

**Gender Study
and
Inclusion Action
Plan
for the National
University of
Vanuatu**

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Executive Summary

This study examines the key gender and disability inclusion issues and challenges, pertaining to the effective development of the National University of Vanuatu (NUV). Carried out for the Agence Française de Développement (AFD), the study reviews the legal context of gender and disability in Vanuatu, along with major research studies on gender and disability, and politics, decision-making, culture, and employment.

This is followed by a review of gender/disability and education in Vanuatu. To provide the foundation for the NUV inclusion action plan, the study summarizes major findings on gender and education globally, including best practices in gender/disability mainstreaming in higher education.

The last part of the study presents an Inclusion action plan (IAP) for the NUV, including a preliminary gender/disability audit, major action steps, and indicators for success. The IAP presented is fully in line with the global best practices recommendations, addresses the main issues and needs in Vanuatu, and includes key monitoring and evaluation measures.

The two major components of the proposed IAP include:

1. Implementing the existing institutional gender and disability equality and inclusion commitments expressed in the NUV strategic plan, through:
 - a. Further development of NUV equality and inclusion policies, covering gender, disability, language, island origin and other diversity factors
 - b. Promoting and maintaining gender equality in governance, administration and staffing
 - c. Working to accomplish Goal 3 of the NUV Strategic Plan to “provide effective and inclusive Student Support”, and Objective 3.3 to provide a “safe, diverse, and supportive learning environment for all”
 - d. Working to accomplish Goal 7 of the NUV strategic plan, which is to “foster cultural competence, connectedness and diversity” and Objective 7.3 which is Diversity and Inclusion
2. Designing and implementing a comprehensive and systematic pilot gender/disability mainstreaming project for the School of Education

1. Introduction

This study was conducted as part of a feasibility study¹ for Agence Française de Développement (AFD) funding to support the expansion of the National University of Vanuatu (NUV), especially in the areas of academic and administrative facilities, finances, and human resources. NUV was established by a Vanuatu Act of Parliament in 2019. AFD has been supporting the development of the NUV with FICOL² funding since 2018.

As noted in the Terms of Reference (ToR) for the study: “developing NUV will provide young Ni-Vanuatu with improved access to higher education by offering bilingual English and French courses leading to attractive business and employment opportunities”.

In 2020, the NUV had more than 300 students and plans to expand to approximately 1600 by 2023. In 2020, it offered four training disciplines in collaboration with overseas universities and training institutions, i.e., a Bachelor’s degree in economic and social administration set up in 2013 (and an online version in 2019), a Master’s degree in economic and social science and another in land management and local development added in 2017, plus a Bachelor’s degree in tourism and hospitality started in 2018”.

Key components of the expansion include the plan to merge existing post-secondary educational institutions in Vanuatu into the NUV, and developing new programs. The first stage of this was completed in early 2021, with the Vanuatu Institute of Teacher Education becoming the NUV School of Education. A Bachelor's degree in environmental science was started in 2021 in collaboration with the University of New Caledonia, James Cook University, Australia, and the Pasteur Institute. A Bachelor's degree in Digital Science will be added in early 2022.

This study provides a gender/disability equity baseline for the NUV, covering a wide range of areas, including governance and decision-making, gender/disability mainstreaming in teaching content and methods, learning environment, safety and access, and overall learning outcomes. While the study focuses on gender, it aims to promote *overall inclusion* with regard to gender, gender diversity, and disability. Furthermore, while the study focuses on the areas to be funded by AFD beginning in 2021, it will also provide broader, longer ranging recommendations.

Specific recommendations are offered using a NUV Inclusion Action Plan (IAP). Implementation of the IAP will ensure that the ADF supported NUV project will improve gender and disability equity for NUV faculty, staff and students, along with producing male and female graduates who are equipped to understand, research, analyze, and promote gender equity in Vanuatu. The study intends to show that gender equality is an important and deliberate objective in this project, consistent with an Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Development Assistance Committee (DAC) 1 marker.

The Study used the following methodology:

1. Comprehensive review of the legal framework and research pertaining to gender, gender diversity, and disability in Vanuatu³
2. Comprehensive review of available data on gender and disability inclusion in higher education in Vanuatu, along with a review of relevant employment patterns and human resource development needs
3. Stakeholder interviews, focusing on gender and disability inclusion
4. Comprehensive review of global studies related to gender equity in education

The Gender Study is divided into the following components:

1. *Gender equality in the Vanuatu context* – this section explores equality and inclusion in Vanuatu, including the Vanuatu legal framework, and major inclusion studies in Vanuatu.
2. *Inclusion in higher education in Vanuatu* – this section focuses on equity in higher education in Vanuatu, along with related data pertaining to employment. Where available, data on disability inclusion are also provided. The chapter summarizes key statistics along with the results from stakeholder interviews.
3. *Gender equality in the global academic context* - this section explores gender equality in higher education. It discusses the relationship between gender equality and the sustainable development goals. It identifies key components and best practices for mainstreaming gender equality at the University level, and offers examples of effective gender action plans globally.
4. *Inclusion Action Plan* -this section presents a IAP framework, a preliminary NUV gender audit and a detailed action plan for the NUV, based on reviews from sections 1, 2, and 3, along with additional relevant data from the NUV and its partner organisations.⁴

2. Gender in Vanuatu

2.1 Legal Review

Vanuatu's commitment to addressing inequality and discrimination regarding gender, gender diversity, and disabilities has been formalized in a number of international and regional conventions, and national policies.

2.1.1 International and regional commitments

Vanuatu ratified the Convention to Eliminate All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and its Optional Protocol in 1995, and transferred this into Vanuatu's domestic laws that same year through the *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (Ratification) Act and Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) (Ratification) Act 1995*. It has also ratified the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, transferred into domestic law in 2008. Vanuatu also signed the Beijing Platform for Action, an international framework for advancing women's rights, and in 1997 some of the action plans were incorporated in the Nine Benchmarks as national plans.⁵

Gender Equality is one of the goals (Goal 5) of the Sustainable Development Goals (2015), which calls on states to take action towards the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls. Vanuatu has adopted and embodied into the national governance system through the National Sustainable Development Plan (2015-2030).

At the regional level, Vanuatu endorsed the Pacific Platform for Action on Advancement of Women and Gender Equality (1994) (PPA) in its first iteration, the Revised Pacific Platform for Action on Advancement of Women and Gender Equality (2005-2015) (RPPA), and the current PPA on Gender Equality and Women's Human Rights (2018-2030).

Implementation of the commitments under the instruments above is currently being carried out by the Government of Vanuatu (GoV) and detailed under the section below. Other international and regional agreements also include:

- The Accra Agenda for Action and the Busan Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation
- The International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) Programme of Action
- The Pacific Plan
- The Pacific Leaders Gender Equality Declaration

2.1.2 Domestic legal framework

The Constitution of Vanuatu 1980 prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex for fundamental rights and freedoms that in general terms provide the same protections within the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. In relation to the right to equal treatment under the law or administrative actions, it allows "provisions for the special benefit, welfare, provision for the special benefit, welfare, protection or advancement of females, children and young persons, members of under-privileged groups or inhabitants of less developed areas" to be made by the government even if inconsistent with the Constitution.⁶ However, while these provision offer general human rights protections, there are no specific prohibitions against discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity or sex characteristics.

2.1.3 Implementation of international commitments

Vanuatu generally adopts a dualist approach to incorporating international laws into the domestic legal system. Therefore, an act of parliament must be passed for an international convention or agreement to have legal effect in Vanuatu. As mentioned above, Vanuatu has ratified CEDAW and its Optional Protocol, and directly transferred the literal text of these conventions into domestic law. However, there are outstanding actions that need to be carried out for Vanuatu to be fully compliance with its obligations. As detailed in the most recent country report on CEDAW and its implementation, the Constitution does not yet provide for a definition of discrimination against women that encompasses both direct and indirect forms of discrimination, the Department of Women's Affairs continues to operate without budget provisions for its program of activities and supplementary budgetary requests must go through Parliament and DWA staff continue to lack the capacity to implement activities for the promotion of gender equality and the use of gender mainstreaming strategy.⁷

Vanuatu also recently underwent its Universal Periodic Review (UPR) in Geneva.⁸ The UPR is a unique process created by the UN General Assembly and involves the review of the human rights situations of all UN Member States once every four and half years. It is a state driven process and an opportunity to for each state to identify key human rights issues and challenges as well as to periodically declare what actions it has taken to improve human rights situations and fulfil human rights obligations.

Recommendations to Vanuatu from other countries included an amendment to the constitution to incorporate the prohibition of discrimination based on sex and gender, to put in place a comprehensive strategy to eliminate discriminatory gender stereotypes and patriarchal attitudes and to put in place measures to eliminate discrimination and violence against lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons, including anti-discrimination measures and awareness-raising campaigns.

While Vanuatu accepted many recommendations to strengthen its overall human rights policies and implementation mechanisms, it noted but did not accept the specific recommendations mentioned above. The next UPR of Vanuatu will takes place in 2024.

Also mentioned above, Vanuatu has also made commitments under the Beijing Platform for Action in 12 critical areas of concern relating to:

- Inclusive development, shared prosperity & decent work
- Poverty eradication, social protection and social services
- Freedom from violence, stigma and stereotypes
- Participation, accountability and gender responsive institutions
- Peaceful and inclusive societies
- Environmental conservation, protection and rehabilitation

In the most recent National Review Report, the Government of Vanuatu detailed progress in the development of gender policies and mainstreaming gender across other sectoral policies, including the Gender Equity in Education Policy in 2018. Legislative reforms through to the Family Protection Act, a Council of Ministers' decision to increase representation of women in task forces and committees, and temporary special measures in the Municipal Act and People's Representation Act have also seen progress increasing the number of women in leadership positions.⁹

At the same time, the Government reported setbacks under the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action due to delays in the launch of the National Gender Equality Policy (see further detail below), challenges with influencing social norms in relation to gender based violence, a lack of political will and support for improving women's participation in decision-making, and a lack of long-term funding

support from the Government and donor agencies to implement and mainstream initiatives to address gender across sectors.¹⁰

The top five priority areas for the Government of Vanuatu under the Beijing Platform for Action are:

1. Quality education, training and life-long learning for women and girls
2. Eliminating violence against women and girls
3. Political participation and representation
4. Gender-responsive budgeting
5. Gender-responsive disaster risk prevention, reduction and resilience building¹¹

In terms of regional international commitments, in particular the regional charter, Implementation of the PPA has previously been linked with the Vanuatu National Gender Equality Policy's (NGEP) objectives.¹² The current Pacific Platform for Action on Gender Equality and Women's Human Rights (2018-2030), was developed at the end of the policy life of the NGEP 2015-2019. The draft NGEP 2020-2024 is yet to be launched, and its linkages to the PPA are not yet available to detail. However, the draft NGEP2 2020-2024 Implementation Plan does specify linkages to the Sustainable Development Goals, CEDAW and the National Sustainable Development Plan.

2.1.4 National Legislation and Policies

In terms of *laws*, the Constitution is the supreme law of Vanuatu and therefore all laws inconsistent with the Constitution will be invalid, unless they fall within one of the exceptions, such as legislative provisions "for the special benefit, welfare, provision for the special benefit, welfare, protection or advancement of females, children and young persons, members of under-privileged groups or inhabitants of less developed areas". There are also policy objectives under the NGEP2 to amend the Vanuatu Constitution to include the principle of equality between women and men and to define and prohibit all forms of discrimination against women.

The Education Act is also relevant to gender equality and discrimination against women. It generally restates constitutional prohibitions on discrimination, and requires that a child must not be refused admission to any school or be treated less favourably.

The following Acts are not specific to the education sector, but have been identified as needing reform on the basis of being discriminatory to women or impeding gender equality:

- Family Protection Act
- Matrimonial Causes Act
- Control of Marriage Act
- Employment Act
- Maintenance of Children Act
- Maintenance of Family Act
- Customary Lands Management Act

In terms of *policies*, The National Sustainable Development Plan (NSDP), is the overarching policy document for the nation. Gender inequality and discrimination is addressed through various policy objectives under the NSDP's 3 Pillars: Social, Economic and Environment, most significantly through objectives:

- Society Pillar 2 – Quality Education, which aims to 'ensure that every child, regardless of gender' has access to the education system,¹³
- Society Pillar 4 – Social Inclusion, which aims to 'implement gender responsive planning and budget processing',¹⁴ and eliminate all GBV,¹⁵ and

- Economic Pillar 4 – Create jobs and business opportunities, aiming to ‘increase the number of decent, productive employment opportunities, particularly for young women and men and people with disabilities.’¹⁶

The draft NGE2 Implementation Plan, which is taken as representative of the NGE2 Policy soon to be launched, also aligns with other non-gender specific policy objectives, and aims to address gender inequality and discrimination that exist within these other policy areas and support women’s empowerment, promote leadership, reducing violence and gender mainstreaming in collaboration with stakeholders, including the Ministry of Education and Training (MoET).¹⁷ The MoET has a significant role as a lead or supporting agency under this Policy for the policy objectives below, which are highlighted to indicate expectations within the education sector to address gender inequality and discrimination:

- NGE2 Policy Objective 1.1.2 – Develop a national framework and action plan on ending violence against women and girls
- NGE2 Policy Objective 1.2.1 – Implement behaviour change programs for men and boys using consistent messaging and ‘do no harm’ approach
- NGE2 Policy Objective 1.2.3 – Deliver family life education and sexual and reproductive health programs to men, women, boys and girls
- NGE2 Policy Objective 1.2.4 – Expand human rights, civic education and leadership training for women and girls
- NGE2 Policy Objective 1.3.3 – Implement referral and reporting process for gender-based violence cases in the education sector
- NGE2 Policy Objective 2.1.1 – Invest in inclusive education programs for pregnant adolescent girls, students with disabilities and disadvantaged students
- NGE2 Policy Objective 2.1.2 – Implement child protection and safeguarding policies and procedures in schools
- NGE2 Policy Objective 2.2.1 – Promote female and male participation in non-traditional industries and sectors (e.g., agriculture, fisheries and construction for women; tourism, creative industries, nursing and teaching for men)
- NGE2 Policy Objective 2.2.2 – Support job creation and skills development of women engaged in agriculture, fisheries, handicrafts and tourism, including for women with disabilities
- NGE2 Policy Objective 3.2.2 - Coach, train and support women to progress into senior positions within education, health, policing and justice sectors
- NGE2 Policy Objective 3.2.3 – Expand human rights, civic education and leadership training for women and girls.

