



Inspiring Innovation and Leadership

KARATINA UNIVERSITY

GENDER POLICY

JULY 2013

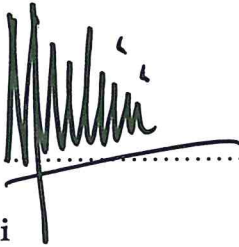
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SIGNATURE PAGE

This Gender Policy was approved by Karatina University Council on 26th July 2013.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mucai Muchiri', is written over a horizontal dotted line. The signature is stylized with vertical strokes and a long horizontal stroke at the bottom.

Prof. Mucai Muchiri
Vice Chancellor

VISION

To be a University of global excellence, meeting the dynamic needs and development of society.

MISSION

To conserve, create and disseminate knowledge through training, research, innovation and community outreach.

CORE VALUES

Equity
Teamwork
Meritocracy
Academic Freedom
Accountability
Excellence
Probity

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DEFINITION OF TERMS

Affirmative action: A policy action taken on a temporary basis in favor of a disadvantaged group so as to enhance equity.

Disability: A condition or function judged to be significantly impaired relative to the usual standard of an individual or their group.

Disadvantaged Groups: A term used to assert rights of peoples who have been discriminated against, either socially or by law such as women and the disabled.

Equal opportunities: Absence of discrimination, as in the workplace, based on race, color, age, gender, national origin, religion, or disability.

Gender: Refers to the array of socially constructed roles and relationships, personality traits, attitudes, behaviours, values, and relative power and influence that society ascribes to the two sexes on differential basis. Gender is an acquired identity that is learned, changes over time, and varies widely within and across cultures. Gender is relational and refers not simply to women or men but to the relationship between them.

Gender Equality: Refers to the absence of discrimination, on the basis of a person's sex, in the allocation of resources or benefits or in the access to services. Gender equality entails the notion that all human beings, both men and women, are free to develop their personal abilities and make choices without the limitations set by stereotypes, rigid gender roles, or prejudices. Gender equality means that the different behaviors, aspirations, and needs of women and men are considered, valued and favored equally.

Gender equity: Refers to fairness and justice in the distribution of social and economic benefits and responsibilities between women and men. The concept recognizes that women and men have different needs and power and that these differences should be identified and addressed in a manner that rectifies the imbalance between the sexes.

Gender Issues: Arise where an instance of gender inequality is recognized as unjust.

Gender mainstreaming: The process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies, or programs in any area and at all levels.

Gender parity: Refers to a numerical concept referring to equal number of girls and women, boys and men relative to their respective number in the population.

Gender based violence: Any act of violence that results in, or is likely to result in physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to the other gender, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life.

Gender Desegregated Data: Data that is separated and analyzed by sex in order to allow differential impacts on men and women to be measured.

Gender Discrimination: Refers to any distinction, exclusion or restriction made on the basis of socially constructed gender roles and norms which prevent a person from enjoying full human rights.

Sex: Refers to the biological differences between male and females. Sex differences are related to males' and females' physiology and generally remain constant across cultures and over time unless one has undergone sex change.

Sexual Harassment: Unwelcome acts of a sexual nature that cause discomfort to the targeted person. These include words, persistent requests for sexual favors, gestures, touch, suggestions coerced sexual intercourse and rape.

Sexual Offences: An offensive, disrespectful, impudent act directed towards persons targeting their sexuality.

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AIDS = acquired Immune-Deficiency Syndrome

GBV = Gender-Based Violence

HIV = Human Immune-deficiency Virus

KarU = Karatina University

VCT = Voluntary Counselling and Testing

WHO = World Health Organization

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Gender mainstreaming is a public policy concept of assessing and promoting sensitivity and integration of gender issues and concerns that affect men and women in all areas and at all levels. Gender mainstreaming essentially offers a pluralistic approach that values the diversity among both women and men.

Gender inequality has continued to be pervasive and persistent across many dimensions of life, from domestic households to social institutions to the economy. In most developing countries such as Kenya gender inequalities have been manifested in terms of disparities in basic rights, in access to and control of resources, in employment and earnings and in political voice (World Bank 2001)

The Government of Kenya is committed to attaining gender equality. This is clearly underlined in various international and national agreements. The Government is a signatory to international protocols relating to education and human rights of women and girls. The government is also signatory to the universal declaration on Human Rights (1948), Beijing declaration and platform for Action (1995), the Kenya sexual offences Acts (2007). The new constitution of Kenya has made major strides in ensuring gender equity in all spheres of human life. In this respect, the government in 2011 established the Kenya National Human Rights and Equality Commission charged with the responsibility of gender equality and equity.

