



MAKERERE UNIVERSITY

A LANDSCAPING REPORT

ON

THE STATUS OF GENDER EQUALITY AND LEADERSHIP OF WOMEN IN UNIVERSITIES IN EAST AFRICA

BILL & MELINDA
GATES *foundation*

MARCH, 2024



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SUBMITTED TO
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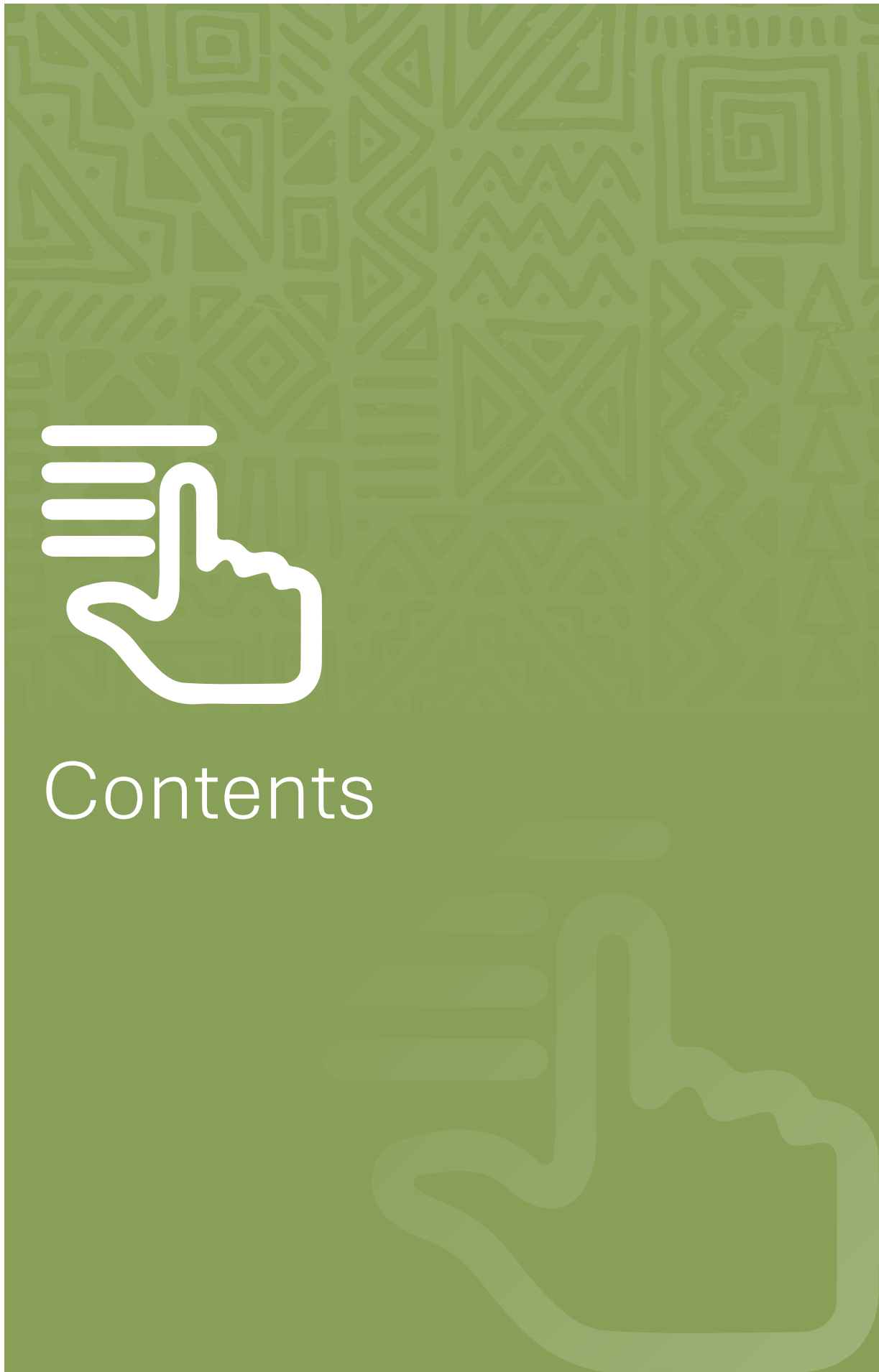
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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

| | |
|----------|--|
| AAU | African Association of Universities |
| ANSTI | Africa Network of Science and Technology Institutions |
| AWSC | African Women's Study Centre |
| AU | African Union |
| BMGF | Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation |
| DAAD | The German Academic Exchange Service |
| DRC | Democratic Republic of Congo |
| EAC | East African Community |
| FAWE | Forum for African Women Educationalists |
| FUSP | Female Undergraduate Scholarship Programme |
| GE | Gender Equality |
| GDD | Gender Disaggregated Data |
| GDTF | Gender Dimension Task Force |
| GDPC | Gender Dimension Programme Committee |
| HEI | Higher Education Institutions |
| HERS-EA | Higher Education Resource Services East Africa |
| HE | Higher Education |
| HRDTF | Human Resources Development and Trust Fund |
| IDP | Individual Development Program |
| IUCEA | Inter-University Council of East Africa |
| IWF | International Women Forum |
| Mak | Makerere University |
| MakGMD | Gender Mainstreaming Directorate |
| MakGMP | Gender Mainstreaming Programme |
| MakPRASH | Makerere University Policy and Regulations Against Sexual Harassment |
| MUGEP | Makerere University Gender Equality Policy |
| MoGLSD | Ministry of Gender, Labor and Social Development |
| NORAD | Norwegian Development Organization |
| NUR | National University of Rwanda |
| PAC | Preferential Admission Criteria |
| PEP | Pre Entry Program |
| PI | Principal Investigator |
| SIDA | Swedish International Development Agency |
| STEM | Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics |

| | |
|--------|--|
| ST&I | Science, Technology and Innovation |
| SSA | sub-Saharan Africa |
| SSNDS | South Sudan National Development Strategy |
| TCU | The Tanzanian Commission of Universities |
| THE | Times Higher Education |
| UB | University of Burundi |
| UDHR | Universal Declaration of Human Rights |
| UDSM | University of Dar es Salaam |
| UN | United Nations |
| UNESCO | United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization |
| UNICEF | United Nations International Children’s Emergency Fund |
| UNIFEM | United Nations Development Fund for Women |
| UNIKIN | University of Kinshasa |
| UoJ | University of Juba |
| UoN | University of Nairobi |
| UOTIA | The Universities and Other Tertiary Institutions Act |
| UWOPA | Uganda Women Parliamentary Association |
| UWONET | Uganda Women’s Network |
| USAID | United States Agency for International Development |
| WoHEN | African Women in Higher Education Network |



OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS

Gender equality refers to the equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities of women and men and girls and boys. Gender equality implies that the aspirations of both women and men are taken into consideration, recognizing the diversity of different groups of women and men. Gender equality is not only a women's issue, but it should also fully interest and engage men as well. Gender equality is a human rights issue and a precondition for, and indicator of, sustainable people-centered development (UN Women, 2016: p. 28).

Gender equity is the process of being fair to men and women, boys, and girls, and importantly the equality of outcomes and results. Gender equity may involve the use of temporary special measures to compensate for historical or systemic bias or discrimination. It refers to differential treatment that is fair and positively addresses a bias or disadvantage that is due to gender roles or norms or differences between the sexes. Equity ensures that women and men, girls and boys have an equal chance, from birth to natural death. It is about the fair and just treatment of both sexes that considers the different needs of the men and women, cultural barriers and (historical and current) discrimination of the specific group (UNICEF, 2017).

Gender parity is a numerical concept concerning relative equality in terms of numbers and proportions of men and women, girls, and boys. Gender parity addresses the ratio of female-to-male values (or males-to females, in certain cases) of a given indicator (UNICEF, 2017).

Gender disparities are statistical differences (often referred to as “gaps”) between men and women, boys and girls that reflect an inequality in some quantity (UNICEF, 2017).

Gender justice refers to equal enjoyment by women and men of socially valued goods, opportunities, benefits, privileges, life chances, resources, and rewards.



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Report presents findings of a robust post-Covid 19 scoping study around gender equity conducted between 2023-4 in 30 universities across 7 East African countries. It was led by Makerere University in partnership with Higher Education Resources Services (HERS-EA) and it was supported by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. Participating universities were selected because they produce the largest proportion of professional workforce and leaders in their respective countries. The report provides evidence to support previously known persistent gaps in women leadership in universities and draws on lived experiences to extend the understanding of the challenges women grapple with. While acknowledging strides made to improve aggregate enrolment numbers, the report exposes disparities in progress across academic disciplines; hidden norms that deter women from advancing and make leadership unpleasant for those who break through. The report identifies lack of accountability as a significant omission in policy implementation (where policies exist) and proposes a non-punitive self-assessment scorecard that can be used within and across universities to catalyze and track their own progress towards gender equity. The report anticipates creation of replicable communities of good practice that could eventually address gender equity. The report broadly covers:

1

Background and Problem Statement:

- Gender inequality persists in higher education despite interventions.
- Statistics show progress, but male dominance remains in higher education leadership, especially in East Africa.
- Institutional and domestic barriers contribute to gender disparities.

2

Objective of the Landscape Analysis:

- Conducted a comprehensive landscape analysis of gender equality in East African universities.
- Explored female faculty participation in leadership.
- Identified strategies for advancing women's leadership and improving gender equality.

3

Specific Objectives Achieved:

- Assessed completion rates of women in academic programs (2012-2022).
- Established the status of female staff engagement in academia, research & leadership.
- Examined existing mechanisms (policies, practices, services) and identified success factors, challenges, and barriers.

3

Methodology:

- Scoping review of literature on gender equality and women leadership in East African universities.
- Rapid online survey and key informant interviews with women in 30 universities and other relevant stakeholders.

4

Findings and Recommendations:

- Barriers can be summarized as Personal, Institutional and Policy-Oriented (PIPO).
- Analysis of PIPO informed the co-creation of context-specific interventions including Personal development and networking, Institutional climate transformation and Pipeline interventions.
- Implementation of interventions draws on lessons from exemplar institutions in South Africa and the USA, and use of a scorecard for ownership of accountability and sustainability towards gender equity in universities.



Introduction

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Gender inequality in University education and across all workplace settings worldwide is a reality (Jayachandran, 2015; Thébaud, 2015). In higher education, it has been a particularly troubling issue (Clauset, Arbesman, & Larremore, 2015; Duong, Wu, & Hoang, 2017), identified through underrepresentation of women in educational leadership.

Although statistics indicate that women are slowly advancing, the upper echelons of higher education, university leadership positions are still dominated by males (Khumalo, 2021). In 2016, the Department of Higher Education and Training collected data on women occupying leadership positions in higher education institutions (HEIs) within South Africa which revealed that women constituted only 27.5%, and that indicated an increase when compared with previous statistics (Williams, 2017). Less than two-fifths of senior academics are women globally, while less than a third of authors in research papers are women (UNESCO, 2022).

Higher education (HE) benefits women as individuals and society. Individuals benefit directly and significantly through investment in tertiary education where the rates of return (profitability for individuals) are generally higher for women than for men, across low-income and high-income countries. Engagement in HE is an important route to economic independence for women, a marker and facilitator of gender equality, disrupting cycles of gender disadvantage. HE also brings a range of social benefits, including indirect and non-financial benefits, to women and is associated with better individual and family health (Mott, 2022 - British Council Report). The slow progression and under-representation of women in senior scientific career positions is a well-known and persistent global problem, especially among university-based academics, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa (SSA). To inform action for change, we need to go beyond numerical evidence of inequalities to understand the underlying social, cultural, and institutional drivers and processes producing gender inequities in universities. This requires a theoretically rigorous gender analysis framework that is relevant to SSA and sufficiently accounts for variations in both women and men.

Since no such framework is available, a literature review of emerging theories and empirical evidence on the dimensions of and reasons for the prevailing gender inequities in higher education institutions in SSA was done. Liani et al 2020 demonstrated that women's (lack of) progression in academic/scientific research careers was shaped by intersections between gender roles and social power relations of gender within the family, wider society, and academic institutions themselves. Based on this, a landscape analysis of Gender equality was conducted in universities in East Africa to identify available empirical findings and develop preliminary explanations of observed inequities, and suggest possible interventions for improvement. The landscape analysis was conducted under three thematic areas: 1) Participation of women in academia; 2) Female academic staff's engagement in research and academic advancement, and; 3) University-wide policies, services and practices that promote gender equity and women leadership in University education in East Africa. This study not only provided insights into the status of gender equality in higher education institutions in East Africa, but it also informed interventions

aimed at improving gender equity in HEIs.

1.2 Statement of the problem

There is low representation of women in top leadership positions in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in low-income countries. Across sub-Saharan Africa, women make up 43% of those who receive tertiary education (McKinsey Global Institute, 2019). However, only 24% of academic staff in tertiary education are female. For instance, across sub-Saharan Africa, only 2.5% of vice-chancellors are women (UNESCO, 2019). Research and publishing are key requirements for advancement to top leadership positions in Universities. However, less than half (39.7%) of the world's researchers are female. Male academics produce more publications than women, more so, in top journals (Bendels MHK et al., 2018). Gender inequalities in research outputs increased during the COVID-19 pandemic (Kwon E, Yun J, Kang JH, 2023). During its first wave and lockdown months, male researchers increased their publication rates more than female researchers (Ucar I, Torre M, Elías A, 2022). This deficit was wider for younger female researchers, which could point to an uneven distribution of childcare responsibilities between genders at a time when schools worldwide were closed (Squazzoni F et al., 2021). In addition, age restrictions for accessing funding exclude women (who raise families in early careers), thus, slowing down their long-term academic success (Anita Bosch and Georgina Pondayi, 2022). Such institutional and domestic gaps have further widened the gap in research and publishing between male and female academics. In East Africa, the prevailing landscape of gender equality in Universities is not well documented. Specifically, the level of participation of women in leadership across various levels of leadership and management and the interventions implemented as well as opportunities for learning across universities are not clearly outlined. As part of the planning for the implementation of interventions to enhance gender equity across universities in East Africa, we assessed the gender equality terrain in the East African region to inform the co-creation of a comprehensive context specific program that is expected to promote participation of women in University leadership in East Africa.

1.3 Justification

From our literature review, this formative assessment/study provided the first and most comprehensive review of the gender equality terrain across universities in East Africa that informed the design of comprehensive interventions.

First; prior studies that examined the gender equality terrain in HEIs provided a general overview on women's participation but not comprehensive enough to address the progression across all academic leadership levels. Some studies were very limited in scope and covered few public universities in Uganda. There was also a limited focus on graduate programs which are prerequisites for entry into an academic career and higher educational leadership where the greatest gender disparities exist.

Second; we were not aware of any prior studies that conducted a post-pandemic landscape analysis of gender equality in universities in East Africa – a region that closed schools for the longest time during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Third; previous assessments and university rankings (e.g., UNESCO/THE, 2022) did not provide an in-depth analysis of the contextual issues and institutional barriers that limit female academic staff participation in top leadership of HEIs. To inform action for change, we went beyond numerical evidence of inequalities to understand the underlying social, cultural, and institutional drivers of gender inequities in universities. In addition, prior studies did not assess how well existing interventions had worked in advancing women participation in leadership of HEIs. Our study explored and identified opportunities for engagement and learning across universities.

Fourth; universities are critical intervention points as they are incubation centers for knowledge and policy change needed to promote gender equality across all other sectors (such as health and agriculture which are key drivers of economic development) in East Africa.

Fifth; we focused on universities as opposed to all HEIs broadly because in East Africa, universities contribute the greatest percentage of each country's workforce and especially research and thought leadership across all sectors.

1.4 Conceptual Framework

We adapted the theory of change (Figure 1—see sections highlighted in purple) which is rooted in the theory of reasoned action and planned behavior (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975, Ajzen, 1985), to explain and predict actions based on attitudes, norms and intentions (See Figure 1 for an overview of our conceptual framework). The framework represents the entire theory of change for a program to address gender equity while the areas highlighted in purple represent gaps in evidence addressed in this study, to inform intervention design and provide a baseline for subsequent monitoring and evaluation of the program. The attitudes in this framework are made up of our envisioned benefits and outcomes of the gender equality program. The norms and intentions were formed by relevant and influential stakeholder views on the gender equality terrain in universities in East Africa, including policies and strategies for improving gender equality and advancing women leadership in universities. The data that addressed the areas of focus, which are highlighted in purple within the framework, was gathered through a literature review, survey, and key informant interviews. A scoping review of literature on the prevailing landscape of gender equality and women leadership in universities across East Africa was conducted. Additional information was obtained using a rapid online survey with female academic staff and key informant interviews with relevant stakeholders. This informed the co-creation of a comprehensive feasible program expected to improve gender equality and women participation in leadership of higher education through learning across universities and benchmarking with exemplar institutions in Africa and beyond.



Literature Review and Theoretical Background



2

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Participation of women in academia

Male domination in the leadership of educational institutions is a worldwide phenomenon (Bangkok UNESCO, 2010; Kagoda and Sperandio, 2009). In the 1990s, affirmative action policies intended to boost women's participation in educational leadership were introduced by the government of Uganda. These included the Government White Paper on Education; the Ugandan constitution of 1995; the 1.5-point scheme (i.e., 1.5 extra points awarded to girls to increase entry into university education); policies of expanding tertiary institutions; introducing evening programs at public universities; initiating distance-learning programs; among others. These policies were also intended to bring about gender parity in education, which has almost been achieved but, it has not translated into gender parity in educational leadership.

Leading causes for this imbalance were policies and practices in male-dominated recruiting agencies, women's self-limitation, fear of responsibilities, and lack of self-esteem. Gender inequality in fields of studies is common in science subjects as very few female students are admitted to science fields especially in Mining Engineering, Mechanical Engineering, Civil Engineering etc (Petro, Wasson et al. 2011). Similarly, in Japan, only 14.5% of engineering students are women whereas they are the majority in humanities (65.2%) and education (59.1%). In Canada, women make up 22.3% of computer and information systems professionals and 13% of civil, mechanical, and chemical engineers. While 25% of men complete an engineering course, only 6% of women obtain this diploma (OECD 2019). These statistics indicate a low presence of women in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) disciplines. Increasingly in Africa, many young girls and women show great interest in STEM education as evidenced by the eminent and young female scientists celebrated across the continent. Yet, the under-representation of women in STEM fields persists, globally and across the continent (ADEA, 2015; Bezansonm 2021).

Female students outnumber male students globally, particularly in medicine and arts, humanities, and social sciences, but there are still fewer women in STEM (UNESCO, 2022). In 776 institutions participating in a study by UNESCO (2022), 54 percent of students awarded a degree in 2019 were female. However, when these data were analyzed by subject, only 41 percent female students were in STEM subjects. According to Bezansonm (2021), this phenomenon can be attributed to several factors such as the entrenched cultural perception that STEM is a male domain, and that boys and men are just 'better' at math and science. There are limited early interventions to get girls and young women excited about STEM. Other factors included domestic pressures on girls, early marriage and child pregnancy, and lack of STEM female role models. Society expects men to be natural leaders while women are weaker and emotional; challenging this stereotype is an uphill task. There is discrimination and marginalization of women in all forms of leadership. There are few role models and mentors of women leaders. With this kind of domestic life, women fear additional responsibilities that will add pressure on them (Gabona, 2011).

Women in leadership in HEIs is still low

Women are underrepresented in senior faculty, university leadership and education policymaking positions. For example, only 18% of university rectors were women in a survey of nine Latin American countries, while only 15% were women in a survey of 48 European countries, of which 20 countries did not have any female leaders. Just 21% of the top 200 universities globally in the Times Higher Education World University Rankings have a female leader (UNESCO, 2022, Part 2). Across sub-Saharan Africa, 2.5% of vice-chancellors are women and 5% of CEOs are women. Women make up 43% of those who receive tertiary education but hold 28% of formal sector jobs (McKinsey Global Institute, 2019). Only 24% of academic staff in tertiary education across SSA are female (UNESCO, 2019). In Ethiopia, 10.6% of executive management positions were held by women in 2019-20 across the 45 public universities. In the same period and across the same institutions, women made up less than 5% of deans and 3% of department heads. Ethiopia also has few female undergraduates, with a tertiary GER of only 8% for women, compared to 13% for men in 2018. This reduces the pool of potential leaders in higher education institutions.

Women's share of enrolment in PhD programs in 2020 was only about 12% of total enrolment (UNESCO, 2022, Part 2). Scholars around the world have researched impediments affecting the progression of women, and they have identified numerous factors hindering women such as toxic leadership (Herbst, and Roux, 2021), lack of confidence (Herbst, 2020), gatekeeping and climate, balancing workload and taking care of the family, support from family and workplace, and mentoring (Khumalo, 2021).

Women in leadership in other sectors

A comparative study of barriers to women leadership across three sectors (healthcare, academia, and business) showed differences in gender inequalities and inclusion challenges (Kalaitzi et al 2017). For instance, stereotypes were the most important barrier in business (12%), whereas gender gap and lack of career advancement were the most important barriers in healthcare (12%); gender gap was also reported in academia (12%) followed closely by lack of mentoring (11%). These authors drew attention to barriers that have been under-studied and need to be further explored. This gap in knowledge extends to policy, highlighting the need to address gender equality and inclusion challenges differently within different working environments. Another cross-sector analysis of leadership barriers encountered by women in executive leadership in higher education and religious organizations, Diehl and Dzubinski (2016) highlighted: 1) The divergent nature of the two sectors and the striking similarity of leadership barriers faced by women concluded that the barriers are traceable to being a woman in executive leadership, regardless of the type of organization. 2) The barriers operate at the macro, meso, and micro levels of society and are deeply embedded in organizational structures and functions, rendering them at times virtually invisible. 3) Most organizational efforts to support women in leadership focus on a few barriers, typically at the meso level. They recommended broader strategies that will address barriers across the three levels to make them visible, eliminate them, and fully incorporate the potential leadership capacity of both men and women.

Whereas the barriers to women leadership have similarities across sectors, the education sector has a major role to play in shaping societal perspectives. The landscaping exercise generated additional evidence to address some of the current knowledge gaps. 1)

Research and thought leadership coming out of HEIs have a direct line to government and policymakers, and exerts influence that is unique among industries, 2) Leadership in HEIs may be a pathway into leadership in other highly influential public sectors, 3) HEI leaders are often asked to speak on topics of public importance and are therefore uniquely placed in the public eye and influential. Also, 4) Despite HE systems being a driver for the promotion of equality and empowerment, evidence shows that they reproduce discrimination against women, often ‘by default rather than design’, 5) Engagement in HE is a route to economic independence for women, which is a marker and facilitator of gender equality, and disrupting cycles of gender disadvantage.

Female academic staff’s engagement in research and academic advancement

HEIs are increasingly prominent in the development of disadvantaged regions (Williams and Cochrane, 2010). In addition to research and teaching, HEIs have potential to contribute to the creation of a more socially inclusive society. HEIs possess long histories that underpin the relationships between regional and local stakeholders, reflected in the strategies they adopt and interact with local communities. While teaching and knowledge production remain fundamental roles of HEIs, they shape societal culture and norms through studentification, cultural transformation and changing local populations (Williams and Cochrane, 2010). Researchers also contribute to national policy in several ways.

Female researchers at HEIs represent 39.7% of the world’s total, while the share of research and development personnel (including researchers and non-researchers) who are women is 41.7% globally. The gaps in research and publishing skills that require networking and participation in international conferences and membership of writing and publishing groups are also more prominent among women, due to institutional and domestic tasks.

Having female leaders can influence the extent of emphasis placed on gender equality in policy and practice. It is therefore important to document government interventions aimed at increasing female representation in key decision-making positions in the economy generally, especially in higher education. Documenting highlights effective and viable good practices and assists evidence-based policymaking (UNESCO, 2022-Part 2). Globally, tertiary education shows a clear split by gender between the different fields of study. STEM programs, for example, display a clear underrepresentation of women in most countries, which results in fewer female researchers in those fields. Regarding study levels, in 2019, women accounted for 46 percent of all PhD-level (ISCED 8) students, up from 41% in 2001. However, this figure drops to 29% in low-income countries (2018) and 37% for sub-Saharan Africa.

There is a very low ratio of women mentors for junior female staff.

Mentoring studies suggest contribution to the advancement of women in executive leadership positions both in public and private institutions (Maranto & Griffin, 2011). Mentoring is a key component for women pursuing leadership positions in HEIs because a mentor breaks a person out of his/her comfort zone, encourages the aspiring leader to improve, and pushes them into new experiences (Khumalo, 2021). Underrepresentation of women in HEIs as teachers, senior academics, and university leaders leads to a very low ratio of women mentors for junior female staff and students. In 2020, women represented 43% of teachers in tertiary education, compared with 66% and 54% in primary and secondary education respectively. The world average share of tertiary female teachers has steadily increased (33.6% in 1990; 38.8% in 2000; 41.9% in 2010; 43.2% in 2020). The largest increase has been in South and West Asia (a rise of 17% points in 30 years, now at 40%) and the smallest in SSA (two points in 30 years, now at 24%, which remains the lowest regional share overall).

