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Foreword

The commitment to scholarly excellence by Cavendish University Uganda is embedded in the university's policies, regulations and guidelines. The university gender policy provides direction in matters that include a framework for conceptualizing, designing, implementing, monitoring and evaluating its programmes in a gender sensitive manner.

This policy is aligned to the provisions of the Constitution of Uganda, as amended, pertinent laws, the Uganda Gender Policy (2007), and to all other University policy documents.

Cavendish University Uganda, as an equal opportunity institution, has an open-door policy for men and women, in the academics and employment. It provides learning and employment opportunities to the young and the old irrespective of gender, protecting each gender from harassment, gender insensitive language, sexual harassment and gender based violence. On employment, it invites job applications from both genders and strives to promote gender balance in recruitment, promotion and appointment of staff.

Current overall staffing is 63% male and 37% female. The university management is determined to close the gap in the next five years through an effective implementation of this gender policy.

The policy has four broad areas: background, policy statement, code of practice, and implementation mechanisms. Its effective implementation requires that staff, students and stakeholders support the university management and embrace the policy.

This policy is based, largely, on Uganda's national policy on gender (<http://www.mglsd.go.ug/policies/Uganda-Gender-Policy.pdf>)

Prof John Mugisha, PhD
Vice Chancellor

Definition of Terms

Affirmative Action: a deliberate policy that gives special privileges to certain groups of people to compensate them for inequalities and inequities that they have suffered in the past or continue to suffer due to an inadequate access to resources and opportunities; the Government of Uganda for example has adopted the policy on affirmative action in the admission of students to public universities and, according to this policy, female students and special categories of students are admitted to public universities with 1½ points lower than other applicants. In the application of an affirmative action policy, the group that is expected to benefit must meet minimum qualifications. Affirmative action is a temporary special measure that should be implemented together with other interventions and discontinued after an acceptable level of parity has been achieved.

Gender: socially constructed roles, responsibilities and relations between men and women, as well as boys and girls, and not to the biologically different categories of male and female; gender roles and relations, are learned through the life-long process of socialization, vary between and in countries and cultures, are dynamic and change with time and space. Gender is also understood to mean what society considers to constitute the concepts of male and female

Gender Equality: evenly balanced opportunities for men and women, as well as boys and girls, in their access to and control over resources, voice and rights

Gender Equity: the principle of fairness and justice in the distribution of resources and access to opportunities between men and women, as well as boys and girls

Gender Sensitivity: an ability to perceive existing gender differences, issues and equalities, and incorporate these strategies and actions

Gender Parity: a numerical concept referring to equal numbers of girls and women as well as boys and men relative to their respective numbers in a population

Gender Disparities: the differences in outcomes observed between different sexes

Gender-Based Violence: an act of hostility that results in, or is likely to lead to, cruelty resulting in physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, girls, boys and men on the basis of one's gender

Gender Blind: ignoring or failing to address the gender dimension

Gender Mainstreaming: the consistent integration of gender concerns in designing, implementing, monitoring and evaluating policies, plans, programmes, activities and projects at all levels operation

Policy: a guiding principle designed to influence decisions and actions; for its effective implementation, the principle must be supported by appropriate structures, processes, and procedures

Sexual Harassment: unwelcome acts of a sexual nature that cause discomfort to the targeted person such as words, gestures, touch, suggestions, persistent request for sexual favours, coerced sexual intercourse and rape.

1.0 Introduction

Over the past decade, Uganda has made significant progress in the advancement of gender equality and empowerment of women in political, economic and social spheres. The development of a National Gender Policy (NGP) in 1997, and its revision in 2007, confirms the Government of the Republic of Uganda's unequivocal commitment to take actions that will bring about more equal gender relations. The policy will ensure that all Government policies and programs, in all areas and at all levels, are consistent with the long-term goal of eliminating gender inequalities. The policy gives a clear mandate to the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development and other Line Ministries to mainstream gender in all sectors. It sets priority areas of action at the National, Sectoral, District and Community levels with all levels of planning, resource allocation and implementation of development programs redressing gender imbalances and acting with a gender perspective. The ultimate objective of this policy is to lead to a society that is both informed and conscious of gender and development issues and concerns.