Also important within the education sector is the Reviewed Gender Equity in Education Policy (GEEP) of 2018, which recognises the need for action on gender inequality and discrimination against women, acknowledging that ‘gender equality is a key pillar of sustainable development’. The GEEP sets out values and principles to guide the policy, specifically stating that the “Vanuatu education system encourages, supports and promotes gender equity in education. Gender equity in education at all levels is essential to a positive learning experience where both males and females are given the same opportunities to reach their full potential”.

The values and policies, which were also echoed in the MoETs Interim Sector Strategy (VETSS 2017 – 2018) are as follows:

- Accessible, equitable and inclusive education is a human right for everyone;
- Providing high quality education for all students (male and female), is the professional responsibility of all those working in education;

- Being male or female does not determine our capacity to learn or to work, both males and females are equally capable;
- Being male or female should not determine which subjects are studied or which career path to be followed;
- Equality of opportunity may at times mean that either males or females are treated differently for a period of time;
- Action needs to be taken to improve education for females, participation and profile of women in the education system;
- Culture practices/ attitudes based on gender must not limit the educational opportunities of anyone;
- Education must prepare males and females for life in both the modern world and the traditional/cultural world;
- The Teaching and learning environment must always be safe, free from any forms of harassment, bullying and violence.¹⁸

The implementation strategy for the GEEP identifies activities to be carried out under the Policy, under the following areas:

- 11.1 Build a gender, evidence-based understanding of education in Vanuatu
- 11.2 Ensure that schools and materials promote equitable learning and performance, and address issues of security, particularly for girls and women
- 11.3 Foster girls' and women's participation in higher education, STEM, VSP and links to post-education employment
- 11.4 Ensure the full participation of girls and women across all levels of a balanced, gender-equitable education system in Vanuatu

The GEEP also recognises persons with disabilities being vulnerable groups in relation to receiving education, and requires that all aspects of the policy include equal access to education for persons with disabilities.¹⁹ Policy objectives in relation to persons with a disability are also included in the National Disability Policy and Plan of Action 2008-2015, the Mental Health Policy and Plan 2009-2015, the Vanuatu National Disability Inclusive Development Policy 2018-2025, and the Inclusive Education Policy and Strategic Plan 2010-2020. A Disability Desk within the Ministry of Justice and Community Services also exists to monitor the implementation of disability related policies and to coordinate collaboration with government institutions, civil society and development partners. According to Vanuatu's 2009 Census and based on the definitions used in this report, around 5 percent of the population have a mild, moderate or severe disability.²⁰

Other national policies that have seen some development with gender mainstreaming include the National Strategy for the Justice and Community Services Sector (2018-2021), National Financial Inclusion Strategy (2018-2030), and the Vanuatu Agricultural Sector Policy 2015-2030.²¹

2.2 Research Studies on Gender Equity

Gender inequality and discrimination against women is a major challenge in Vanuatu across all areas of society, including access to education and health, participation in the formal labour force, and representation in parliament and other decision-making positions. As detailed in the section above, Vanuatu has made commitments through international conventions and national laws and policies to address inequality and discrimination. However, raising awareness and implementing the objectives of these commitments continue to face considerable challenges due to clashes with customary norms, the gendered roles of women and men, and women's low status in society in general.

High rates of gender-based violence (GBV) and sexual abuse also contribute to these challenges.²² This has been well documented in research studies over the last decade²³.

In a recent comprehensive report on gender and LGBTQI+ policy and programming in Vanuatu prepared by Oxfam, the following findings were presented:

- Gender inequality is a major development challenge for Vanuatu
- The average gross national income of women is about \$1,200 lower than those of men.
- Women occupy a smaller share of most types of formal employment, filling fewer than 40% of jobs across the private and public sectors.
- A greater proportion of women than men are engaged in informal or unpaid work, with the result that women's incomes are less secure. For example, the impacts of Covid-19 have seen a 79% decline in women-led businesses, compared to 54% for their male counterparts.

The report also acknowledges that some progress has been made in the following areas:

- The proportion of women in wage employment has increased, and the number of women directors in government is a new record for Vanuatu.
- Teenage pregnancy has fallen, gaps in education are closing, and the introduction of the *Family Protection Act* in 2008 indicates progress on the issue of gender-based violence.²⁴

Key issues that contribute to inequalities are important to recognise and address in the development of any gender action plans with Vanuatu. For the purposes of this report, they are discussed under the headings of politics and decision-making, culture and gender roles, and economic empowerment.

2.2.1 Gender, politics and decision-making

A particular challenge for gender equality in Vanuatu is a lack of representation of women in leadership and decision-making forums. While women do have the right to vote, Vanuatu is one of only 3 countries in the world without women in Parliament. Given Vanuatu's Westminster government system, this means , women having no representation at either the legislature and the executive (Council of Ministers) level ²⁵.

Most high-level positions in the public and private sectors are also held by men, with qualified women working at lower levels.²⁶ A 2009 census found that the proportion of elected officials, senior officials and managers who were women was less than one third (29%). Recently, significant progress has been made, especially at the level of Directors and Director Generals, but women still only occupy seven out of the 48 Director and Director General positions in the Vanuatu government.²⁷ At the Director General level, what was initially two female DGs has now been reduced to one, following the suspension and subsequent termination of the DG of the Ministry of Justice and Community Services (MoJCS), based on claims of insubordination from the Minister of MoJCS. Prior to being suspended, the DG had challenged a Council of Ministers' decision to replace the MoJCS with a Ministry of Fisheries and Ocean. The Supreme Court ruled that both the dissolution of the MoJCS and the termination of the DG were unlawful.

Barriers also exist in other areas, such as the Malvatumauri Council of Chiefs and senior positions in the church, the two institutions that provide spiritual guidance the maintenance of customs and traditions, based on beliefs that only men can participation in these institutions or positions.²⁸

The lack of representation in positions of leadership and decision-making forums represents a major challenge in dealing with gender equality issues in all aspects of society. Strong traditional cultural norms—known as *kastom* in Vanuatu—along with patriarchal values introduced through Christianity and colonial power structures dictate that leadership roles are the domain of men and that women should fulfill supportive roles.²⁹ A study carried out by the Department of Women's Affairs in 2002 found

that the influence of *kastom* and the reluctance of political parties to adopt women candidates were major contributors to the political underrepresentation of women.³⁰

A comparison of gender inequality issues in Vanuatu and the Solomon Islands, carried out in 2000, made interesting observations that have not changed much since then. It noted that both countries had a history of poor commitment to gender issues, such as minimal staffing of the Department of Women's Affairs (or its equivalent) and a lack of delivery of specific programmes and policies. It noted also that while Vanuatu had taken steps to develop a policy committed to addressing gender inequalities (the Comprehensive Reform Program 1997), the policy was limited in its ability to promote attitudinal change regarding traditional gender relations on women's participation in decision-making at all levels. This posited the program as a rhetorical policy, not offering any significant suggestions for change.³¹

The lack of resources, staffing and funding for delivery of specific programmes and policies was reinforced in a review carried out by the Department of Women's Affairs on the previous Gender Equity Policy, which highlighted that key barriers towards the policy's implementation included:

- Lack of government resources and commitment
- Dominance of men in Parliament and political parties
- Traditional beliefs that a woman's place is not as a leader
- Lack of supporting policies created a challenging environment for the success of the policy³²

In more recent years, policies supporting the NGEP have come into existence (see section above). However, resistance to measures to address inequality remains sensitive and divisive and has resulted in some organisations being targeted in a negative way for trying to speak out or create change to government policies. One example of this was the Oxfam supported 'Vot Woman' campaign. In spite of its grassroots orientation, it resulted in a government backlash against Oxfam and criticism from other NGOs and the Vanuatu Association of NGOs.³³ Attempts to create temporary special measures for gender representation quotas at the national level have been highly controversial and unsuccessful.

Interestingly, a research study carried out by NGO Care Vanuatu found that women also created barriers, with many having more conservative views than men. This included strong beliefs that violence against women is justified in certain circumstances, and women in senior positions acting dismissive towards or denigrating younger women for participating in decision-making forums.³⁴ A recent Overseas Development Institute report also suggested that evidence of having more women in power, even at a critical mass, does not automatically generate improved outcomes for women.³⁵

2.2.2 Culture and Gender Roles

As described above, in Vanuatu the unequal gender representation in positions of power creates resistance to progress on gender. It constrains men and boys to particular gender stereotypes. In a research study carried out by the Stretem Rod blong Jastis Programme (AusAID funded), which looked into conflict management in rural Vanuatu, respondents clearly distinguished roles and norms based on gender. For example, both men and women believed that men were the best people to deal with cases involving land disputes.³⁶

It should be noted that Vanuatu's land laws determine customary land ownership and rights according to *kastom* rules. While this does not directly discriminate against women, 97% of land in Vanuatu is held under customary tenure, and *kastom* rules relating to land rights and use are predominately patriarchal. Even though there are a few islands that determine land ownership through matrilineal lines, the resolution of disputes, how the land is used, and other decision-making is still often decided by men. One example is the Vanuatu land registry reports which indicate that of the 30,000 registered leases on record, less than 20 of these leases are registered in the sole name of a woman.³⁷

In a research study carried out by the World Bank, analysing challenges to economic participation for women in Vanuatu, the findings *kastom* has great ‘potency’ in shaping gender roles Vanuatu:

The uncertain futures associated with modernity cause some ni-Vanuatu to hold tight to *kastom*. *Kastom* can be used to curtail the actions of women... Bride price, for example, while intended to celebrate the union of families, has been used to undermine women. The late Grace Mera Molisa, ni-Vanuatu poet and women’s activist, asserted that women were oppressed both by traditional structures and by introduced structures of church and politics.³⁸

The example of bride price used in the World Bank study is linked to gender inequalities, a lower status of women and gender-based violence. A UN Women’s Report found that 50% of women believed that good wives must obey their husbands even if she disagrees, 40% believe the man should be the boss, and 53% believe that a wife becomes the husband’s property after bride price is paid. Other common views shared included agreement that it was alright for a woman or girl to be swapped for marriage, that women were not allowed to touch food while menstruating, and that it was justified for a husband to beat his wife to teach her a lesson or if the bride price was paid.³⁹

The review of the NGEF carried out by the Department of Women’s Affairs, cited earlier, also reiterated challenges around *kastom*, tradition and gender roles. Key barriers included:

- Traditional beliefs that a woman’s place is not as a leader
- Belief that *kastom* laws do not need changing
- Continued belief in the inferiority of women by both women and men
- The idea that promoting women’s rights is incompatible with Christian principles
- The endemic nature of gender-based violence⁴⁰

Gender-based violence is endemic in Vanuatu. A report in 2011 by the Vanuatu Women’s Centre surveying 3,750 women across Vanuatu found that 60% of women who had ever been in a relationship had experienced either physical or sexual abuse by a partner, and more than 2 in 3 had experienced emotional abuse.⁴¹ This impacts on women participating in the work force, with other research studies finding that women earning an income experience physical and/or domestic violence by their spouse at a higher rate than women that do not earn their own income, and others having to resign or refuse work because their spouse interrupted their work or did not want them to work.⁴²

Children also experience high rates of violence. Close to 1 in 3 women were sexually abused before the age of 15 years and children are regularly subjected to severe physical discipline.⁴³ People with disabilities (PWD) and people of diverse sexual orientation and gender identity expression (SOGIE) experience additional negative impact from social norms. Traditional Vanuatu culture tends to hide or ignore people with disabilities⁴⁴ and SOGIE people experience active violence and hostility. Recent research on violence against SOGIE people has also indicated that experiences of violence are considerably higher than the figures for women⁴⁵.

Gender-based violence in Vanuatu has resulted in a variety of programmes addressing this issue being designed in an “extremely sensitive” way, with “careful, locally led, contextualised approaches”.⁴⁶

The Vanuatu government recognizes the role of culture in relation to gender equality and statements within the National Gender Equity in Education Policy 2018 indicate some approaches for addressing conflicts between *kastom* and gender equality:

There are many different cultures in Vanuatu that sustain and enrich the lives of its people. These cultures have evolved over many centuries. Cultural practices vary from Province to Province and within islands.

Culture does not stand still; over time it changes. This is the case in Vanuatu, for example over the last 150 years Christianity has become central in the lives of many Ni-Vanuatu. While it is important to preserve those aspects of culture that help sustain and enrich people's lives, it is also important to change those aspects that limit people's opportunities based on their gender.

Promoting gender equality does not mean disrespecting culture; rather it is about evaluating their unique needs and constraints and acknowledging that specific steps must be taken if differences are to be addressed. The result needs to ensure the contribution of men/women are equally valued and both have the same chance at success.⁴⁷

3. Gender in Employment and Education

3.1 Gender and Labour Force Participation in Vanuatu

Women represent 40% of the labor force in both public and private sectors, compared to 60% for men. More women than men are engaged in informal or unpaid work, most being full-time homemakers caring for children, the elderly, people with disabilities and other family members⁴⁸

Sixty percent of private and public sector jobs are held by men. The top occupations for women in Vanuatu include: subsistence crop farmers; field crop and vegetable growers; subsistence mixed crop and livestock farmer; cleaner; crop farm laborer; early childhood educator and teacher, copra cutter, handicrafts; sales person; and market seller. More women than men are engaged in informal or unpaid work, most being full-time homemakers caring for children, the elderly, people with disabilities and other family members⁴⁹

Despite holding a lower percentage of jobs in both public and private sectors, the educational qualifications of women are generally higher than men in the same jobs. The number of women completing senior secondary education is also higher than those of men. About 85% of full-time homemakers are women.⁵⁰ Notably, over half of women income earners earn the same or more income as their partner/husband. However, only one in five (18%) have a savings account, 31% have other savings, but very few women own any major assets⁵¹.

