, research, and networking pull you in multiple directions.

## The Eisenhower Decision Matrix



### Gerald went ahead to break down the quadrants as follows;

- Quadrant 1: Anything Urgent & Important is supposed to be done first. When you have a crisis or deadline, handle it immediately to prevent escalation.
- Quadrant 2: something may not be important but not urgent.
- Quadrant 3: something may be urgent but not important. So one can delegate them to another person.
- Quadrant 4: something may be neither urgent nor important. Therefore one ought to eliminate time wasters (cut them out)

Gerald also introduced and gave an overview of the Pomodoro (Tomato) Technique where he informed the students that it was developed by Francesco Cirillo, it's a time management method using focused work intervals (pomodoros) to enhance productivity.

Gerald also gave a core idea to the students to work for 25 minutes straight, then take a 5-minute break. After 4 Pomodoros, take a long 15-30 minute break.

As students/grads juggling studies, internships, and activism, it combats procrastination and burnout in demanding fields like gender advocacy.

### **How it works, cycle breakdown;**

- 25 minutes: focused work (e.g drafting a policy brief on gender-based violence)
- 5 minutes: short break (stretch, hydrate-avoid screens).
- Repeat 4 times, then long break (reflect or recharge).
- Tools needed: timer app (eg, focus boosters), notebook for tasks.
- Adaptation Tip: customize intervals if 25 minute feels too short for deep research

Gerald went ahead and introduced strategic management to the students where he defined it as a systematic approach to achieving long term goals through planning, action, and assessment. He further brought in its relevancy to Advocacy; where in gender and development, its about turning passion into sustainable impact eg advancing women's rights or inclusive policies. Gerald also gave the students a quote by Sun Tzu, "Strategy without tactics is the slowest route to victory. Tactics without strategy is the noise before defeat."

### **He also went ahead and gave the stages of Strategic Management which included;**

- Strategic Formulation; as emerging leaders in gender and development, these tools help you manage time, resources, and strategies to drive real-world change.
- Strategy Implementation; this involves allocating resources, defining responsibilities, setting timelines, create a system of controls & feedbacks and developing a communication plan.

**Strategy Evaluation and control;** this involves monitoring process, identify problems and opportunities, take corrective actions, evaluate the effectiveness of the strategic plan and repeat the process.

### **Gerald also elaborated to the students on how to connect/ integrate all tools as shown below;**

- Use Eisenhower to prioritize formulation tasks;
- Pomodoro for focused implementation;
- Evaluate overall strategy.

As gender advocates, blend these for ethical, inclusive strategies that amplify underrepresented voices.

### **Key Takeaways**

- Eisenhower Matrix: Prioritize for efficiency.
- Pomodoro Technique: Sustain productivity.
- Strategic Management: Plan, act, access for lasting impact.

Gerald ended by imploring the students to apply these in your next advocacy project-share experiences!

## Participant Reflections & Feedback

Participants expressed gratitude for the training's practical nature, citing improvements in confidence, goal-setting, and public speaking. Key reflections included:

- "This training has unlocked my confidence to speak about gender issues in public forums."
- "The personal mapping session helped me rediscover my purpose and align my goals."
- "For the first time, I feel equipped to write persuasively for a cause I care about."

Facilitators noted the participants' enthusiasm, discipline, and eagerness to translate ideas into tangible advocacy actions.

## Lessons Learned

- Empowered Communication: Youth can influence change when equipped with storytelling and persuasive writing skills.
- Confidence Is Built, Not Born: Practice and mentorship are key to overcoming fear in public engagement.
- Accountability Sustains Growth: Peer partnerships foster long-term consistency in leadership development.
- Structured Strategy Drives Advocacy: Planning and prioritization convert passion into measurable impact.

## Closing Ceremony and Certificate Awards

The Advocacy and Leadership Development Training culminated in a distinguished closing ceremony attended by students, faculty, partners, and esteemed guests, celebrating the successful completion of the program and honoring the achievements of the graduating participants.

### Student Representative Address

The students were represented by Leticia, who delivered a heartfelt vote of thanks to the French Embassy, Fidelis Leadership Institute (FLI), and the facilitators. She expressed gratitude for the training's impact on their lives, emphasizing how it boosted their confidence to advocate for their rights and speak up for what is just.

### Faculty Address

On behalf of the FLI faculty, Precious Collette Kemigisha commended the students for their dedication, active engagement, and eagerness to learn throughout the training. She acknowledged the collaborative effort of instructors and administrative staff in ensuring the smooth delivery of the program and encouraged graduates to continue practicing and refining their newly acquired skills to achieve mastery.

### Executive Director's Remarks

Mrs. Pheona Wall, Executive Director of FLI, congratulated the graduates on their accomplishment and reaffirmed the Institute's commitment to equipping learners with valuable leadership and advocacy skills. She highlighted plans for future programs aimed at expanding FLI's impact and expressed sincere appreciation to the French Embassy for its support and partnership in making the training a success.

### Guest of Honour's Address

The ceremony was honored by Amale Abdalla, Atashe of the French Embassy, representing the Ambassador. In her keynote remarks, she commended FLI for promoting advocacy and confident leadership and elaborated on the transformative power of advocacy at both individual and societal levels:

### **Individual Benefits of Advocacy:**

- **Empowerment:** Helping individuals find their voice, express their needs, and make informed decisions.
  - **Respect for Rights:** Ensuring human rights are upheld and central to decision-making.
  - **Increased Confidence:** Building assertiveness and autonomy.
  - **Access to Information:** Enabling informed choices in complex systems such as healthcare.
- Societal Benefits of Advocacy:

- **Driving Social Change:** Raising awareness and influencing policy reforms.
- **Promoting Justice and Equity:** Reducing social inequalities and fostering fair systems.
- **Addressing Systemic Issues:** Amplifying marginalized voices and demanding better outcomes.
- **Fostering Trust:** Building credibility and productive relationships in professional and community settings.

### **Certificate Award Ceremony**

The highlight of the event was the presentation of certificates, symbolizing both the completion of the training and the beginning of new opportunities. Certificates were awarded by Amale Abdalla, representing the French Ambassador, alongside Mrs. Pheona Wall, Executive Director of FLI. This moment marked the participants' readiness to step into the global arena with enhanced advocacy and leadership capabilities.

### **Conclusion**

The Advocacy and Leadership Development Training was more than a workshop; it was a leadership awakening. Participants departed equipped with communication, strategic thinking, and advocacy skills to translate their passion into purposeful action. Through its partnership with the French Embassy, Fidelis Leadership Institute reaffirmed its dedication to nurturing a generation of ethically grounded, courageous, and collaborative leaders. The day concluded with reflections, networking, group photographs, and a renewed call to amplify youth voices for gender equality and inclusive development across Uganda.