In addition, the National Development Plan (NDP) II which describes the country's macroeconomic and social policies in support of growth and poverty reduction during the period 2015/16-2019-20 emphasizes that discrimination against women in the country is embodied in traditional rules and practices that explicitly exclude them or give preference to men, resulting in a lasting constraint on women's empowerment and economic progress. At the governance level, these rules and practices limit political and economic participation of women. This in turn, leads to formulation and passing of policies and laws which do not protect women's rights. At the community and household level, women are restricted from participating in important decisions such as resource use, family planning, and access to services such as health and education. Women have been marginalized in access to ownership and control over land, education, business ownership, skills. Whereas women comprise an estimated 70 per cent of the work force in agriculture, they experience unequal access to and control over important productive resources like land. This limits their ability to move beyond subsistence agriculture. In wage employment, women are concentrated in the lowest paying sectors, which is linked to their lower education levels; 50 per cent of employed women work in the three lowest paying sectors, compared to 33 per cent of men (2005/06 Uganda National Household Survey (UNHS)).

Uganda's National Development Plan (NDP) outlines a broad strategy for promoting gender equality that includes the development of an action plan for promoting action in all spheres and transforming mind-set, negative attitudes, and negative cultural practices. It underlines gender inequality as one of the binding constraints to Uganda's development progress. It identifies several areas of action that includes awareness campaigns on gender issues for mining communities; tackling gender-related land issues; and adherence to reproductive health rights especially for women and girls. A results' indicator on gender is also included in reference to water user committees/Water Boards with women holding key positions.

Progress towards achieving gender equity in education has been steady, but universities have lagged behind primary and secondary schools. According to the 2017 Statistical Abstract, Uganda had near gender parity for pupils registered to sit Primary Leaving Examinations (PLE) in 2016, a trend which continued in students registered to sit Ordinary Level Examinations. Students that sit Advanced level examinations and those enrolled in universities though remain predominantly male just like in their staffing. Gender mainstreaming in Cavendish University is

embedded in one of the university's core values, namely, respect. This is because the university recognises diversity as part of the means to high performance as well as a happy co-existence.

1.1 Scope of the Policy

Applying to staff, students and all stakeholders of the university, the policy covers gender equality in all aspects of university life such as gender balance in recruiting, training and promoting staff, developing gender-sensitive curriculums, and having a working and learning environment that is safe for all genders.

2.0 Goals and Objectives

The overall goal of the policy is to sustain a fair and just academic and working environment where men and women, boys and girls, have equal opportunities, voice, rights and access to resources so that they can realise their potential and contributions in a community of scholars and working citizens characterised by a culture of mutual respect.

Consequently, the specific objectives of the policy are to

- a) Ensure the existence of gender-responsive management and administration and equity in teaching and research programmes,
- b) Ensure proper responses to allegations of gender-based harassment and/or assault
- c) Reach out to marginalised groups especially men and women , as well as boys and girls, from poor backgrounds—such as previously war-torn districts, arid and semi-arid lands, rural areas, and slums—to enable them to enjoy the benefits of university education,
- d) Ensure that efficient and effective structures for implementing the policy are established,
- e) Ensure gender sensitivity in the university's dealings and interactions with its external stakeholders exists, and
- f) Work closely with the Government of Uganda and its partners to obtain the necessary resources for the implementation of the policy.

3.0 Legal Framework

The Constitution of the Republic of Uganda provides overall legal frame work for the Uganda Gender Policy (UGP). It recognizes equality between women and men. Specifically, it provides for gender balance and fair representation of marginalised groups; recognises the role of women in society; accords equal citizenship rights, freedom from discrimination, affirmative action in favour of women; and articulates specific rights of women including outlawing customs, traditions and practices that undermine the welfare, dignity and interests of women. A copy of the Ugandan national gender policy can be found online at:

<http://www.mglsd.go.ug/policies/Uganda-Gender-Policy.pdf>

The Poverty Eradication Action Plan (PEAP), the overarching national planning framework, guides public actions to eradicate poverty. The Uganda Gender Policy is an integral part of the national development process. This, therefore, provides a firm foundation for the PEAP implementation to be based on gender responsive strategies. Sector Wide Approaches to planning (SWAPs) and the Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF) as mechanisms for

PEAP implementation, have the potential to enhance gender focused programming, gender and equity budgeting so that national and local government interventions, expenditures and services benefit both women and men. The UGP contributes to achieving the national vision and aspirations as espoused in Uganda's Vision 2025.

This gender policy is guided by the Cavendish University Uganda mission and values and the Human Resource Policy, which guides the University in its actions to eliminate barriers and gender inequality within the university community by creating a framework of gender equality in staff and student activities through equitable participation in all decision-making processes. In the same policy principles, the university; is committed to providing unbiased opportunities for development and to the achievement of gender balance with respect to both academic and administrative staffing and decision-making processes.

4.0 Guiding Principles

4.1 Decision-Making Organs

The university has made progress in appointing women to senior decision-making positions, but the overall optimum level of at least two-thirds has not yet been achieved. As a result, the university will

- a) Ensure that gender equity and equality in its organs and committees exists at all the levels,
- b) Ensure that the number of women in senior management positions increases until gender equality is achieved,
- c) Use affirmative action as a strategy to achieve gender parity for appointive and elective positions at all the levels, and
- d) Apply the principles of gender equality to leadership positions in university-sponsored student organisations.