University-wide policies, services and practices that promote gender equity and women leadership in higher education in East Africa.

HEIs are important for gender equality as they are the incubators for thought leaders and social leaders of the future. The creation of HEIs and systems where norms for gender equality are practiced and modeled, and where the voices and ideas of women are valued and amplified, are some of the most powerful tools available to society for accelerating progress towards the equality and empowerment of women and girls everywhere. When harmful, rigid social gender norms are challenged, and gender equality is promoted, the full realization of equal rights for all people becomes achievable (Mott, 2022 - British Council Report). HEIs hold a unique position in society and are critical actors for change in progress towards gender equality (UNESCO, 2022). HEIs should therefore ensure that female students have equal chances to application, admission, and completion rates; they teach curricula where women are equally represented; and they educate students on gender equity (UNESCO, 2022). Through their research, they can expose the ways in which girls and women are discriminated against and ensure that datasets include the perspectives of women (UNESCO, 2022).

According to a study by UNESCO, most institutions initially declared that they have measures of access and women's progress, however, a minimal proportion of universities supplied relevant documentation. Fewest institutions shared relevant evidence regarding the tracking of women's graduation rate and the existence of women's mentoring schemes for existing students in which at least 10% of female students participate. While 64% of institutions say they are tracking women's graduation rates compared with men's, 37% provided evidence and, of those that did provide evidence, it was sufficiently detailed and relevant in only 42%. Most universities provided evidence around tracking application, acceptance, and completion rates for female students and providing appropriate women's access schemes, such as mentoring or scholarships, for prospective students (UNESCO, 2022 part 1).

The unavailability of policies and systems to address violence in HEIs makes it hard to track the occurrences of violence in HEIs. It is difficult to perceive HEIs as gender-neutral in general and safe environments, there are also, limitations in the process of receiving complaints and information that can support actual data about these occurrences (Anitha and Lewis 2018). Although there are already occurrences of sexual violence against women in the university context, research argues that the claims presented are a drop in the ocean (Sales Oliveira 2021). Further research shows that much of this category of violence is exercised through a combination of power and superiority which originates in the academic environment itself; most cases occur between male faculty (aggressor) and women students (victims). The combination of age, level at work, and gender creates conditions for power to be used to commit harassment against students and female staff. Women are more vulnerable to this type of harassment (Akazawa and Aono 2018).

Action is required within HEIs to transform discriminatory gender norms such as unequal domestic burdens falling upon women and bias in assessment, recruitment and promotion that disproportionately affect women because of their place in society. Effective policies to address structural barriers (e.g. maternity, paternity, flexible working) are not in place for HEIs or research bodies in many parts of the world. (Mott, 2022 - British Council Report).

This initiative explores these structural barriers to inform the design of the follow-on program expected to be comprehensive and contextually appropriate for maximum impact.



Research Objectives



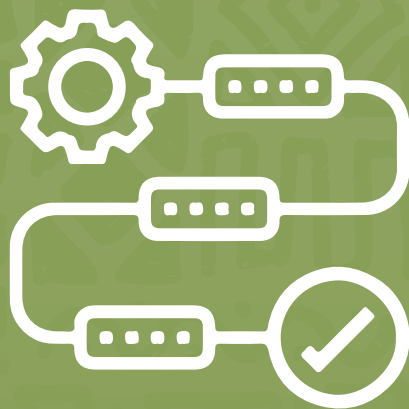
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3.0 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

3.1 General objective

To establish the prevailing landscape of gender equality in universities in East Africa.

| | |
|-----------------------------|---|
| Specific objective 1 | To assess completion rates of women in selected academic programs in universities in East Africa for the period 2012-2022. |
| Specific objective 2 | To establish the status of female academic staff engagement in academia and research (e.g., publishing rates) and leadership in universities in East Africa for the period 2012-2022. |
| Specific objective 3 | To examine existing mechanisms for promoting gender equity and women leadership (e.g., university-wide policies, practices, services) as well as success factors, challenges, and barriers to gender equality in universities in East Africa. |



Methodology



4

4.0 METHODOLOGY

4.1 Study setting

The study was conducted in selected universities in all seven East African Community countries including Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania, Rwanda, Burundi, South Sudan and Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). The study was implemented by Makerere University School of Public Health (MakSPH) in partnership with Higher Education Resource Services–East Africa (HERS-EA). A full-time coordinator supported the consortium and engagement activities, with support from a core team at Makerere University and HERS-EA. The core team was comprised of personnel of technical, coordination and administrative staff. We drew on in-house expertise within the university as well as the consortium. The study was overseen by a high-level Advisory Committee (see Figure 2).

Consortium: MakSPH partnered with HERS-EA and leveraged the HERS networks including HERS South Africa (HERS-SA). HERS-EA is an educational non-profit organization incorporated in 2014 in Uganda and hosted at Makerere University Gender Mainstreaming Directorate (GMD) (Khaita et al, 2017; HERS-EA, 2022). An affiliate of HERS-Denver, Colorado, USA, HERS-EA advances women in East Africa (Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania, Rwanda, Burundi, South Sudan and Democratic Republic of Congo) using similar strategies to those of HERS. The goal of HERS-EA is to raise the proportion of women in leadership and management positions in HEIs in East Africa to at least 50%.

4.2 Study population

The study population were universities in East Africa and/or relevant stakeholders and departments responsible for higher education in all seven (7) East African countries including Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania, Rwanda, Burundi, South Sudan and DRC.

Participating institutions included 1) Universities (both public and private); 2) Higher education regulators (and related agencies) of each country e.g., Uganda National Council for Higher Education, Tanzania Commission for Universities, Rwanda HE Council, Burundi's HE Council, DRC Council, Kenya Commission for HE; 3) Ministries of Education in all 7 East African countries focusing on the departments responsible for higher education; 4) Regional blocks such as Inter-University Council for East Africa (IUCEA).

4.3 Inclusion and exclusion criteria

Inclusion criteria: Universities in East Africa were selected for inclusion in the study based upon the following criteria: 1) country (i.e., universities that contribute to at least 80% of the country's workforce); 2) institution type (private or public) and; 3) ranking (major universities based upon the Times Higher Education rankings and student numbers). Within selected universities, we reviewed data for six (6) selected academic disciplines at graduate level (i.e., 3 STEM and 3 Humanities) for the period 2012-2022. Under STEM, we focused on entry and completion rates and women leadership in Engineering, Veterinary Medicine and Natural Sciences. Under Humanities, we focused on Law, Economics and Public Administration. These disciplines were chosen based upon prior literature that showed low presence of women faculty overall and in top leadership positions in these disciplines in universities across East Africa. Our review targeted graduate programs (i.e., Masters and

PhD programs) in each of the six selected disciplines. A Master's degree is a prerequisite for enrollment into a PhD program while a PhD is a minimum requirement for entry into an academic career and higher educational leadership for a majority of universities in East Africa. We interviewed selected individuals (aged >18) responsible for HE including HEI leadership, relevant national actors, and regional networks for HEI in East Africa.

Exclusion criteria: We excluded universities that are not accredited by their respective National Accrediting agencies and those that did not run any graduate program under the six academic disciplines included in this study for the period 2012-2022. Our review excluded undergraduate programs as these were largely represented in a recently concluded UNESCO Report (2022) on the status of women participation in HEI worldwide. Also, narrowing down our search to selected graduate programs streamlined and refocused our search on the critical entry points for female academic staff.

4.4 Study design and procedures

This was a cross-sectional study which employed an exploratory sequential mixed methods approach to data collection. Quantitative data was collected through a rapid online survey with 207 women academics in selected universities in East Africa. We also conducted a scoping review of published and gray literature (especially reports and graduation books) of women's participation in the six selected academic disciplines including three STEM and three Humanities graduate programs between 2012 and 2022. Qualitative data was collected through key informant interviews with purposively selected stakeholders including individuals responsible for higher education in each of the participating countries.

4.4.1 Scoping review

The scoping review integrated women's representation at graduate level across selected academic disciplines and administrative levels. We also reviewed university-wide policies, practices and services (if any) promoting gender equity and women leadership as well as success factors, challenges and barriers to gender equality in universities in East Africa. The scoping review exercise covered seven (7) major universities including one university as a tracer in each of the participating countries. The review was guided by a pre-determined checklist of indicators derived from the UNESCO Report of 2022 and from other relevant literature, it involved the following key steps: 1) identifying the research objectives; 2) defining inclusion or exclusion criteria; 3) searching for evidence across three target databases and institutional websites; 4) selecting evidence (i.e., selecting citations and full text screening); 5) extracting evidence; 6) charting evidence (i.e., creating a descriptive summary of the evidence); 7) presenting results (Andrea C Tricco., 2016). We started by reviewing publicly available reports on university websites for information on gender policies and graduation rates and any other relevant publicly available information before searching the selected databases. We drew on in-house expertise within the university mostly Makerere University to identify the top 3 multidisciplinary databases that covered a wide range of literature on gender issues and women's participation in academia, research and educational leadership (e.g., Ebscohost, Wiley and ECONLit).

4.4.2 Surveys with women academics

We used SurveyMonkey (an online survey tool) to conduct rapid online surveys with 207 women in leadership in selected universities. The women were selected using a snowball sampling method—a non-probability sampling technique which is widely used in sociology and statistics research. This online survey was kept open and available for a period of 60

days from the date it was posted to achieve the targeted sample size and representation across the selected universities. The survey covered two questions from each theme, and lasted not more than 15 minutes. To avoid being coercive, automated reminders to complete the survey were emailed to potentially identified participants once each week.

4.4.3 Key informant interviews

To obtain an in-depth understanding of the observed status and trends of women's participation in universities, key informant interviews (KIIs) were conducted with purposely selected individuals identified from the online quantitative survey sample. We completed a total of 68 KIIs and an additional 07 KIIs with individuals serving in other non-university participating institutions including higher education regulators of each country such as National Councils for Higher Education, relevant national sectors, and regional networks for HEIs in East Africa.

Objective 1:

To assess completion rates of women in selected academic programs in universities in East Africa for the period 2012-2022

We conducted a scoping review of relevant published and gray literature including publicly available reports on university websites. This review was guided by a pre-determined checklist of indicators (identified from the UNESCO report) to document women's participation in academia right from entry into the selected graduate programs to graduation. Sample indicators included: 1) existence of schemes encouraging applications by women in underrepresented programs such as STEM programs; 2) percentage of female students enrolled in underrepresented programs such as STEM; 3) availability of female student access schemes (e.g., scholarships targeting women) (*see Appendix F for a checklist with a full list of indicators*).

Objective 2:

To establish the status of female staff engagement in academia and research (e.g., publishing rates) and leadership in universities in East Africa for the period 2012-2022

We started with reviewing relevant published literature and other publicly available documents (policies, strategies, reports, etc.) on university websites. This objective focused on examining female academic staff's engagement in academia and research at their respective universities. The review was guided by pre-determined indicators such as: 1) percentage of female academic staff with Masters and PhDs serving in universities; 2) percentage of senior female staff across academic ranks (e.g., professors, associate professors, senior lecturers, other ranks); 3) percentage of senior female academic staff in administrative leadership positions (e.g., vice-chancellors, principals of colleges, deans, chairs/heads of departments); 4) percentage of senior female academic staff serving on committees (e.g., Appointments committee, Higher Degrees committee), Senate and Councils. We explored these findings further, to obtain a deeper understanding of the emerging issues by conducting KIIs with 68 purposely selected women in leadership in the selected universities including key stakeholders responsible for HE in East Africa.

Objective 3:

To examine existing mechanisms for promoting gender equity and women leadership (e.g., university-wide policies, practices, services) as well as success factors, challenges and barriers to gender equality in universities in East Africa.

We reviewed and explored the policies and criteria on appointments and promotions as well as criteria for appointment in academic leadership positions and how they may facilitate or hinder the participation of women. We also explored the presence or absence of interventions to improve the participation of women as well as their successes and gaps. In addition to the review of policies and practices across universities in East Africa broadly, we identified seven (7) exemplar institutions within East Africa (at least one in each country) and two (2) exemplar institutions in other regions in Africa (in different countries) through a scanning of indicators on gender equality and women involvement in leadership and senior academic levels. This was followed by a deep dive into the selected potential exemplar institutions for a more in-depth review of the policies and practices as well as the outcomes in terms of women participation in leadership. This assessment was used to benchmark on national and university-wide policies, services and practices that promote gender equity and women leadership. We included two universities from South Africa from a list of their top five universities based upon the Times Higher Education (THE) rankings—South African Universities ranked highest on the gender equity assessments in the THE rankings. We also selected two universities in the United States, the University of Wisconsin-Madison and Michigan State University, which have existing collaborations with Makerere University. The selection of exemplars (with good performance) was intended to identify potential successful interventions to inform the intervention development for universities in East Africa. We documented existing mechanisms promoting gender equity and women leadership in universities in East Africa including factors contributing to the observed trends.

We also documented successful case studies and challenges using KIIs with purposively selected women leaders and key stakeholders responsible for HE in East Africa. Further, we documented the networks and potential platforms for gender related information sharing within the region to inform the establishment of a community of practice for gender equality in universities in East Africa. This activity was guided by indicators presented in Appendix B. For each qualitative indicator, in addition to asking universities whether they provide the service or fulfill the condition, we asked for evidence in form of a document and whether the policy is recent (created or reviewed in the last five years); if it was, we awarded an extra point and documented the relevant policy provisions.

4.4.4 Recruitment and Informed Consent

Our study entry point was the Inter-University Council for East Africa (IUCEA) who provided a letter of support to introduce the study team to the leadership of the selected universities. Once we gained entry in the university, we approached the gender unit or the Human Resource (HR) department, for those that did not have a gender unit to virtually introduce the study to key university stakeholders.

Recruitment and consent for the e-survey: After introducing the study, we obtained an initial list of 3-5 female academic staff from each university who served as “seeds” to snowball in identifying potentially eligible study participants for the rapid online survey. The “seeds” were representative of the diversity across the selected disciplines within the study and across the university. The “seeds” were then asked to contact at least 10 people within their networks to ask if they would like to participate in the study and share the link to the survey. Those who agreed to participate were also requested for the email addresses of the 10 potential respondents so that the surveys could be emailed to them directly by our study team to ensure that there were no lapses, should the seeds get busy and forget to circulate the link. We drew on in-house expertise to set up secure systems for sending and receiving encrypted emails from potential study participants. The SurveyMonkey online tool for the interview was designed on Google forms. The form included the consent statements (see attached) and participants only proceeded to answer the questions after consent.

Recruitment and consent for the key informant interviews: The potential participants were deliberately selected based on their positions and experience with gender equality work within the universities and higher education network organizations as well as higher education departments and ministries. The contact details of the individuals within each organization were obtained from the Gender and/or HR units. An email was sent with an attachment of copies of our study consent forms for participant’s review ahead of a scheduled zoom meeting for the key informant interview. Our study staff received the consent forms prior to or at the time of the interview. Eligible study participants who agreed to participate in the study signed the consent form and returned an electronic copy.

4.4.5 Participant incentives

Participants in the KIIs received USD15 (UGX50,000) to compensate for their internet data. Participation in the rapid online survey (lasting approximately 10-15 minutes) was not compensated. However, we hoped that participants would gain some insights on gender equality issues during the survey and dissemination of findings, as well as the design of interventions to advance gender equality in their institutions.

4.4.6 Benchmarking Exemplar Universities

The objective of this activity was to identify and learn from exemplar universities for gender equality in Africa and beyond. These are institutions that have designed and implemented deliberate policies to advance gender equity and equality and have increased participation of women in HEI leadership. Selected Universities in Africa included University of Johannesburg (Ranked 17/100 for Gender equality, Times Higher Education, 2023) and University of South Africa (Ranked 95/100 for Gender equality, Times Higher Education, 2022). In the U.S. University of Wisconsin, Madison and Michigan State University were selected. Both institutions are recipients of the National Science Foundation (NSF) ADVANCE Grants for Institutional transformation in gender equity and equality. Also, both

institutions had ongoing partnerships and collaboration on gender equality with Makerere University. A benchmarking rubric/guide with specific questions was used.

4.5 Sample size and sampling procedure

This study was an exploratory formative assessment and not powered to detect differences in outcomes across countries and institutions, but rather to obtain reliable information on the level of involvement of women in leadership and existing interventions that can be adapted to co-create interventions that can be implemented within the East African region. We included a sufficiently large and varied number of universities (representative sample of IUCEA members) to enable us to achieve the objectives of the formative study. The IUCEA membership (HEIs accredited by their National Accrediting agencies) currently stands at 133 public and private Universities and University Colleges distributed within the seven (7) East African Countries of Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania, Rwanda, Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo, and South Sudan. We selected a total of 35 universities. These were selected on a proportionate-to-size basis guided by IUCEA university listings per country so that countries that have more universities could have greater representation including private and public universities. Based on the statistical premise of the Central Limit Theorem (CLT), a sample size of 30-50 assumes that this number is large enough to allow us run meaningful statistical analyses. As a general rule, sample sizes of around 30-50 are deemed sufficient for the CLT to hold, meaning that the distribution of the sample means is fairly normally distributed (Akhilesh Ganti, 2022). We applied purposive sampling in selecting key informants and as much as possible, ensured equal representation of institutions stratified by country, institution type (private or public), and ranking (major research or teaching institution). Determining qualitative sample size a priori is an inherently problematic approach, especially in more interpretive models of qualitative research (Sim et al 2018). We kept this sample size (n=35) open until saturation was reached. For the rapid online assessments with selected women leaders in universities, we employed a snowball sampling method until the required sample size was achieved.

4.6 Study measures and outcomes

We collected data on sociodemographic variables that included age, sex, marital status, education level, academic rank, role in participating institution, number of years in service, number of publications. The primary outcomes of this study include: 1) This status report of the gender equality terrain in universities in East Africa. The findings were also disseminated and discussed in a workshop that was attended by key stakeholders to co-create a gender equality program and provide benchmarks to evaluate subsequent interventions; 2) A gender equality assessment tool for universities. This tool will be important for objective assessment of the progress across institutions and ongoing monitoring and evaluating interventions; 3) Case exemplars of universities that have made commendable strides towards gender parity and gender equality, with clear documentation of the policies and practices that have produced good outcomes in increasing women's participation in leadership. These case studies and their practices informed the design of evidence-based, feasible and scalable interventions and they will be shared in a community of practice to inform improvements across universities (*see Appendix A for a summary of measures and sample indicators*).

4.7 Quality control

4.7.1 Training of research assistants

To conduct a scoping review of literature and stakeholder key informant interviews, two graduate research assistants with related experience were hired and trained by the investigators. The investigators also participated in the key informant interviews.

4.7.2 Pre-testing

The measures (all written in English) were pre-tested with study staff to assess the duration of the interview and adjusted, where necessary. The key informant guide was also pretested and subsequent revisions made to ensure the comprehensibility of each question item before actual interviews began. English is the official language used across East Africa, However, we translated the rapid survey tool into French for institutions in Burundi and DRC. Both English and French versions of the survey tool (attached) were uploaded online so that participants could choose their preferred version.

4.8 Data collection

This study employed an exploratory sequential mixed methods approach to data collection. We first collected quantitative data through a scoping review of published and gray literature (guided by a pre-determined checklist) to document indicators for analysis of the gender equity terrain in universities in East Africa. We started by reviewing the publicly available policies and reports, the Times Higher Education, and UNESCO surveys that are publicly available. Secondly, we conducted a rapid online survey with women in selected universities in East Africa (using a pre-determined questionnaire mounted on SurveyMonkey—an online survey tool). We then reached out to the universities (through the IUCEA) to obtain additional information by conducting the KIIs (via zoom) with purposely selected stakeholders. This allowed us to pose questions to explore some of the emerging issues from the literature and the survey. Our experience of collecting data from participants across multiple countries especially during the COVID-19 pandemic to-date indicated that people preferred zoom meetings to in-person meetings/interviews.

4.9 Data management and analysis

4.9.1 Data management

We used an online structured pretested questionnaire designed in English. All data was stored in a password-protected database that was backed up through a secure connection. Our data team met weekly to address any data issues such as missing information, inconsistent data, duplicate study identification (ID) numbers, etc. Qualitative interviews were transcribed from audio recordings, word for word, and entered into a software analysis system (Atlas.ti version 9.0). The audio recordings were destroyed once the information from the recordings was written down and double-checked for accuracy.

Data security

Data obtained from the online surveys was encrypted and automatically submitted to a secure server which was accessed by only the PI and data manager. Encrypted data was downloaded at the end of each week onto a local computer and an external password protected drive which was stored in a locked study office. Complete encrypted datasets

were exported to the project PI through SSL connection. No participant names were stored in the database. All participants were identified by a unique identifier, a random number assigned to them at the time of recruitment. In the event of loss of data or theft, all data files had been encrypted, and no outside user would be able to access the data. To ensure that no data collected was lost, encrypted data was backed up on three sources: a separate server; flash/external hard drives that were securely stored; and copied to a secondary encrypted database used by the PI and data manager for additional processing.

4.9.2 Data analysis

Qualitative data analysis: An initial review of all transcripts was done by at least two members of the study team. The transcripts were then entered into a data analysis software system (Atlas ti version 9.0). A codebook was generated to list each theme. Two coders independently coded and reviewed together a random sample of 20% transcripts. Inter-coder reliability was tested using Kappa \geq 0.80 and discrepancies were resolved through discussion. Thematic analysis of the data was done using Atlas ti. Consistently appearing themes were identified, tabulated as to frequency, and illustrated with representative quotations. Results were supported by sample quotes presented verbatim.

Quantitative data analysis: Descriptive statistics were performed on all variables using STATA version 15.0 (Stata-Corp, College Station, Texas, USA). The variables included socio-demographic variables like age, education level, marital status, role in participating institution, number of years in service, number of publications if applicable, etc). Means, medians and standard deviations were obtained for continuous variables while frequencies and percentages were obtained for categorical variables. Trends of women participation in academia, research and leadership across selected academic disciplines were examined using various indicators collected between 2012 and 2022. For purposes of enhancing confidentiality, data were collapsed during analysis and presented by country rather than universities. Results will be presented in tables, line-graphs, and histograms.

The results of this landscape analysis include; 1) A status report on entry and completion rates of women in selected academic disciplines in universities in East Africa for the period 2012-2022; 2) A gender equality assessment tool for universities. This tool will be used for objective assessment of the progress across institutions and will play a vital role in monitoring and evaluating interventions; 3) Statistics on women participation in research, academic and administrative leadership overall and across various fields; 4) Trends in the statistics of women participation in research and leadership across various fields; 5) Exemplar institutions in female participation in leadership in HEI in East Africa and beyond, based on the policies, their implementation and outcomes; 6) Documentation of success factors, challenges and barriers to gender equality in universities in East Africa.

4.10 Study limitations

We anticipated the following challenges;

- 1) **Challenges with obtaining the buy-in of key stakeholders and key informant respondents:** The entrenched structural gender biases are often clouded in suspicion, fears, and hesitancy in embracing and implementing comprehensive gender equality interventions.
- 2) **Communication challenges:** Clear internet access remains a major problem in many African countries. This affects the quality of virtual meetings and webinars.

How these challenges were to be mitigated:

- 1) **Challenges with scheduling key informant interviews:** At project inception, we planned to map and utilize influential champions and carry out sensitization meetings with university leadership and relevant networks to inform and involve them in the planning and project design.
- 2) **Communication challenges:** The project would facilitate key informants with internet data bundles to ensure unobstructed internet access during virtual meetings and webinars.

4.11 Dissemination plan

Findings from the landscape analysis informed subsequent steps in the planning phase including the intervention and proposal design. Findings will also be disseminated widely to stakeholders (identified at project inception) through in-country workshops, webinars, and policy briefs. Manuscripts, factsheets, and reports will also be shared with stakeholders to trigger institutional support, further review and interventions.



Ethical Considerations



5

5.0 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

In this study, human subjects constituted women (aged >18) in leadership in selected universities and key informants including individuals in HEI leadership and representatives of relevant national sectors and regional networks in all 7 East African countries. Objective 1 & 2 involved a scoping review of relevant published and gray literature including publicly available reports on university websites to document women's participation in academia, research and leadership. We also conducted a rapid online survey with women leaders in selected universities in East Africa and key informant interviews with purposively selected stakeholders. In objective 3, we conducted a scoping review of existing mechanisms for promoting gender equity and women leadership (e.g., university-wide policies, practices, services) as well as success factors, challenges, and barriers to gender equality in universities in East Africa. For additional information, we reached out to key university stakeholders through the IUCEA. We also benchmarked exemplar universities (in South Africa and the United States) that have made commendable strides in achieving gender parity in terms of increasing participation in women leadership.