The functions of the commission are:

- a) To promote the gender equality and development a culture of human rights in the republic.
- b) To promote gender equality and equity generally and to coordinate and facilitate gender mainstreaming in national development.
- c) To promote the protection and observance of human rights in public and private institutions.
- d) To monitor, investigate and report on the observance of human rights in all spheres of life in the republic.
- e) To receive and investigate complaints about alleged abuses of human rights and take steps to secure appropriate redress where human rights have been violated.
(Kenya Constitution, Chapter 4 part 5 article 59)

The country's development blueprint (the Kenya Vision 2030) whose objective is to help transform Kenya into a, "middle-income country providing a high quality life to all its citizens by the year 2030" advocates equality of citizens as one of its guiding principles (Kenya vision 2030). All these documents reiterate the need to eliminate all forms of discrimination, enhance rights to education, and promote gender equality particularly in education as well as gender inclusion and empowerment.

1.2 Justification

Karatina University (KarU), recognizes the importance of gender mainstreaming in all areas of its development. The formulation of the policy is geared towards providing a coherent and comprehensive framework for guiding the relationships among staff students and other stakeholders as well as offering direction in decision making processes of different departments and schools in the university. KarU stands to gain in achieving its vision by embedding gender mainstreaming in all of its activities and programs.

The policy entails institutionalizing the principle of gender mainstreaming to ensure that opportunities and benefits are equally accessible to both men and women in all activities and programs of KarU.

1.3 Goals and Objectives

The overall goal of this gender policy is to enhance the principle of gender equity and equality for all persons at Karatina University, such that no deserving persons are discriminated against on the basis of gender and to institutionalize gender mainstreaming to ensure that the opportunities are equally accessible to all.

1.3.1 Specific Objectives

The following are the specific objectives of the Policy:

- i. Mainstream gender in all the programs and activities of KarU.
- ii. Create and sustain a gender responsive working, living and learning environment.
- iii. Alleviate sexual harassment and gender-based violence.
- iv. Promote gender equity and equality in student enrollment, progression, completion and welfare.

- v. Monitor gender representation in staff recruitment, promotion, development, retention and welfare.

1.4 Scope of Gender Policy

The gender policy provisions shall apply to all activities and programs at all levels of Karatina University including all its campuses and centers. It will focus on access, retention, transition, promotion, completion, relevance, governance and management of KarU units for the benefit of all.

1.5 Guiding Principles

The policy is guided by the following principles:

- i. KarU is obliged to address gender inequalities where they exist.
- ii. KarU is an equal opportunity employer. Whenever a group is clearly under represented, it shall be given preference in principle as long as the minimum qualifications are met.
- iii. Equity irrespective of gender shall be ensured.
- iv. KarU declares zero tolerance to gender discrimination, sexual harassment and gender-based violence.
- v. All human beings have alienable rights irrespective of their gender.
- vi. Gender mainstreaming can be achieved in the society through deliberate and concerted efforts by all stakeholders.

2.0 POLICY AREAS

2.1 GENDER AND EDUCATION

Education is a vital tool for individual, community and national development. Access and quality of education has a positive impact on the growth of individual earnings, which leads to a reduction on poverty and income inequalities. It is also instrumental in the improvement of health, good governance and quality of life for individuals and families.

Regardless of the many universities in place, the national education systems have been characterized by gender inequality in the enrolment of female and male students. In spite of affirmative action that allows women to be admitted at the public universities with one point lower than the men, low enrollment of women is still a big challenge in university education.

2.1.1 Objectives

- i. To encourage female and male enrolment at university including postgraduate studies and research.
- ii. To make university education accessible to individuals from all communities.
- iii. To advance equal expression and participation in decision-making and problem solving in educational sectors.
- iv. To promote gender equity in expressions and participation in management of all Units, Departments and University programs.

2.1.2 Policy Statements

- i. The University shall review opportunities for both female and male students in the areas of enrolment, progression, retention and completion until an equal representation ratio is achieved and maintained in all programs.
- ii. The University shall guarantee a gender responsive teaching and learning environment to advance involvement and participation of all categories of people in the programs of the University.

- iii. The University shall endeavor to correct gender imbalances through affirmative action.

2.2 GENDER AND GOVERNANCE

Good governance demands accountability, democracy, human rights, management and administrative efficiency. Effective institutional governance demonstrates progress towards gender balance. The target in Kenya currently is a at least a third of either gender representation in all public appointments but the ultimate goal is to achieve equal representation fo men and women. Karatina University is committed to gender mainstreaming through deliberate efforts to enhance gender balance and equity in governance and management at all levels of operation in the institution.

2.2.1 Objectives

- i. To institutionalize guidelines that ensures gender equity and equality in governance and management.
- ii. To ensure gender equity in appointment of senior positions at the University.
- iii. To ensure equal representation of men and women in decision-making processes.