4.2 Recruitment, Training, and Promotion

The university will sustain an enabling and empowering working environment to recruit and retain qualified staff at all the levels. Given both the tendency to associate certain occupations and academic disciplines with either men or women and the current male dominance in many positions, specific measures are needed to achieve gender balance in recruitment, training and promotion in the university. Consequently, the university will

- a) Use a competitive recruitment process at all the levels in combination with an affirmative action strategy,,
- b) Ensure a gender-balanced pool of applicants for every position, and where a female and male candidate for a position are considered of equal merit , gender balance will be taken into account in the final decision,
- c) Re-establish training programmes for both academic and non-academic staff and ensure that men and women have equal opportunities to participate in the programmes,
- d) Use affirmative action to hire into positions where one gender is under-represented,
- e) Provide support in the form of scholarships, study leave and incentives to enable female academic staff members to complete postgraduate studies, and
- f) Ensure that men and women receive equal pay for equal or similar work or work of similar value.

4.3 Student Admissions

The national university Joint Admissions Board affirmative action on admission of female students into regular undergraduate programmes with 1½ points less has resulted in only 34% enrolment of female students. The policy tends to take more students into some programmes than others, and therefore is not effective in addressing gender imbalance across programmes.

The selection of students at Cavendish University Uganda is on merit, but some programmes have significantly more male students than female students. Some departments have mentoring programmes where senior students mentor junior students; in departments where mentoring takes place, female students are performing well. The university therefore will

- a) Increase female enrolment in undergraduate programmes where there is extreme gender disparity by lowering the cluster cut-off points,
- b) Support visits to girls high schools by students and academic staff to encourage more gender-balanced enrolments,
- c) Use affirmative action to ensure improved gender-balance in programmes where it is currently lacking,
- d) Facilitate the development of mentoring programmes for both undergraduate and postgraduate students, and
- e) Monitor enrolment statistics in all programmes annually to ensure gender balance is maintained or improved.

4.4 Gender-Sensitive Curriculum

Individuals learn in different ways. Some of the differences are gender-based because the different ways in which boys and girls are socialised. It is important that both male and female students have academic role models, mentors and sponsors. Role models found in the content of the curriculum include authors of textbooks and people who are considered as important contributors to a discipline. In this respect, the university will

- a) Ensure that its curriculum is designed and developed in such a way that it is gender sensitive in content and delivery,
- b) Ensure that teachers use gender-sensitive language that is inclusive of both females and males,
- c) Ensure that its curriculum provides positive academic role models to its students—both male and female, and
- d) Ensure that students are exposed to theories and concepts that enable them to understand gender and its implications for society.

4.5 Working and Learning Environment

The university wishes to provide staff and students with a safe, clean, and comfortable working and learning environment because, to perform well, they need to feel secure. Security is important especially to those of them who must work late, teach or attend evening classes, or reside in the halls. The university therefore will

- a) Ensure that its buildings have an adequate, appropriate provision of male and female toilet facilities,
- b) Ensure that its facilities such as office buildings, lecture halls, and libraries are clean and properly maintained,

- c) Ensure that it has adequate office space for male and female academic and non-academic staff,
- d) Ensure that multi-storey buildings have working lifts,
- e) Strengthen security systems throughout the university.

4.6 Role Models, Mentors and Sponsors

Role models, mentors and sponsors are an important part of the working and learning environment. It is necessary to present positive role models to male and female staff and students.

Mentors help to define the dream while sponsors are the dream-enablers. Mentors assist individuals to understand the unwritten rules, provide a map for the uncharted corridors to power, and to prepare men and women, as well as boys and girls, to attract sponsors. In turn, sponsors make individuals visible to leaders inside and outside an institution—in this case, the university. They connect individuals to career opportunities and provide cover when they encounter trouble. They open not only one door but see their protégés to the threshold of power.

Most of the role models, mentors and sponsors in the university are largely male, partly due to historical gender blindness. As a result, the university will

- a) Present positive female role models in university-sponsored activities,
- b) Undertake activities designed to raise the profile of female scholars and professionals,
- c) Encourage gender sensitivity in male students and staff by presenting male role models who demonstrate gender sensitivity in their language and behaviour, and
- d) Facilitate or encourage senior staff to provide mentorship and sponsorship to young scholars and staff.

