

Increasing the participation of girls and women in leadership in higher education institutions across Africa

FAWoVC works towards addressing the gap in equality in the education sector. It is universally known that gender inequality is a global problem. FAWoVC works to contribute towards the alignment and addressing the challenges of achieving the African Union 2063 Agenda (Capable institutions and transformative leadership in place) and Sustainable Developmental Goals 4 (Quality Education) and 5 (Gender Equality) with a particular emphasis to enhance gender equality and inclusiveness for sustainable higher education.

31st October -01 November 2023, Yaoundé Cameroon

FAWoVC will convene three activities aimed at promoting gender inclusiveness, equity, equality and transformative leadership in higher education institutions in Africa by holding:

a) Fifth Symposium

The fifth symposium themed, ***“Enhancing a transformative leadership and gender equality in Higher Education”*** will provide platform for female leaders of higher education in Africa to deliberate and address matters relating to gender inclusiveness and transformative development in higher education and a programme of action to strengthen gender role and leadership in higher education institutes. In addition, the symposium will facilitate opportunities for networking, collaborating and exchange of ideas among the universities leaders as well as with other international re-known leaders and experts in higher education. At least 70+ participants mainly composed of members of FAWoVC, Key partners and other stake holders and observers are expected to attend.

b) The Mentorship and Training session

The mentors and experts are identified based on their substantial knowledge and experience but not limited to leadership in higher education institutes, gender equality and inclusiveness. It is expected that at least 70+ female leaders will benefit from this exercise. It's expected that agreed mentorship plan for upcoming leaders in selected African countries would be established, as develop a mentorship and training modules for good governance in higher education institutions.

c) The Annual General Meeting (AGM)

The AGM will be characterized with plenary presentations and participatory discussions, and it will be chaired by the Chairperson of the Executive Committee assisted by the Vice Chairperson. AGM aims to debate on agenda to strengthen

FAWoVC capacity to effectively support the realization of its vision in Africa and beyond. Fifty five (45) members of the FAWoVC are expected to attend.

Friday 28th July 2023, a virtual Seminar: Networking and empowerment of female university student leaders in Eastern and Southern Africa.

FAWoVC in partnership with UN Women held a virtual seminar which primarily targeted young female Universities student leaders from East and Southern Africa. At least 137 participants attended from Burundi, Botswana, DRC, and Ghana. Kenya, Malawi, Tanzania, Rwanda, Uganda, USA, South Africa and Zambia (30 universities). In addition, were representatives from UN Women (East and Southern Region), RUFORUM, FAWE and Centre for Advocacy and Awareness on Youth Rights in Africa.

The virtual seminar was one of the many to be carried out across the Africa continent aimed to empower young girls and women inter alia provide a voice for them on the bigger stage. The young leaders were provided with the tools and knowledge to enable them develop their own skills, strategies and capability and be role models to their peers. Additionally,

- i. Ability to identifying leadership and governance skills
 - a. Increase self-awareness and reflective thinking.
 - b. Identify critical skills for potential future roles.
 - c. Understanding leadership roles
- ii. Strategies needed to climb the leadership ladder
 - a. Develop effective and efficient communication and digital skills.
 - b. Ability to adopt to the changing and diverse environment
 - c. Unlocking self-worth: the unseen leadership strategy
- iii. Develop and refine mentees leadership philosophy
 - a. Figure out what kind of leader you want to be and make tough ethical choices.
 - b. Work through ethical dilemmas and other tough situations
 - c. Develop a broader perspective on gender and leadership
 - d. Recognize the male leaders as allies in decision making
- iv. To overcome obstacles in leadership and administration roles
 - a. Problem solving and overcoming issues by strategic thinking
 - b. A good understanding of your strength and weaknesses
 - c. To enhance Mentorship training and programs for young leaders
 - d. Hold virtual seminars, workshop, mentorship training sessions
 - e. Inter-generation linkages between established leaders and young leaders
 - f. Harness adequate financial resources at institutions (internal) and beyond (external) to support mentorship activities.

Main Skills required to be successful:

- **Emotional Intelligence**
- **Critical Thinking**
- **Good communication – need to face students/management – to speak well – prioritize issues – understand underlying issues and put it across to both constituencies – prepare**
- **Digital Skills – emails - how to present material – collaborate**
- **Own Academic Success matters**

According to the UN Women data, there are 1.8 billion young people aged 10-24 in the world signifying the largest youth population ever. In addition, 600 million of these are adolescent girls and young women. It is therefore important to recognize that the force and inspiration of our youngest leaders are critical drivers for accelerating progress on sustainable development and gender equality.

It is against this background that the UN Women and FAWoVC have embarked on a journey to collectively embrace and promote gender inclusiveness and participation in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in Africa.

Insert the PowerPoint presentations

29th May 2023, UN Women and FAWoVC signed a Memorandum of Understanding, Makerere University Main Campus, Kampala, Uganda.