Prior to the start of the study: Initial review and approval of all study procedures was obtained from Makerere University School of Public Health Research and Ethics Committee (MakSPH-REC). Permission to conduct the study was obtained from the Uganda National Council of Science & Technology (UNCST).

Informed consent: IRB-approved informed consent procedures were implemented.

Privacy and confidentiality: All files were identified only by study ID numbers. The recordings and transcripts from the KIIs were password protected. All audio recordings were destroyed after transcribing and cross-checking the data for accuracy. Raw data were accessed only by the core study staff. A summary of the emerging findings was presented in a manner that preserves confidentiality including avoiding naming positions of participants and institutions, where a few respondents are interviewed in KIIs. All research staff were certified in ethical conduct of human subjects.



Results

Participant
Characteristics

6

6.0 PARTICIPANT CHARACTERISTICS

6.1 Overview of participant characteristics

Interviews with academic staff in participating universities

Overall, 30 of our targeted 35 universities in seven East African Community Countries responded, including Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania, Rwanda, Burundi, South Sudan and DRC. Of the 30 universities, 70% were public not-for-profit universities. We interviewed 70 academic staff across selected universities. We are presenting participant characteristics in narrative by country, rather than by named university, to further protect participants' anonymity. Participating universities by country included:



Uganda

18

Makerere University, Kyambogo University, Mbarara University of Science & Technology, Kabale University, Uganda Christian University and Uganda Martyrs University. We interviewed 18 academic staff including Vice Chancellors, College Principals, Deans, Heads of Department (HOD), Directors, Administrative Assistants and Lecturers serving in the Departments of Engineering, Education, Law, Journalism, Finance, Interdisciplinary Studies, Agriculture, Veterinary Medicine in their respective universities.



Kenya

17

University of Nairobi, Moi University, United States International University, Strathmore University, Maseno University and Egerton University. We interviewed 17 academic staff including Deans, HOD, Directors, Professors and Lecturers serving in the Departments of Anthropology, Public Health, Veterinary Medicine, Mathematical Sciences, Quantitative Business Techniques, Law, Natural Sciences, Statistics, International Relations, Human Nutrition, Sociology, Leadership & Management in their respective universities.



Tanzania

10

University of Dar-es-Salaam, Muhimbili University of Health and Allied Sciences, Sokoine University of Agriculture, State University of Zanzibar, Ardhi University and University of Dodoma. We interviewed 10 academic staff including a College Principal, a Deans, HOD, Lecturers and Teaching Assistants in the Departments of Law, Education, Development Studies, Social Sciences, Natural Resource Laws, and Spatial Planning in their respective universities.



Rwanda

05

University of Rwanda, Carnegie Mellon University and Kigali Independent University. Overall, we interviewed 05 academic staff including Deans, Directors and Lecturers serving in the Departments of Science & Technology, Estate Management and Valuation, ICT, Data Science, Diversity & Inclusion in their respective universities.



Burundi

07

University of Burundi, University of Ngozi and Lake Tanganyika University. We interviewed 07 academic staff including HOD and Lecturers in the Departments of Psychology, ICT, Applied Linguistics and Agriculture in their respective universities.



South Sudan

06

University of Juba, University of Bahr el Ghazal, Upper Nile University (Malakal) and Rumbek University of Science & Technology. In total, we interviewed 06 academic staff including Deputy Vice Chancellors, Deans, Professors and Lecturers in the departments of Medicine, Economics and Finance in their respective universities.



DRC

05

University of Kinshasa and The Bukavu Catholic University. We interviewed 05 academic staff including a Gender Equality Focal Person, Deans, Professors and Lecturers serving in the departments of Medicine, Public Health and Biostatistics in their respective universities.

6.2 Scoping review

6.2.1 Findings from the scoping review

The review covered seven public universities in East Africa one from each of the East African Community countries. These included: Makerere University (Mak), University of Dar es Salaam (UDSM), University of Nairobi (UoN), National University of Rwanda (NUR), University of Juba (UoJ), University of Burundi (UB) and University of Kinshasa (UNIKIN).

The national, regional and international legal frameworks for gender mainstreaming.

International and regional conventions and initiatives greatly influence the national agendas that promote gender equality and women in leadership of institutions. All the seven EAC countries are signatories to many international human rights and freedoms including promotion of gender equality and equity. These include, the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) Conference; the 1960 UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education; the 1979 Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against women (CEDAW); the resolutions of the 1985 Nairobi UN Decade for Women; the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action; the resolutions of the 1998 UNESCO World Conference on Higher Education; and the 2000 UN Millennium Development Goals (Goal 3) and the current UN Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development include goals, specifically goal 4 (on inclusive, quality and equitable education) and goal 5 (on promotion of gender equality and women empowerment) The EAC countries have also signed up for the African Union (AU) Agenda 2063, which calls for gender equality in all spheres of life, with an emphasis on women and girls' empowerment and protection against violence and discrimination.

Some studies indicate that since independence promoting gender equality at all levels of education has been a long-term goal in East Africa (Lihamba et al 2006, Randell 2008, Mugambwa et al 2017, Achieng 2018). Since the 1990's, the Higher Education sector in East Africa has been attempting to transform structures and systems to achieve gender equality in enrollment across the education sector through interventions including affirmative action programmes. In the seven universities under study, the pursuit for gender equality is enshrined in the respective National Constitutions and other statutory instruments.



Uganda

The 1995 Constitution of Uganda provides for fair representation of all marginalized groups and requires the State to take affirmative action on the basis of historical prejudices, socio-cultural negative attitudes and practices. Article 33 elaborates the rights of women, including their right to dignity and realization of their full potential and advancement (Constitution of the Republic of Uganda, 1995). In addition, the Uganda Gender Policy (2007), National Equal Opportunities Policy (2006), The Equal Opportunities Act (2007), the Universities and Other Tertiary Institutions Act (UOTIA), all include provisions for gender equality in various sectors. The Uganda 2018 Gender in Education Sector Policy includes a target to increase women in employment by 20% at all levels of the education sector by 2030.



Tanzania

The affirmative action policy is enshrined in the 1985 Constitution of the United Republic of Tanzania, and was first implemented in 1990 where special seats were reserved for women in parliament (Lihamba et al 2006). The first affirmative action intervention at the University of Dar es Salaam Tanzania was the Musoma Resolution of 1974 that saw the increase in enrollment of female students in Higher Education in Tanzania (Lihamba et al 2006). The Tanzanian Development Vision 2025 sets out to achieve 50% gender inclusion in leadership. The Tanzanian Commission of Universities (TCU) regulates the operations of all public universities in Tanzania, coordinates and harmonizes functioning all university institutions higher and education systems in the country (Kilango et al 2017).



Kenya

The Constitution of the Republic of Kenya 2010, the Employment Act (2007); the Kenya Vision 2030 Kenyan Ministry of Education's Gender Policy (2015); the National Gender and Development Policy 2000, and the Gender Policy in Education, July 2007 among others (Wango et al 2012) provide for affirmative action in favour of women and girls.



Rwanda

The Government of Rwanda recognizes that "education is a fundamental human right and an essential tool to ensure that all Rwandan citizens – women and men, girls and boys – realize their full potential" (Rubagiza et al 2022). The 2003 Constitution of Republic of Rwanda, Rwandan Organic Education Law, The Rwanda National Action Plan (2018-2020) (Rubagiza et al 2022) all articulate the requirements and the country's commitment for all entities within the country to promote equal opportunities for men and women at all levels.



South Sudan

The South Sudan Vision 2040, the South Sudan National Development Strategy (SSNDS) 2018-2021, Local Government Act of 2009, South Sudan Research Council Act of 2008 highlight inclusiveness and equity in all sectors (Akec, 2021). However, most of the policies of the different sectors of the government are not yet completed, but exist either in a draft form or are not implemented. For instance, the National Gender Policy and the National Strategic Plan are still in draft form.



Burundi

The 2018 Constitution of the Republic of Burundi mandates institutions and decision-making bodies including in public administration, diplomatic posts, the judiciary, and defense and security forces to ensure gender equity in decision making under the 30% quota.



DRC

The Constitution of the Democratic Republic of Congo, 2005 guarantees gender parity in the Country's national, provincial and local institutions.

Besides the statutory instruments, there are strong African regional partnerships including the East African Community which require members to implement the EAC treaty by mainstreaming gender in all sectors (Mori and Richard 2019); the Inter University Council for East Africa (IUCEA) Forum for African Women Educationalists (FAWE); Association of African Universities (AAU), Africa Network of Science and Technology Institutions (ANSTI) among many others. All these partnerships are geared towards promoting women's access, retention and completion of education at all levels, especially in STEM (Masanja 2010). These efforts have resulted in gender policies and programmes at country level and at HEI level, focusing on specific gender-related issues such as gender-based violence, readmission of girls and women students who drop-out due to pregnancy, with the aim to create a gender-friendly environment for both men and women.

As a result, significant gains in gender equality in access to education have been registered mainly at primary level, across East Africa. At secondary and tertiary levels including Universities, girls and women continue to lag behind boys and men (Nakayiwa et al 2020) in some disciplines and in leadership. This underscores the importance of interrogating the current gender terrain and co-creating interventions that can change the status quo in Universities. This scoping study aims to instigate that change.

Participation of women in selected academic programs (i.e., from entry to graduation).

Percentage of female students graduating in STEM programs between 2012 and 2022.

The review revealed consistent female under representation in selected STEM programmes across the universities under review. For example, Table 1.1 shows that at Makerere University the percentage of female graduate (Masters and PhD) students graduating in selected STEM Disciplines ranged between 31% to 39% for over 10 years from 2014. This is with the exception of 2020 and 2023 when the gender representation was almost 50%.

Table 1.1 Percentage of female students in selected STEM disciplines graduating with Masters and PhD degrees at Makerere University.

| Year Of Graduation | Natural Sciences | | | Veterinary Medicine | | | Engineering | | | Total (Masters) | | | PhD (Natural Sciences, Vet medicine & Engineering) | | |
|--------------------|------------------|----------|-----------|---------------------|-----------|-----------|-------------|-----------|-----------|-----------------|-----------|------------|--|----|----|
| | M | F | T | M | F | T | M | F | T | M | F | T | M | F | T |
| 2014 | 15 | 3 | 18 | 29 | 10 | 39 | 28 | 8 | 36 | 250 | 120 | 370 | 20 | 3 | 23 |
| %Female | 17% | | | 26% | | | 22% | | | 32% | | | 13% | | |
| 2015 | 26 | 10 | 36 | 34 | 11 | 45 | 25 | 3 | 28 | 312 | 161 | 473 | 27 | 16 | 43 |
| %Female | 28% | | | 24% | | | 11% | | | 34% | | | 37% | | |
| 2016 | 26 | 15 | 41 | 22 | 12 | 34 | 26 | 10 | 36 | 320 | 161 | 481 | 26 | 16 | 42 |
| %Female | 37% | | | 35% | | | 27% | | | 33% | | | 38% | | |
| 2017 | 27 | 8 | 35 | 39 | 16 | 55 | 28 | 12 | 40 | 403 | 208 | 611 | 25 | 9 | 34 |
| %Female | 23% | | | 29% | | | 30% | | | 34% | | | 26% | | |
| 2018 | 25 | 11 | 36 | 10 | 3 | 13 | 37 | 9 | 46 | 265 | 169 | 434 | 31 | 31 | 62 |
| %Female | 31% | | | 23% | | | 20% | | | 39% | | | 50% | | |
| 2019 | 21 | 7 | 28 | 22 | 4 | 26 | 56 | 13 | 69 | 314 | 157 | 471 | 17 | 7 | 24 |
| %Female | 25% | | | 15% | | | 19% | | | 33% | | | 29% | | |
| 2020 | 22 | 11 | 33 | 8 | 5 | 13 | 49 | 13 | 62 | 229 | 216 | 445 | 26 | 14 | 40 |
| %Female | 33% | | | 38% | | | 21% | | | 49% | | | 35% | | |
| 2021 | 16 | 6 | 22 | 41 | 17 | 58 | 74 | 22 | 96 | 358 | 177 | 535 | 28 | 19 | 47 |
| %Female | 27% | | | 29% | | | 23% | | | 33% | | | 40% | | |
| 2022 | 17 | 4 | 21 | 20 | 4 | 24 | 57 | 27 | 84 | 94 | 35 | 129 | 36 | 28 | 64 |
| %Female | 19% | | | 17% | | | 32% | | | 38% | | | 44% | | |
| 2023 | 31 | 8 | 39 | 27 | 17 | 44 | 51 | 25 | 76 | 109 | 50 | 159 | 33 | 32 | 65 |
| %Female | 21% | | | 39% | | | 33% | | | 31% | | | 49% | | |

Available statistics for the University of Nairobi revealed that in 2018 the percentage of female students in STEM was only 12% (Acheng 2018). The average ratio of female to male graduate students in 2018 was 0.122 (one in every 10 students in Mathematics, Engineering, Technology, Physics, Chemistry and Biology (Mausya, 2013). For the University of Dar es Salaam, the average female percentage for 8 years 2012/2013 – 2020/2021 was 30%. For graduate programmes (Master's and PhDs) female enrollment over 10 years was 46.8% (University of Dar es Salaam Facts and Figures 2017 and 2020).

At UR overall female student enrollment was 32.4% in 2016 (National University of Rwanda Gender Policy 2016). For graduation, the review did not obtain gender disaggregated statistics for graduate programmes. The overall percentage of female students (Bachelors and Graduate) graduating was 35% in 2015/2016, 36.4% in 2016/2017, 23.8% in 2017/2018, 38.4% in 2018/2019, 40.7% in 2019/2020 and 43% in 2020/2021.

Although the review was unable to access the statistics of the Universities of Kinshasa, Burundi and Juba a study by (Nakayiwa 2020) revealed that African countries lack the capacity to attract

applicants to STEM programmes. Challenges of poorly equipped laboratories and facilities are a deterrent for potential female students.

In South Sudan, cases of gender discrimination in academic programs at university level still exist. According to Akec J.A (2021) some public universities limit engineering fields such as survey, petroleum and excavation engineering to boys only.

Schemes for increasing female students especially in STEM programs.

In all the seven universities under study, there are efforts to encourage female participation in the Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) programs (Lihamba et al 2020, Nakayiwa et al 2020) mainly through affirmative action. In Uganda and South Sudan there are regulatory and policy frameworks to promote female participation in University Education and Science, Technology and Innovation (Nakayiwa Et al 2020). According to Lihamba et al 2020, affirmative action includes all policies geared towards offsetting historic discrepancies in allocating opportunities. E.g., Makerere University has the affirmative action programme that started in 1990 targeting female undergraduate students commonly known as the 1.5 Points Scheme. This scheme saw an increase of female students from 24% in 1990 to 46% by 2004 (Situational Analysis Report 2004). The overall enrollment rate of female students at Makerere University is now at 48% (Makerere University Admissions Office).

In 2020, Makerere University enhanced affirmative action beyond the 1.5 awarded to all girls at entry, and introduced the STEM 60/40 Quota Policy for undergraduate students. Under this policy, quotas were set so that under each STEM programme there should be at least 40% enrollment of either gender. Other interventions include Female Scholarship Foundation Fees-waiver scholarships that target socially economically disadvantaged undergraduate female students, the MasterCard Foundation, SIDA, NORAD scholarships among others. At graduate studies level there are the donor- funded scholarship programmes for female staff for Masters and PhD for example SIDA, NORAD.

The University of Dar es Salaam (UDSM), has since 1997 implemented three major affirmative action interventions namely PEP (Pre entry program) - a special pre-entry programme for engineering female students. This programme aimed to increase the number of female students in engineering and statistics. An eight-weeks programme of tuition was given to the female students to gain those requisite points. On completion of the programme and passing the examinations given, the students were absorbed into the pre entry engineering reserved government slots. The second one is PAC (Preferential Admission Criteria) to allow female candidates who have attained the minimum required marks in science related degree programs such as engineering, pharmacy, environmental engineering, dentistry, and nursing to enter with lower cutoff points and thirdly the female undergraduate scholarship programme (FUSP) (Lihamba et al 2020, Mukangara and Shao 2007) Through this programme the enrolment of male/female students ratio rose from 7% (2003/04) to 26% (2006/7) (Mukangara and Shao 2007). In addition, the University of Dar es Salaam introduced the Human Resources Development and Trust Fund (HRDTF). The scheme operated from 1997 to 2003, its main objective was to promote enrolment into engineering programmes for both male and female students, but also favoring female's students. Male students were required to contribute 20% of tuition fees, while female

students were exempted (Kalango et al 2017). Besides the schemes targeting undergraduate female enrollment, the University of Dar es Salaam introduced a scholarship for female staff to undertake postgraduate studies. This contributed to the increase of female staff with PhDs by 80% in the 4 years, from 25 in 1997/98 to 60 in 2006/07 (Mukangara and Shao 2007). Other schemes that contributed to the increased female representation at the University of Dar es Salaam include the Norwegian Development Organization (NORAD), the Swedish International Development Agency scholarships through the (SIDA) fund, mainly to support UDSM's human resources capacity building programme, through post graduate training for female staff. The Human Resources Development and Trust Fund (HRDTF) at Dar es Salaam University that ran from 1997 to 2003 aimed at promoting enrollment into engineering courses for both male and female students. Male students were required to pay 20% of the tuition fees while female students were exempted. This scheme increased female enrollment from 3.5% and 7.0% by 2003 and others (Kalango et al 2017, Lihamba et al 2020)

Similar interventions were introduced at the University of Nairobi where female students were admitted at lower points than those of their male counterparts (Musembi, 1990). University of Nairobi Strategic Plans since 2005 to date advocate for gender equity in enrollment (Mausya, 2013). The National University of Rwanda also implemented targeting all categories of students in higher education institutions in the Republic of Rwanda ((Randel and Fish 2008, NUR Gender Policy 2016). In addition, NUR Strategic Plans promotes gender equality in the entirety of its delivery of core business.

The University of Juba provides academic support in the form of scholarship opportunities created for female students to improve their completion rates in record time (Taiwo 2014).

The review revealed that the focus of the interventions to increase female participation was on undergraduate studies with minimal support for graduate studies. The schemes targeting graduate programmes were mainly donor funded and short-lived, for example the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA / SAREC) and Norwegian Agency for Development (NORAD) and the Carnegie Corporation of New York at Makerere and UDSM. The SIDA/SAREC and NORAD scholarships were for human resource capacity development for staff (especially female) at Makerere and Dar es Salaam (Lihamba et al 2020). Under these scholarship programmes 30% of the scholarships were reserved for women. Despite the affirmative action interventions geared toward increasing female enrollment, overall female representation in the seven universities is still low despite the fact that they are the largest and oldest in the respective countries. Most of the schemes mentioned did not have a sustainability plan and have since ended. Graduate education forms the basis for participation in leadership of universities, however interventions for supporting graduate education have been predominantly donor supported.

Policies to address application, acceptance, and participation of women.

Out of the seven universities under study, four have enacted university gender policies to promote gender equality and enhance women's participation in leadership namely; Makerere University Gender Equality Policy 2009 (as amended 2022) and the Policy and Regulations Against Sexual Harassment 2006 (as amended 2018); University of Dar es Salaam Gender Policy 2006 and Anti Sexual Harassment Policy; University of Nairobi Gender Policy 2008 and National University of Rwanda Gender Policy 2016. Apart from the Makerere University Gender Equity Policy reviewed in 2022, the gender policies for University of Nairobi and National University Rwanda were due for review. It is not known whether this was done and whether the set targets for gender equality were realized.

A review of the University strategic plans for Mak, UoN, UDSM, NUR, UoJ revealed that gender equality was one of the universities' targets. At Mak, since 2000 gender mainstreaming has been a cross-cutting issue in the Makerere University strategic plans. The same applies to the strategic plans at the Universities of Nairobi, Dar es Salaam and Rwanda. In 2016, the Republic of Rwanda set up an overall target in the sciences at 80% (NUR Gender Policy 2016). This target was adopted by the National University Rwanda in the University's Gender policy in 2016. There is need to assess how this was implemented and the progress so far.

System for tracking women's completion rates.

Despite the existence of policy provisions in some of the Universities (Makerere University Gender Equality Policy, National University of Rwanda Gender Policy, and the University of Rwanda Gender Policy, University of Nairobi Gender Policy) for assessing gender, there was no specific mention of institutional mechanisms of tracking female students' completion rates. The available university fact books did not present explicit data on female students' graduation rates. Where graduation statistics existed, for example in the UDSM Facts and Figures 2021/16 to 2020/2021 the information did not specifically highlight female students' enrollment rates. At the NUR, there are efforts to generate gender disaggregated data (GDD) but there is no capacity to generate GDD (NUR Gender Policy 2016).

Mentorship schemes for women

The respective University gender equity policies for Makerere, Dar es Salaam and University of Nairobi provide for mentorship programmes but detailed implementation plans of how the mentorship is to be done. Consequently, none of the seven universities have institutionalized mentoring programmes. At Makerere University under the Gender Mainstreaming Program a Mentorship guide was developed with support from donors in 2000 but was not sustained (Situation Analysis Report 2004, Nakanjako et al 2011, Makerere University 2019). A study conducted in 2019 on the status of gender equity at Makerere university found that there were isolated cases of formal mentorship programmes in some units. Literature revealed unit based, program-based, donor-driven(project-based) mentoring initiatives that were not institutionalized and were being implemented in an ad hoc manner (Makerere University Gender Equity Report 2019). An example is the Individual Development (IDP) Model at the College of Health Sciences, Makerere University that was used to enable early career faculty to explore career growth opportunities and develop personal development plans. Such plans are not specific to women but have a

potential to enhance women's leadership capacities (Nakanjako et. al. 2011). Mak has a draft institutional mentorship guide for all public universities in Uganda that wish to institutionalize mentoring as a strategy for enhancing women's participation in leadership and decision-making, formally and informally and to propose processes and structures that will sustain mentoring as an integral part of enhancing women's participation in university leadership (Makerere University 2021).

Female academic staff's engagement in research and academic leadership.

Percentage of female academic staff with Masters and PhDs serving in HEIs.

The available data revealed that across all the seven universities women are grossly underrepresented in academic leadership. **Table 1.2** shows that less than 35% of academic staff with Masters and PhD qualifications at Mak are women. **Table 1.3** shows a similar scenario at UDSM for a ten-year period between 2012 and 2022 (Mwakitalu et al 2022).