4.7 Student Organisations and Co-Curricular Activities

The membership in the university-sponsored student organisations reflects the overall student gender balance, but male students hold disproportionate leadership positions and the election processes are characterised by abuse and violence that discourage female participation. Certain leadership positions are usually “reserved” for female students that perpetuates gender stereotyping. Further, the women students’ organisation receives very little university financial support and therefore is highly constrained in its ability to undertake activities. Consequently, the university will

- a) Ensure that the university guild students’, along with overall student elections are free, fair, peaceful, and gender responsive,
- b) Give greater budgetary support to the women students welfare association and facilitate it to have a higher profile,
- c) Ensure that its affirmative action policy applies to university-sponsored student organisations.

4.8 University Staff Awards

Wishing to recognise the performance and achievement of its male and female members of staff, the university will both design a system of staff performance awards that offers men and women

equal opportunities to be rewarded and group long-service awards into categories that will assure balanced gender representation.

4.9 Examinations and Coursework

The university is committed to ensuring fairness in examinations and coursework by putting in place measures to correct or prevent abuses based on the gender of a lecturer or student. As a result, it will

- a) Make places where students can read in safety, security, and without fear of sexual harassment available on campuses,
- b) Protect students against victimisation if they report sexual offences or decline advances from a lecturer,
- c) Provide and enforce clear guidelines on student-lecturer relationships,
- d) Develop and enforce clear guidelines for acceptable use of academic and administrative offices,
- e) Ensure that students taking examinations are properly and positively identified,
- f) Make scholarships that target good female students available, and
- g) Ensure that no lecturer marks the examinations of a spouse, child, or relative

4.10 Gender Based Violence

Gender-based harassment and violence, both physical and psychological, is prohibited in the university, which—committed to putting into place measures designed to eliminate sexual harassment and forms of gender-based violence—will

- a) Develop and enforce university rules aimed at protecting staff and students from sexual harassment in matters such as staff-student interaction, dressing, organisation of dining and library facilities and use of gender-sensitive language,
- b) Establish support centres and provide counselling services to promptly and effectively respond to and deal with cases of sexual harassment,
- c) Ensure that all reports or records on allegations or complaints of sexual harassment are treated with confidentiality,
- d) Enforce strictly rules designed to protect students from harassment or violence in the students' halls of residence, especially the prohibition of cohabitation and regulations pertaining to visiting hours, and
- e) Treat rape and related sexual offences as provided for in the Sexual Offences Act as crimes which upon proof will lead to the automatic expulsion or dismissal; the university will report such an offence to the law-enforcement authorities.

4.11 Staff and Student Welfare

The university aims to promote staff and student welfare by providing medical services, housing and accommodation, recreational facilities, and transport to some or all members of the university community. Sometimes, the impact of these efforts is reduced by poor communication or gender bias, however, and therefore the university will

- a) Provide regular communication to members of staff concerning the medical facilities that are available to them, their spouses and their children,
- b) Provide family planning services to all students,

- c) Provide maternity and paternity leave, recognizing the equal value and importance of both men and women in parenting children
- d) Diversify recreational facilities and activities to cater for the different needs of male and female staff and students,
- e) Recruit staff for sports and games department on the basis of gender equality.

5.0 Gender Mainstreaming Responsibility and Complaints

- (a) The Quality Assurance Division of the University will be responsible for collecting data on all gender issues outlined in this policy and reporting them to the Senate and Council.
- (b) All offices of the University are responsible for demonstrating adherence to this policy.
- (c) Complaints will be directed to the offices of the Vice Chancellor (VC), Deputy Vice Chancellor (DVC), Executive Director, Academic Deans and Dean of Students.
- (d) The VC will form a committee that is responsible for hearing complaints and forwarding them to the Disciplinary Committee of Senate.
- (e) The University will place announcements on notice-boards alerting students to direct complaints to the offices in (c) above.
- (f) For all serious allegations of gender-based harassment and sexual assaults, the offender will be suspended pending investigations.

6.0 Commitment

The university commits itself to

- a) Appoint women to senior decision-making positions,
- b) Ensure gender balance in recruiting, training and promoting staff,
- c) Increase female enrolment for courses offered,
- d) Ensure that its curriculum is gender sensitive,
- e) Ensure that the working and learning environment is safe to the two genders,
- f) Present positive female role models and mentors,
- g) Ensure that elections in students' organizations are fair, peaceful and gender responsive, and put in place measures to eliminate sexual harassment and forms of gender-based violence.

7.0 Accountability

The Vice Chancellor will be responsible for the implementation of the policy.

8.0 Policy Review

The policy will be reviewed periodically, but at least every five years to take account of emerging issues and trends. A dynamic gender action plan outlining how the commitment will be operationalised will be developed in the first year of the implementation of the policy.