It has also been recognized through various policies and gender research studies that women and girls are disproportionately impacted by disasters and pandemics, including Covid-19 resulting in existing gender inequalities being exasperated. Covid-19 has impacted most significantly on the tourism and handicraft industries, with both sectors having a large portion of uneducated, or low educated women workers.⁵² Women-led enterprises were reported to have declined by 79%, as compared to 54% for their male counterparts in a recent survey report.⁵³

Initiatives to date that have aimed at addressing gender equality in economic empowerment have had inconsistent outcomes. For example, the Australian Aid programming has included a strong focus on gender with mixed results, stating:

There is not strong or overt political or cultural support for promoting gender equality and women's economic empowerment in Vanuatu. Therefore, while Australian aid programming has included a strong focus on gender, results have been mixed.

Discussions with stakeholders revealed systematic agreement that addressing gender equality was challenging in Vanuatu. It was reported that there was a pervasive mentality against women's economic empowerment and that views on gender were extreme and divided.

Stakeholders agreed that donors are limited in the role they can play and should not tackle the issue head-on but rather work indirectly, preferably through their own programs. . Moreover, even when program designs included gender, implementation was often a problem. A commonly held view was that the best way to lead on this issue was by demonstrating effectiveness, thereby gaining male acceptance and potentially male champions⁵⁴

As mentioned, women are more likely to undertake the role of full-time homemaker than men. However, they also have responsibilities within the wider family and the community, which limits their ability to dedicate time and energy to developing business activities. The increasing incidence of non-communicable diseases also impacts women. Having to dedicate many hours of care for family members limits their capacity to enter into paid work.⁵⁵ For families that have both husband and wife working, it is generally expected that the wife uses her salary to feed the family, pay school fees and all household expenses, while the husband's salary is used at his discretion.⁵⁶

Given Vanuatu's land tenure system, detailed in the section above, women often have no formal rights to the land. As a result, women in the informal sector, or those self-employed, have less opportunity to secure financing using land as collateral.⁵⁷ To address this issue, the Department of Women's Affairs in 1996 introduced VANWOODS, a microfinance project to mainstream women's participation in economic activities. After providing financial support to over 1,000 women,⁵⁸ the institutional arrangements were changed, separating VANWOODS from the Department of Women's Affairs. Subsequently VANWOODS changed its focus from women's economic empowerment to a general lending scheme.⁵⁹

There are no women's business associations in Vanuatu, limiting opportunities to network and receive training and support. However, there have been some recent initiatives by the Vanuatu Chamber of Commerce and Industry providing mentoring, training and support for women.⁶⁰

3.2 Gender and Education in Vanuatu

3.2.1 Historical Context and current state of education

The educational system in Vanuatu must be understood within the context of colonial history. European explorers and colonists entered the region we now know as Vanuatu in the 17th and 18th centuries and this chain of islands later became known as New Hebrides. Following a 1906 agreement between French and British Colonists, known as the "Condominium", the New Hebrides was jointly administered by French and British colonialists.

The "Condominium" rule divided the country into French and British dominated areas. A parallel system of courts, police force, hospitals, administrative machinery, and education systems was created. Both French and English languages were promoted and taught separately in different school systems. French and English rivalry included divisions in the colonial imposed religious sector with French oriented Catholic churches functioning parallel to Protestant oriented Anglophone churches. This cultural and linguistic rivalry also extended into the political sector, with each having their own Francophone or Anglophone oriented parties

After Vanuatu independence in 1980, the Vanuatu educational system continued to be divided according to French or English curricula. However, the growing influence of English has left French speakers with diminished educational opportunities in Vanuatu. USP uses English as its language of instruction, leaving French speakers at a disadvantage. NUV promises to end the imbalance in language orientation at the level of higher education by emphasizing bi-lingual education.

Today, the Education and Training Sector Strategy (VETSS) 2020-2030⁶¹ is aligned with the National Sustainable Development Plan (2016-2030), also known as the “Peoples Plan”. It places strong emphasis on the central role of education in the socio-economic development, the protection of cultural identity, and the betterment of the people of Vanuatu at every level of society.

The education system in Vanuatu is based on 2 years of preschool, 6 years of primary, 4 years of lower secondary, and 3 years of upper secondary. This is also known as the “2-4-6-3” model. In addition, opportunities have been created for post-secondary education.

The education sector is managed by the Ministry of Education and Training (MoET) and is supported by church and private education authorities, operating under government agreements and framework regulations. Over 98% of primary education in Vanuatu are either public schools or government-assisted church school.

In 2019, 92,000 students were served by 4,230 teachers, in a total of 1,453 schools across the country. Even though enrollment rates in secondary education are still low, due to high dropout rates Vanuatu has met the goal of universal primary education.

Post-secondary education is considered to be an optional final stage of formal learning. This often takes place in a number of varied educational institutions offering academic degrees or professional certifications, including the University of the South Pacific (USP), an intergovernmental, public teaching and research university that has general and speciality campuses spread throughout a dozen countries in Oceania. The USP Emalus campus offers advanced studies in English, in law, along with Certificates and/or Diplomas in Information Technology, Early Childhood Education and Care, Accounting, Human Resource Management, Counselling and Office Management.⁶²

The recent Oxfam report (2020) already referred to above, concluded that there is inequality in education, noting that the expected years of schooling are slightly lower for girls than boys, and a greater proportion of women than men have never been to school. Although this gap is closing in younger generations, women still have lower rates than men do of secondary education attainment (25.3 percent versus 27.4 percent) and tertiary education attainment (3.3 percent versus 4.5 percent).

The report points to some progress made regarding these issues, particularly with a reduction in teenage pregnancy and linked to this, a slow closing of the gap in education at the primary and secondary levels.

3.2.2 The costs of education

While the government of Vanuatu subsidizes primary education to a large extent, education at the secondary and tertiary level is costly, and includes school fees, uniforms, books and supplies.

Since 2010, the government has provided free tuition at the primary school level. Attendance however is not mandatory. At the secondary level, school fees come to 55,000 Vt., and is the responsibility of the family. Comparing the cost of education for a family of three (average number of children per family) 70,000 Vt. to the average monthly salary of a citizen of Vanuatu (33,000 Vt.), we can find education costs (not including supplies) amounting to almost three months of family income.⁶³

This presents a particular challenge for families with lower income status and directly affects their chances for providing an education for their children, especially for girls.

It is acknowledged that many families struggle to find the money to pay school fees and sometimes it is difficult to pay all their children’s school fees to attend school. At times, a boy is chosen to continue his education because traditionally on marriage, a girl will leave her

family. In this case, the child's sex rather than their ability determines their educational future. This practice disadvantages girls yet we know that when girls are educated the return to the family in terms of improved health benefits the whole family. Education cost, discrimination, attitudes and expectations still hamper gender equality in Vanuatu's education system.⁶⁴

To offset the cost of education, Vanuatu students are offered scholarship to study in Vanuatu or abroad through a variety of Vanuatu governmental and foreign scholarships. Between 2017 and 2019, the availability of scholarships to female students has increased substantially. This is the case for both Vanuatu government scholarships, as well as those offered by foreign governments.

All scholarships are intended to align with one or more of priorities stated in the *People's Plan*⁶⁵. These priorities exist within the Three Pillars of the *People's Plan*: Society; Environment; and Economy. Scholarships are posted on-line by the MoET Scholarship Department to all interested applicants.

Education is considered to be a major part of the government social and economic development goals and aspirations, and much progress has been made in the area of education, especially at the tertiary level. Unfortunately, much like many developing countries, Vanuatu faces many financial and technical challenges and the funding for education needs to be weighed against other national priorities. This is clearly evident in recent budgetary allocations. The 2020 education budget amounted 7,334,908,061 Vatu and the estimated budget for 2022 is 7,460,642,400 Vatu.

An amount of VT 870.7 million will be used to improve the education quality, accessibility and training outcomes for children and young people. This includes tuition fees for children in years 7 to 10, grants for schools, recruitment of new teachers, severance and housing allowances for teachers, and the development of Vanuatu National University.⁶⁶

As a developing country, Vanuatu faces major challenges in meeting the development needs and requirements of the nation, as outlined in the *People's Plan*. These include the continuous threat of natural disasters, geopolitical rivalries in the Pacific, globalization instabilities, and the most recent public health threat from COVID-19, and its impact on the economy, especially the collapse of the tourism sector. All of these affect the government budget, and the allocation of resources to national needs.

The UNESCO 2020 Global Education Monitoring (GEM) report, based on 2016 data, shows that Vanuatu expenditures on education comprised 4% of the GDP and 12.7% of total government expenditures. The global and Oceania medians were 4.4% and 4.7% of GDP, and 14% and 12.7% of total government expenditures, respectively⁶⁷.

3.2.3 Disability and Education

Intersectionality becomes a key factor when we consider gender, disability, and socio-economic factors. People with disabilities live at the margins of society for a number of socio-economic and cultural reasons, with women and girls being the most affected. The government of Vanuatu has recognized this problem, and is making efforts to rectify the situation:

“Boys and girls with disabilities are less likely to receive an education. Girls with disabilities are part of the vulnerable group and seldom receive an education; they are less visible than boys with disabilities. All aspects of this policy include equal access to education for boys and girls with disabilities”.⁶⁸

The Vanuatu Education and Training Sector Strategic Plan 2020 – 2030 states:

“Disability was seen as a significant determinant to education access in Vanuatu, with study participants naming disability-specific barriers such as access to school facilities, teaching

inclusion, curriculum inclusion, discrimination and limited access to income (to meet school fees) as the 4th highest barrier to education “. ⁶⁹

Vanuatu government statistics for 2007 showed that 3,396 out of 33,268 primary school students had disabilities, close to 10% of primary school student population. In secondary school, 392 disabled children were attending, about 8% of the secondary school student population. In senior secondary schools we find 251 disabled students out of a population of 4,804 or 5%.

The same study shows that 348 students with disabilities did not attend school. Out of this, 163 were at kindergarten level, 258 at primary level, and 348 at secondary level.

How many children were not able to access secondary schooling due to attitudinal, structural and administrative barriers such as negative attitudes, inadequate teacher training, inappropriate educational tools, lack of qualified special needs and sign/braille teachers, lack of accessible textbooks, failure to make modifications to the school environment to make it fully accessible, school fees and many more are barriers that need to be researched and documented. What is clear is that the exclusion of children and youths with disabilities from higher education will result in their exclusion from other opportunities of development leading to diminished access to vocational training, employment, income generation and potential to live independent lives. ⁷⁰

3.2.4 Gender and post-secondary education

Despite important challenges, significant progress has been made over the past years in providing students with access to tertiary education. Vanuatu students can attend a number of institutions after the completion of secondary school education. These include both Post Education and Training Institutions (PSET), and opportunities for study at the university level at home, and abroad. These opportunities are open for all qualified male and female students.

Post-School Education and Training (PSET) sector refers to all education and training, private, public, formal and informal, that takes place after school training. “The main purpose of the PSET sector is to develop occupation-specific and generic skills needed in the economy, so that students find employment.” Some challenges remain in this program relating to the difficulties of the private sector in finding skilled workers. Socio-cultural factors may affect how PSET training is perceived by the general public, and by the private sector potential employers.

More broadly, post-secondary options such as technical and trade qualifications are not well understood in Vanuatu and stakeholders report that these are considered by many families and communities to be less desirable than university and professional pathways.

Alongside this, pathways to and within private sector employment are not necessarily well understood by the wider population. As a result, the contribution of the PSET sector to employment opportunities and to economic development for Vanuatu are not well understood and communicated”. ⁷¹

A review of the PSET program also found issues with data collection and management, as well as too much centralization in how the program is organized. This has made it difficult to evaluate the program in terms of efficiency and effectiveness. ⁷²

These issues become important as the strategic plan of the National University involves the absorption of PSET institutions into its domain. Integration of these institutions into NUV will require major upskilling and educational capacity building so that the education and training provided will meet university level education standards. Hopefully this will change perceptions of the PSET program in a positive and productive manner.

The PSET institutions below provide Vanuatu students with vocational training needed to participate in the labor force:

- Vanuatu Maritime College
- Vanuatu Institute of Teachers Education (VITE)
- Vanuatu Institute of Technology (VIT)
- Vanuatu Nursing College (VNC)
- Australian Pacific Training College (APTC)
- Vanuatu Agriculture College (VAC)

Levels	SECTORS		
	School	TVET	Higher Education
10			Doctorate
9			Masters
8			Post Graduate Diploma Post Graduate Certificate Bachelor with Honour
7			Bachelor Degree Graduate Diploma Graduate Certificate
6		Advance Diploma	Diploma
5		Diploma	
4	Vanuatu Form Seven Certificate/SPFSC	Certificate IV	University Foundation
3	Vanuatu Senior Secondary Certificate	Certificate III	
2		Certificate II	
1	Vanuatu Junior Secondary Certificate	Certificate I	

With the exception of APTC, the long term plan is for the NUV to integrate these existing post-secondary institutions into the NUV, along with its own and the AUF new and existing programs, to create the integrated approach shown in the model above.

The chart below shows PSET trainees for the period of 2017-2019⁷³. Looking at participation and graduation rates, we see substantial differences between male and female students. In terms of PSET enrollment, in 2017, 67% of those enrolled were male and 33% were female. In 2018, 70 % were male and 30% were female. In 2019, there was a significant overall drop in enrollment, but a major increase in the proportion of female students, with 56% of the students being male and 44% being female. PSET graduation numbers demonstrate that significantly fewer women than men actually graduate. For 2017, of the 1441 graduates, 1090 or 76 % were male and 351 or 24 % were female. For 2018, of the total of 1,113 graduates, 953 or 86 % were male, and 160 or 14% were female. For 2019, 469 or 44% were female and 589 or 54% were male.