Table 1.2 Percentage of female staff with Masters and PhDs at Makerere University

| College | Qualification | M | F | Total | % a g e Female |
|--|---------------|-----|-----|-------|----------------|
| College of Natural Sciences | Masters | 32 | 15 | 47 | 32% |
| | PHD | 75 | 30 | 105 | 29% |
| College of Engineering Design Art and Technology | Masters | 50 | 19 | 69 | 28% |
| | PHD | 55 | 9 | 64 | 14% |
| College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences | Masters | 30 | 14 | 44 | 32% |
| | PHD | 107 | 31 | 138 | 22% |
| College of Health Sciences | Masters | 29 | 19 | 48 | 40% |
| | PHD | 167 | 87 | 254 | 34% |
| College of Veterinary Medicine, Animal Resources and Biotechnology | Masters | 23 | 4 | 27 | 15% |
| | PHD | 46 | 17 | 63 | 27% |
| College of Education and External Studies | Masters | 31 | 15 | 46 | 33% |
| | PHD | 40 | 20 | 60 | 33% |
| College of Computing and Information Sciences | Masters | 20 | 17 | 37 | 46% |
| | PHD | 24 | 22 | 46 | 48% |
| College of Humanities and Social Sciences | Masters | 43 | 36 | 79 | 46% |
| | PHD | 98 | 40 | 138 | 29% |
| College of Business and Management Sciences | Masters | 39 | 22 | 61 | 36% |
| | PHD | 48 | 16 | 64 | 25% |
| School of Law | Masters | 9 | 7 | 16 | 44% |
| | PHD | 9 | 10 | 19 | 53% |
| Jinja University Campus | Masters | 3 | 1 | 4 | 25% |
| | PHD | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0% |
| TOTAL | | 978 | 451 | 1429 | 32% |

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Table 1.3 Percent of female staff with Masters & PhDs at University of Dar-es-Salaam

| 2012/2013 | M | F | TOTAL | %age Female |
|------------------|----------|----------|--------------|--------------------|
| Master's | 485 | 177 | 662 | 27 |
| PhD | 458 | 105 | 563 | 19 |
| 2013/2014 | M | F | TOTAL | |
| Master's | 507 | 179 | 686 | 26 |
| PhD | 495 | 112 | 607 | 18 |
| 2014/2015 | M | F | TOTAL | |
| Master's | 462 | 188 | 650 | 29 |
| PhD | 531 | 136 | 667 | 20 |
| 2015/2016 | M | F | TOTAL | |
| Master's | 474 | 195 | 669 | 29 |
| PhD | 458 | 143 | 601 | 24 |
| 2016/2017 | M | F | TOTAL | |
| Master's | 458 | 171 | 629 | 27 |
| PhD | 547 | 151 | 698 | 22 |
| 2017/2018 | M | F | TOTAL | |
| Master's | 467 | 198 | 665 | 30 |
| PhD | 538 | 204 | 742 | 27 |
| 2018/2019 | M | F | TOTAL | |
| Master's | 473 | 217 | 690 | 31 |
| PhD | 454 | 197 | 651 | 30 |
| 2019/2020 | M | F | TOTAL | |
| Master's | 541 | 241 | 782 | 31 |
| PhD | 590 | 190 | 780 | 24 |
| 2020/2021 | M | F | TOTAL | |
| Master's | 576 | 285 | 861 | 33 |
| PhD | 624 | 258 | 882 | 29 |

Source: University of Dar-es-Salaam (2017) Facts and Figures 2011/2012 - 2015/2016, University of Dar-es-Salaam (2020) Facts and Figures 2015/2016 - 2020/2021

Percentage of female staff in senior academic ranks (e.g., professors)

Table 1.4 Percentage of female academic staff in senior ranks

| University | Professor | Associate Professor | Senior Lecturer | Lecturer | Assistant Lecturer | Teaching Assistant | Total |
|------------|-----------|---------------------|-----------------|----------|--------------------|--------------------|-------|
| Mak | 13% | 23% | 35% | 33% | 34% | N/A | 31% |
| UDSM | 12% | 38% | 21% | 27% | 32% | 24% | 28% |
| UNIKIN | 11% | 13% | 8% | 20% | 22% | 17% | 17% |

Sources: *Makerere University Fact Book 2019 – 2020*

Men outnumber women in research leadership positions in the seven participating universities. **Table 1.4** shows that for Mak, UDSM and UNIKIN, Professors and Associate Professors constitute no more than 15% of academic staff engaged in research and academic leadership.

At Makerere University, the country's largest and premier university in Uganda, only 28% of academic and research positions are occupied by women, with similar situations in all 46 universities (Nakayiwa Et al 2020). At the University of Dar es Salaam in 2019 among more than 110 professors only 10 are female (less than 10%), of whom many have reached the mandatory retirement age of 60 years thus disqualified from leadership positions at the universities (Nyoni and He 2019) and public sector. The overall percentage of female academic staff was 21% in 2010 and there has not been any significant increase since then. The situation in the STEM disciplines is worse, according to Masanja (2010) with a percentage of only 2% of female academic staff at the University of Dar es Salaam.

Table 1.5 shows that in 2020 UDSM had 2 female professors out of 29, 20 female Associate Professors out of 90, and 41 Senior Lecturers out of 211 (UDSM 2020). According to Mwakitalu et al (2022), some of the senior female professors and associate professors have reached mandatory retirement age of 60 years.

Table 1.5 Percent of female academic staff in senior ranks at UDSM

| YEAR | Professor | | | Associate Professor | | | Senior Lecturer | | | Lecturer | | | TOTAL | | |
|----------------|-----------|----|----|---------------------|----|-----|-----------------|----|-----|----------|-----|-----|-------|-----|------|
| | M | F | T | M | F | T | M | F | T | M | F | T | M | F | T |
| 2012/13 | 51 | 9 | 60 | 95 | 10 | 103 | 170 | 32 | 202 | 147 | 53 | 200 | 1111 | 350 | 1461 |
| %Female | 15% | | | 10% | | | 16% | | | 26% | | | 24% | | |
| 2013/14 | 52 | 6 | 58 | 100 | 9 | 109 | 170 | 32 | 202 | 175 | 64 | 239 | 1148 | 369 | 1517 |
| %Female | 10% | | | 8% | | | 16% | | | 27% | | | 24% | | |
| 2014/15 | 47 | 6 | 53 | 59 | 10 | 69 | 156 | 36 | 192 | 230 | 85 | 315 | 1131 | 391 | 1522 |
| %Female | 11% | | | 9% | | | 19% | | | 27% | | | 26% | | |
| 2015/16 | 41 | 9 | 50 | 80 | 12 | 92 | 143 | 36 | 179 | 213 | 87 | 300 | 1167 | 423 | 1590 |
| %Female | 18% | | | 13% | | | 20% | | | 29% | | | 27% | | |
| 2016/17 | 43 | 8 | 51 | 81 | 11 | 92 | 155 | 34 | 189 | 259 | 100 | 359 | 1136 | 402 | 1538 |
| %Female | 16% | | | 12% | | | 18% | | | 28% | | | 26% | | |
| 2017/18 | 38 | 12 | 50 | 69 | 27 | 96 | 139 | 45 | 184 | 283 | 97 | 380 | 1130 | 405 | 1535 |
| %Female | 24% | | | 28% | | | 24% | | | 26% | | | 26% | | |
| 2018/19 | 38 | 7 | 45 | 60 | 22 | 82 | 161 | 33 | 194 | 298 | 131 | 429 | 1151 | 467 | 1618 |
| %Female | 16% | | | 27% | | | 17% | | | 31% | | | 29% | | |
| 2019/20 | 33 | 4 | 37 | 55 | 21 | 76 | 147 | 30 | 177 | 351 | 135 | 486 | 1289 | 496 | 1785 |
| %Female | 11% | | | 28% | | | 17% | | | 28% | | | 28% | | |
| 2020/21 | 27 | 2 | 29 | 70 | 20 | 90 | 167 | 44 | 211 | 443 | 160 | 603 | 1404 | 537 | 1941 |
| %Female | 7% | | | 22% | | | 21% | | | 27% | | | 28% | | |

Source: University of Dar es Salaam Facts and Figures 2014 - 2022

Nakayiwa et al (2020) found that in Sudan including the University of Juba, the percentage of female academic staff by the year 2020 was; Professors 21.1%, Associate Professors 21.0%, Assistant Professors 34.3%, Lecturers 47.1% and Teaching Assistant 51.9%.

Percentage of female academic staff in administrative positions (e.g., vice chancellors, principals of colleges, deans, HoDs, leadership of research centers/institutes).

Across participating universities, available data revealed a gross under representation of females in administrative positions starting from the topmost positions of the universities. **Table 1.6** presents partial information about the male and female top university leaders in the seven universities of Makerere University (Mak), University of Dar es Salaam (UDSM), University of Nairobi (UoN), National University of Rwanda (NUR), University of Juba (UoJ), University of Burundi (UB) and University of Kinshasa (UNIKIN) as of March 2023.

Table 1.6: Gender composition of staff in some top administrative positions

| Position | University | | | | | | |
|--|------------|---|---|----|---|----|---|
| | A | B | C | D | E | F | G |
| Chancellor/ Rectorate/ Rector | M | M | F | F | M | M | M |
| Vice Chancellor/ Vice Rectorate | M | M | M | M | M | M | M |
| Vice Chancellor (Academic Affairs)/ Academic Secretary General | M | M | M | M | F | M | M |
| Deputy Vice Chancellor (Finance and Administration)/ Administrative Sec. General | M | M | F | F | M | NA | M |
| University Secretary/ Administration and Finance Registrar / General Secretariat/ Budget Administrator | M | M | X | NA | M | M | M |
| Academic Registrar | M | X | M | NA | M | M | X |
| Director Research and Graduate Training | M | M | F | NA | M | M | X |

X- Information not available on university websites

(Source: UDSM Fact Book, UoJ Official Website, UB Official, UNIKIN Official website)

Similarly, females are underrepresented in middle level managerial leadership.

Table 1.7: Percent of female Principals, Deans and HoDs at Makerere University

| Position | Male | Female | Total | %Age Female |
|---------------------------|------|--------|-------|-------------|
| Principal | 7 | 3 | 10 | 30 |
| Deputy Principal | 9 | 1 | 10 | 10 |
| Dean | 23 | 7 | 30 | 23 |
| Heads of Department (HOD) | 63 | 30 | 93 | 32 |

Source: Makerere University Records, 2023

Table 1.7 shows the situation at Makerere University in 2023 where females constituted less than 30% on average in College level leadership.

At UDSM, in 2016 the four top leaders namely Vice Chancellor, Deputy Vice Chancellor-Academic, Deputy Vice Chancellor-Administration and Deputy Vice Chancellor-Research are men. The UDSM University Council was composed of 7 males and 2 females i.e. 22% (Ojwala et al (2022)). Only 34 out of 166 Heads of Colleges are female (Nyoni et al 2017). In 2020 the gender composition of females in higher education leadership in all Tanzanian Universities was 5,933 males and 2,523 females i.e. 30% women (Mwakitalu et. al.2022).

Percentage of female academic staff serving on committees, senate, and councils

Table 1.8 presents the gender composition of University Councils- the top most decision making organs of university. Although the Chairpersons of the university councils at Mak, UDSM and UoN were female, the Councils were male dominated.

Table 1.8 Gender composition of University Councils as at March 2023

| University | Members of University Council | | Total | % Female | Chairperson |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|--------|-------|----------|-------------|
| | Male | Female | | | |
| Makerere University | 17 | 6 | 23 | 26% | Female |
| University of Dar es Salaam | 7 | 2 | 9 | 22% | Female |
| University of Nairobi | 3 | 3 | 6 | 50% | Female |
| University of Rwanda | 9 | 6 | 15 | 40% | Not Known |

Percent of female grant awardees benefitting from internal institutional grants

At Makerere University, there are several interventions to support university employees to enhance their careers. The University's Staff Development Fund supports both male and female staff to pursue graduate Studies (Makerere Human Resources Manual 2009). The Human Resources Manual 2009 as Amended also provides for tuition waiver scholarships for staff (both male and female) registered at Makerere University. The PhD completion grant coordinated by the Directorate of Research and Graduate Training supports staff registered for PhD studies with research funding to enable them complete their PhD studies. This research fund reserves 30% for female staff.

The internal grants were donor funded support mainly the bilateral Swedish Development Corporation and the Norwegian Development Corporation at Makerere University. The same arrangements existed at the University of Dar es Salaam, however, most of these programmes have since ended (Lihamba et al 2020). The NUR Academic Staff Development Guidelines 2016 are gender neutral and do not take disaggregate the needs for male and female staff.

Integration of gender dimensions in research

The Makerere University School of Women and Gender Studies has since its establishment in 1990 been conducting gender-specific research. In addition, the MUGEP 2019 as Amended provides for the university to adopt a gender-responsive research environment that improves the understanding of national development issues and impacts positively on the lives of women and men. All research done by Makerere University is required to be gender sensitive.

Since 1997, through the Gender Dimension Programme Committee (GDPC), the UDSM supported members of staff (academic and administrative) to undertake gender-oriented research with a view to building their capacity on how to ingrain gender methodology and gender analysis in conducting research and writing research results (Mukangara and

Shao 2007). By 2007, more than 35 researches had been conducted since 1997, some of which have been published in scholarly journals; while others have remained at the Gender Centre as mimeos (Mukangara and Shao 2007). Mukangara and Shao 2007 further report that one of the conditions for the research grant awards is having gender responsive research proposals. There are efforts under donor funded research projects at the NUR to mainstream gender into research (NUR Gender Policy 2016). However, an assessment of the 2021 NUR Facts and Figures Handbook does not list gender specific research in the thematic areas of publication as presented in the fact book.

The UDSM Gender Centre established in 2006 adopted the approach of conducting research and policy reviews, undertaking specific affirmative action programmes, undertaking institutional and individual capacity building for gender mainstreaming and forming networks and linkages (Masanja 2020). According to Adam (2008) the University of Juba did not have a centre for gender studies nor a college, or a department specialized in women's or gender studies then. Most of the lecturers and academics were either unaware of the importance of gender studies or believe it is a women's issue. They were unfamiliar with feminist research. Moreover, many do not believe that gender studies are an area of scientific inquiry and a source of intellectual work. Some simply want to support the status quo. Many of the academic staff who are responsible for teaching gender studies lack appropriate training, manuals and references (Adam 2008). At the NUR gender specific research is not listed in the thematic areas of publication as presented in the 2021 NUR Facts and Figures Handbook.

Availability of systems for tracking women's career development in selected programs.

The reviewed literature did not contain any institutional systems for tracking career development of women. However, it showed efforts made at Mak, UoN, UDSM and NUR to highlight women's career progression in the universities' annual reports and fact books. College annual reports of selected Colleges at Makerere University revealed that career achievements are reported and recognized, however, there are no systematic tracking mechanisms. Section 8.8 The MUGEP 2009 as Amended mandates Makerere University to "...strengthen monitoring and evaluation for gender mainstreaming including development and/or adaptation of a gender mainstreaming scorecard. The GMD shall track progress overall and across Units. The tracking should include staff entry, development, retention, and attrition by gender". Similar provisions exist under section 4.2 of the UoN Gender Policy 2018. According to Masanja (2010), the University of Dar es Salaam produced gender disaggregated data throughout the recruitment and promotions process (Masanja, 2010).

Allocation of funding by the university to support women's academic career advancement and leadership

The review established that the universities have institutional capacity building opportunities for all staff both male and female that are allocated on merit. There are no affirmative action or quotas allocated for women. For example, the Staff Development Policy at Makerere University is gender-neutral and focuses solely on academic career growth of staff with no specific focus on women's participation in leadership. The staff development priorities are driven by unit-specific staff development needs regarding the number of PhD holders in a department without regard to male and female faculty (Makerere Select Committee of Gender Equity Report 2019). There are several donor-funded capacity development funding opportunities

that reserve a percentage of the funding for women faculty. For example, women staff have benefitted from the Commonwealth Scholarships, DAAD, Swedish, Norwegian, Carnegie Corporation of New York funding. Some of the funding agencies like the Commonwealth Scholarship Fund provide special eligibility for women by age, and other conditions that address the strategic gender needs of women.

Elsewhere, at the University of Dar es Salaam there are programmes to increase the number of women in science and technology disciplines. However, a large proportion of scholarships intended for women are diverted to men because gender-related constraints are not addressed. A flexible programme to support women to do PhDs was introduced in 2010 at the National University of Rwanda (NUR) in order to support women who have been stuck at the master's level for many years. This was funded by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA) (Masanja 2010). In addition, the UDSM implements initiatives and sponsors women for leadership capacity building courses for example those offered by IWF (International Women Forum) and others (Bachilula et al 2022). According to Taiwo (2014) the University of Juba provides staff development support to increase women's access to capacity development that can be reflected in the quality of research and publication by women, enhanced curriculum delivery and mentorship.

Policies, services and practices that promote gender equity and women leadership in Universities in East Africa.

Existence of equitable policies and criteria for academic promotions in HEIs.

The respective gender mainstreaming policies at Mak, UMSD, UoN and NUR study provide for equitable academic growth. However, studies [including data provided earlier, Table 1.2 and Table 1.4] have shown that these provisions were too generic with no specific targets and therefore stayed on paper (Makerere University Gender Report 2019). For example, strategic Objective 4 of the MUGEP states that: *Makerere University Council shall invest in endowments, infrastructure and resources to support activities aimed at improving gender balance in the recruitment, promotion, retention, staff development (including access to research funding, scholarships, etc.), and performance of staff members at all academic and administrative levels* (Makerere University Gender Equality Policy 2009 as Amended).

Section 3.2 of the UoN Gender Policy 2008 sets out to achieve gender balance in recruitment, training and promotion through the use a competitive recruitment process at all levels in combination with an affirmative action strategy; Ensure a gender-balanced pool of applicants for every position; Re-establish training programmes for both academic and non-academic staff and ensure that men and women have equal opportunities to participate in these; use affirmative action to hire into positions where one gender is under-represented, and provide support in the form of scholarships, study leave, and other incentives to enable female academic staff members to complete postgraduate studies. The same provisions are stated in the NUR Gender Policy 2016.

In the universities that had formulated gender equity policies, it is not known how these policies have contributed to increasing the participation of women in leadership. For example, the University Rwanda Gender policy enacted in 2016 adopted that Rwanda National target of at least 80% overall enrollment in STEM (at all education levels and for both male and female students) (University of Rwanda Gender Policy 2016), however, the

current status at the University is not known. According to Kuyang (2021), there is no formal policy at the University of Juba to support minority groups like women to join the university, and no formal policies existed to encourage more women to join the university as teaching staff or as top level administrators at the university and within the Colleges of Law and the IPDSS (Institute of peace and Development Studies) (Kuyang 2021).

Policies and mechanisms to increase appointment of women in administrative positions

Strategic Action No 4 of the MUGEP 2009 (As amended) states that the university shall adopt proactive measures to increase the participation of women in decision-making through recruitment, promotion, staff development, and retention to eliminate the existing gender imbalances within the systems, structures and all core activities of the University. At the UDSM, beginning 1997 the University made it mandatory that women participation should be visible in most governance and management structures and processes. The UDSM Senate recommended women to the posts where the position of a woman was ranked number two, and the man who was ranked number one was not an incumbent or sitting dean or director (Mukangara and Shao 2007).

Availability of a postdoc policy, including a system for tracking Masters and PhDs.

The Makerere University Postdoctoral Policy 2011 states post-doctoral fellowships will be awarded to individuals with demonstrated ability and high potential for research career development. Normally, the eligible candidates will be holders of a doctoral degree or equivalent within five years of having received that award. Fellowships will be awarded for a period of one to three years depending on performance of the Post-Doctoral Fellow, availability of resources and existence of a suitable supervisor/mentor with an appropriate supportive research environment. However, the policy is gender-neutral.

Availability of a system for tracking publications and grant awards by gender in Universities in East Africa.

The review did not ascertain the availability of institutional tracking systems and grant awards by gender. However, there are efforts for these universities for tracking publications and grant awards in the annual fact books and annual reports at UDSM and NUR. The information on the publications in the two universities is not disaggregated by gender (NUR Fact Book 2021, UDSM Fact Book 2015/16-2020/2021).

Availability of a structure and system for coordination of gender issues in HEIs.

Makerere University has since 2000 been implementing a Gender Mainstreaming Programme (MakGMP) coordinated by the Gender Mainstreaming Directorate (MakGMD). The Makerere University Council Committee on Quality Assurance, Gender Mainstreaming and ICT is the top decision-making body that oversees among others the implementation of the Makerere University Gender Equality Policy 2009 and the Policy and Regulations against Sexual Harassment. Implementation of the PRASH is handled by a Committee of 100 staff appointed from all university units to mainly handle investigations of sexual harassment offenses. The MUGEP provides for unit gender officers to coordinate implementation of the two policies.

At UDSM gender mainstreaming activities are coordinated at the Institute of Gender Studies

with the mandate is to develop short courses, undergraduate and postgraduate courses on gender and gender related programs. The IGS is also designed to develop competences in Gender analysis, basic and applied Gender research applicable in various aspects of society. At the same time, it acts as a catalyst for change on gender equality and equity at national and global level, with interest in networking with related institutions. The IGS started as a wing attached to the VC's office, in 2006 it grew into a Gender Centre responsible for Gender mainstreaming in all policies and practices at UDSM. In 2017, the UDSM Council approved the transformation of the Gender Centre into the IGS (<https://www.udsm.ac.tz/web/index.php/institutes/igs/background>). The UDSM has unit-based gender focal points and gender focal persons mandated to coordinate gender mainstreaming activities in the units.

At the UoN Institute of African, Anthropology and Gender Studies (IAAGS) coordinates gender activities. The IAAGS was established in 1970 mainly to teach Bachelor of Arts, Post-graduate Diploma and Masters in Arts in African Studies and Anthropology. In 1999, the Department got an additional mandate from the University of Nairobi Senate to mount courses in Gender and Development (both at Undergraduate and Postgraduate levels) in Museum Collections. Apart from teaching, IAAGS in collaboration with United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) facilitated two seminars in 2006 and 2007 to empower the students and staff of the UoN on gender-related issues on governance and human rights (Muasya 2013, UoN Website <https://african-studies.uonbi.ac.ke/index.php/basic-page/about-department>).

In 2011, UoN established the AWSC (African Women's Study Centre) to promote African women's experiences and world views in scholarship, policy, institutional and community development. AWSC brought the African women's knowledge to visibility, through academic and policy debates in academic institutions and other fora at national and regional levels.

The University of Nairobi has established a Gender Mainstreaming Division within the Vice-Chancellor's office. Each Faculty has a Gender Mainstreaming Committee to interpret and domesticate the objectives of the policy (Nairobi University Gender Policy 2008). The UoN Gender Policy provides for a Gender Mainstreaming Division, College Based Gender Committees and Campus-based Gender Focal Points. However, the review did not establish whether or not these implementing organs are in place.

According to Adam (2008), the University of Juba did not have a centre for gender studies nor a college, or a department specialized in gender studies then. However, Taiwo (2014) asserts that there is a gender initiative including the establishment of a Women and Documentation Centre providing a forum for research, advocacy and documentation of women's issues in collaboration with other private and non-governmental organizations (Taiwo, 2014).

The NUR Gender Policy provides for strategies to mainstreaming gender in access, teaching, learning, research and welfare however, there is no indication in the literature reviewed about an active coordinating Unit for gender mainstreaming programmes.

Funds allocated to support gender coordination units and mainstreaming activities.

Documents reviewed indicated that the universities with gender mainstreaming coordinating units namely Mak, UoN and UDSM) were allocated some funds to implement activities. At Makerere University, the Gender Mainstreaming Directorate receives funding from government subventions just like any other university administrative unit to implement the Makerere University Gender Equality Policy and the Policy and Regulations against sexual harassment. However, across these universities, the funding is not commensurate to the units' mandate. Most of its activities are funded through partnerships and bilateral corporations which are time bound and not sustainable.

Existence of equitable policies and criteria for staff recruitment— deliberate policies and mechanisms to increase recruitment of women especially in underrepresented disciplines such as STEM.

Apart from Mak, UoN and NUR there was no information about any intentional policies and mechanisms to increase recruitment of women especially in the STEM disciplines. The MUGEP 2009 As amended mandates Makerere University to *support activities aimed at improving gender balance in the recruitment, promotion, retention, staff development (including access to research funding, scholarships, etc.), and performance of staff members at all academic and administrative levels.* The policy specifically requires that at least 40% of staff positions at recruitment should be reserved for the under-represented gender. Similarly, the UoN Gender Policy provides for using affirmative action to hire into positions where one gender is under-represented and to provide support in the form of scholarships, study leave, and other incentives to enable female academic staff members to complete postgraduate studies. At the UDSM there are capacity building initiatives and scholarships to enhance the skills for women to qualify for recruitment and promotion (Masanja 2013).

According to Masanja, in 2008 the NUR introduced initiatives to increase the number of women qualifying for leadership namely (a) a flexible PhD programme, (b) a mentorship scheme, and (c) research to establish the reasons for women's low participation in research and PhD training (Masanja, 2013).

Existence of policies on sexual harassment and measures for protecting victims and whistle-blowers.

Three (3) out of the seven (7) universities in the study have policies for addressing sexual harassment. Makerere University has since 2006 been implementing the Makerere University Policy and Regulations against sexual harassment (MakPRASH) 2006 as amended. The objectives of the policy are, (a) to sensitize the University community about the evils of sexual harassment, thereby engendering a sense of social responsibility and zero tolerance for such behavior; (b) to establish an institutional framework that encourages victims of Sexual Harassment to seek redress and; (c) to take action in eliminating sexual harassment at Mak and impose such sanctions and corrective action as may be deemed necessary.

Similarly, the University of Dar es Salaam Anti sexual harassment Policy 2006 Amended in 2018 sets out to establish a mechanism that encourages victims of sexual harassment to exercise their rights, maintain their dignity and refuse to submit to the pressures of sexual harassment; take action to eliminate sexual harassment at UDSM and promptly,

effectively and sensitively handle cases; inform members of the university community about sexual harassment, including sexual favors and violence, and explain what they can do if they encounter or observe it in connection with any university program or activity. Section 3.10 of the UoN Gender Policy sets out to eliminate sexual harassment and all forms of gender-based violence through developing and enforcing University rules aimed at protecting students and staff from sexual harassment; establishing sexual harassment centers and counselling services to effectively respond to and deal with sexual harassment cases among others.