2.2.2 Policy statements

The University shall:

- i. Ensure gender equality in the appointment of Heads of Departments, Committees and Sections, and Deans/Directors of Boards and Schools.
- ii. Institute programs aimed at capacity-building in gender competencies.
- iii. Encourage equal gender representation in positions of leadership.
- iv. Ensure that appointments conform to the at least a third of either gender rule.

2.3 GENDER AND WORK ENVIRONMENT

A gender sensitive institution has staff recruitment, training, promotion, retention and welfare programs that are gender responsive. This will be achieved by creating an environment that respects the diversity of its staff and students and an environment

that facilitates exploitation of their full potential and contributes fully to maximum fulfillment of the individuals concerned. All members of the University will be expected to promote gender equality through their actions, attitudes and respect for one another.

2.3.1 Objectives

To create a gender friendly teaching, learning and work environment for all students and staff.

2.3.2 Policy Statements

The University shall:

- i. Train and sensitize staff members and students to change attitudes and behavior patterns towards gender relations.
- ii. Provide adequate health and safety facilities to meet maximum work place standards.
- iii. Institutionalize monitoring and evaluation for progress and impact assessment on gender issues among the stakeholders.
- iv. Create an environment that is free from sexual harassment for both men and women.

2.4 GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

Gender-based violence (GBV) is a fundamental violation of human rights, a means of unacceptably asserting power over another and cuts across the whole society. Karatina University is committed to eliminating gender-based violence. The University recognizes that any form of GBV is punishable under the Sexual Offences Act of 2009. For this reason, the University shall have zero tolerance to GBV at all organizational levels.

2.4.1 Objectives

- i. To prevent cases of gender based violence at Karatina University.
- ii. To sensitize KarU community on what constitutes GBV.
- iii. To create awareness on the reporting procedure for victims of GBV.
- iv. To provide disciplinary procedures and reprieve for the aggrieved.

- v. Provide prompt, effective and consistent, sensitive and fair guidelines for handling cases of GBV.

2.4.2 Policy Statements

The University shall:

- i. Ensure safety and security of all members of KarU community.
- ii. Mainstream gender in formal and co-curricula activities to create understanding, appreciation and respect for human dignity.
- iii. Support research on GBV to ensure better understanding of the nature and extent of the vice and develop preventive and responsive strategies and policies.
- iv. Enact detailed procedures for reporting and documenting cases of GBV.
- v. Provide rapid response and support services for victims of GBV.
- vi. Develop and implement a Gender Based Violence Policy.

2.5 GENDER-RESPONSIVE HEALTH SERVICES

Health is the state of complete physical, social, spiritual and mental well-being and not merely the absence of infirmity (WHO Constitution of 1948). Gender considerations are central to the provision of quality health services especially sexual and reproductive health. The unique reproductive health issues for women compared to men include the physiological differences such as menstruation, unwanted pregnancy, child-bearing, breast-feeding, menopause and rites of passage such as circumcision.

2.5.1 Objective

To provide gender-responsive and quality health service for KarU students and staff.

2.5.2 Policy Statements

The University shall:

- i. Avail health services including personnel that will cater for sexual and reproductive health needs of female and male students and staff.

- ii. Build capacity for health providers in gender responsiveness.
- iii. Establish mechanisms to monitor the delivery of gender-responsive health services.
- iv. Develop and implement gender integrated health policies.

2.6 GENDER AND LINKAGES

Institutional gender mainstreaming requires effective establishment of networks and linkages with other stakeholders. KarU will continue to establish and strengthen linkages with other institutions in research, policy implementation, monitoring and evaluation of institutional programs to promote best practice. The linkages will be established through gender-responsive training, teaching, research, advisory and consultancies.

2.6.1 Objectives

- i. To identify gender-related areas of focus for local community outreach programs.
- ii. To identify and develop new collaborative networks in gender mainstreaming programs at various levels nationally, regionally and internationally.

2.6.2 Policy Statements

The university shall:

- i. Develop gender responsive programs at the local, national, regional and international levels.
- ii. Promote gender-responsive activities in community outreach programs.

3.0. POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

The responsibility for the implementation of this policy lies with the Vice Chancellor on behalf of Council. However, the functions responsibilities outlined in the policy shall be delegated according to the structure of the University. Each administrative unit will ensure gender equality and equity is achieved in all areas of development and decision making.

4.0. POLICY REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed regularly in consultation with the KarU Gender Mainstreaming Committee. The Committee will further ensure that data relating to gender in the University is updated annually. The Committee will also monitor both staff and students to evaluate the degree of satisfaction with the services provided.