Institutions	2017			2018			2019		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Vanuatu Maritime College (VMC)	925	38	963	748	8	756			
Vanuatu Institute of Teachers Education (VITE)	108	184	292	54	72	126	54	66	120
Vanuatu Institute of Technology (VIT)	290	227	517	509	382	891	240	231	471
Vanuatu Nursing College (VNC)	32	79	111	32	79	111	67	37	104
Australian Pacific Training College (APTC)	108	206	314	47	73	120	31	52	83
Vanuatu Agriculture College (VAC)	65	29	94	79	57	136	115	53	168
Vanuatu Police College (VPC)				24	11	35	82	30	112
Total	1,528	763	2,291	1,446	609	2,055	589	469	1,058

Qualified Vanuatu students have opportunities for university level education at home and abroad. In past years, the only university in Vanuatu was the *University of the South Pacific* (USP). The chart below shows near parity levels of USP enrollment by gender. USP Emalus data also show that in 2018, more women than men graduated. Of the total 173 graduates, 73 were male and 100 were female.⁷⁴

*USP Emalus Campus ni-Vanuatu student completion of awards by program and gender*⁷⁵

Program	2016			2017		
	M	F	Total	M	F	Total
Certificate	2	0	2	1	3	4
Diploma	0	0	0	0	4	4
Bachelor of Degree	45	56	101	43	30	73
Graduate Certificate	0	0	0	10	28	38
Postgraduate Certificate	0	0	0	0	1	1
Postgraduate Diploma	3	2	5	8	7	15
Professional Diploma	2	1	3	4	5	9
Master	2	1	3	1	1	2
Total	54	60	114	67	79	146

The *Agency of Francophone Universities* (Agence Universitaire de la Francophonie - AUF) facilitates the enrolment in the 900+ universities within their network. The data set below indicates that for ni-Van students taking this route, both enrolment and graduation numbers for women have been consistently higher than those for men from 2016-2018, with one exception in 2017. The tables show graduates in AUF facilitated programs from 2017 – 2019 and enrolments by programs from 2018 to 2020⁷⁶.

Number of graduated students in each program in 2017 - 2019

Course	2017			2018			2019		
	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T
High School Diploma to Access to University	3	2	5	3	14	17	2	2	4
Certificate in IT and Internet (C2i)	5	4	9	4	4	8	4	8	12
Diploma in Science and Technology	2	1	3	4	5	9			
Diploma in IT and Internet (B2i)	7	5	12				1	0	1
Totals	17	12	29	11	23	34	7	10	17

Number of students by gender enrolled in courses offered through AUF in 2018 – 2020

Course	2018			2019			2020		
	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T
High School Diploma to Access to University	21	41	62	15	26	41	18	15	33
Certificate in IT and Internet (C2i)	7	4	11	6	8	14	4	19	23
Diploma in Science and Technology	3	0	3	0	0	0	1	0	1
Diploma in IT and Internet (B2i)	7	9	16	0	0	0	n/a	n/a	n/a
Totals	38	54	92	21	34	55	23	34	57

The *National University of Vanuatu* was established in 2019 to provide higher education and lifelong learning through academic and professional excellence by way of training, teaching and learning in both English and French languages. The university offers Bachelor, Master and PhD programmes with specific fields as outlined in the tables below⁷⁷.

Overall, the enrollment pattern for the NUV, reflected in the tables below, shows that in 2020, at the undergraduate level, substantially more female students were enrolled than male students. At the Master's and PhD level, there were more male than female students⁷⁸.

Number of students by gender enrolled by in programs offered at the NUV in 2018 – 2020

Program	2018			2019			2020		
	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T
B. Economics & Social Administration	78	78	156	85	98	183	76	107	183
B. Economics & Social Administration (O)				13	17	30	18	7	25
B. Tourism & Hospitality	19	19	38	19	34	53	24	52	76
M. Economics & Social Sciences	22	14	36	10	9	19	13	10	23
M. P/D of Pacific Island Territories	5	5	10				6	1	7
PhD	-	-	-	3	1	4	3	1 ⁷⁹	4
Total	124	116	240	130	159	289	140	178	318

Number of students by gender graduated in each program at the NUV in 2018 – 2019

Program	2018			2019			2020		
	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T
B. Economics & Social Administration	11	9	20	24	18	42	76	107	183
B. Economics & Social Administration (O)	-	-	-	-	-	-	18	7	25
B. Tourism & Hospitality	-	-	-	-	-	-	24	52	76
M. Economics & Social Sciences	12	9	21	3	4	7	13	10	23
M. Planning / Developing of Pacific Island Territories of Vanuatu	5	4	9	-	-	-	6	1	7
PhD	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	1	4
Total	28	22	50	27	22	49	140	178	318

Scholarships are available from the Vanuatu Government and donor countries. The data below details the number of scholarships awarded, and those that are on-going, by funding agency and gender⁸⁰.

Vanuatu Students Scholarship Awards by Sponsors 2018-2020

Sponsors	2018			2019			2020		
	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T
Vanuatu Government	266	255	521	248	273	521	67	99	166
VNPF Schemes							200	182	382
New Zealand	17	20	37	19	15	34	16	17	33
France	5	5	10	2	2	4	7	7	14
Australian Aid	7	6	13	10	10	20	14	18	32
Total	295	286	581	279	300	579	294	314	608

Number of on-going scholarships awarded by sponsors in 2018 – 2020

Sponsors	2018			2019			2020		
	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T
Vanuatu Government	224	241	465	377	359	736	358	351	709
New Zealand	51	52	103	54	48	102	28	20	48
France	7	2	9	5	2	7	9	2	11
Australian Aid	18	19	37	21	24	45	13	17	30
Total	300	314	614	457	422	890	408	390	798

4. Gender in the Global Academic Context

4.1 Gender Equality and Gender Mainstreaming

According to the Global Partnership for Education, *gender equality* refers to “the equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities of women, men, girls and boys, and equal power to shape their own lives and contribute to society”. Gender equality also includes gender equity, which concerns itself with “fairness and justice regarding benefits and needs”. Achieving gender equality by necessity also requires a transformational commitment “to make equal rights and equal power a reality”. Rather than a ‘women’s issue’, “gender equality benefits women and men, girls and boys, and should be of concern to all”^{81,82}.

Gender equality is not an isolated component or a separate goal in development, since most if not all of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) require gender equality in order to be effectively realized. SDG 5, however, focuses on the enforcement of gender equality, and states that:

“Achieving every Sustainable Development Goal depends on improving the lives of women, girls, men, and boys equally. But achieving gender equality demands urgent action to end harmful practices and violence against women and girls, and overcome the social, political, educational, and health barriers that deny them equal rights and opportunities”⁸³. SDG 5 includes the following targets:

- 5.1 End all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere
- 5.2 Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation
- 5.3 Eliminate all harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation
- 5.4 Recognize and value unpaid care and domestic work through the provision of public services, infrastructure and social protection policies and the promotion of shared responsibility within the household and the family as nationally appropriate
- 5.5 Ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life
- 5.6 Ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights as agreed in accordance with the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome documents of their review conferences
- 5.7 Undertake reforms to give women equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to ownership and control over land and other forms of property, financial services, inheritance and natural resources, in accordance with national laws
- 5.8 Enhance the use of enabling technology, in particular information and communications technology, to promote the empowerment of women
- 5.9 Adopt and strengthen sound policies and enforceable legislation for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls at all levels⁸⁴

Higher education plays a particularly important role in achieving gender equality, as it “lies at the nexus of growth, jobs, and competitiveness and has the potential to serve as a catalyst for economic transformation. The higher education system sits at the apex of the education system, supporting the lower levels of education, preparing professionals and skilled labor, and serving as an incubator for research”^{85 86}.

The International Association of Universities in its 2021 publication on Higher Education and SDG5 notes that “Gender Equality is a crucial issue for society in the 21st century, with more than half of the world’s population being women. Around the globe, universities and other higher education institutions, their leadership, academic and administrative staff, and students, are increasingly mobilized for the United Nations Agenda 2030 and the related Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). SDG 5, in particular, is receiving more and more attention, due to its crucial role for the advancement of all of the SDGs and society⁸⁷.”

Similarly, the Global Partnership argues that “gender equality in and through education is critical to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development” and that “gender equality in education has substantial proven impacts on many other Sustainable Development Goals, including economic growth, health, nutrition, agricultural productivity and reduced inequality”⁸⁸.

Unfortunately, the road to gender equality, whether in education, development, governance, or other areas, is often misunderstood as a mathematical exercise, adding in isolated “gender” components, or counting the mere presence of women in the room, regardless of their influence or the decision outcomes. As a result, education in gender issues is often relegated to a secondary status⁸⁹ and efforts at meaningful gender reform remain ineffective.

To counter these problems, *gender mainstreaming* was developed as “a globally accepted strategy for promoting gender equality”. Gender mainstreaming involves “ensuring that gender perspectives and attention to the goal of gender equality are central to all activities – policy development, research, advocacy/dialogue, legislation, resource allocation, and planning, implementation and monitoring of programmes and projects”:

Mainstreaming is not about adding on a ‘women’s component’, or even a ‘gender equality component’, to an existing activity. It involves more than increasing women’s participation. Mainstreaming situates gender equality issues at the centre of policy decisions, medium-term plans, programme budgets, and institutional structures and processes.⁹⁰

The rationale for mainstreaming gender equality is not only social justice and equity. More fundamentally, it is the understanding that gender equality is one of the major conditions for and drivers of development, and a powerful tool in the exponential increase of national capacity.

4.2 Gender Mainstreaming in Education

The basis for gender mainstreaming in education can be found as early as 1960 in the adoption of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) by the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). Article 10 of CEDAW specifically stipulates that ‘parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in order to ensure equal rights with men in the field of education and in particular to promote rights on a basis of equality of men and women’⁹¹. However, the *meaning* and the *scope* of gender mainstreaming in education is not always clear to those responsible for its implementation.

When we apply gender mainstreaming to education, gender equality means first, “equal educational opportunities (including access, retention and learning) for all girls and boys, as well as gender equality for teachers and administrators”. Second, it means “gender-responsive curricula, teaching and learning materials, and teacher training”. Third, it requires embedding “gender equality and gender responsiveness in the leadership, governance, operations and financing of the education system itself, including the government, local education groups, school management committees and other interfaces with local communities”⁹².

Gender mainstreaming also means that a gender lens, gender informed practices, and equitable gender representation systematically permeate what the IEG World Bank report on Higher Education refers to as the three distinct but interrelated missions of higher education: 1) Teaching and learning: Preparing students for the future; 2) Research: Creating knowledge and innovation; and 3) Community engagement: Supporting university and community collaboration⁹³.

Talking about the African experience, Taiwo notes that “(o)ver the past decade, African higher education institution, Universities in particular, have been very keen to mainstream gender into their core functions of teaching, learning, research and administration systems”. Key themes that were addressed as part of this process included the international policy drivers for gender equity, representation of women in senior academic and management posts, access as a redistributive measure, gender violence, gender bias in organizational culture, the micro-politics of sexism, and the gendered division of labour in academia.⁹⁴

Looking specifically at research, the EU Member States and Associated countries in the European Research Area identified gender equality as a key priority area contributing to the quality of research and innovation, and advocated for sustainable cultural and institutional change through: 1. Removing barriers to the recruitment, retention and career progression of women researchers; 2. Addressing gender imbalances in decision making processes; 3. Integrating the gender dimension in research and innovation content⁹⁵⁹⁶.

Equitable access to higher education is another key area to consider, including patterns in enrollment, results or completion, and learning and employability:

Policy makers have a wide range of policies to improve equity at the tertiary level. Broadly speaking, these can be divided into four groups: (i) financial assistance, including targeted scholarships and student loans; (ii) academic support, covering supplemental teaching and tutoring; (iii) personal support, including academic guidance and counseling; and (iv) institutional support, comprising affirmative action, accommodation, and tracking⁹⁷

Mainstreaming gender in education also means looking at and addressing the broader connections between higher education and society. For instance, it is commonly known that men and women often pursue different fields of study. The IEG report notes that “in all countries with data, the Gender Parity Index (GPI) of students in the science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) fields is substantially less than 1”⁹⁸.

University funding of these costly degree programs, often at the expense of other fields more popular with women, such as education, nursing and the humanities, has considerable, negative implications for gender inequity. This is even more so the case if the universities do not succeed in attracting women to those programs through such strategies as actively recruiting women, providing positive female role models and faculty in those areas, providing science and technology curricula that use a gender perspective, working with institutions of secondary education to promote girls’ success in those areas, and working with the public and private sector to ensure women are welcomed and accepted in professional positions once they graduate⁹⁹.

Additional factors to be explored include social and cultural forces, such as strong social pressures on women to marry and bear children, a lack of social, financial and cultural support for single women, and a failure to accommodate pregnancy and pregnancy- related disabilities, which are all factors that will directly or indirectly affect female enrollment in and graduation from the university.

Like women, people with disabilities encounter significant barriers to education, especially higher education. Equality of access for students with disabilities may require teaching adaptations, since many

disabilities affect how the curriculum is accessed, and funding mechanisms must consider the additional time students may require to complete their studies as well as the higher living costs¹⁰⁰

For students with disabilities, it means that the university must provide differentiated accommodations, transportation, and learning modalities to accommodate physical and learning disabilities. This requires not only financial commitments, but more fundamentally, an awareness of and a commitment to inclusion on the part of faculty and administrators.

Summarizing, gender mainstreaming in higher education effectively means a thorough transformation of *all aspects of higher education*: teaching methods and content, curriculum in all disciplines, research areas and methods, administration policies and practices, faculty composition and skills, student support and learning outcomes, and community relations.

One of the most comprehensive documents in this area was developed by the Catalan University Quality Assurance Agency (AQU) in 2018, providing guidelines and recommendations for effectively mainstreaming a gender equality perspective in all areas of higher education teaching¹⁰¹.

Explaining the need for and benefits of gender mainstreaming, the document explains that:

Mainstreaming gender into teaching improves the quality of instruction and the social relevance of the resulting knowledge, technology and innovations. The gender perspective facilitates an in-depth understanding of the needs, behaviour and attitudes of the whole population, avoiding both partial interpretations based on men as the universal subject and essentialist views of men and women. In this way, errors in theoretical conceptualisations and empirical analyses can be avoided. Teaching with a gender perspective also stimulates students' critical thinking capacity, providing them with new tools to identify social stereotypes, norms and roles related to gender. They thus learn to problematize dominant socialisation patterns and develop skills that will enable them to avoid gender blindness in their future careers.