Existence of maternity and paternity policies that support women's participation

All the Universities stated paternity and maternity leave provisions in their human resources policies. The Makerere University Human Resources Manual 2009 as amended provides paternity and maternity leave for all employees. The MUGEP 2009 as Amended provides for the formulation and implementation of a policy on pregnant and parenting students and sensitizes all relevant University staff on sexual and reproductive rights of students. Section 3.11 of the UoN Gender Policy 2008 states that the University shall provide family planning services to all students; support pregnant students by granting them a maximum of one-year maternity leave and, where necessary, assist them to get appropriate accommodation.

Existence of childcare facilities for female academic staff

Provision of childcare services exists in the respective universities' human resources policies, however, there was no evidence of existence of the facilities and the services. The Mak Human Resources Manual 2009 (as amended in 2023) provides for a resting place for pregnant women and lactating mothers, mother-care centres and Day /child care centres. Similarly, the Makerere University Gender Equity Policy 2009 (As amended) mandates the University to "Invest in childcare facilities on university campuses for the benefit of parenting staff and students, and identify spaces for nursing mothers across colleges and units". However, apart from the Mak Library that has established a day care centre, there are no childcare centres for other university Units. Section 3.11 of the UoN Gender Policy 2008 states that the University shall establish affordable daycare facilities for babies of students and members of staff. However, the review could not ascertain whether this provision was implemented.

Availability of a M&E framework for gender equity, reporting and mechanisms to engage and design improvements e.g., targets and systems for tracking set targets.

Across the seven universities there was information about gender specific monitoring and evaluation frameworks to measure gender equity outcomes. Efforts for tracking the progress of gender mainstreaming programs were cited at Makerere University and the University of Dar es Salaam in their respective strategic plans.

Availability of programs / policies for male engagement into gender equality issues

Apart from Makerere University that developed a male engagement strategy to provide guidance to universities on how to effectively engage men in the promotion of gender equality there was indication of similar strategies in the other universities. The Makerere University draft male engagement strategy offers information on the importance of

engaging men in gender equality interventions, provides evidence based strategic areas where men should be involved in promoting women in leadership and decision making at universities and supports research and documentation of male involvement/participation in promoting gender equality at universities (MakGMD Male Engagement Strategy 2021).

There was indication of similar male engagement guides in the other six universities

Existence of policies for mental health support overall and by gender

The human resources policies at Mak, UNSM and UoN provide for psycho-social support services to all staff to ensure social, psychological and emotional health, offer free counselling services and address issues of diversity among staff. However, none of the universities had a mental health policy apart from Makerere University which was in advanced stages of developing a psychosocial support policy.

Existence of policies for tracking equitable workload distribution e.g., teaching load

In all the universities, the workload policies were gender neutral and did not consider the practical and strategic gender needs of employees. For example, the **Makerere Human Resources Manual 2009 (as Amended)** requires all academic staff male and female to teach a minimum of 10 and maximum of 12 contact hours per week.

6.3 Online surveys with female academics

A total of 207 completed responses were obtained from the online survey. Of these, the highest percent were from Kenya (29.5%) and the lowest from South Sudan (2.4%). Of the 207 respondents, most had attained a PhD except in Rwanda and Burundi where all participants had a Bachelor's degree. Most of the respondents were in Humanities disciplines as opposed to STEM except in Rwanda (17.8%), Burundi (7.5%) and DRC (3.7%). Kenya had the highest number of professors (top academic rank), junior research fellows and graduate assistants (entry level). Across participating countries, most participants had served in their respective academic ranks for at most 2 years. Most did not hold any administrative position and many had offered themselves unsuccessfully for an administrative position (see graphs).

6.3.1 Perceptions towards entry into university leadership

With the exception of Tanzania, nearly half of participants in Uganda (41.4%) and Kenya (18.4%) felt that pathways into an academic career were scarce for women and that recruitment processes were tainted with gender biases and that no targeted numbers (slots) were set aside for women (relative to men). Over two-thirds (60.4%) of respondents from Uganda believed that pathways for recruitment of women were characterized by sexual harassment, followed by Kenya (22.9%) and Tanzania (14.6%). Women in Uganda (38.1%) perceived that culture influences recruitment of women into faculty positions, followed by 26.2% in Kenya and 23.8% in Tanzania.

6.3.2 Perceptions of how gender enhanced women's progression into leadership

The majority of participants in Rwanda (31.6%) perceived that their gender considerably accelerated progression in research while those in Uganda (16.7%) and Kenya (16.7%) perceived that gender considerably accelerated their advancement in publishing.

6.3.3 Perceptions of how gender deterred women's progression into leadership

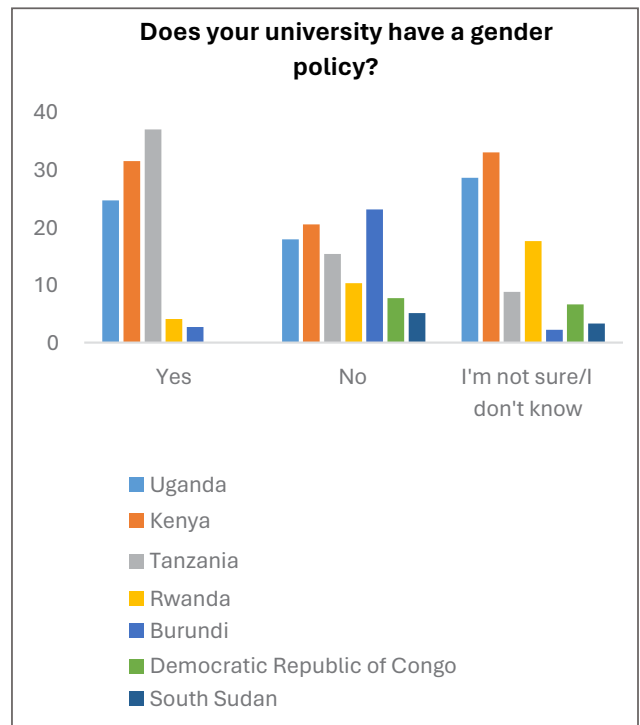
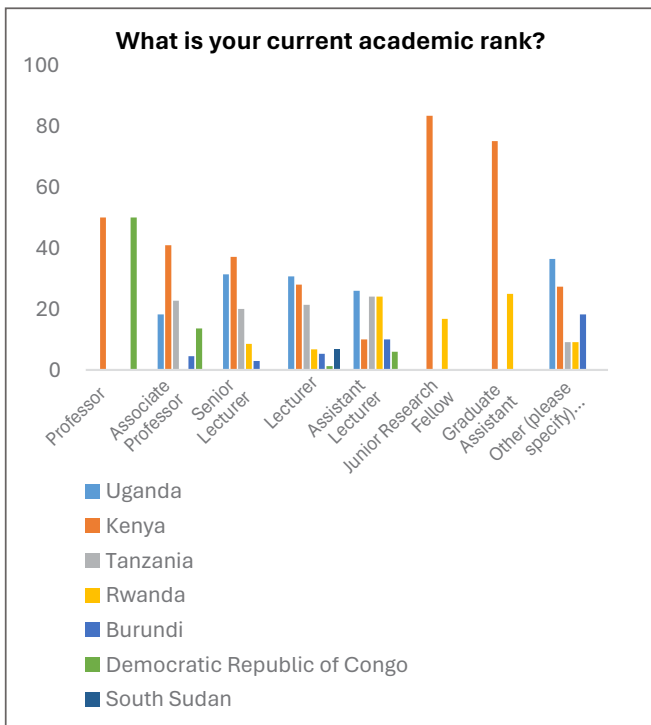
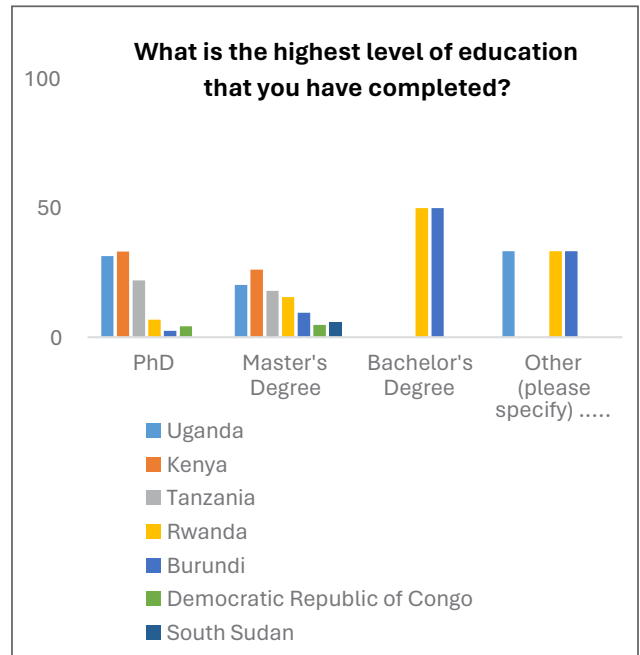
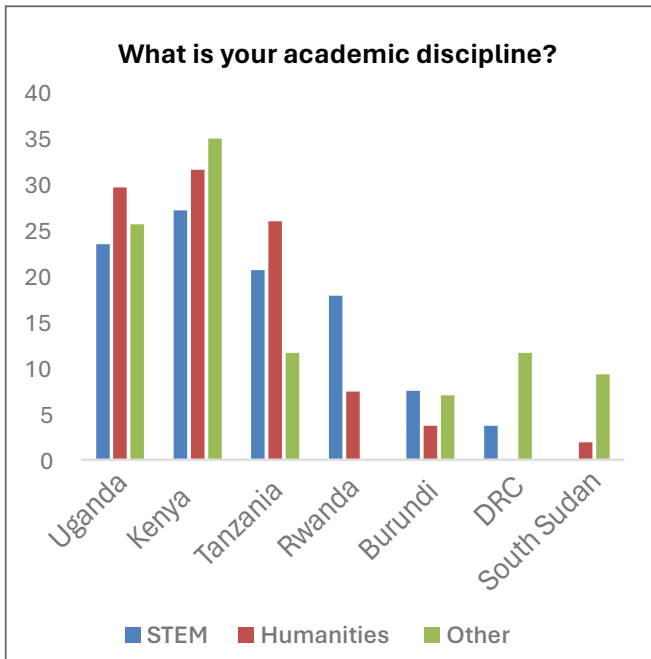
In Uganda and Kenya respectively, participants perceived that their gender considerably deterred completion of post graduate training (33.3%, 25%) while those in Rwanda (42.9%) perceived that gender considerably deterred their promotion through the academic ranks.

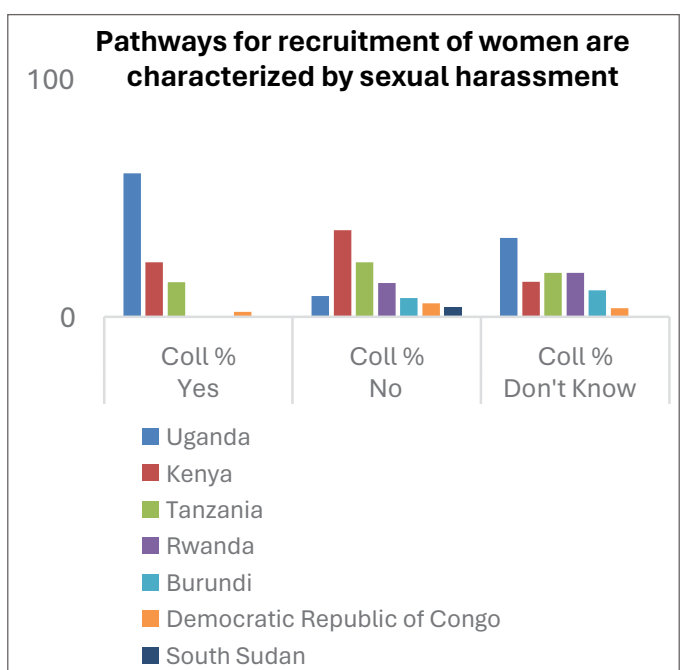
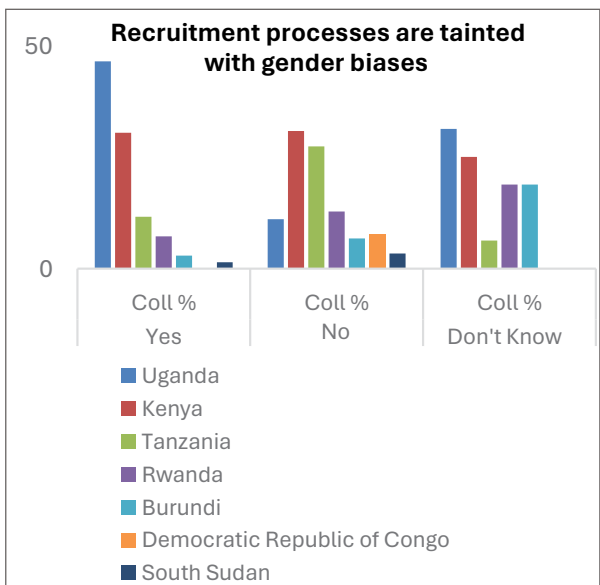
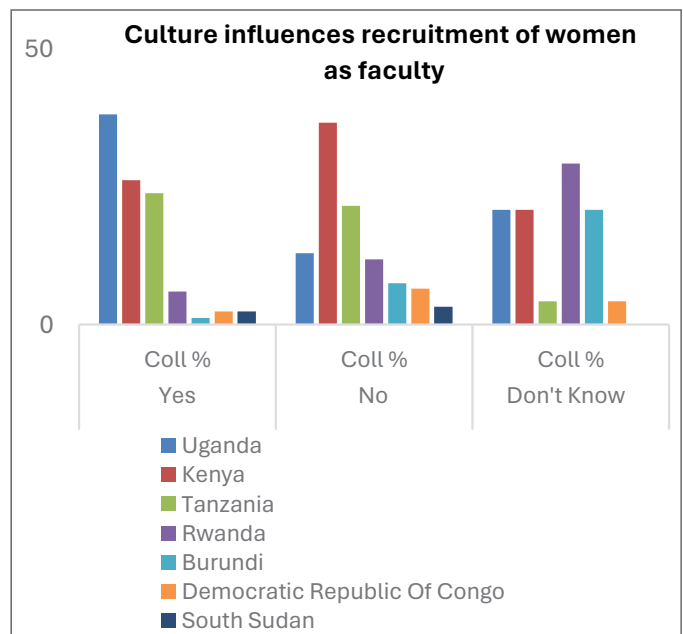
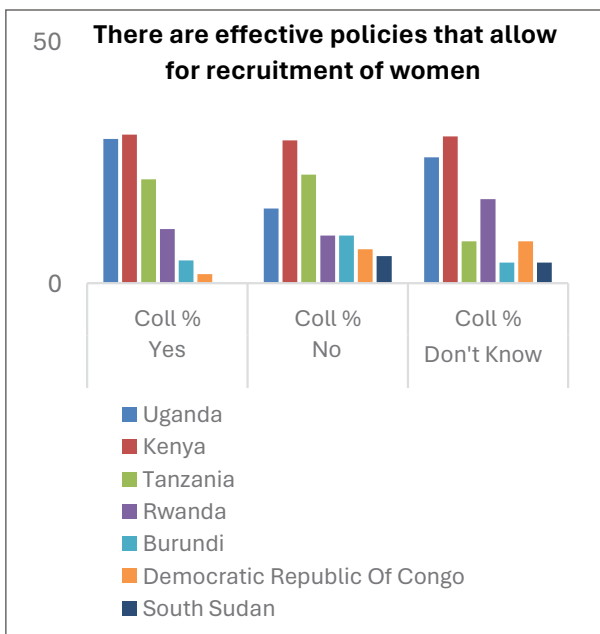
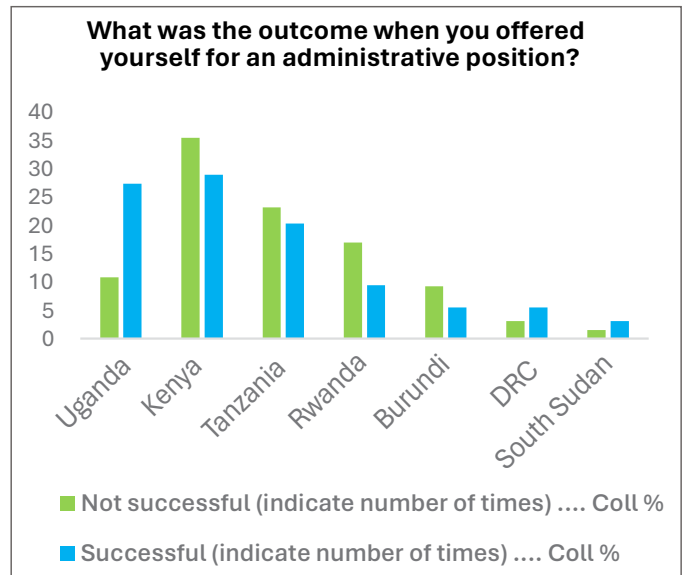
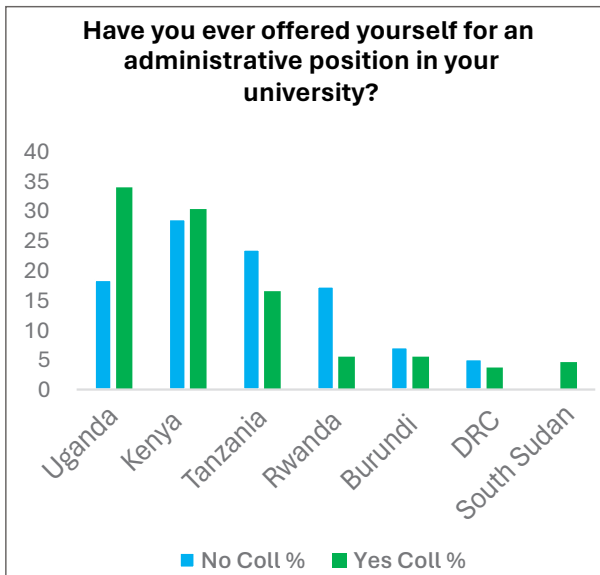
6.3.4 Strategies for advancing gender equality in university leadership

Most participants agreed that having more women to Appointment Committees and working on mindset change (i.e., changing perception, attitudes, behaviors, and stereotypes towards women) would advance gender equality in university leadership.

6.3.5 Existence of gender policies

In Uganda, Kenya and Rwanda, 28.6%, 33%, and 17.6% respectively, were not aware of any existing gender policies in their universities. In DRC and South Sudan 7.7% and 5.1% respectively, reported no gender policies.





6.4 Key informant interviews with academic staff in participating universities

6.4.1 Social demographics

Overall, seventy-seven key informant interviews were held with different purposively sampled participants from the selected institutions, of whom 18.1% were males and 81.9% females (Figure 1). These included: DVCs, Principals, Directors, Deans, HODs, professors, lecturers, teaching assistants and administrators from universities in Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania, Rwanda, Burundi, DRC and South Sudan (Table 1). From the regulatory institutions, data were collected from Government Permanent secretaries, commissioners, managers and principal officers; 7 staff affiliated to higher education regulatory agencies and sectors across participating countries, including members of the IUCEA. Other officials interviewed included a representative from the Uganda National Council for Higher Education, and from the Ugandan Ministry of Education & Sports. In Kenya, they included a representative from the Kenyan Ministry of Gender and in Rwanda, staff from the National Council for Higher Education and the Ministry of Education. In Burundi we interviewed a representative from the National Council for Higher Education. We were unable to secure interview appointments with representatives from Tanzania, DRC and South Sudan. The interviews focused on recruitment of female academic staff, advancement of women in university leadership (academic, administrative and research leadership), gender policies and practices, success factors, barriers and outstanding challenges and suggestions of improving gender equality in universities in East Africa.

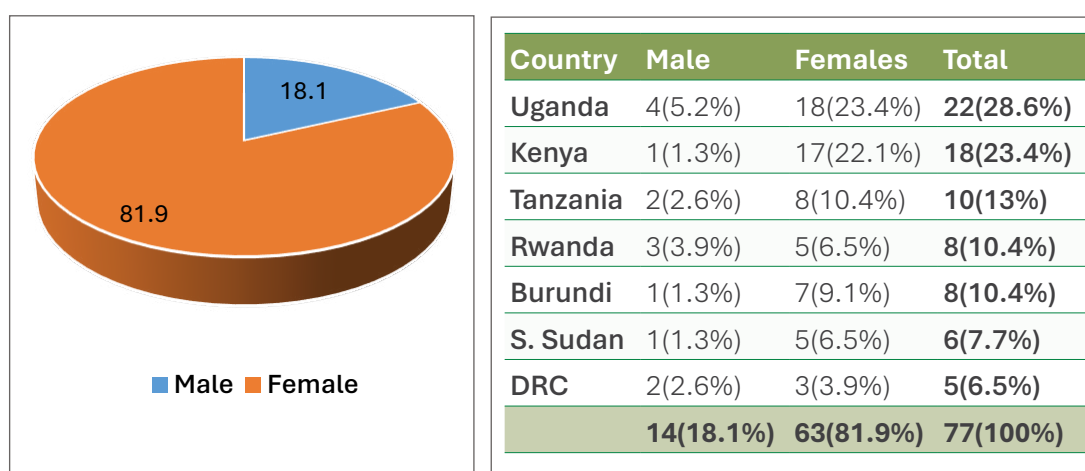


Figure 1: Gender of participants Table 1: Key Informant Interview distribution

In addition, study participants included staff in top management positions (VC, DVC, Director, Principal, Dean, HODs, Professor, PS, Commissioner), mid-level staff (Senior lecturer, Lecturer, Gender focal persons) and Junior staff (Teaching Assistant, Assistant lecturer, Administrator). Majority (57.2%) of the participants who accepted to take part in the study were top management staff whereas a few junior staff (10.4%) accepted to participate.

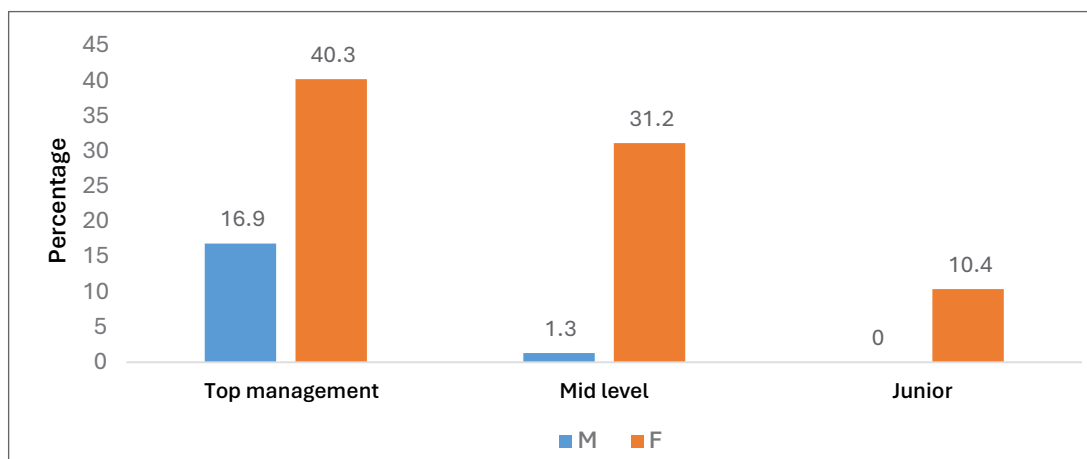


Figure 2: Participant leadership positions

6.4.2 Thoughts about female recruitment

6.4.2.1 Recruitment for academic programs

Majority of participants mentioned that some universities have observed higher enrolments for females than males for undergraduate studies, attributed to affirmative action. In some cases, the excess proportion female students over male students was phrased as *“the downside of affirmative action.” one that threatened the ‘boy-child’*. Universities in Rwanda, Burundi, DRC and South Sudan needed some effort regarding balancing and increasing numbers of female students.

“At the student level, our universities have tried. Because [...] females are admitted at a point lower than males.” KII_63_F_KE. “In a class of 150 students, 100 are females and only 50 are male.” KII_53_F_TZ

6.4.2.2 Recruitment in academic positions

Despite significant strides in female students’ representation, recruitment of female academic staff remains limited. Despite many countries having affirmative action as an overarching policy to support gender equality in the workplace, in academia, equal opportunity for both men and women was a common practice. Many participants underscored the importance of objective recruitment based on competence and established criteria rather than gender and the need for candidates to impress the interview panelists as the best fit. In reference to equal opportunity practice during the recruitment process, one of the participants alluded to the Darwinian evolutionary phrase of *“survival for the fittest”*, noting that both men and women *“are set to swim in the same waters, where the strongest are able to avoid drowning”*. Unfortunately, males seemed to perform favorably in these aspects compared to females.

