

# **WORKSHOP ON GENDER EQUITY IN HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS IN EAST AFRICA**



**HELD AT MUNI UNIVERSITY ON WEDNESDAY, 13 - 16 AUGUST  
2019**

**THEME: “STRENGTHENING GENDER EQUITY IN HIGHER  
EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS IN EAST AFRICA”**

**SUMMARY OF DAAD SUPPORTED WORKSHOP REPORT**

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**Titled:** “Strengthening Gender Equity in Higher Education Institutions in East Africa”

**Date:** August 13-16, 2019

**Venue:** Muni University

**Host:** Muni University

**Financed by** DAAD

### 1.0 Background

Muni University is a Public University established under the Universities and Other Tertiary Institutions (Establishment of Muni University) Instrument No. 31 of 2013 as a model University whose mission is to provide quality education, generate knowledge, and promote innovation and community empowerment for transformation. The management of the University is vested in the University Council as stated in the UOTIA, 2001 (as amended) (the Act). As stipulated under the general functions of Universities, Muni University’s mandate is the provision of higher education through teaching, research and outreach activities. The core values of the University are: *Quality; Equity; Responsiveness; Professionalism and Innovativeness*. The University Motto is “*Transforming Lives*”.

Muni University Gender Policy was approved by the Council in 2018 <http://muni.ac.ug> and part of the affirmative action is to operationalize the policy. To that effect, a small grant under the DAAD Alumnus projects titled “Strengthening Gender Equity in Higher Education Institutions in East Africa” was approved for the University in April 2019.

### 2.0 Objectives

The workshop objectives were two folds:

- a) To build capacities of the selected HEI for promoting gender equity using innovative ICT-driven approaches
- b) To initiate an innovative ICT-driven gender awareness creation network in selected HEI for enabling the promotion of women’s participation in leadership
- c) To build capacity for gender mainstreaming and prevention of sexual harassment in Higher Education Institutions in East Africa.

### 3.0 Workshop Participants and areas of discussion

In a workshop attended by Higher Education Institutions from Kenya and Uganda, that was attended by 33 participants, fourteen (14) females and nineteen (19) males of which, 24.2% were DAAD alumni; the three days were dedicated for Intensive discussions of gender concepts, Women’s Leadership and Overall governance in HEI, Gender issues amongst marginalized communities, Sexual harassment, ICT driven gender equity and anti-sexual harassment strategies,

experiential sharing and commitments from institutional leaders. Vice Chancellor, Deputy Vice Chancellors, Deans, Directors, Young academics, University Chaplains, Students' Guild leaders, Security personnel and Media People were the categories of participants.

**Individual expectations and interests of the participants were sort through an online questionnaire that included the following: -**

To be trained on how to mainstream gender in higher education; to be empowered to champion gender inclusivity in higher education institutions; to know how best to provide gender specific support to females in Higher Education Institutes in order to increase their presence, participation, impact to society, have 24/7 internet access; to know the challenges faced in managing Gender Based Violence (GBV) in HEI; strategies to curb Gender Based Violence (GBV) in Institutions; to gain the understanding of various theories of gender and their relevance to Higher Education Institutions; to learn how to improve on the gender equity in a university setting; to gain a deeper understanding of the issues affecting women's ability to fully engage and perform within institutions of higher education; to see how gender inclusivity in higher education institutions can be achieved; to know the History of Gender Equity in Higher Education; to find out practical remedies to challenges faced in the process realizing Gender equity as a basis for the future; to understand Gender budgeting as a requirement for Public University's budgeting; unpack challenges of women's under-representation in leadership in higher education institutions and to have a deeper understanding of Sexual harassment of the female students by their male counter parts.

#### **4.0 Outcomes of the workshop**

Participants noted the following as learning outcomes:

- That Gender Concepts helped them to understand the meaning of gender and role of gender equity in development and
- that Some of our African cultures contributes greatly to gender inequality; therefore, such cultures need to be revised to suit the needs of the contemporary society;
- Gender is not an issue of women alone but a humanity issue;
- Women rights are based on the universal rights;
- In the area of Women leadership and governance in HEI, it was found out there are few women in higher positions of Management of HEI. Therefore, increased mentorship and support to women by allotting more opportunities for capacity building for Postgraduate studies for women can be helpful;
- That the youth face a lot of challenges in progressing in their careers due to "Intellectual intimidation/harassment" by superiors and Professors in HEI. Little room is given to the youth to express themselves and sell their innovations;
- Our institutions are lacking positive role models for young male and female staff and students
- The websites can be useful in dissemination of gender research and policies.

## **5.0 Way forward and Recommendations**

A ten point resolution and recommendations were generated by the team thus:-

1. Walk the Talk of implementing the Commitments by the institutional leaders and other gender mainstreaming issues that emerged and discussed in the workshop;
2. Consider adopting good ideas and practices learnt from other Universities on gender mainstreaming;
3. Share knowledge gained in the workshop with other staff who did not participate in the workshop;
4. Network and collaborate with the other institutions;
5. Initiate proposals for unpacking the institutional gender policy and putting them in an easily accessible place in HEI e.g. posted on websites, a printed copy deposited to the library(ies);
6. Create webpages for sharing institutional gender mainstreaming issues;
7. Institutions should recruit persons (gender focal person) who can implement gender issues;
8. Gender issues be integrated in the governance of Higher Education Institutions.
9. Empowerment programs shall have to continue in all institutions.

More stories can be followed on West Nile Web publications on

<http://www.westnileweb.com/news-a-analysis/arua/poor-dressing -code -fueling -sexual-harassment-in-learning-institutions>.

## **6.0 Acknowledgement**

We are very grateful to DAAD for the small grants. Our sincere appreciation goes to Dr. Miriam Pahl and the selection committee, DAAD Uganda Country Office, Professor Mercy Mirembe, Edith Okiria and all other facilitators. Participants from University of Eldoret Kenya, Makerere University, Mbarara University of Science and Technology, Busitema University, and Muni University are most appreciated for creating time and their engaging participation. We look towards a combined effort in strengthening and realizing gender equity in HEI of learning.