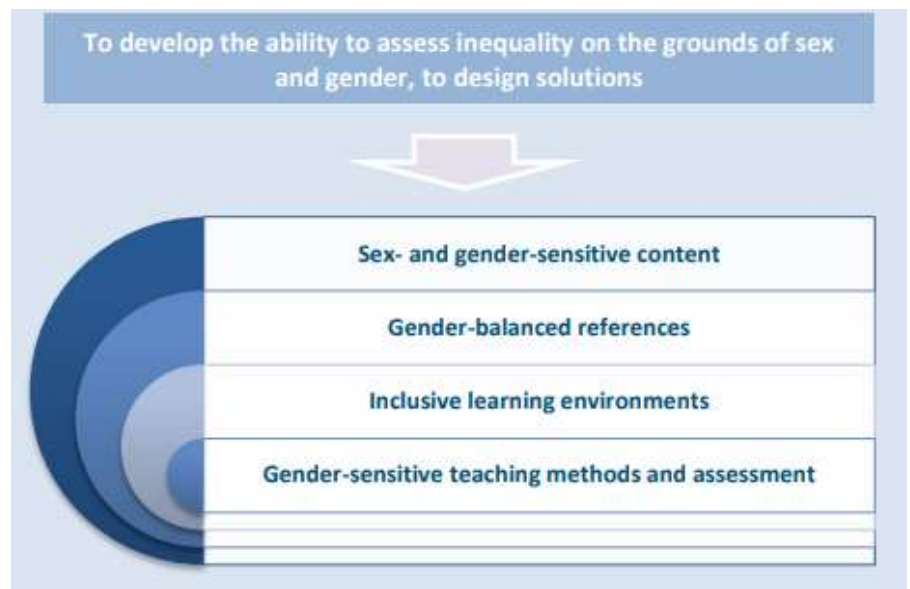
According to the definition given by the European Union (EIGE, 2016), "*Gender blindness* is the failure to recognise that the roles and responsibilities of women/girls and men/boys are ascribed to, or imposed upon, them in specific social, cultural, economic and political contexts. Gender-blind projects, programmes, policies and attitudes do not take into account these different roles and diverse needs. They therefore maintain the status quo and will not help transform the unequal structure of gender relations". University teaching is also affected by gender blindness, as pointed out in a recent report from the Xarxa Vives d'Universitats (Verge and Cabruja, 2017). Regarding content, gender blindness has many consequences in education: the over-generalisation of the phenomena studied on the basis of the experience of men, making the situation of women invisible; a false representation of the behaviour, attitudes and needs of women as a deviation from the ideal male model; a blurring of the differences between men and women, as if they were homogeneous groups; and explanations of the differences based on gender stereotypes (Lovenduski, 1998; Minnarch, 2010). At the same time, teaching with a gender perspective helps us to detect the potential gender imbalance in the authorship of the works studied and to determine the extent to which the learning environment and teaching and assessment methods are inclusive and take into account the diversity of students.

Teaching with a gender perspective takes into account both people's biological characteristics (sex) and the social and cultural characteristics of women and men (gender). Gender is a social category and a constitutive element of social relationships and structures based on hierarchies imposed by discourses and ideologies that define social norms, stereotypes and roles

associated with femininity and masculinity, which produce different structural forms of inequality and injustice, both in terms of recognition and status and in access to socio-economic resources (Scott, 1986; Beckwith, 2005). These discourses and ideologies also establish a strict correspondence between biological sex and sexual orientation, as well as the socially expected gender identity and expression of, classifying as "abnormal" individuals who are non-heterosexual, transgender, transsexual or gender-fluid ¹⁰².

In terms of *effectively implementing gender mainstreaming*, key insights provided by the report include the following:

- *Mainstreaming gender into teaching* is one of the central features of gender equality policies at the university level. As the European Union emphasises, gender equality is not simply a question of social justice. It also affects the quality of teaching and research ¹⁰³.
- *Outcome:*
 - The central goal of gender mainstreaming is to ensure the development of students' skills to "assess inequality on the grounds of sex and gender and to design solutions"
 - The visual provided summarises the relationship between the various components in teaching as they relate to this skill development
 - To accomplish this, key changes need to be made in teaching, curriculum, research, faculty and administration and data collection
- *Teaching:*
 - Include women's rights in curriculum and academic programmes
 - Use an intersectional approach to show how the combination of different types of inequality (sexism, classism, racism, homophobia and ableism) produces specific forms of discrimination
 - Promote gender equality in the professional training of teachers
 - Eliminate all gender stereotypes from textbooks
 - Ensure gender balance in course syllabi and bibliographies
- *Curriculum:*
 - Student skills in this area can be developed through specialised courses or in a more overarching manner, by identifying the courses where sex and gender are relevant
 - Integrate gender bias and gender components into the curriculum in *all disciplines* (arts & humanities, social sciences, education, sciences, health, engineering and architecture) along with resulting student competencies. The document provides useful examples of common gender bias in each of the disciplines and gender relevant areas of study and research ¹⁰⁴



- *Research:*
 - Train students to work on research, projects and applications with a gender perspective, both in course and final research assignments and final bachelor's or master's degree project or dissertations
 - Ensure students can demonstrate that they have learnt to use gender as an analytical and explanatory variable when identifying the research question, doing the literature review, defining the hypotheses, selecting the methodological approach, gathering the data and analysing them, reaching conclusions and highlighting policy implications
- *Faculty and Administration:*
 - Train faculty in incorporating a gender perspective in the design of program competences and skills, courses, learning outcomes, content, examples provided, language used, sources selected, assessment methods, and managing the learning environment
 - Ensure that faculty is gender-balanced and can provide effective role models through diverse faculty composition, behavior, and research products
 - Ensure gender balance in administration and management positions
 - Ensure effective gender mainstreaming and inclusion policies
 - Ensure all faculty and staff are training in gender mainstreaming
 - Provide recognition and incentives for effective gender mainstreaming, including through performance assessment
 - Ensure that University publicity, recruitment and other materials avoid gender stereotyping
- *Data Collection:*
 - Effective tracking of gender in student recruitment, retention, and graduation,
 - Effective tracking of gender in staff and faculty employment in all areas
 - Complete and detailed records of gender in curriculum, teaching and research
 - Assessment of gender skills outcome in students
 - Carry out regular gender audits

The assessment indicators on the next page provide a useful framework for monitoring gender mainstreaming in universities¹⁰⁵.

Assessment indicators	Validation standards	Accreditation standards
General indicators: The existence of gender imbalance or gender stereotypes		
Percentages of women and men among students enlisted in the degree	Access to the course and admission of students Course plan Teaching staff Material resources and services Internal quality assurance system	Quality of the training programme Relevance of the public information Efficacy of the programme's internal quality assurance system Suitability of teaching staff for the training programme Effectiveness of learning support systems
Percentages of women and men teaching the degree		
Percentages of women and men holding permanent and non-permanent positions		
Breakdown by sex of management positions in the centre		
Action has been taken to increase the number of students of the underrepresented sex enlisted in the degree (Yes/No, evidence)		
Action has been taken to make visible women's contribution to the discipline (bibliography, seminars, lectures, awards, extra-curricular activities, etc.) (Yes/No, evidence)		
Action has been taken to incorporate the gender perspective in activities not forming part of the course: career guidance, work by tutors, academic regulations, lectures/conferences/workshops, internship agreements, etc. (Yes/No, evidence)		
Training of staff in gender mainstreaming		
The institution offers teaching and research staff training in gender mainstreaming (Yes/No, evidence)	Quality of the teaching programme	
The degree's teaching and research staff participate in gender mainstreaming training sessions provided at the university (Yes/No, evidence)	Appropriateness of public information Internal quality assurance system	Suitability of teaching staff for the training programme
The degree's teaching and research staff participate in teaching innovation projects dealing with gender mainstreaming (Yes/No, evidence)	Teaching staff Material resources and services	
Materials production		
The degree provides students with teaching material which has a gender perspective (Yes/No, evidence)	Course plan	Quality of the training programme Quality of programme (learning) outcomes
Public information		
In the materials used to present the degree (website, information leaflets, etc.) women appear as often as men and gender stereotypes are avoided.	Access to the course and student admissions Material resources and services	Relevance of the public information
Specific indicators: programme's curriculum		
An analysis has been made of the extent to which gender has been mainstreamed into the degree (Yes/No, main conclusions)	Knowledge, skills and competences Course plan	Quality of the training programme Effectiveness of learning support systems Quality of programme (learning) outcomes
Number and types of gender competencies included in the degree		
Number and types of learning outcomes related to a gender perspective		
Number of units/courses that incorporate a gender perspective or focus on gender		
State how many of these units/courses are basic, compulsory or optional and which academic year they are taught in		
The programme's curriculum allows students to choose gender-specific courses which are part of other programmes (optional, minors, electives, etc.)		
Training is provided on how to conduct research with a gender perspective when preparing a final bachelor's degree or master's project (Yes/No, evidence)		
Satisfaction indicators: Student satisfaction⁵		
The degree has evidence of students' perception on the extent to which gender has been mainstreamed into their studies (Yes/No, evidence)	Internal quality assurance system	Quality of the training programme Efficacy of the programme's internal quality assurance system Effectiveness of learning support systems

Organisational policy recommendations showing the scope of university gender mainstreaming are also provided by the *Gender Equity in Commonwealth Higher Education: An Examination of Sustainable Interventions in Selected Commonwealth Universities* Report, grouped into 4 main categories: 1) general; 2) access; 3) curriculum; and 4) Staff development.¹⁰⁶

1) *General:*

- Organisations should undertake gender audits;
- Higher education organisations need to mainstream gender equity into their strategic planning, with resources allocated to promoting and sustaining gender equity;
- Success in working towards gender equity and diversity should be a performance indicator in management appraisal;
- Affirmative action programmes that include attention to student and staff matters should be developed and regularly reviewed to ascertain impact and effectiveness;
- Different structures/intersections of inequality need to be taken into account e.g., access schemes for women should include consideration of socio-economic and ethnic backgrounds and disability;
- Learning environments need to be made safe for women via material measures e.g., lighting, campus security; by strict policy frameworks e.g., grievance procedures for sexual harassment; by pastoral services e.g., counselling and welfare and via the curriculum and pedagogy e.g., challenging discriminatory attitudes and behaviours;
- Gender mainstreaming should relate to governance as well as to curriculum. Decision-making for a need to include women members and consideration of gender issues;
- Equality policies need to be accompanied by action plans and grievance procedures, with sanctions against discriminatory behaviours;
- Crèche facilities need to be available on campus.

2) *Access:*

- Affirmative action programmes should be developed and sustained, accompanied by evaluation mechanisms and impact measures;
- Preparedness for higher education is essential. Pre-sessional courses should be available – particularly for women from socially disadvantaged groups;
- Career Guidance Units need to be established in all universities, (focusing on) career counselling, publicising job opportunities for the various disciplines, including job postings and seminars/presentations by public and private organisations and NGOs, workshops on interview skills, CV development and alumni networks (and) outreach programmes to high schools on career counselling;
- Gender sensitisation programmes should be conducted at orientations for undergraduates. They should address the desired academic environment conducive to gender equity, including concepts of inclusion, respect for diversity and sexual harassment codes and the need for gender balanced participation in all university activities including student unions

3) *Curriculum:*

- Gender disaggregated statistics on women's enrolment in different disciplinary areas should be maintained, accompanied by action plans to increase women's participation in areas where they are under-represented;
- Student evaluation of courses, teaching and learning quality and the learning environment should be introduced, with implementation mechanisms and audit loops;
- Build capacity in gender analysis especially on how to review the university curriculum to make it more inclusive and representative of women's interests;
- Gender should be mainstreamed into all academic programmes. This means ensuring that gender is a consideration and category of analysis in the course content, resources and pedagogy;
- Women's and Gender Studies courses should be supported and further developed;

- Good pedagogy is inclusive pedagogy. Staff development on gender sensitive pedagogy should be promoted;
- Impact measures need to be developed and applied to gender mainstreaming programmes, e.g., review of booklists, resources and content.

4) Staff Development:

- Gender disaggregated statistics should be kept on recruitment, retention, professional development and promotion of staff;
- Gender equity policies and affirmative action schemes need to be reinforced by staff development programmes that are available and even mandatory for all staff;
- Gender indicators should be applied to funding allocation for conferences;
- Gender awareness/sensitisation programmes need to be accompanied by impact measures;
- Mentoring schemes should be formalised;
- Gender should be included in appraisal schemes for managers; gender should be embedded in staff development programmes;
- Where policies do not already exist, equality of opportunity criteria, principles and practices should be applied to recruitment, selection and promotion procedures;
- Gender equitable representation on decision-making committees should be instigated;
- Gender-related research skills (e.g., including gender analysis, gender-based needs assessments, application of gender theoretical concepts) should be developed.

4.3 Best Practices in Gender Mainstreaming in Higher Education

Having reviewed gender mainstreaming and its meaning and scope in the context of higher education, a few examples will now be provided of universities around the world that have worked on implementing such programs.

The International Association of Universities published a report on Higher Education and SDG 5 providing concrete instances of meaningful initiatives towards gender equality, undertaken by 12 higher education institutions and organizations from around the world¹⁰⁷. The examples “are heterogeneous and diverse: lecture, seminar and conference cycles to spread gender awareness, training courses and master’s degrees to enhance professional figures, community counselling centers and groups, programs of scholarships for female students to ensure equitable access to education and to promote career development. Other actions include projects to elaborate and assess gender-aware plans to improve wellbeing at work and in personal and collective life, as well as annual reports to gather qualitative and quantitative data to monitor gender equality progress and to locate areas where further achievement may be obtained”¹⁰⁸. Some examples include:

- *University of Bologna, Spain*: The Gender Equality Annual Report, PLOTINA: Promoting Gender Balance and Inclusion in Research, Innovation and Training, GEMMA European Mundus Master’s Degree in Women’s and Gender Studies, and the MeTRa Interdisciplinary Research Centre on Mediation and Translation from and for Young Girls and Boys
- *Sao Paulo State University, Brazil*: The Gender and Race Research Group, consisting of 12 researchers from different Brazilian Education Institutions, 8 students at different levels, 2 foreign collaborators (PhD professors at the Grand Valley State University, USA, and the University of Leeds, UK) and led by Professor Claudia Maria Ceneviva Nigro, meets monthly to discuss, study, produce, and spread knowledge related to gender and race equality.
- *McMaster University, Canada*: Strategic plan, principles and practices, and action plan organised around the concept of inclusive excellence, recognizing that meaningful inclusion of diverse peoples and perspectives is vital to stimulating the creativity and innovation needed to achieve the world class quality of teaching, research and governance.