“[...] what I see being practiced is that XX university is an equal opportunity employer and that is that. [...] usually, they will not bend the rules just to accommodate females. No!” KII_08_F_UG

“[...] When they advertise, they do not mention that women are encouraged to apply. [...] at the university we have criteria for working as an academician, you have a CGPA of 3.8 at undergraduate and 4.5 and above at post graduate level.” KII_29-F_TZ

*“[If] you’re good at what you do, you’re able to convince people on the interviewing panel, you get in. I think women have equal chance to apply for positions [...] provided they meet the criteria yes, if they are looking for someone to fill a certain position and you have the qualifications you all go for the interviews. **KII_07_F_UG***

*“It is an individual competence-based kind of recruitment. A job is advertised when there is need, candidates apply, get assessed and the best is hired. **KII_23_F_KE.***

*“[...] as I have already mentioned, the recruitment system is we have objective recruitment criteria, which means whether you are a man, you are a woman, but if you meet the criteria and you are ready, you are qualified, you can already be selected... **KII_50_F_DRC***

*“I can say no! There are not really targeting women, but it is an open thing. Those who qualify are the ones that are recruited. **KII_31_F_TZ***

Few participants reported having special considerations for females during the recruitment process in academic positions in their universities and it was uncertain how consideration for females was followed through during interviews, shortlisting, and eventual hiring for the available positions.

*“Recruitment procedure allows the recruitment of both men and women. And women are encouraged. So, when they advertise jobs they usually indicate that ‘that women are encouraged to apply’”. **KII_28_F_SS***

*“Right now, what we are doing is when we are recruiting people we are telling them we are encouraging women also to join though [...] because the message is being very clear many women are joining so we hope that with time things are going to change for the better.” **KII_14_M_DRC***

Furthermore, the role of male champions including vice Chancellors as well as support and funding requirements from projects were highlighted as some main facilitating factors for recruitment of women as was the case in South Sudan, Uganda and Tanzania respectively.

*“[...] the VC encourages women to be recruited. If a woman and man apply, he will select a woman”. **KII_17_M_SS***

*“[...] you hear my head of department saying we have 3 candidates but only is female and if she is good we will probably take the female because look we are so many men around here but then that is because this guy is pro-fem like he is really about advancement of women” **KII_22_F_UG.***

*“[...] the HEET Project under the World Bank has asked all the participating universities [...] to have a policy that will help to admit more female students and to recruit more academic staff. If you vie for a position and if there are two positions and you score the same marks or performance with women, the women will be considered for the position. **KII_12_M_TZ***

6.4.2.3 Recruitment for Research positions and scholarships

Regarding recruitment for research positions, participants reported that there were fewer females in research positions. While participants at top management level noted that they had been able to either attract or participate in research projects, some expressed concern about the condition of their colleagues at lower levels in the ranks. Although low

female recruitment and participation in research was a challenge across all participating countries, Burundi, Sudan and Rwanda were the most affected. Female recruitment into research positions was perceived as a historical challenge, exacerbated by male domination, gender roles and negative gender norms and stereotypes that demean women's capacity to idealize as well as write winning grants.

"Some stereotypes have not died away and they may not die tomorrow. Somebody might even read a proposal and it is about to be a good one and then realizes that it is from a woman! [laughs]" KII_72_M_UG

For the females that had successfully participated in research projects including mobilization, the study revealed that facilitating factors included networking with 'gurus' and experienced 'male' researchers and mentors, working in teams as well as applying the acquired skills and connections to existing systems and funding infrastructure/platforms. Specific to Uganda was the availability of a relatively recent government/national drive to fund research and encourage women's participation in research in public universities-known as the REF fund. One of the representatives from the regulatory institutions raised concern about the potential widening of the 'gap' between the few that benefited and those that were yet to benefit. He further noted that the former had a higher competitive advantage, hence there was:

"[...]the Matthew effect [...], those that begin with advantage accumulate more advantage overtime [...] things tend to flow to the epi-center black hole where there is high energy and who is controlling that replaces the other. [...] who would they bequeath? [...] it is anointment [...] probably that is what you guys must work hard against, so you regularize [mentorship for all] [...]" KII_71_M_UG

6.4.2.4 Recruitment and access to scholarships

The general perception was that female access and qualification for scholarships had improved over the years. Indeed, most confirmed that they were beneficiaries of various scholarships sourced individually or through their institutional collaborations. However, in addition to research related hindrances, gender roles, age limit and high academic requirements still hindered most women from fulfilling the requirements of scholarships.

"[...] but the question is, how many women are willing to leave their families behind for one year or two years or three years? It's complex!" KII_24_F_KE

Improvements over the years, enabled by factors such as affirmative action policies embedded in the memorandum of understanding with the funding institutions. For example, the CARTA fellowship program was reported to have introduced flexible age limits, hence providing opportunities for some participants that had taken a career break to finally enroll and complete their PhDs. However, this consideration was not reported to be considered in the design of most existing scholarships.

"[...] when it comes to opportunities like research scholarships [...] you find that if there are four scholarships three would go to female. [...] I think it's something that is not written but when it comes down to selection, we usually go that way I think it has become a tradition." KII_55_F_TZ

"Ok, I really think that the 4 foundations of international fellowships did that very well because gender was one of the factors that were considered, you know, as a factor of

marginalization. And so, in reviewing and evaluating applications [...] women were given a slight push. KII_11_F_KE

6.4.2.5 Recruitment/ appointment in Leadership/ administrative positions

Recruitment was largely competence based on the institutional criteria. Participants expressed mixed relations regarding the use of competences and application of equal opportunities for leadership positions. Whereas some felt that the criteria were objective and needed to be maintained, others felt that there needed to be new criteria to provide a conducive environment for females considering the various barriers faced.

“I think the constitution refers to 1/3. [...]. Now currently the VC is a male and the 3 DVCs are male. If we don't have women who are full professors, they will not qualify for the positions. [...] I mean some of these policies [...] I don't want to bring us down not to just be given, we also want to work for it really, but if you notice that we have associate professors... can we relax it a bit because women we are working hard.” KII_65_F_KE

Some participants highlighted instances where there had been special consideration for women into leadership positions, to comply with the national affirmative policy, support by champions from top management and availability of project funding.

“[...] our outgoing vice chancellor Mr. XX and the current chancellor emphasize the importance of having women in positions of leadership at university. There are women in the senate in various positions.” KII_25_F_KE

“I would say that we have been greatly encouraged to go into leadership [...]– the HAS program is one I can mention for example, that is there. I think you know, like coming now into leadership for example if you want to vie for, for principle.” P77: KII_40_F_UG

6.4.3 Barriers to recruitment, retention, and advancement

6.4.3.1 Gender roles

Many respondents cited gender roles and stereotypes about age and time for family as one of the biggest barriers for female recruitment and retention at universities. Recruitment into academic positions was reported to target candidates just after completion of their undergraduate degrees, a period that was also reported to coincide with **culturally acceptable ‘timelines’** for females to get married, and caring for children and husbands. While many women were reported to have made a choice to prioritize marriage and related family obligations, others struggled to balance both career and family.

“[...] Some of the women will tell you; ‘I have many children, I suffer, I have my marriage to save so if I come to the university, I am worried I may go back and find my husband with another wife.’ Women are so worried.” KII_05_F_DRC

“The time of recruitment is the same time [...]. I want to get married, start a family, I have young children, then I have all these other things of my demanding career.” KII_09_F_UG

“But you sort of have so many roles at the same time. I had my role as a mother, taking care of my children. I must go to work as usual, I have to take the full load like any other person. And that sometimes can make it very difficult”. KII_63_F_KE

“The main thing, for Burundi women is marriage. [...] if you are advanced in age, it’s very difficult to get married. So many women want to get married, and once they get married, it becomes very difficult to continue with education.” KII_66_F_BRD

Although some participants showed pride in their ability to balance productive roles, mainly by pausing their careers to raise their children, they recognized their colleagues who gave up their careers to concentrate on their families. Women in Uganda and Kenya were more likely to return to work after a long career break (up to ten years) compared to their counterparts in Rwanda, DRC, and Burundi. They cited a supportive spouse and their own determination as the key factors. Gender roles further hindered women’s decisions to pursue further studies as they prioritized their families over extended periods away.

“But also, do not forget that women will be provided probably with these opportunities, but the question is, how many women are willing to leave their families behind for one year or two years or three years? It’s complex! Okay. It’s a little bit complex” KII_24_F_KE

6.4.3.2 Strict recruitment criteria vs Female qualifications

Many of the respondents reported that the universities recruited and retained staff mainly on merit/ competences. Compared to women, men were more competitive as they had performed better at undergraduate level hence fulfilled the minimum requirements for applications for junior or mid -level positions. In South Sudan, Burundi and DRC, there were fewer women in the lower education system and there were lower completion rates mainly due to negative cultural stereotypes and norms, and limited funding. Gender roles and gender stereotypes further frustrated many of those that made their way into the system and contributed to delays in promotion.

“[...] the minimum qualification, especially for teaching in the university in Kenya, and I believe in other places also like Uganda is a PhD. [...] how many women get to realize a PHD?” KII_24_F_KE

“[...] this is academia they can’t recruit you if you are not capable so, you have to be able to show them that whatever you are going to give to the student is worth it.” KII_37_F_RW

“Here in reality, we have very few women who reach the level of the university in fact we have only 6.2% of our student population that are women, and it is a very small number and academic staff is even more frightening than the students it’s only 2.5% of the academic staff are women and they are[mainly] all first-degree holders.” KII_41_F_SS

“[...] and where the problem comes from is with the standards set. Most female do not achieve the standard set. [...] you will find that most people who are employed are men.” KII_49_F_TZ

Regarding advancement to leadership and administrative positions, participants reported that the criteria was equally strict. In many universities the minimum criteria were tied to number of publications, contribution to student academic affairs through teaching and supervision as well as resource mobilization. Unfortunately, many females, particularly those that delayed due to reasons articulated earlier were unable to qualify for leadership.

“[...] more senior positions for example directors, deans, leaders of graduate programmes,

you need to have attained a PHD. Some positions require you to be a senior lecturer. This can hamper promotion of women, especially of women are taking longer to get PHDs or have family responsibilities.” KII_25_F_KE

“If you want to vie for principal, you need to be at the level of professor and above. [...] And I don’t think you want also to bend the criteria, just because, you want people to be fully, fully empowered. You don’t want to be there and you’re saying, ‘you know me, I became principal because of 1.5’”. KII_40_F_UG

Most participants cited the limited number of publications as a hindrance for promotion for academic positions as well as qualifications for leadership. With a few exceptions, most female staff were unable to participate in research projects, a main contribution to publications due to competing gender roles. Moreover, those who had conducted research were unable to complete peer reviewed publications. Men were perceived to have an advantage because they could avoid family distractions and concentrate on publications.

“You see, the qualification required for you to move from a certain job group to another requires that you have published and supervised. [...] In the process of publication, this woman is a mother, a wife!” KII_24_F_KE

6.4.3.3 Female inferiority complex

Some respondents cited that some women had ‘an inferiority complex’- didn’t believe in themselves and shied away from offering themselves for certain positions possibly due to fear of being outcompeted by males during the screening process. Men, on the other hand, were generally perceived to exhibit more confidence, ultimately contributing to the limited number of women that are recruited or retained in universities. Under such circumstances, women could only be recruited through head hunting or other means.

“I can’t put exactly a finger to what it is, but I have seen females not offering themselves for those positions. [...] I don’t know whether this is kind of a personality thing. KII_06_M_UG

“[...] ladies are probably not open enough to opportunities, they are less of risk takers so when positions are advertised, we don’t see many of them applying as the men. KII_21_F_KE

“[...] some women are not confident. Some don’t think that they can secure jobs in higher institutions. It could also be that maybe [...], thinking that maybe men are cleverer than them which is not true.” KII_33_F_TZ

“[...] maybe limited confidence amongst female applicants that could be a barrier! They may have suspicion that maybe we could be discriminated, or this system is male-dominated our names will not be selected.” KII_44_M_ZR

Additionally, cultural stereotypes about how men and women should behave and gender dynamics that emphasize male dominance and privilege to decision making further exacerbated the inferiority complex among females. Many participants noted that their socialization emphasized women’s submission and respect of men’s opinion in the family, and community and this was often carried forward to the workplace, sometimes in the form of perceived unwillingness of women to vie for leadership positions.

“General women in the Congolese culture have very little power compared to men. So,

because of the culture many women do not really come [out].” KII_14_M_DRC

“Some of the women are not given opportunities because they are just women by the family, by the community and all these kinds of things. And this one discouraged the women from even thinking higher.” KII_51_F_SS

“And I think the social cultural aspect plays a big role in our system here in Uganda. We have a culture or a social aspect which is not yet open to see the value of the woman in the leadership, even the research.” KII_52_F_UG

6.4.3.4 Male insecurity and desire to keep status quo

Some respondents reported insecurity among spouses and potential male workmates as a barrier to recruitment into academic positions. The spouses were perceived to be threatened if their wives went to work. Participants also perceived the common existence of male dominated interview panels as platforms for protecting the status quo. Delayed promotions frustrated some females who sought opportunities outside the universities including government ministries, non-governmental organizations, and other private sectors.

“But men from different places may think that if my wife goes to Kinshasa, she’s going to be surrounded by other men so that is a challenge too.” KII_05_F_DRC

“I think the men at the faculty are not willing to change or to improve and make the conditions better for women because it favors them. So, for them if it’s not broken why fix it? And over the years, we have very few women, they come in and stay a few years and they leave.” KII_18_F_KE

“Most of the people making the decisions are men! So, its men who mainly make decisions how women progress and that decision is affecting our growth but if we had more women in theses position, then I think a woman would relate easily with the growth.” KII_65_F_KE

Similarly, the desire to protect the status quo was also reported as a major hindrance for women’s advancement and participation in leadership as well as administrative roles. The study revealed that even females in leadership were keen to maintain the requirements such as publications which were perceived as a source of privilege and were therefore unwilling to accommodate any flexibilities.

“They say ‘we have struggled this far; we are not here because of any form of affirmative action but because of publication record [...] You may say for females you come with 3 publications and males 5. There is no such thing!’ [...] It will reduce their ‘posture’” KII_71_M_UG

Interviews showed that some universities had made some positive efforts to utilize affirmative action to encourage women to advance in leadership positions. Interestingly, one of the participants from the regulatory institutions referred to it as “having a good problem”- implying that it was work in progress. However, many universities were reported to have limited ability to sustain such efforts.

6.4.4 Mechanisms promoting gender equity/women / women leadership

6.4.4.1 Existence of a gender policy

The common perception across participants interviewed was that there was no written gender policy in their universities. Majority didn't know, were unaware, had not heard of, nor seen a gender policy in their universities. Others noted that they followed broader national policies where gender issues were itemized as a section. Gender policies were reported to exist in only a few universities, with many indicating plans to develop, while others were in the process of policy development. In cases where gender policies existed, revision and updates were overdue, and the implementation was limited.

“So, we are trying to draw up some policies but till now, we can say there is nothing. But it is underway.” KII_45_F_DRC

“Actually, our school has been tasked with the responsibility of developing a gender policy, but the university now doesn't have a gender policy” KII_1_F_UG

“No! usually policies are allowed to exist within institutions. Public universities have a mandate to have different policies to guide some matters. That one of gender is underway.” KII_30_F_TZ. “I don't think so. And even if it is there, I don't think they consider gender things. No. [...] I think maybe it is because we are under church affiliation.” KII_64_F_BRD

6.4.4.2 Policies for creating conducive environment for females

6.4.4.2.1 Gender coordination structure - existence

A few participants, especially from Rwanda, Burundi, and DRC noted the absence of a gender coordination structure in universities.

“Now there is no office as such. Am very happy if you can help us to create such an office we would be very happy.” KII_14_M_DRC

“No, when you are a student having those issues you go to the career guidance and when you are staff, you go to the senior manager the person in charge.” KII_37_F_RW

More than half of the participants reported having a structure or system for coordination of gender issues within the universities. However, operationalization varied across institutions. For example, some had directorates, committees, gender offices, gender desks, while others had individuals who acted as gender focal persons, responsible for coordinating all gender related activities in the institution.

“Okay, on the issue of gender, there is a gender desk under the directorate of diversity. Whenever a man or woman feel like they have been treated on unfair grounds, he or she can report on any issues, and they take care of that.” KII_33_F_TZ

In instances where the individual was a focal person they also had other administrative and academic roles, making gender issues largely optional. Furthermore, they were mainly females and given this trend, some participants perceived that females were more suitable to head such structures because gender was about women's issues.

“[...] it is kind of a surprise when people hear the title ‘gender coordinator’, they start thinking it is a female. But I am not. [...] I am a man, and I am managing, and people are happy when they see me addressing gender issues” KII_12_M_TZ

6.4.4.2.2 Gender coordination structure - functionality

Key informants from universities highlighted that in cases where a gender unit or directorate existed, their functionality was limited due to lack of funding and staffing. Interviews with regulators revealed that functionality of the existing gender structures particularly in the universities was suboptimal, without indicators of “presence” across the University. For example, they recommended that having sentinel sites across the cascade of the university committees, colleges, schools, department would enable better coordination and prioritization of gender activities particularly those related to appointments and sexual harassment.

“No, gender equality is really not a priority, you see the council committee on quality assurance and gender, even then you see gender being combined with something else, it has not been constituted as a committee on its own, it is not seen as worthy of standing on its own. There is no deliberate effort to it. Our gender directorate is under -funded.”

KII_09_F_UG

Interviews with the regulatory institutions outside the universities revealed that despite their expression of interest in gender issues and gender mainstreaming, gender units/departments within such institutions were either nonexistent or a thought process. Some participants noted that the gender departments were a unit of a broader ministry, making the prioritization of gender issues difficult. This was mainly attributed to lack of funding.

“The department of gender and affirmative action in the ministry has changed names and has been moved to another ministry [...] affirmative action has been left on the culture side [...]” **KII_75_F_KE**

6.4.4.2.3 Existence of maternity/paternity policy

Across all interviews, there was no unique maternal policy developed by universities- many were guided by the national labor laws which provided for issues such as maternity and paternity leave as well as annual leave. Notably, implementation of the days for maternity leave varied across countries (ranging between 45 to 90 days), with possibility of extension, depending on supervisors’ judgment and workload.

“We follow the government policy for maternity leave. They are given 45 days. But there is flexibility you can add annual leave. In case of any challenges [...] they can ask their head of department or dean on condition that the colleagues will cover the activities.”

KII_17_M_SS

*“With the University of Nairobi, the maternity leave policy is in line with the employment act where you get your 90 days’ maternity leave. **KII_18_F_KE***

“Of course, if you give birth you are given three months of maternity leave, and the government is proposing to make it 6 months. So that applies in our institution also. And you get your full salary and get all other things that are given to normal working staff.”

KII_57_F_RW

6.4.4.2.4 Paternity leave

In relation to paternity leave, participants noted that men were given fewer leave days compared to women- lasting about one week. Furthermore, men that were married had a higher chance of getting paternity leave compared to unmarried ones. One of the

participants was however surprised by the limited interest by men to utilize their paternity leave.

“[...] but men rarely take up paternity probably they don't feel or think they need it. Rarely do you hear that someone has gone for paternity leave.” KII_21_F_KE

Practices to support new mothers

In addition to maternity and paternity leave, some participants reported informal practices to make it friendly for new mothers including flexible arrival and departure time, working from home and adjustment of timetables to suit new mothers. Other good practices included recruitment of stop gaps.

“[...] Then after that, you work for six hours per day and I think there's some fund (I will not say exactly how much) but I think after delivery, you are given some money to support you and your baby. KII_31_F_TZ

“And once they come back we put them on what we call flexible working schedules. [...] now I have an employee who is currently on maternity leave, but we agree she gives me her schedule, and then we agree on what deliverables we want to be achieved she can do from home and what she can do from the office” KII_38_M_KE

“[...] also, you are allowed to have sometimes of breast-feeding and all this time. The time related to that so that it can in a way create sort of non-binding environment for you to remain in the system, talk about retention” KII_28_F_SS

6.4.4.2.5 Childcare facilities

Availability of childcare facilities for staff

The study revealed that childcare facilities existed at a few Universities (Eleven) and they were in the form of lactation rooms or general rooms that had been demarcated to support childcare roles such as -breast feeding, pumping, milk storage, diaper change and caring for sick children. Lactation rooms were only mentioned by participants from Kenya, Rwanda, and Uganda, and these were sometimes shared by both academic staff and students, although the rooms in Kenya seemed to have more functionality than elsewhere. Notably, the names assigned to the lactation rooms varied.

“There are lactation rooms for women who need to express milk for storage. I have also seen staff come to university with their children. [...] My other colleague was able to come with her daughter who was unwell and sit care for her while at work.” KII_25_F_KE

“[...] Those who have the young ones [...] we have the room! Our university has a room for kids for waiting for their mothers to feed them for break. KII_35_M_RW

“We had a room that set up and it was really helping our female students including the staff. One of the staff members, the clerk used take care of the babies. You bring with diapers and something [...] if you are a student when you go for lectures, after lectures you come take your baby”. KII_27_F_KE

Although majority of the female participants appreciated having a lactation room, one participant expressed discomfort having their babies making noise for others.

“[...] sometimes we feel uncomfortable coming with your baby crying around. But we have such a nice room.” KII_19_F_KE

Absence of childcare facilities for staff

Despite unanimous appreciation of the advantages of having childcare facilities for the mothers, many respondents reported absence of such facilities in their universities. In DRC, childcare centers were mainly for students that were undertaking their masters' but challenged with long distance. In two Ugandan Universities, participants mentioned availability of nursery schools for those that could afford, hence perceived as "non-existent". In South Sudan, one of the participants attributed absence of the childcare facilities to ongoing insecurity in the country, which affected the functionality of the Universities as well. Some participants (in Uganda) also reported that plans for establishment of childcare facilities had been frustrated by limited funding.

"Like a crèche or something for babies? [...]. Well, I wish it were there! but the closest we get to that is really the maternity leave." KII_22_F_UG

"So far, there have been complaints and people have been trying to get the university to start some sort of a day care center for employees with young children, they have put proposals, but the university hasn't responded." KII_53_F_TZ

Coping in absence of child facilities

To cope with absence of onsite childcare facilities many participants reported several strategies including leaving the baby at home and abandoning breastfeeding, or expressing breast milk and leaving someone to feed the baby. Others decided to rush home during lunch break or leave work early. In most cases, the new mothers faced the dilemma of performing optimally to keep their jobs and ensuring that their babies are well taken care of. Those that left the babies at home delegated domestic workers or any other reliable person.

"No. We don't and that's a challenge for most mothers because you either come with your baby, you leave her with the house girl in the car and maybe you go and feed the baby or maybe you leave her at home. Yeah that's one of the challenges we face." KII_31_F_TZ

"No, I leave the baby at home with pumped breastmilk and someone else can take care of him. I don't have a choice because if I keep at home, they will give my place to another person. Sometimes I give the supplements, or I pump my maternal milk and put in the refrigerator, so they just warm it. This is very disturbing that I must leave the baby at home alone [...] [long silence]." KII_48_F_BRD

6.4.4.2.6 M&E framework for gender equity

Absence of M&E frameworks in universities

In general, many participants reported the absence of the Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) framework for gender equity for staff within universities. Many were not aware of what the framework entailed while others had never heard of it. During interviews, participants often had long pauses as they pondered about what to say. However, in relation to students, participants reported the existence of mechanisms to disaggregate the number of students by gender and this information was available.

M&E frameworks in regulatory institutions

Interviews with the regulatory institutions revealed that comprehensive M&E frameworks were largely lacking. Uganda was mainly focusing on selected M&E activities such as gender disaggregated data. Participants in Uganda raised concerns about lack of clear [fleshed out] indicators to monitor over focusing on monitoring – without evaluation Participants from Kenya reported having robust and detailed M&E tools including performance contracts

and annual ISO certification tool. The implementation of the M&E tools was enabled by political will and decentralization structure. However, their implementation was faced with challenges including lack of harmonization of the existing tools, staffing shortages and knowledge gaps as well as integrity issues influenced by universities that desired to perform better on gender issues. Across all countries the common challenge reported was a lack of implementation of the recommendations from the monitoring process. Participants highlighted limited funding and lack of “power to cause change”. Indeed, all referred to themselves as only being able to “bark but not bite” in reference to their ability to merely make recommendations about performance.