It was a quaint atmosphere on the 29th May 2023, the Forum for African Women Vice Chancellors (FAWoVC) and United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (“UN Women”), held a meeting at the Makerere University main campus, Kampala, Uganda to sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to strengthen their partnership. UN Women and the Forum for African Women Vice Chancellors are thereby jointly referred to as the “Parties”.



Dr Paulina Chiwangu signed MOU on behalf of UN Women and Prof Teresa Akenga on behalf of FAWoVC

The Parties agreed to cooperate in good faith in order to achieve common objectives such as

- a. Share analysis and information for identifying complementary programs to promote gender equality in East and Southern Africa.
- b. Identify policy approaches in areas of gender equity and empowerment to promote gender and equity policies in higher education institutions in East and Southern Africa,
- c. Eliminate violence against women and female students in higher education institutions in East and Southern Africa.
- d. Encourage FAWoVC to be an effective voice nationally, regionally and internationally in higher education institutions by hosting symposium, redesigning leadership modules, mentorship and training session for female leaders and upcoming leaders among others.

This historical day was graced by the presence of UN Women Uganda Representative Dr Paulina Chiwangu. Dr Paulina Chiwangu, UN Women Representative, Uganda, Dr Jack Abebe, UN Women Regional Knowledge, Management and Research Specialist East and Southern, Professor Teresa Akenga, Vice Chancellor University of Eldoret, Kenya and Chairperson the

FAWoVC, Professor Mary Okwakol Executive Director National Council for Higher Education, Uganda and former Chairperson the FAWoVC, Rev Canon Olivia Banja, Vice Chancellor Ndejje University, Uganda; Dr Patrick Okori, Executive Secretary RUFORUM. In addition, Ms Patricia Ochieng, Knowledge Management Lead Consultant UN Women- East and Southern Africa and Mr Martin Minsima, UN Women, Uganda. Also in attendance were Ms Harriet Nabirye, Representative Busitema University, Ms Juliet Ochienghs the FAWoVC Programme Coordinator and Ms Olive Kajumba of Ndejje University, Uganda.

The meeting participation reflected the partnership that is needed to achieve gender equality.

13th -14th December 2022, Harare, Zimbabwe

On this momentous occasion, after the disruption of activities due to COVID19, FAWoVC held three activities. The highlights of the three events are summarized as follows:

- a. Fourth Symposium, ‘Enhancing Gender Equality and Inclusiveness for Sustainable Higher Education’.**



- a. It was held from 12 December 2022 (14:00 pm) to 13 December 2022 (13:00pm) Harare, Zimbabwe.
- b. Over 70 participants including Vice Chancellors, Deputy Vice Chancellors, Principles, Deans, Directors and Head of Departments. In addition were UN Women, FAWE, and National Council for Higher Education, Inter University Council of East Africa and RUFORUM also in attendance.
- c. The opening ceremony was held in the afternoon of 12th December 2022 and was officiated by Professor Amon Murwira, Honorable Minister of Higher and Tertiary Education Innovation Science and Technology Development, Zimbabwe and Honorable Monica Musenero, Minister of Science, Technology and Innovation - Office of the President, Uganda officiated the closing ceremony on 13th December 2022.
- d. The Fourth Symposium unarguably provided a platform for the Vice Chancellors to network and interface with their counterparts from across Africa because the last Symposium was held in 2019 and none had been held since due to the interruption of Covid19.
- e. The Fourth Symposium allowed for discussions on various subject matters including but not limited to discussing the state of gender equality in higher education with particular focus on Africa; to share gender mainstreaming policies and practices that maximize impact in higher education in Africa; to share lessons and experiences with women leaders of similar institutions from other parts of the World in regards to strengthening institutional capacities to nurture women leaders in higher education; understand the current trend on gender equality and inclusiveness in higher education and leadership and advocate for skill enhancement training for upcoming leaders.

b. The Mentorship Session



- a. It was held on the afternoon of 13th December 2022, Harare, Zimbabwe.
- b. There were over 90 participants in attendance. The Mentees included senior level Managers (VCs, DVCs) Middles and lower Managers (Principles, Directors, Dean, Heads of Departments, Lecturers and registrars). Also trained were upcoming scientists, postdoctoral student and post graduate students were among other who also benefited enormously from the mentorship session.
- c. The programme focused on skills sets for leaders and managers, managing diversity and digital fluency and transformation among others. It provided the mentees the occasion to ask very poignant and important questions from the Mentors. The success of the Mentorship is owed to the very experienced 10 Mentor from across universities in Africa who shared first-hand knowledge and involvement on a diversity of topics.

c. The Annual General Meeting (AGM)



- a. AGM was held morning of the 14th December 2022, Harare, Zimbabwe.
- b. It was attended by 30 Women Vice Chancellor and Deputy Vice Chancellors of Universities across Africa.
- c. Prof Teresa Akenga, Vice Chancellor of University of Eldoret was elected Chairperson FAWoVC
- d. It was resolved that the FAWoVC Fifth Symposium, Mentorship and training Session and AGM of 2023 would be held in Cameroon.



Professor Mary Okwakol signing off as FAWoVC Chairperson witnessed by a few FAWoVC Members