- *Open University of Catalunya, Spain*: 2020-2025 Gender Equality Plan (GEP), organised by its Equality Unit and featuring 4 key strategic areas: teaching, research and innovation, communication and organizational culture.
- *University of Vechta, Germany*: Gender and Diversity Certificate available to students from all disciplines and including theory, research and practical scientific components.

The IAU report also includes a valuable bibliography on higher education and gender equality¹⁰⁹.

Gender mainstreaming can also be reflected in specific initiatives. The United Nations Academic Impact (UNAI), an initiative that aligns institutions of higher education with the United Nations in supporting and contributing to the realization of United Nations goals and mandates, has created a vibrant and diverse network of students, academics, scientists, researchers, think tanks, institutions of higher education, continuing education and educational associations, consisting of 1400 member institutions in more than 147 countries that reach over 25 million people in the education and research sectors around the world¹¹⁰. A few examples of SDG5 work provided by the UNAI include:

- *La Salle University (Brazil)* promoted in 2017 an international seminar on Gender, Sexuality and Human Rights to discuss issues such as feminism and the lives of women in the Brazilian penal system. Moreover, professors Paula Pinhal and Tatiana Vargas Maia have been researching issues related to gender equality.
- *Ahfad University for Women (Sudan)* hosts the Regional Institute of Gender, Diversity, Peace and Rights which is focused on awareness, research and training on gender issues.
- *The American International University - Bangladesh (Bangladesh)* has developed a Women Forum to create awareness on women's rights and empowerment, a Women Research Group to promote academic research on these topics and a scholarship program for female students.
- *The Berg Institute (Spain)* dedicated one of its graduate programs on human rights to women and gender equality, including specific activities and seminars to address women's rights and academic activism as well as gender-based violence.¹¹¹¹¹².

An additional example worth looking at is Sciences PO, an international humanities and social sciences research university, based in France. In 2010, Sciences Po created PRESAGE, a gender studies and research program, which is now part of a comprehensive gender equality action plan. Recognised by the UN Women HeForShe programme, the program includes 10 measures¹¹³:

RAISING STUDENTS' AWARENESS

1. Training student associations and promoting parity at governance level
2. Regular awareness-raising activities on everyday sexism
3. 10 recommendations sent out to all faculty to ensure equality in the classroom¹¹⁴.

TOOLS AND GUIDES TO FOSTER A CULTURE OF EQUALITY

4. A sexual harassment monitoring unit and guide to raise awareness throughout the Sciences Po community about sexist acts and sexual violence, with the help of this guide
5. A Non-Sexist Communication Charter and a Guide to Inclusive Writing¹¹⁵
6. A network of gender equality advisors is active in each of Sciences Po's divisions.

APPROPRIATE HIRING PRACTICES

7. Training workshops for women students on core career skills: assertiveness, wage negotiation, work-life balance and public speaking.
8. The 13-member Sciences Po Executive Committee includes six women.
9. Gender balanced selection committees for the recruitment of permanent faculty and temporary teaching staff.
10. A charter to restrict work-related email after-hours is in place to promote a better work-life balance, and a campaign has been conducted to encourage men to take their paternity leave.

Another study offered best practice recommendations, based on African higher education:

- Management should undertake gender audits to determine gender gaps and effect on development
- Use identified gaps to develop a policy and an implementation plan for the institution.
- Higher education institutions need to mainstream gender into their strategic plans towards promoting and sustaining gender equity
- Performance indicators should be developed to determine progress and success in gender equity in the institution with leadership provided by the management
- Affirmative action programmes that include attention to student and staff matters should be developed and regularly reviewed to ascertain impact and effectiveness
- Different structures/intersections of inequality need to be taken into account e.g., access schemes for women should include consideration of socio-economic and ethnic backgrounds and disability
- Learning environments need to be made safe for women via material measures e.g., lighting, campus security; by strict policy frameworks e.g., grievance procedures for sexual harassment; by pastoral services e.g., counseling and welfare and via the curriculum and pedagogy e.g., challenging discriminatory attitudes and behaviour
- Gender mainstreaming should relate to governance as well as to curriculum
- Decision-making for a need to include women members and consideration of gender issues
- Equality policies need to be accompanied by action plans and grievance procedures, with sanctions against discriminatory behaviours¹¹⁶.

Lastly, the 2017 *Female Leadership and Higher Education Management in Developing Countries* conference offers valuable best practices insights in a number of different areas¹¹⁷: The conference offered the interesting metaphor of the bibingka cake, a scrumptious cake from the Philippines that is cooked with fire from the top and the bottom. This metaphor captures the need to work both bottom-up and top-down; that is, to provide individual support to women (through funding, networking, mentoring, staff development, etc.) and to develop legal frameworks at national level, while using global policies (such as UN declarations) to effect and bolster change.

- *Scholarships and Fellowships:*
 - Targeted female scholarships focusing on undergraduate and postgraduate female students in Science and Technology Faculties where gender gaps are highest
 - Flexibility, no age limits and explicit mention that women are encouraged to apply
 - Scholarships to fund studies in home country should be made available
 - Use all available channels and networks to advertise and recruit female role models
- *Policies and structures*
 - Gender mainstreaming to be included in the university's strategic plan
 - Gender desk
 - Gender audit. tracking gender relations in all areas (academic, educational, methodological, managerial, financial, marketing)
 - Increased female representation at all levels of decision-making
 - Anti-Sexual Harassment Policy
 - Counseling and mentoring for female staff and students
 - Child care and other support for women, especially in countries where child care is "female's job"
- *Special Programs*
 - Gender Studies. conduct gender sensitive training for new lecturers
 - Gender awareness included in all curriculum
 - Tutoring, mentoring, and tracking program

To the extent possible, the findings and best practices presented in this section will be incorporated into the NUV diversity and inclusion action plan, to be discussed in the next section.

5. An Inclusion Action Plan for the National University of Vanuatu

This section presents an Inclusion Action Plan (IAP) for the NUV, with the following components:

1. Developing action plans
2. Preliminary gender audit
3. Key strategies to ensure gender mainstreaming into the NUV
4. Targets and Indicators

5.1 Developing Gender Action Plans

In the specific context of research and higher education institutions, the European Commission defines a Gender Equality Plan, or Gender Action Plan (GAP), as “a set of actions aiming at:

1. Conducting impact assessment / audits of procedures and practices to identify gender bias;
2. Identifying and implementing innovative strategies to correct any bias; and
3. Setting targets and monitoring progress via indicators.¹¹⁸

The European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) identifies the following steps for GAPs¹¹⁹:

Step 1: Getting started, in which the importance of promoting gender equality is acknowledged and essential information is gathered in order to start establishing the Gender Equality Plan.

Step 2: Analysing and assessing the state-of-play of the institution, in which the national (or regional) legal and policy backgrounds are analysed; sex-disaggregated data is collected and processed; procedures, processes and practices are critically assessed with a view to detect gender inequalities and gender bias in the institution;

Step 3: Setting up a Gender Equality Plan, in which objectives are defined, targets are set, actions and measures to remedy the identified problems are decided, resources and responsibilities are attributed and timelines are agreed upon;

Step 4: Implementing a Gender Equality Plan, in which activities are implemented and outreach efforts are undertaken so as to gradually expand the network of stakeholders;

Step 5: Monitoring progress and evaluating a Gender Equality Plan, with attention to process as well as to progress, accompanying the implementation phase.

Step 6: What comes after a Gender Equality Plan, in which (based on the evaluation, the findings and progress made), a decision should be made on how to continue the efforts undertaken so far and what a new Gender Equality Plan should address.

Based on national fieldwork at the level of EU member states, EIGE also identifies a number of main impact drivers for effective gender mainstreaming in research and higher education institutions¹²⁰:

- Senior leadership and management support
- A well-equipped and well-located gender equality body
- Involvement of different categories of stakeholders (inside and outside the organisation)
- Embedment into existing structures and management procedures
- Setting clear targets and practical objectives
- Flexibility and resilience
- Availability of sex-disaggregated data
- Developing competences
- Monitoring and evaluation practices

Lastly, the European Commission and EIGE developed a step-by-step guide, referred to as the Gender Equality in Academia and Research (*GEAR*) tool on how to set up and implement GEPs¹²¹, covering 11 specific areas:

1. *Structures to support gender equality work* - Structures to support gender equality work are dedicated organisational arrangements (unit, office, network, service, etc.) which are mandated to support structural change towards gender equality through their work. Such structures can take a variety of forms: from Gender Equality Offices, over Ombud's services, to networks of gender equality 'antennas' in different organisational departments, and others.
2. *Awareness-raising and gender competence development*- Awareness raising efforts aim at generating and stimulating sensitivity to issues related to gender (in-)equality, while (gender) competence development aims at strengthening people's knowledge and skills to engage with gender equality issues. In practice, the two types of efforts often overlap, as learning starts with awareness, but is a continuous process. Awareness-raising and competence development can take many forms: from campaigns, over short introductory sessions for specific target groups, seminars, training, to lectures and dedicated courses or summer schools.
3. *Engaging stakeholders* - To structurally embed gender equality within the organisation, it is necessary that the widest possible circle of stakeholders is receptive to this change. In order to make gender equality work effective, it is therefore paramount to engage with these stakeholders, vertically as well as horizontally. Outreach work goes from the top to the bottom of the organisation, and across departments, schools and disciplines. Even alliances and outreach beyond the institution can help to strengthen and legitimate internal change.
4. *Organisational culture and work-life balance* - The organisational culture and work-life balance are key factors that contribute to creating an enabling environment for both women and men to have fulfilling careers in the research sector. This area covers all aspects that promote an enabling working environment in which both women and men can thrive, feel good in their jobs, enjoy equal opportunities to develop their careers and have fulfilling lives. This is a broad thematic area that covers issues such as: Gender-sensitive communication, Childcare provisions, Maternity / paternity / parental leave provisions
5. *Recruitment, selection and career progression support* - Recruitment, selection and career progression support measures aim at ensuring that women and men get equal chances to develop and advance their scientific careers. Actions are needed to avoid and undo the systematic and structural discrimination of women along their career path in research. It is thus important to critically review the existing selection processes and procedures at all stages and to remedy biases where these occur.
6. *Leadership and decision-making* - The leadership of the institution and its decision-making bodies need to be gender balanced for the organisation to truly live up to its values. Women and men should have equal access to and a balanced participation in leadership and (formal and informal) decision-making structures. Decision-making itself has to be gender-sensitive (or gender-responsive) because it takes into account gender differences and aims at promoting gender equality.
7. *Combatting sexual and gender-based harassment* - The fields of research and higher education are not immune to sexual and gender-based harassment. Actions are needed to put an end to this behaviour, such as: providing information regarding sexual and gender-based harassment, and offering attention and support to victims and witnesses of misconduct, with a commitment to putting an end to such behaviour.
8. *Integrating gender in research and education content* - Integrating the gender dimension means taking into account the biological characteristics and the social features of both women and men, girls and boys. Our knowledge is the basis on which future generations will build their societies. It is therefore crucial that the knowledge which is created through

research and transferred through education is free of gender bias. Particularly, when relevant, research and innovation activities need to critically examine both gender differences and inequalities.

The added-value of integrating a gender dimension in research and innovation allows: a) ensuring excellence and quality in outcomes and enhancing sustainability, b) making research and innovation more responsive to social needs and c) developing new ideas and fostering innovation. Through the inclusion of a gender dimension in research and innovation content, gender biases are more likely to be tackled and eliminated. Also, as education forms our future scientists, young people need to be taught about the gender aspects of their disciplines and trained to perform gender-sensitive research.

9. *Analytical measures, targets, indicators, monitoring and evaluation*: Collecting, assessing, reviewing, analysing numbers, data, procedures and practices enable optimal planning and implementation of gender equality work. A Gender Equality Plan or any other gender equality ad-hoc initiatives need to be grounded in evidence. An initial assessment of the state-of-play of gender equality in the institution usually includes a statistical analysis of sex-disaggregated data, a documentary analysis of national legal and policy documents, along with the organisations' strategic and operational documents.
10. *Incentives to promote gender equality* - Both rewards and sanctions can push forward change towards gender equality by stimulating the desired behaviour among actors. Rewarding positive contributions has the potential to enhance the working relations and the organisational atmosphere.
11. For a gender-sensitive response to the COVID-19 crisis – As most of human organisations, RPOs and RFOs are severely affected by the health, economic and policy impact of the COVID-19, and are constantly adapting to the current situation. It is therefore difficult to map their efforts at this stage, as those are often based on ad-hoc initiatives and not fully documented. However, the resources and examples listed below illustrate different scales of gender-sensitive responsiveness to the COVID-19, from a broad gender and feminist platform compiling useful resources, to large surveys launched to measure the different impact dimensions of the COVID-19 on academic communities.¹²²

5.2 Preliminary NUV Gender Audit

At this point in time, it is challenging to carry out a meaningful gender audit for the NUV, first, because most of its programs to date have been implemented using foreign universities, and second, because the full structure and processes of the NUV are not yet in place. Nonetheless, the following observations can be made with regard to enrollment patterns, staffing, curriculum, and existing institutional gender equity commitments:

1. *Enrollment, graduation and scholarship patterns by gender*

Looking at the overall NUV enrollment patterns to date, we find that the NUV has more female students than male students, with the most recent 2020 ratio being 43% males to 57% females. However, it should be noted that at the Master's level, that ratio changes to 63% males to 37% females and at the Ph.D. level, to 75% males to 25% females. It is important to keep in mind though, that the numbers here are very small, especially at the Ph.D. level.

It should also be noted that the graduation rates for male students are higher than those of female students. In 2018, 56% of the graduates were male and 55% were female. In 2019, 55% were male and 45 % were female.

With VITE merging with the NUV in 2021 as the School of Education, their students now comprise the largest group within the University. Over the period of 2017-2019, VITE had more female students than male students, with the 2019 ratio of 45% males to 55% females. In terms of

graduation rates, the latest figures available are from 2017, with 33% of the graduates being male and 67% of the graduates being female.