“The problem is that although we refer to it as M&E, on many occasions, we monitor but do not evaluate. We even pick statistics, we have them, but we never answer the “and so what” **KII_72_M_UG.**

“There is reporting and if somebody has less scores, then what is next? So, what I am proposing is that we need to give awards and we are planning to have a conference now so we should involve the media for a well published event. **KII_75_F_KE**

“What we are doing only is to encourage the higher learning institutions to comply with education rules where females have to be among the composition of team members from those senior leadership positions” **KII_73_M_RW**

6.4.4.2.7 Existence of policies on sexual harassment.

Across all universities, there was zero tolerance to sexual harassment. Participants reported that existence of exclusive policies on sexual harassment although some highlighted that sexual harassment provisions were elaborated with in the broader gender policy. Most participants agreed that sexual harassment cases were mainly experienced by both female staff and students, between staff and between staff and students, with the students having a higher likelihood of reporting. The study revealed that staff were less likely to report for fear of repercussions including exclusion from opportunities where their perpetrators were in charge. The study revealed the sexual harassment for female staff occurred at various stages- recruitment and any time during their tenure as academic staff in the universities.

“The problem comes when they do not want to report their issues and most of the time those who report harassment are females or girls against men.” **KII_49_F_TZ**

“I know that there are those conditions of many ladies who are recruited first being abused sexually by the seniors who are recruiting them, who are the decision makers. But I think it could be quite common, but this is something that happens and parties agree [...] no one will tell you.” **KII_10_F_UG**

“Sexual harassment, there is zero tolerance to this. If it happens, it must be reported and dealt with.” **KII_36_F_SS**

“There are a few cases that come out openly [...]. it depends on one’s confidence, but others will end at sharing informally and in corridors.” **KII_54_F_UG**

6.4.5 Recommendations for improving equality and participation of women

The recommendations were clustered into 3 broad themes: individual, institutional & policy.

6.4.5.1 Individual level interventions

At individual level, recommendations related to addressing challenges associated with socio-cultural barriers that deter women from accessing and advancing in formal education as well as leadership positions. Many of these were embedded in the general gender stereotypes about women/men, their core gender roles and the myths about women's engagement in leadership. The main interventions proposed included community sensitization, renewed focus on the boy child, deliberate, favorable and flexible funding and scholarship opportunities for women.

Community sensitization about female education

One of the suggestions was sensitization at community level, aimed at enabling male decision makers in the family level- fathers and husbands to appreciate the importance of girl child/female education right from primary, secondary, bachelors, Masters, through PhD. The participants argued that buy-in from key decision makers would not only contribute to increased enrolment and recruitment of females thereby generating a critical mass. Other participants only hoped that both male and females need to be socialized into doing chores

“So, we can start with sensitization from the family level where we must tell the patients to know that children should be treated equally. [...] and that will give even confidence to girls to do the same as what boys can do”. KII_50_F_DRC

Renew the focus on the boy child

Participants were of the view that as we sensitize communities about the girl child, we also need to be cognizant of the gradual effect of affirmative action on the boy child, noting that over focusing on females would only arouse resistance from the males overtime but also have unintended effects on the types of husbands the women would marry.

“So, I think the way society perceives these gender issues and gender roles is what really matters! I [...] you [will] have all these uneducated men and these highly educated women, but still these women must get married to the uneducated men.” KII_06_M_UG

“But anyway, long story short, is that there is that general feeling that affirmative action has gone too far, there is that feeling that now we have more female leaders than male leaders at the university. There is that feeling that men are no longer being given opportunities compared to females.” KII_55_F_TZ

Scholarships targeting females

For enrollment in post graduate courses at master's and PhD- the barriers were mainly related to difficulties with work life balance, inflexibilities of PHD programs, limited affordability, limited scholarship positions as well as lack of confidence. Participants had several suggestions including deliberate funding of females; supporting progress up the ladder; and mentorship with work life balance. Majority of the female participants had been beneficiaries of scholarships and therefore recommended sustainability of such good

programs as well as establishment of more funding programs to support post graduate education for female staff.

“If only partners or other organizations can unveil scholarships that can help women to go for master’s degrees, PhD degrees, for post-doctorate studies, I think that one can make women also climb higher. KII_51_F_SS

“And then we should also set aside funds for ensuring that they[women] don’t have the excuse that “I didn’t have money that is why I have dropped out”. KII_27_F_KE

“I think here [...] we need really to promote and at least put aside a special scheme for bursary women, girls’ bursaries at the university that can encourage them and help them to continue their education.” KII_66_F_BRD

Female mentorship initiatives [on-campus and offsite]

In relation to inferiority complex among females to enroll for post-graduate, participate in research and publication activities as well as show interest in leadership positions, participants noted that having good mentors would be a wonderful idea. Mentors could be either males or females. Female mentors would not only share their experiences about work life balance but also provide capacity building on grant proposal writing, research project writing and manuscript writing. Participants noted that mentors could also play a role in leadership skills. Participants encouraged deliberate efforts of females to mentor their colleagues while some expressed preference of mentorship by females to encourage open sharing of challenges- a situation that could be difficult in the case of having male mentors. One of the representatives from the regulatory institutions in Rwanda suggested that mentorship need to not only be institutionalized but also extended off campus to benefit those at the workplace and those that are ‘still stuck’ with in the home.

“There should be a mentorship program particularly for us females to help us get integrated within the system because there are several challenges that we face that we cannot air out to our male counterparts.” KII_53_F_TZ

“One of the ways is to aggressively identify mentors. [...] we could continue training them [...] on things like how to win grants, how to balance family and other life and academic work.” KII_13_F_UG

Deliberate efforts related to male engagement

The study revealed that having male mentors for both academic, scholarship and male allies’ leadership advancement was also an opportunity that could be explored as it had proved to contribute to success for some women [see section about recruitment for research]. For many participants, male engagement would *‘naturally be appropriate’* given the recognition of the male dominance across the board. This would enable the identification of male champions, mentors, and allies.

“We need to recruit male champions [...] the men in leadership [...] we need to be deliberate to recruit them and have a few of them on our side. [identify some power centers and use them to advance our cause.” KII_11_F_KE

Notably, one of the representatives from the regulatory institutions warned against negative unintended effects of tokenism of a few women that would be mentored by male mentors, champions, and allies. Male allies were also perceived as important assets to support recruitment into leadership positions by both men and women. However, the potential

role of female mentors was also emphasized, despite surprising reports of experiences about women thwarting efforts of colleagues to advance in leadership. Notwithstanding, some participants recommended that women need to take deliberate efforts to mentor colleagues for research and leadership, starting from those within their departments and faculties.

“But sometimes, because of tokenism, we get the Margaret Thatcher’s of this world, the ‘women-men’. So, there must be that kind of sensitization regarding role models [...] they may start as being a good role model but then they become like a man.” KII_72_M_UG

6.4.5.2 Institutional level interventions

The main institutional interventions included development, implementation and review of gender & sexual harassment policies; establishment and functionality of gender coordination structures, inclusion of women on recruitment panels and setting up day care centres.

Develop, implement, and review gender policies

Participants recommended the development of gender policies, particularly in universities where these were absent; review of policies that were due for update and implementation of both broader gender policies as well as policies specific to sexual harassment.

“[...] then maybe the universities should come up with clear policies on gender because I know most universities, they come up with policies, but it’s more about harassment, sexual harassment, violence, you know?” KII_63_F_KE

Set up and further functionalize gender coordination structures

Participants recommended the establishment of gender coordination structures and in some instances assigning individuals for this role [despite acknowledging the risk of overwhelming one individual] as a starting point for some countries.

“Secondly, maybe we can create just a special office or unit where we can assign a specific person to deal with gender equality issues. People should know that there is a person dedicated, to deal with these issues [...] also be charged with the advocacy and promotion of women’s representation in academia [...]” KII_68_F_BRD

However, in countries and/ universities where gender coordinated units already existed participants recommended strengthening the functionalization of such units. One of the suggestions was to provide and/ or secure prioritized funding to support the work of such units [for example sensitization about gender and collection of gender disaggregated data across departments and units of universities. Funding was also deemed critical for establishment of special committees across units in the universities, to support implementation of activities particularly for sexual harassment. Implementation of activities from M&E including rewards and sanctioning for good and bad performers respectively also required funding. Furthermore, key informants recommended increasing the staffing as well as capacity strengthening for staff of gender coordinated units to effectively collect data for various M&E.

“We need a framework in place that will help in implementing the policies at college level, for example have more gender officers to support with the execution of the policies. We need to resource them through capacity building, people must have knowledge about policy provision. We need to create a reward system to recognize and motivate.” KII_09_F_UG

Include women on recruitment panels and management boards

Although noted to be a good practice, inclusion of women on recruitment panels had not yet been scaled up across universities. Hence, some participants were of the view that this needs to be tried because it could not only support gender inclusive policy development and female recruitment in various spheres and followed up closely to understand the ways in which this influences the final outcomes of the committees and boards.

“There is need for deliberate note, there is need for an initiative [...] in form of ensuring that recruiting panels are more representative. KII_21_F_KE

“[...] and women should be involved in the forming of those policies.” KII_34_F_UG

“And lastly because most of the people making the decisions are men! [...] but if we had more women in these positions, then I think a woman would relate easily with the growth. KII_65_F_KE

Set up day care centers

Participants recommended that Universities need to establish day care centers and nursing rooms [where they are not in existence], to support the new mothers to balance maternal roles and official duties.

“Number one should be having a day care so women can easily apply for the job [...] Sometimes the women who are capable are afraid to apply because they will not have time to take care of their babies.” KII_37_F_RW

6.4.5.3 Policy level interventions

Cross cutting interventions

There were also recommendations related to cross cutting issues including establishment and implementation of comprehensive M&E framework, Resource mobilization and investment, and empowering regulatory institutions.

Establish comprehensive M&E framework

Participants recommended the establishment of robust M&E frameworks in both universities and regulatory institutions as these were largely lacking. Availability of M&E frameworks would not be enough to support to track and monitor progress - The frameworks also needed to have clear and elaborate indicators, and have actionable recommendations, which would later be reflected upon. Regular collection of robust data for the M&E frameworks was also a highlighted as a requisite for functional M&E frameworks as was funding for implementation of action-points. For university institutions, harmonization of the M&E framework with the gender policy was perceived to bring aggregated benefits.

“We need to go beyond the written policies and frameworks to track the progress and success of women [...] there should be a plan for reviewing of these policies at least to see whether there are things to be incorporated or it is really working [...]” KII_36_F_SS

“May be the issue is having implementation planned so that the M&E framework is followed. This is what we need to be doing going forward so that we do not stop ticking the box only, but we also ensure that the policy is working and making progress” KII_72_M_UG

6.4.5.4 Resource mobilization

As has been noted throughout the report, resources mobilization for implementation of

programs to support female advancement in academia, research and leadership requires investing a lot of funds and being patient to observe the results. This is in recognition of the fact that many interventions, knowingly or unknowingly were ultimately aimed at changing the status quo as well as mindset change, issues that take time.

"[...] you must invest a lot of resources now, if society is not pulling along with you."
KII_71_M_UG

6.5 Benchmarking

6.5.1 University of Johannesburg (UJ) and University of South Africa (UNISA).

Policies and Practices on gender equality at national level were adopted and cascaded to universities for both students and staff.

- The transformation process was led at National level e.g., through employment equity, labor laws, universities had to comply. There were transformational projects implemented at different universities e. g., equal numbers at entry to university.
- Resources were provided & several programs that provided capacity building for women to get experience & qualify for jobs.
- Universities were allowed to align with national policies.
- Bi-directional engagement by UNISA Women's Forum to Africa bodies and to UNISA
- Put policies in place on Health and Wellness
- Provided position papers on gender equality at national level and at Africa level.
- The women positioned themselves in such a way so as to be consulted on gender matters at national and at Africa level.
- Recruitment, Retention and Performance management

Some of the best practices noted were:

- Equality, equity and non-discrimination were part of the institutional culture.
- The leadership of the universities had commitment to gender equality.
- There were deliberate talent management strategies for women and early career academics, such as discussion fora, and mentorship programs.
- There was collaboration and communication between universities and the community (and industry) on topical matters.
- There was ally-ship with male champions.
- There was bi-directional engagement on gender equality at institutional, national and regional levels, e.g. discussions and debates, writing position papers.
- Universities in South Africa have made advances in gender equality and women leadership and are now left with enabling women to successfully manage their advanced careers. However, challenges still exist including backlash, bullying and work-life balance.

6.5.2 Michigan State University (MSU)

Gender Representation of the Institution

As per MSU Enrollment Report, September 27, 2023, total enrollment was 51,316 students; 10,917 new undergraduates, plus returning students, undergraduates made a total of 40,483. This included 10,285 students of color (26.9% of the domestic class). The overall percentage of female faculty members at the university was 50% men and 50% women out of 20,260 employees. Most common ethnicity was White (63%), 13% Asian, and 10% Black or African American. The Gender distribution at top to middle leadership levels was 50% Women, 50% men. MSU Executives who were Women were 59%, MSU Employees Who Are Minorities were 37%, and MSU Executives Who Are Minorities were 28%.

Specific initiatives or programs for increasing the representation of female faculty members overall and/or for specific programs

ADVANCE was an initiative of the National Science Foundation (NSF) which promoted a diverse and capable science and engineering workforce within higher education. The funding supported equity and inclusion of women in STEM and mitigated the systemic factors that created inequities in academic workplaces.

- Between 2008-2014, MSU received ADVANCE grants from NSF including Advancing Diversity Through Alignment of Policies and Practices (ADAPP) and the ADVANCE STEM Intersectional Equity in Departments (SIEDS) program. From ADAPP:
- MSU created five toolkits: (i) Faculty Search tool kit (ii) Faculty guide for reappointment, promotion, and tenure review tool kit (iii) Faculty Mentoring tool kit (iv) Graduate Student Mentoring and Advising tool kit and (v) Annual Performance Review Toolkit to facilitate the efforts to increase the diversity of women and under-represented minorities in STEM.
- **The Faculty Search tool kit** ensured a) there was Academic Search Committee Training to raise awareness and help prepare search committees to effectively conduct inclusive and equitable searches that meet legal requirements and utilize best practices for hiring and b) Training on Implicit Bias (online courses available).
- The **Graduate Student Mentoring and Advising Mentoring Toolkit**: included training graduate students in foundational skills including career-development, research, teaching, leadership, community engagement, diversity, equity & Inclusion and personal wellbeing. After professional development and being mentored, graduate students were recruited into faculty positions using the same recruitment tools available at MSU.
- Created **Faculty Excellence Advocates, or FEAs**, embedded in each college to ensure equity practices, and institution-wide distribution of the toolkits. FEAs were change agents focusing on recruitment, retention, and advancement of faculty.
- Created Equal Opportunity Reporting Guidance EORG- for faculty & Academic staff.
- The Diversity Equity and Inclusion (DEI) scorecard was developed to track over 200 action items institutionally over time, showing how MSU is advancing strategic initiatives across 12 action teams and driving organizational change.
- **Annual Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Report** provides an overview of the compositional diversity of MSU students, staff and faculty. The data are organized by

race/ethnicity, gender and disability status among student and employee populations.

- The DEI report presents information on broader efforts that MSU undertakes to support the recruitment, retention, advancement & success of members of underrepresented groups.
- From SIEDS, MSU partnered with Ohio State University and Wayne State University, to create inclusive work cultures (Improving the environment for everyone to feel like they belonged especially underrepresented minority faculty) in STEM. A Climate Assessment Toolkit was created to track progress.

Policies and Procedures that were intentional about promoting gender equity/equality:

Lactation/Breastfeeding Procedures for Employees, Guidance: Reasonable Accommodation Procedures for Pregnant Employees, University Policy on Relationship Violence & Sexual Misconduct, Faculty and Academic Staff Salary Adjustment Guidelines–2022-2023, Extending the Reappointment/Promotion/Tenure Review Timeline (Extending the Tenure Clock) e.g. An extended probationary appointment may be requested due to the birth/adoption of a child. Such requests are limited to 2 separate one-year extensions during the probationary period).

How the policies were disseminated—from the highest office to the end-user:

- At orientation for new employees
- Most policies are disseminated online at the university website.
- Faculty Handbook - Academic Human Resource website
- Ongoing workshops, seminars, etc.
- Some require Mandatory training of all employees via courses listed at the university portal e.g. Canvas course site. E.g. Sexual Harassment training, Security Awareness Training, Research Compliance Training, etc.

Department/office/unit/staff charged with the implementation of the policy

The Office of Institutional Equity (OIE) – which administers MSU’s Title IX policies and procedures of Non-discrimination, Anti-Harassment and Non-Retaliation. This policy applies to complaints of sexual harassment, including sexual assault and sexual violence, carried out by employees, students, and third parties.

Systems for recruitment, performance measurement, promotion, and comprehensive career development/support

Faculty search Toolkit: recruitment process designed to ensure that it does not disadvantage/exclude women, Handbook for Faculty Searches with Special Reference to Affirmative Action; Academic Search Committee Education. Other resources for search committees include Faculty Excellence Advocate (FEA)/hiring guide/, Training on Implicit Bias - Implicit Bias Certificate Series (Live, Online Courses).

Women Leadership: Facilitated by Women’s Leadership Institute – which supports and empowers women students, faculty and MSU community. Challenges or barriers identified: discrimination, family-life demands, Lack of formal Paid Family Leave policy/program, Prejudice, and stereotyping. For women of color - Lack of role models (in leadership or as

Full professors), they are asked to take on additional duties in colleges and universities, without compensation; they may be elevated to leadership roles during times when organization is in crisis when their risk of failure is high, public shaming.

Work-Life Balance

Policies or programs in place to support work-life balance for faculty and staff include The WorkLife Program, Childcare, Faculty and Academic Staff Time Off and Leave programs, Support Staff Time Off and Leave programs, Flexible and Remote Work Arrangements.

Training and Development

Specific training, mentorship or development programs focused on gender equality for faculty, staff, and students include Graduate Student and Faculty Mentoring, MSU Resources for research collaborations e.g. Alliance for African Partnerships (AAP), AAP Bridge an online platform that allows users to connect and collaborate with others within the AAP consortium network and beyond, Research Institute for Structural Change (RISC), Office of Faculty and Academic Staff Development Programs (OFASD) career development, conferences, Faculty & Academic Staff Orientation (Orientation), “ElevateU” Online Program Leadership, IT & desktop, business, finance, human resources, change management, project management, interpersonal skills and much more.

Wellness and provisions for women-specific health and hygiene needs

Mental Health and Medical Care, Counselling and Psychiatric Services, Complimentary menstrual product dispensers have been installed in women’s and all-gender restrooms.

Best practices and Recommendations

ADVANCE: Advancing Diversity Through Alignment of Policies and Practices (ADAPP), The Faculty Excellence Advocates (FEAs) Program, the climate and response framework.

Recommendations for improving gender equality at a university:

Track progress of institutions on implementation of policies using score cards e.g. The [DEI scorecard](#) at MSU which tracks over 200 action items institutionally over time, showing how MSU is advancing strategic initiatives (*what is completed, not started, in progress (%)*, *what % is remaining, etc*).

Academic Program Review process to assess progress and accountability for DEI.

The climate and response framework/ the [Climate Assessment Toolkit](#)- for “Creating and Sustaining a Respectful Workplace”.

Excellence in Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Awards recognizing individuals, units and teams for their contributions toward advancing DEI at the institution.

6.5.3 The University of Wisconsin-Madison

Gender Representation at the University

Research & Clinical Doctorate student Enrolment by Gender – in 2022-2023 was Women (51%) and men (49%). Master’s & Specialist Enrolment by Gender was Women: 50%; Men: 50%. The overall percentage of female faculty members (tenure track) was Professor (33.1%), Associate Professors (44.3%), Assistant Professor (49.9%). A report “Trends in Faculty and Staff Diversity” is produced annually to provide trends related to racial and gender diversity among faculty and staff (<https://data.wisc.edu/trends/>). For instance, in 2022-2023, the report showed that the percentage of women faculty and faculty of color has increased steadily over the past decade. In 2022, 40% of faculty were women compared to 33% in 2013. In 2022, 26% of faculty were faculty of color compared to 19% in 2013.

Specific initiatives or programs in place to increase the representation of female faculty members included: Strategic Hiring Initiatives, Fellowship programs, Climate Studies e.g. Study of Faculty Work Life; Committee for Women in the University, Compensation / Faculty Gender Pay Equity, Mentoring & Career Development/ Support, Departmental Mentoring for all faculty, Women, Trans, & Non-Binary Faculty Mentoring Program - Slesinger Awards for Excellence in Mentoring; Promotion Policies, Departmental & Divisional Tenure Guidelines (explicit criteria for tenure).

Policies and Procedures that are intentional about promoting gender equity/equality

The UW-Madison has a number of policies that promote gender equity, either as a stated mission or as one of many goals of the program. Some of these include Sexual Harassment Policy, Tenure Clock Extensions (Stopping the Tenure Clock); Hostile and Intimidating Behavior policy; Salary Equity Review policy.

Systems for recruitment, performance measurement, promotion, and comprehensive career development/support

Strategic Hiring, e.g. Searching for Excellence & Diversity, transparent faculty performance review, recruitment process designed to ensure that it does not disadvantage/exclude women, Breaking the Bias Habit (through Implicit Bias Workshops).

Women Leadership

Challenges or barriers identified: Lack of formal Paid Family Leave policy/program, Lack of affordable childcare – very limited options for infant care, Lack of formal workplace flexibility.

Work-Life Balance

Policies or programs in place to support work-life balance for faculty and staff include Family Caregiving, A Flexibility Toolkit - Remote Work, Equity/Inclusion/Employee Well-Being. Support systems in place to address gender-based discrimination, harassment, or bias include Sexual Harassment Policy, Office of Compliance, led by a Director, Students – Bias Incident Reporting through Office of the Dean of Students, Ombuds Program and Employee Assistance Office.

Training and Development

Specific training, mentorship or development programs focused on gender equality for faculty, staff, and students include Women, Trans, & Non-Binary Faculty Mentoring

Program, Academic Staff Mentoring Program – Mentor Match Program. Opportunities exist for women to participate in career development e.g. Graduate Students’ and faculty Professional Development programs.

Wellness and provisions for women-specific health and hygiene needs

For wellness and provisions for women-specific health and hygiene needs, bathrooms include feminine hygiene products.



Discussion



7

7.0 DISCUSSION

Overall, we gained entry into 30 universities across East Africa and completed 207 online surveys with female academic staff. The survey quantitatively assessed the status of female academic staff's engagement in university leadership as well as perceptions on recruitment into an academic career and subsequent progression into academic leadership. The survey revealed unequal participation in university leadership with low representation of female academic staff in top management positions in their respective universities. Even when women faculty offered themselves for an administrative position, the majority reported not being successful. With the exception of Tanzania, the majority of women faculty across countries perceived that culture influenced recruitment of women into academic institutions and that gender considerably deterred their completion of graduate training as well as advancement in research and publishing. Although gender policies existed in some universities, majority of staff across countries were not aware of them.

According to the 2021 UNESCO report, women enrollment in higher education increased from 19% in 2000 to 41% in 2018. Even so, women are still under-represented in top leadership of their respective universities. For example, of the 30 participating universities, only 3 had female vice chancellors (i.e., 1 in Uganda and 2 in South Sudan). In their article, Tina Shabsough and colleagues (2020) explained the moderating role of the "sticky floor" phenomenon where women gain entry into an academic career but find themselves stuck in low-paying female-dominated positions with limited flexibility and a lack of opportunities for promotion. This status quo has been over time masked by the rising number of women in subtle management positions that do not necessarily hold decision making power. Also, there is evidence of existing implicit gender biases that continue to hinder women's participation in leadership positions that involve decision making (Bustos, 2012). The low representation of women on management boards and remuneration committees is not merely a lack of competence issue but more of a socially constructed gender challenge which can only be addressed by getting more women into top leadership to actively work towards removing gender stereotypes and prejudices (Madeline E. Heilman, 2012). In Tanzania, gender biases towards women's participation in leadership were perceived to be diminishing with more slots set aside for recruitment of women into academic institutions while others transitioned into government positions. This could be a broader reflection of the leadership structure of the central government which is headed by a female Head of State. In Kenya, the composition of academic ranks for the majority of women faculty varied from full professors to junior research fellows and graduate assistants which is perceived to clear and improve the pipeline over the coming years. In Rwanda and Burundi, none had attained a PhD. This points to a gap in PhD training for female faculty which may be partly explained by the limited PhD training opportunities, with just one public university offering PhD training in their respective countries. This leaves women faculty stuck between choosing to raise their families or leaving the country to study abroad. Also, majority of women were not aware of any existing gender policies in their universities whereas those who knew about them were not sure whether/not they were being implemented. Women's lack of awareness of their position in the gender space poses a risk of missing out on existing opportunities within the gender equality framework targeted towards enhancing

women's participation in academia and progression into leadership. Efforts aimed at closing the gender gap in university leadership should integrate interventions that address personal, institutional and policy-oriented barriers to gender equality at both university and national level.