As we saw in the earlier section on scholarships, the number of new and ongoing scholarships awarded are almost evenly divided. The 2020 overall figures show that 48% of the new scholarships went to men and 52% went to women and of the ongoing scholarships 51% went to men and 49% went to women.

Looking only at the Vanuatu scholarships, the combined Vanuatu Government and VNPF scholarships figures show that of the total 548 new scholarships awarded, 283 went to women and 267 went to men.

Neither VNPF nor the Vanuatu Government Scholarship Office uses gender, disability or other inclusion criteria as a basis for awarding scholarships. In the future, it will be useful for the NUV, the Scholarship Office and VNPF to review and assess the effectiveness of the existing framework, with an eye to expanding available scholarships for NUV students, especially for vulnerable populations.

2. Staffing

Since the NUV is in its very early stages of growth, it is difficult to make a meaningful assessment of staffing, based on gender. Total staff currently includes 4 females and 5 males. At the top level, the NUV has hired a Vice-Chancellor and a Deputy Vice-Chancellor, both of whom are male. The NUV is in the process of hiring managers in the areas of Finance, HR, Facilities, IT, and Operations. It will be essential for the NUV to consider gender balance in filling these positions.

Considering the School of Education, the top administration consists of 1 female Dean, and 2 deputy positions, one male and 1 female. In terms of academic staff, the School of Education has 59% male teachers and 41% female teachers. Again, for the future, it will be important to consider creating gender balance, especially among the academic staff.

3. Targeted Activities

The NUV has implemented a series of gender and gender-related awareness programs, involving key partners such as Wan Smol Bag, and police and health officials. The NUV also recruited a female psychologist who was present on campus one half day per week to provide student support. In addition, special attention was given to providing lighting and security at night time to ensure the safety of female students when they finish their studies late in the evening.

4. Gender Mainstreaming in the Curriculum

The only program currently offered by the NUV is the Bilingual Bachelor's Degree in Tourism & Hospitality¹²³. None of the 39 courses listed for the program have a gender focus or a clear gender component. While of course individual courses may cover gender in some fashion, there is no clear overall theme or expression evident.

A review of the course listings for the various other programs offered through foreign universities shows the same patterns, including the Bachelor's degree in Economic and Social Administration¹²⁴ and the new program in environmental science¹²⁵, or in the Master of Economics and Social Sciences¹²⁶, Master's Degree in Land Management and Local Development (LMLD)/Planning and development of the Pacific Island territories of Vanuatu (ADTO-Van)¹²⁷.

As noted earlier, the first post-secondary education institution recently merged into the NUV is the former Vanuatu Institute for Teacher Education (VITE), now the School of Education. A stakeholder discussion with the Dean of the School and a review of the curriculum shows no courses with a gender or inclusion focus. A certificate program in Inclusive Education is in the very early stages of development, along with a course on Family Life, which contains gender components.

Given the importance and potential impact of gender mainstreaming for the School of Education and the future teachers of Vanuatu, developing a comprehensive gender mainstreaming program for the School of Education should be a priority.

5. *Institutional gender equity commitments*

The NUV has a number of significant gender equity commitments already in place. With regard to *governance*, the structure of the NUV is regulated by the 2019 Bill for the National University of Vanuatu Act No. 34 of 2019¹²⁸, establishing the University.

As stipulated in the Bill, the NUV Council is the governing body of the University Council and the Senate. The Council consists of 9 members, and at least 4 of the members of the Council must be women. The NUV Senate is the academic and research governing body of the NUV. It consists of 7 members and at least 3 of those must be women¹²⁹.

The NUV itself has gender and disability inclusion as part of its 2021-2030 Strategic Plan. In terms of context, the Plan observes that:

Education is a fundamental human right. It plays a key role in social and economic development and is an essential tool for achieving equality, peace and prosperity.

While much progress has been made in Vanuatu in including girls, women, and people living with disabilities in education, there are still major issues to be addressed. At the secondary level, there are now more females enrolled than males, and their drop-out rates are significantly lower than males. However, female enrollment at the tertiary level overall is lower, and while they have a higher scholarship rate, their completion rate is only 76%. There is also a significant gender disparity in enrolment in vocational programs, with almost twice as many males as females enrolling

The Vanuatu Education for All 2015 National Review also noted that “more males than females are employed in education, that females are underrepresented in senior positions and on committees in education, and that females and males study gender stereotypical subjects”. Additional issues included pregnant girls being expelled from school, and unsafe school environments¹³⁰.

Overall Commitment: The NUV aims to become a model for inclusive tertiary education, through gender and disability mainstreaming, through gender- and disability awareness programs for staff and students, and through targeted recruitment and scholarship support for women and people living with disabilities¹³¹.

Goal 3 of the NUV Strategic Plan is to “Provide effective and inclusive Student Support”. Objective 3.3 of the plan focuses on gender and inclusion by providing “Safe, diverse, and supportive learning environment for all”. Included in this objective are planned actions for disability access, inclusion and support, and a Gender, Disability and Inclusion officer for NUV. ¹³²

Goal 7 of the NUV strategic plan is “Foster cultural competence, connectedness and diversity”. *Objective 7.3* is Diversity and Inclusion. Within Objective 7.3, the NUV aims to promote diversity among things through gender and inclusion tracking, actively recruiting faculty, staff and students with a focus on ensuring diversity, and regularly offering awareness and diversity training for students, faculty and staff¹³³

Policies

The NUV Human Resource Management manual includes equal opportunity in its Employment policy, along with a Discrimination, Harassment and Bullying policy:

Employment Policy: The NUV is committed to equal opportunity, inclusion and diversity. All employment decisions at the NUV will be made without regard to race, place of origin, religious or traditional beliefs, political opinions, language, gender, sexual orientation or identity. As part of the

CBPM system, staff are expected to show respect for all people, to show understanding of diversity, and to effectively respond to differences.

Discrimination, harassment and bullying are unacceptable behaviours at the NUV. Employees have the right to expect a safe working environment and to know that harassment and bullying will not be tolerated.

All employment decisions in the NUV shall be based on merit and on equal opportunity. The NUV is committed to ensuring fair, equal, and impartial treatment of all employees in all aspects of employment. The NUV is also committed to gender balance in employment and to providing employment opportunities for people with special needs.

In carrying out its employment decisions, NUV will provide:

- Fair and transparent methods of recruitment, selection, and appointment
- Fair and equal methods of performance assessment
- Fair and equitable distribution of rewards, and remuneration
- Positive training and development opportunities for all
- Recognition of different needs, aims, aspirations, and cultural preferences of different individuals and groups
- Reflect and accommodate the multilingual functioning of the NUV, in particular French and English
- Safe and healthy working conditions A person must not discriminate in the admission of people to, or the treatment of people at, the University on the basis of gender, religion, nationality, race, language or disability¹³⁴.

Discrimination, Harassment and Bullying

The NUV is committed to equal opportunity, inclusion and diversity. All employment decisions at the NUV will be made without regard to race, place of origin, religious or traditional beliefs, political opinions, language, gender, sexual orientation or identity. As part of the CBPM system, staff are expected to show respect for all people, to show understanding of diversity, and to effectively respond to differences.

Discrimination, harassment and bullying are unacceptable behaviours at the NUV. Employees have the right to expect a safe working environment and to know that harassment and bullying will not be tolerated¹³⁵.

The Manual also describes provisions for maternity leave, following Vanuatu law¹³⁶.

In terms of the *NUV's partner universities*, the gender equality commitment pattern is less clear and consistent:

- *Universite Toulouse (Capitole and University Toulouse Jean Jaures)* - It is not clear if Toulouse University has a GAP in place. The websites do not show any gender related policies and Toulouse Capitole's organogram shows no desks, positions or offices dedicated to gender equality. Some gender research by faculty is listed¹³⁷.
- *Taylor's University* is also not showing any general policies or commitments, but its website does include some informational pages on tackling gender discrimination ¹³⁸
- *University of New Caledonia* does show a gender equality commitment on its website: "Building on the charter of equal opportunities between women and men (Conference of University Presidents, 2013), the University of New Caledonia undertakes, in accordance with the Education Code (art. L 121 -1), to "promote equal opportunities and equality between men and women" and establish an equal opportunities charter for the university. Its actions are linked to the CPED (Permanent Conference of Equality and Diversity Managers for Higher Education and Research Institutions) and local participants. The main areas of work and action

are designed to: 1) promote equal opportunities in the development of professional careers and student courses; 2) develop awareness-raising actions on gender equality; 3) strengthen research and training in gender studies¹³⁹.

- *James Cook University* has been awarded a SAGE Athena SWAN Institutional Bronze Award for its work to increase gender equity and diversity. While much work remains to be done to ensure equitable representation in senior academic positions, JCU has established a broadly based team of staff (the Gender Equity Action and Research Team, or GEAR) to advise and support senior managers who are leading more than three dozen related initiatives, and will meet quarterly in 2021 to review their progress¹⁴⁰.

Given that the NUV has little to no control over the programs offered by other institutions, the main focus for the future needs to be on:

1. Developing an effective gender mainstreaming project for the School of Education
2. At some future point, developing an effective gender mainstreaming project for the Bachelors in Tourism and Hospitality program
3. At some future point, developing NUV's own academic programs in the future, incorporating gender mainstreaming.

Developing its own programs is important not only from the point of view of gender mainstreaming, but also from the perspective of growing the NUV, and developing a more financially sustainable way of operating, one that focuses on developing local capacity and ownership.

5.3 Key strategies to ensure gender mainstreaming into the NUV

Based on reviews presented in sections 2 and 3 of this study, it is clear that gender and disability equality and inclusion is a major challenge in Vanuatu. In that light, AFD's commitment to supporting equality and its desire to make NUV contributions to gender equality in Vanuatu a key part of this development project is extremely valuable and provides a unique opportunity for the NUV. It is essential, however, to ensure that the and inclusion goals are clear, strategic, consistent with the overall strategy of the University, and properly funded and supported.

The two main strategies proposed for the NUV Gender Action Plan are the following:

1. Implement the institutional inclusion commitments expressed in the NUV strategic plan

As noted in section 4.2 above, the NUV strategic plan already contains an effective framework for diversity and inclusion. To ensure consistency and strategic focus, it is proposed that the IAP be harmonised with this plan, emphasizing the following 4 key components:

a. Equality and inclusion policies

1. Issue a general NUV university policy, expressing its clear commitment to gender equality¹⁴¹
2. Institute a high-level Equality and Inclusion Committee (EIC)
3. Appoint an Inclusion Focal Point (IFP)
4. Fully develop existing staff equality, anti-discrimination and harassment, safeguarding and inclusion policies, and connecting administrative mechanisms
5. Ensure NUV disaster preparedness and contingency plans are gender and disability inclusive
6. Ensure monthly safety and violence incident reporting/sharing
7. Include gender and diversity competence in administrative and faculty performance evaluation measures and provide incentives for positive and innovative initiatives
8. Inclusion Study (IS) and institutional data collection systems and processes- to identify special needs of women, SOGIE diverse students and PWD, and assess NUV gender and inclusion effectiveness, also considering other factors such as language diversity and island of origin

b. Gender equality in governance, administration and staffing

1. Ensure that mandated gender representation is implemented at NUV Council and Senate
2. Ensure that gender balance is considered as an important additional consideration in the recruitment and selection of faculty, staff, consultants and international support personnel

c. Inclusive Student Support

Consistent with *Goal 3* of the NUV Strategic Plan to “provide effective and inclusive Student Support”, and *Objective 3.3* to provide a “safe, diverse, and supportive learning environment for all” through the following action steps:

1. Ensure that NUV education is offered without discrimination on gender, disability, language, island origin or any other factor.
2. Provide proper and effective campus access and technological support for students with disabilities – accessible walking pathways and fully accessible buildings
3. Provide a dedicated resource room, preferably in the future library, with adaptive furniture, computers and software specially targeted for students and other people with disability;
4. Following the GIS, plan for accommodation of special needs of women, people of diverse SOGIE, and PWD regarding safety, lighting, transportation, and housing
5. Once accommodations are in place, provide targeted recruitment of PWD through existing networks and disability organisations and supported with targeted scholarships
6. Develop a student handbook, with corresponding policies and administrative mechanisms governing inclusion and equality

d. Diversity and Inclusion

Consistent with *Goal 7* of the NUV strategic plan, which is to “foster cultural competence, connectedness and diversity” and *Objective 7.3* which is Diversity and Inclusion, implement the following action steps¹⁴²:

1. Regularly offer awareness and diversity training for students, faculty and staff, based on diversity competence profile/ skill set and including special forums, discussion groups and support groups
2. Develop partnerships with relevant government offices, Council of Women, and CSOs promoting G/D inclusion in Vanuatu
3. NUV diversity and inclusion events, including NUV support, sponsorship or participate in larger Vanuatu diversity/inclusion events
4. Promote, incentivize and track faculty and student research on gender, disability and other diversity factors such as language and origin
5. Regularly review and revise NUV website and publicity materials on diversity and inclusion

2. Design and implement a gender mainstreaming project for the School of Education

Gender mainstreaming in the NUV curriculum is a key strategic step towards ensuring not only the development of gender competence skills in NUV students, but even more importantly, in the future teachers in Vanuatu and the students they will teach in turn.

The following steps are suggested for curriculum gender mainstreaming:

1. Recruit a visiting professor with the relevant skills set in this area
2. Develop a taskforce, consisting of School of Education faculty and external members of the community, including people with disabilities and gender diverse people

3. Review existing work, such as the 2019 Family Life baseline study, the Family Life booklet developed for ADRA and the VPrize SOGIE booklet and research study
4. Develop a faculty professional development program in curriculum gender mainstreaming, along with a systematic process for including gender/disability and gender/disability competence in course content, teaching methodology, teaching outcomes, research projects, and professional evaluation
5. Pilot and systematically review at least 6 courses with gender/disability mainstreaming content over the first year, with at least one in each program
6. For the following year, ensure every faculty member has at least one course with effective gender/disability mainstreaming content
7. Continue to develop, monitor, and share the results of the gender /disability mainstreaming and inclusion work with other institutions, professionals, and community organisations

5.4 Monitoring and Evaluation

The monitoring and evaluation framework should follow the main action steps indicated above. A summary table is provided in Appendix 2.