UNESCO 2023 asserts that in order to enhance women's visibility in leadership, it is incumbent on higher education institutions to put relevant strategies in place. This calls for a systematic review of the existing institutional gender mainstreaming legislation to make it compulsory for women to join university leadership. This also call for putting in place explicit targets and quotas to achieve these targets. The available literature from the universities under study revealed efforts by universities to build the capacity of women to engage in gender-responsive research, and to nurture gender-responsive organizational environment. However, there literature did not show evidence reward and recognition system to inspire and motivate early career women to join the decision making echelons of the universities.

Policies, systems and mechanisms for promoting gender equity and women in leadership.

In terms of policies, services and practices that promote gender equity and women leadership, the universities are at different levels of progress. Some of the universities (Mak, UoN, UDSM and NUR) have enacted gender policies, others have not. The the review revealed unequal attempts to ensure that these policies work. Common among the seven universities was that some of the gender mainstreaming initiatives were predominantly donor-driven and could not outlive the donor support. The review suggests that unless deliberate effort is made by the universities to put in place sustainability strategies to scale up the momentum created by donors, gender mainstreaming efforts will not reach far. Common across all the universities under review was the absence of deliberate systems of tracking the performance of the policy interventions aimed at promoting gender equality in university leadership. This coupled with the absence of reward systems and robust communication strategies imply that even the few registered milestones go unnoticed and un reported.

The interviews with key informants sought to: 1) understand experiences and opinions about the status of female academic staff engagement in academia and research and leadership in universities in East Africa: 2) examine existing mechanisms for promoting gender equity and women leadership (e.g., university-wide policies, practices, services) as well as success factors, challenges, and barriers to gender equality in universities in East Africa and, 3) to identify recommendations for improving gender equality in Universities in East Africa.

Contribution of the key informant interviews

The research team acknowledges the existence of a breadth of reports about gender equality in higher institutions in Africa and beyond [British council, 2022; UNESCO 2023]. Our study provides contextual insights into the experiences of female academic staff in East Africa, filling a gap in existing literature. It amplifies the voices of female academics, shedding light on issues such as recruitment and advancement in research and leadership. Additionally, it captures the perspectives of regulatory institution representatives, adding valuable insights rarely covered in similar studies.

Summary of main findings from key informant interviews

The first objective was about understand experiences and opinions about the status of female academic staff engagement in academia and research and leadership in universities in East Africa from 2012-2022. The main study findings are summarized below.

Limited recruitment of female academic staff: Despite improvements in gender ratios at the undergraduate level, recruitment of female academics remains limited, primarily based on competence rather than gender considerations. Factors such as societal gender roles and stereotypes particularly the need to prioritize marriage, child-bearing and caring immediately after undergraduate and gender stereotypes about women leaving home to work in public space further hinder female recruitment. Notwithstanding, few instances of consideration for female recruitment were observed, often attributed to male champions in leadership roles and specific partnership programs. Such innovations need to be leveraged to bolster efforts for improvement of the status of recruitment of female academic staff.

Limited recruitment of females for research and leadership positions: The findings showed that scarcity of female staff at entry levels affects their representation in research and leadership roles hence highlighting the need for building a critical mass at entry. Negative stereotypes, low self-esteem among female staff, and male dominance further contribute to this disparity. Nevertheless, the study found some cases of female advancement in research and leadership facilitated by male allies, mentorship, and networking opportunities.

Cross cutting findings: The findings indicate a close linkage of barriers, facilitators for female advancement in academia, research, and leadership. Aside from the numbers at recruitment being influential, publication record (informed by research engagement) and gender stereotypes significantly impact women's progression. Worth noting, balancing affirmative action with the desire to maintain status quo poses a dilemma, particularly for recruitment and promotion processes.

The study underscores the importance of reflecting on gender and intersectionality, advocating for context-specific interventions, and promoting networking among individuals and institutions to capitalize on competitive advantages [ref]. Despite working in higher education institutions, women's experiences vary significantly across countries and institutions. For example, in terms of recruitment, women in countries like Rwanda, Burundi, and South Sudan face greater challenges due to lower female undergraduate enrollment. Gender stereotypes disproportionately affect women's participation in research and leadership across different contexts. Variations exist in factors such as confidence levels, access to male support, and the ability to return after career breaks, highlighting the heterogeneous nature of women's experiences within the same country, institution, or East African region.

Mechanisms policies and practices: The general absence of gender, sexual harassment policies, monitoring and accountability frameworks and limited implementation among institutions was a major finding. Mechanisms, policies and practices to support women's work environment exist although varied in availability and implementation across institutions mainly due to funding and workload. Bench marking efforts could enhance these practices.

Recommendations: The study indicated several recommendations of potential interventions for improvement categories in three broad themes namely individual, institutional and, policy related. Individual interventions were aimed to address challenges related to mitigating effects of gender stereotypes and building self-esteem and confidence among female staff. The main interventions proposed included community sensitization, flexible funding opportunities and deliberate male engagement and renewed focus on the boy child. Institutional interventions should focus on development, implementation and review of gender and sexual harassment policies, recruitment panel inclusivity, and childcare facilities, all requiring collaboration and funding support. Cross-cutting policy level interventions need to focus on establishment and implementation of comprehensive M&E framework, Resource mobilization and investment, and empowering regulatory institutions.

Study limitations for key informant component

The study limitations include: 1) unequal country representation, 2) limited male participation, 3) limited traction about views on personal experiences regarding sexual harassment. There was more willingness for female academic staff to participate particularly those from Uganda and Kenya, although this was not the case for Rwanda, Burundi, South Sudan, and DRC. A few males accepted to participate in the study and, notably, those that participated provided interesting nuances and insights about the subject matter. Lastly, the research team encountered challenges in gathering insights on views and experiences regarding sexual harassment. This difficulty was attributed to two main factors: first, the decision to delve into detailed probes about sexual harassment was made after a quarter of interviews had already been conducted. Second, many participants expressed discomfort in discussing their personal experiences with sexual harassment, despite acknowledging its existence.

Conclusion and recommendations

While progress has been made, more efforts are needed to enhance the status of female engagement in academia, research, and leadership. Given the relationship between status of ratio at entry for staff positions and research and leadership positions, building a critical mass of female staff at recruitment is crucial, alongside comprehensive interventions addressing barriers across domains. The influence and male dominance across domains notwithstanding, male engagement is emphasized as critical for the success of gender inclusion initiatives and so are collaborative efforts across universities, countries, regulatory institutions, and innovative catalytic approaches.

Benchmarking

The objective of the benchmarking exercise was to identify and learn from exemplar universities - institutions that have designed and implemented deliberate policies to advance gender equity and equality and have increased participation of women in HEI leadership.

Below, we highlight the deliberate policies that exemplar universities implemented that could be adapted to address the three categories of barriers identified in this study. The barriers to women's career advancement and participation in HEIs in East Africa which emerged from the study were summarized in three major categories such as 1) Personal and career development 2) Institutional policy and culture and 3) Policy-Oriented barriers.

One common thread among the exemplar universities was development of policies and

procedures that are intentional about promoting gender equity/equality as part of the mission of the institution or as one of the many goals of the programs. Examples of such policies include Sexual Harassment Policy, Tenure Clock Extensions (Stopping the Tenure Clock), Hostile and Intimidating Behavior policy, and Salary Equity Review policy.

Exemplar universities **aligned policies and practices** at their institutions. For each policy developed at these exemplar universities, there were mechanisms for tracking progress towards gender equity through score cards and performance indicators and annual performance reviews. In addition, there were consequences for not following institutional policies. For instance, at MSU, the diversity equity and Inclusion (DEI) scorecard tracked over 200 action items over time, showing how MSU is advancing strategic initiatives (what is completed, not started, in progress (%), and what % is remaining). The Climate Assessment Toolkit- tracked the progress towards “Creating and Sustaining a Respectful Workplace”.

The exemplar universities had **Systems for recruitment, performance measurement, promotion, and comprehensive career development and support**. Examples of such policies or programs include strategic hiring, transparent faculty performance review, recruitment process designed to not disadvantage or exclude women, Breaking the Bias Habit (through Implicit Bias Workshops), policies or programs that support work-life balance for faculty and staff such as Family Caregiving, A Flexibility Toolkit - Remote Work, and those that address gender-based discrimination, harassment, or bias including Sexual Harassment Policy, Bias Incident Reporting through Office of the Dean of Students, Ombuds Program and Employee Assistance Office.

Additionally, **specific training, mentorship or development** programs were implemented focused on gender equality for faculty, staff, and students. For instance, Graduate Student and Faculty Mentoring, Faculty and Academic Staff Development Programs, career development, conferences, Faculty & Academic Staff Orientation where policy awareness happens and providing resources for research collaborations.



Conclusion



8.0 CONCLUSION

- Despite the elaborate international, regional and national legal frameworks, the scoping review revealed that across the seven (7) universities, the gender equality landscape was still skewed, and women are still underrepresented at all levels right from early career to top leadership level. There are glaring gender inequities in women's participation in the universities under the review—women are underrepresented as students, staff and as university leaders. In addition, there is a disconnect between the institutional gender policies and the practice that is presented in the available literature. The review revealed that most of the gender equity interventions in the universities under review were supported by development partners and some did not outlive the donor support. Moreover, initiatives to promote women in leadership were being done in a disjointed manner and end up not being sustainable and impactful (e.g. mentorship, women in leadership training etc).
- The scoping review revealed information gaps in available literature about the gender terrain in the Universities. It was not possible to secure gender disaggregated statistics and trends to assess progress over the years and across the universities. Specifically, partial data was accessed on student completion rates disaggregated by year, sex and discipline for the years 2012- 2022 for UDSM, UoN, NUR, UB, UJ and UNIKIN. It was not possible to secure GDD on academic staff by sex and rank for NUR, UB, UJ and UNIKIN. Statistics on female representation in leadership and administrative positions and decision-making committees for UDSM, UoN, NUR, UB, UJ and UNIKIN. This pointed to the fact that there are inadequate efforts to systematically generate and publicize gender disaggregated data. This in turn impacts negatively on policy formulation and review.

The status of the gender policies for UDSM, UoN and NUR which are due for review.

- For the US universities benchmarked (Michigan State University and University of Wisconsin-Madison), there was recognition of the problem (gender inequity in higher education) by the government which passed an act of Congress for institutional transformation. The funding initially supported equity and inclusion of women in STEM but was later extended to other disciplines to mitigate the systemic factors that created inequities in academic workplaces.
- The exemplar universities put in place policies and procedures that are intentional about promoting gender equity, aligned the policies and practices, and developed systems for tracking progress, performance, and comprehensive career development and support.
- Despite the deliberate efforts implemented at the exemplar universities, and the improvements documented, women were generally still lagging behind in particular areas such as Lack of formal Paid Family Leave policy/program, Lack of affordable childcare – very limited options for infant care, lack of formal workplace flexibility at University of Wisconsin, Madison.



Recommendations



9

9.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- For the systemic gender inequality in HEIs in East Africa to be addressed, government intervention is required to enact deliberate policies that will advance gender equality, provide funding for policy implementation to enable participation of women in HEI leadership.
- For each policy developed, there should be mechanisms for tracking progress over time through score cards and performance indicators and annual performance reviews, and consequences for not following institutional policies.
- Universities should use gender-disaggregated data and performance indicators to enable tracking of the progress made by institutions towards enhancing gender equity and a responsive environment for women to grow and thrive. This would be in line with the African Union Gender Policy which calls for the use of gender-disaggregated data and the performance indicators in a bid to enhance gender equality and a responsive environment.
- The transformation should start at national level and provide resources for universities to align. E.g. UJ engages at National Level through the Minister for Higher Education
- Hold Women's dialogue and recognize women (awards) who have made impactful contributions to gender equity in various areas - such as the 8th annual Women's Dialogue held on 18 August 2023 at the University of South Africa's main campus.
- Form strategic partnerships that will help amplify women's voices e.g. the platform that has been created by the partnership between UNISA (and UNISA Women's Forum), South African Women in Dialogue (SAWID) and United Nations Women established in 2016.
- Universities/Researchers should engage with communities and at national & continental level to share research e.g. through position papers on gender equality at national level and at Africa level just as UNISA Women's forum was doing or through national dialogues as discussants, Community engagement, etc. As noted by a female leader of one of the institutions we benchmarked against, "Academics, researchers and thought leaders, have a unique responsibility of shaping narratives, challenging the norms and advancing knowledge that promotes women's rights and leadership."
- Benchmark with other institutions that are not universities to allow outside influence into universities.
- Deliberate mentorship programs between senior and junior women.
- Ally-ship with different fora.
- Leadership Commitment is needed; VC should be part of the Community engagement & Campus engagement advocating for gender equity.
- Use data for advocacy, and to inform practice.
- Adopt and adapt some best practices for improving gender equality observed at universities benchmarked such as The Faculty Excellence Advocates (FEAs) Program implemented at Michigan State University.
- Track progress of institutions on implementation of policies using score cards as well as The Climate Assessment Toolkit- for "Creating and Sustaining a Respectful Workplace".
- Excellence in Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Awards recognizing individuals, units and teams for their contributions toward advancing DEI at the institution.



Acknowledgement



10

10.0 ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

First and foremost, we appreciate all university leaders who gave us permission to conduct the study in their universities. We also appreciate all academic staff across participating universities in East Africa, who not only shared their experiences but also participated in the dissemination and validation of the findings.

We thank the higher education regulatory agencies and sectors in the participating countries including the education ministries, gender ministries, and the councils for higher education, for their participation and support. We thank the Inter University Council for East Africa for the immense support in the engagement with the universities across East Africa, and participation in the synthesis and dissemination of the findings.

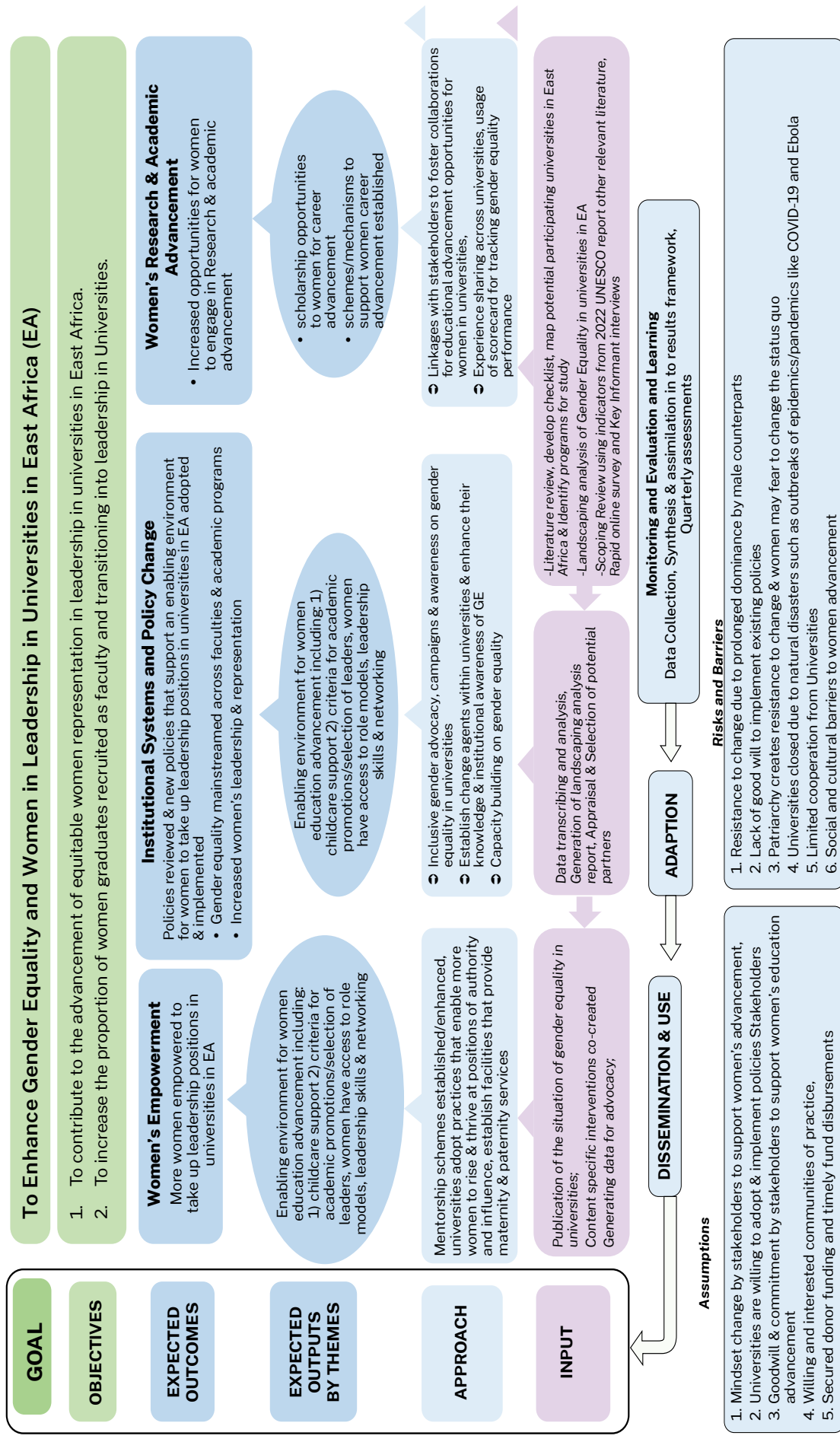
We are grateful to the Forum for African Women Educationalists (FAWE) for providing a platform to network with academic institutions and stakeholders within Africa and beyond. We also thank all members of the Advisory Committee chaired by Dr Martha Muhwezi (Executive Director, FAWE) for allowing us tap into their vast knowledge and expertise. The members included: Prof Joy Constance Kwesiga, Prof Mabel Imbuga, Prof Maggie Kigozi, Prof Maxime Houinato, Prof Maria Musoke, Prof Meshack Obonyo, Prof Salome Bukachi, Prof Lillian Tibatemwa-Ekirikubinza, Dr Lulu Simon Mahai and Ms Dorine Rwehera.

We thank the four universities that we benchmarked (i.e., The University of South Africa, University of Johannesburg, University of Wisconsin-Madison and Michigan State University) for opening their doors for us to learn from their progressive gender equality programs and for participating in our dissemination activities.

We acknowledge the funding support from Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF) and the guidance throughout the project lifecycle.

Lastly but not least, we acknowledge the contribution of our implementing partners and the study team including investigators, coordinator, grant officer, gender officers, data analysts and interviewers.

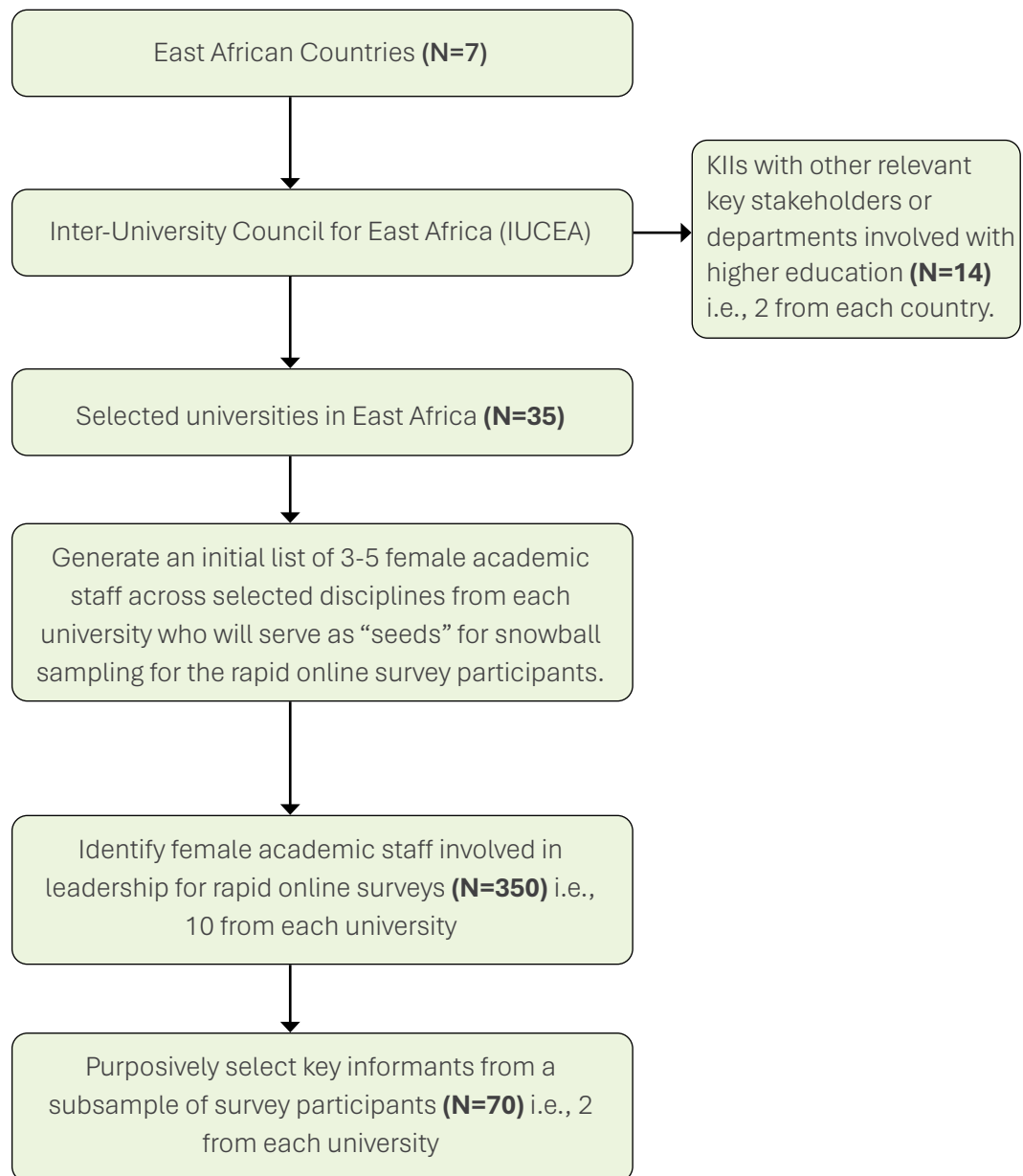
Figure 1: Conceptual Framework on Gender Equality and Women in Leadership in Universities in East Africa.



Appendix A: Table 2: Summary of measures and sample indicators

| Specific objective | Primary Focus | Activities Involved | Data Source | Sample Indicators | Timeline |
|--|--|--|--|---|---------------------|
| Objective 1: To assess entry and completion rates of women in selected academic programs in HEI/universities in East Africa for the period 2012-2022. | Female students in the four selected programs in selected universities. | - Scoping review using a checklist - KIIIs with key stakeholders | Published papers, grey literature, including reports on university websites. | 1) existence of schemes encouraging applications by women in underrepresented programs such as STEM programs; 2) percentage of female students enrolled in underrepresented programs such as STEM; 3) availability of female student access schemes (e.g., scholarships targeting women) | February-March 2023 |
| Objective 2: To establish the status of female staff engagement in academia and research (e.g., publishing rates) and involvement in leadership in HEI/universities in East Africa for the period 2012-2022. | Female academic staff in the selected universities. | - Scoping review using a checklist - Rapid online survey with selected female academic staff. - KIIIs with selected female academic staff and key stakeholders | Published papers, grey literature, including reports on university websites. Quantitative online survey Key informant interviews | 1) percentage of female academic staff with Masters and PhDs serving in HEI; 2) percentage of senior female staff in academic ranks (e.g., professors, associate professors, senior lecturers, other ranks); 3) percentage of senior female academic staff in administrative positions (e.g., vice chancellors, principals of colleges, deans, chairs/heads of departments); 4) percentage of senior female academic staff serving on committees (e.g., Appointments committee, Higher Degrees committee), Senate and Councils. | February-March 2023 |
| Objective 3: To examine existing mechanisms for promoting gender equity and women leadership (e.g., university-wide policies, practices, services) as well as success factors, challenges and barriers to gender equality in HEI/universities in East Africa. | Enabling environment that supports both female students and academic staff to advance in leadership. | - Scoping review of policies, practices and services in selected universities in East Africa, as well as exemplar universities in South Africa and the United States. - KII with stakeholders | Published papers, grey literature, including reports on university websites. Key informant interviews | 1) Existence of equitable policies and criteria for academic promotions in HEIs; 2) Minimum requirements for administrative positions (e.g., academic rank, number of publications, years of service)—deliberate policies and mechanisms to encourage appointment of women in administrative positions. | February-March 2023 |

Appendix B: Flowchart of participant selection for interviews





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