Ultimate accountability for implementing the monitoring and evaluation framework should be placed at a high institutional level, to ensure steps are taken, and results are produced.

To ensure effective implementation, the following internal structures and processes are strongly recommended:

1. The NUV makes its commitment to gender and disability inclusion clear through an overall commitment statement, and through budgetary commitments, as outlined in the M&E table
2. The NUV include a requirement of substantive gender and inclusion competence and experience in at least 1 of the international support positions, identified in the feasibility study
3. The NUV appoint a part-time Inclusion Focal point, a position that could possibly be combined with the existing position of Student Counsellor, assuming that the person occupying the post has sufficient relevant skills in the area;
4. The NUV institute an Equality and Inclusion Committee, consisting of the Inclusion Focal Point, the HR Manager, the Vice-Chancellor or Deputy Vice-Chancellor, 2 faculty members and 2 students to carry the responsibility for implementation and review. The Committee should meet monthly to review action steps, indicators, and progress within the 2 main strategies outlined in this document, along with the M&E framework provided in Appendix 2.
5. The NUV regularly reviews progress on the plan at a high level, using the EIC committee

6. Conclusion

This document provided a comprehensive gender study, carried out on behalf of the AUF for the National University of Vanuatu. Key components included a review of the legal, social-cultural, and political context of gender in Vanuatu, along with a detailed discussion of gender and education in Vanuatu. This was followed by a review of global research and best practices in gender mainstreaming in education. Based on these components, the document provided a preliminary gender audit of the NUV, along with the Gender Action Plan and a monitoring and evaluation framework.

Gender equality is considered by many to be both a condition for and a driver of development. NUV's visionary aims and committed efforts in the area of gender equality and gender mainstreaming in education will undoubtedly provide a significant contribution to the social, cultural, educational, material and spiritual development of the country.

Appendix 1: Summary of stakeholder interviews

1. NUV Students and Staff¹⁴³

Students:

Key priorities expressed by the students, related directly or indirectly to gender included:

- *Relations with the Administration* - Student/Administration relations are missing, and there are no opportunities for students to have their voice be heard. Key suggestions included regular consultations between students and Administration, a Student Services Office, extended office hours and including students in key changes, such as upcoming construction. Consultations need to include female representation.
- *Need Student Handbook* to identify general information/ rules/regulations/rights that apply to NUV students
- *Housing*: Students now live with families or rent housing for high prices. Often times, where they live, there is no internet, no place to study. NUV is not sufficiently accessible during the evening, weekends and exam preparation periods (doors are locked, internet is off or weak, no dedicated study spaces available). Some go to USP during exam periods to find a quiet place for studying. Late night and weekend security must be provided, along with safe transportation, especially for women.
- *Facilities*: not enough women's toilets, and an actual bathroom would be good. There is no access for people with disabilities.

Q: There is a noticeable difference in Vanuatu between the percent of male vs. female students attending university. What affects/affected access to university in Vanuatu?

- Family support – often times boys are favoured over girls by parents when it comes to higher education; girls are still expected to work in the home. Also, if the husband is not supportive, the education will not happen. Problem of who pays for the education – husband if he agrees, parents if they support
- Women still have to fight for the opportunity of higher education
- Currently in the master's program, there are 5 F and 10 M students; female students drop out more often
- There are no scholarships targeted to women, and NUV does not have targeted recruitment for women. Special scholarships would seem to very important from the perspective of promoting inclusion.
- Keeping the education affordable – the planned increase from 50,000 vatu to 160,000 a year is a major concern for the students

Q: Once you are in the University, what is your experience in terms of equal /differential treatment?

The women students did not feel that they were treated differently in any way in the classroom. They felt free to participate and were called upon equally by the professors. Positive factors contributing to this may be the relatively small class sizes and Francophone students (women) being less timid than those from Anglo schools.

Q: Are there Issues of student personal safety for female students – the students said they felt safe of campus and felt respected by their fellow students. There are strong bonds of friendship. There were no issues of harassment or violence. A police awareness session had been presented to all the students, raising awareness around harassment. There were no SOGI diverse students in this group, but those present said there were diverse SOGI diverse students on campus and they did not experience problems. If there ever were incidents, the students said they would comfortable reporting the incidents.

Q: Do you feel that things will be different for you as a female rather than a male graduate from NUV? No, for both women and men getting a job depends on network and *wantok*.

NUV Staff

Staff included 2 female and 6 male staff:

Luie Nauko- Coordinator, Higher Education
Aquino Malvirlani – Educational Assistant
Stephan Silas – Administrative Officer
Jennifer Nuria – Accounting and Management Officer
Eddy Niko – IT Assistant
Vanessa Kalpoi – Cleaner
Jaque Anis – Gardener
Michael Silako – Security

NUV staff would love NUV supported capacity building opportunities so that they don't have to pay for it by themselves. Most everyone is operating on their own with little understanding of job responsibilities and needs.

While some staff members have had NUV support to study at USP, others try to sign up for on-line courses at their own expense, or they self-finance courses at USP. There is no HR person, and the individual performing those duties has no HR training.

Existing staff like working together and consider themselves as a good team. The fear is what happens when new people arrive who may not share their work culture. Staff has no issues with security, and female staff felt safe.

2. School of Education

Interview with Dr. Joy Botleng, Head of School

1. Review of staffing and students by gender (full data in NUV merger application document)

- In terms of students, there are more female than male students.
- Administration: 2 females, 1 male
- General staff: 7 males, 7 females
- Of the 31-teaching staff, approximately 55 % are male, and 45 % female
 - Math 7 males, 1 female
 - Language, arts and humanities: 4 males, 7 females
 - Education 6 males, 6 females

2. Gender related policies and issues

Dr. Joy thinks policies are in place regarding safeguarding, anti-harassment, bullying, and inclusion. In terms of the NUV, now that VITE is School of Education, the process needs to be formulated re: merging or review of policies – which policies are used and/or followed. The VITE application for merger into the NUV contained no gender or disability related data or plans, with the exception of altering the Master architectural plan to ensure disability access.

According to the Head of the School, there are no gender or inclusion related issues or incidents related to staff. There has been staff training but none with a specific focus on gender and inclusion.

3. Gender in the curriculum

The curriculum itself is aligned with the UNESCO framework, which has 4 pillars: learning to know (content), learning to do (skills), learning to be (individual attitudes), and learning to live together. Currently, there is no systematic inclusion of gender in the curriculum.

There has been no training of staff or faculty on gender, disability, or SOGIE inclusion, either in terms of teaching methodology or curriculum content.

There are plans in place for a Family Life and Education course, and there are also small isolated components in the Social Science courses. A booklet was developed on the same topic for ADRA, with a community orientation. There is also a plan to develop a Certificate IV on Inclusive Education, but this is still in the early planning phases, with a needs assessment planned as the first phase.

Request was made to meet with students in the week of May 10th but this has not materialized.

3. Vanuatu Agriculture College (VAC)

A full day was spent visiting VAC on the island of Santo, on May 6, 2021. We met with Administration, Faculty, and students. Staff included Student Services Coordinator, Alexi, Training Coordinator Patricia, and Quality Assurance Lemon, along with the Head of VAC, Peter Natwat. Faculty included Charles Seth, Seo Isaiah, May Kalan, George Moli, Mangau Navian, and Oniel Tabito. Sandy Mael was not present as he is currently in the process of being awarded his PhD in Agriculture.

As part of the visit, we received and reviewed the VAC 2021-2026 strategic plan and the VAC 2020 Annual Report.

1. Review of staffing and students by gender

Gender and disability inclusion were discussed with staff, faculty, and 2 groups of students, one female and one male group, with 10 students in each.

2020-2021(term 1) Enrollment Figures - data based on 2020 annual report						
Certificate 1	2020 Totals	M	F	2021- term 1	M	F
Agriculture	5	3	2	25	16	9
Forestry	18	11	7	8	6	2
Livestock	30	25	5	50	40	10
Total	53	30	14	83	62	21
Certificate 2	2020	M	F	2021 – term 1	M	F
Agriculture	23	16	7	19	9	10
Forestry	12	7	5	14	11	3
Livestock	20	16	4	21	15	6
Aquaculture	7	5	2			
Total	62	44	18	54	35	19
Level 4	2020	M	F			
Agribusiness	0	2		<i>Notes:</i> - Level 4 only contains students previously enrolled in that program and completing courses. Certificates 3 and 4 are under review with VQA and no new students were admitted in 2020 - There is a new, successful beekeeping program in place. - There are currently no French-speaking faculty or French instructional materials.		
Animal Science	0	3				
Plant Science	0	6				
	0	11				
Faculty	Total	M	F			
	11	8	3			

In terms of gender, the ratio of men to women students is about 3 to 1 overall, except that the level 4 group does not include any women. When asked why there were fewer female than male students, the responses from all groups included:

- Problems with attracting youth in general, as agriculture is not respected as a career
- Many women fall into the trap of having children and starting families at an early age
- VAC is open to and has been successful with attracting women at a later age, starting over
- Parents tend to support the education of boys over that of girls – school fees are an obstacle
- Some women do not like to farm

2. Gender related policies and issues

Some positive, gender related initiatives include an empowerment program planned through PPAC, which has not yet happened, and older female students on campus mentoring younger female students. Staff, faculty, and students said there were no major issues around gender in VAC.

However, among the students, there is some bullying and “toktok” that happens. The male students felt this was done jokingly, the women experienced some of it as negative and harmful.

There is a process in place for reporting gender-related incidents of harassment or violence. When reported, discipline takes place, including dismissal, but not all incidents are reported, according to the female students. There is no programming on gender awareness or violence.

The supervisor for both male and female dormitories is male, which may be an issue when it comes to safe and confidential reporting and meaningful support. Birth control (condoms) are available only upon request from this supervisor’s office.

There are also not enough dormitories so some students (male and female) have to live off-campus. There are not enough toilets.

With regard to disability inclusion, there was 1 student with a disability that completed a Certificate 1, and some other students with disabilities that had been enrolled before. VAC fully intends to include students with disabilities and made some adaptive accommodations for the student, with support from the Vanuatu Skills Partnership. Faculty has not been trained on disability inclusion in teaching methods or curriculum content.

In terms of long-term impact, there is some but not enough tracking of student graduates, by gender or otherwise. Tracking is difficult given there are no addresses in Vanuatu and phone/email information often changes.

3. Merger with the NUV

Staff, faculty and students expressed a unanimous excitement about the merger of VAC with the NUV, especially in light of the potential for additional program and content delivery, along with overall growth. The staff and faculty showed great team spirit and genuine excitement about future possibilities, with regard to the NUV growth, program growth, and their own professional development.

The students were especially interested in seeing higher level courses being offered, beginning with the re-offering of certificate 3 and 4, followed by diploma and university level courses. There is also strong interest in new program development, especially at the university level.

In terms of staff development, there is currently a systematic plan in place to upgrade and support faculty and staff development. This includes the possibility of one of the staff enrolling in a PhD program. All trainers but 2 are qualified to teach at Diploma level.

There are some connections in place with international organisations and institutions such as Fiji National University and Stanford University. It will be useful to explore other connections such as with farmer organisations like Farm Support Association and Pacific Islands Farmer Organisation Network (PIFON), along with international associations such as [CGIAR](#)

3. Other issues and Needs Identified

A number of other issues were identified and discussed, not directly related to gender. For the record, they will just be listed here, without further elaboration. They included need for standard course books, need for additional land, need to develop more and higher-level programs, regular problems with water supply, need for funding for staff development, literacy problems, limited access to computer equipment and effective computer access, and need for more nutritious food in the cafeteria and/or providing students with their own kitchens/cooking facilities.

4. Scholarship Office

An interview was held with Mr. John Kaltau at the Scholarship Office of the Ministry of Education.

Key items addressed by Mr. Kaltau included:

- Currently, gender or disability is not a factor considered in awarding scholarships
- For 2019 and 2020, the office awarded scholarships to more women than men
- Scholarships are also awarded via VNPF with a 200M/182F ratio for 2020
- Scholarship awards are now in line with the Vanuatu HRDP
- The annual budget of 838 million vatu is not considered sufficient
- Scholarship amounts cover tuition fees, accommodation and allowance
- There was 1 person with a disability who was awarded a scholarship
- Requirements for scholarships include completion of year 13/14 and satisfactory performance, defined as a minimum of 75% for 3 courses and 51% for 1 course.
- In case of student pregnancy, arrangements are made for the deferral of scholarships

5. Disability Inclusion

Stakeholder interviews were held with Ms. Nelly Caleb, the Director of the Vanuatu Disability Promotion and Advocacy Association on May 7, in Luganville, Santo, and with Ms. Sherol George and Mr. Knox Lanny, Disability Inclusion Officers for Vanuatu Skills Partnerships on May 14 in Port Vila.

In the meetings, the preliminary recommendations of the gender study were reviewed, including full disability access, targeted scholarships for students with disability, and teacher development, including both disability accommodation in teaching pedagogy, and disability content in curriculum, especially for the School of Education. It was felt that these recommendations were right on target.

The two recommendations added were for:

1. a dedicated resource room, preferably in the future library, with furniture, computers and software specially targeted for students and other people with disability; and
2. Once accommodations are in place, provide targeted recruitment of people with disabilities through existing networks and disability organisations, to let people know that NUV welcomes and is capable of accommodating students with disabilities.

6. Vanuatu Institute of Technology (VIT)

1. Review of staffing and students by gender

VIT ENROLMENT - SEMESTER 1, 2020

CLASS	M	F	Total
Cert III in Climate Change	8	6	14
Cert II Mechanical Engineering (English)	7		7
Cert II Arts and Craft (English)	2	1	3
Cert II Construction and Civil Engineering (English)	7		7
Cert II Construction and Civil Engineering (French)	4	1	5
Cert II in Computing (English)	11	3	14
Cert II in Computing (French)		2	2
Cert II in Business and Finance (English)	11	11	22
Cert I Automotive (English)	17		17
Cert I Automotive (French)	9		9
Cert I Accommodation Services	3	17	20
Cert I Catering and Cooking	13	25	38
Cert I Joinery (English)	2		2
Cert I Joinery (French)	2		2
Cert I Electrical (English)	10	1	11
Cert I in Computing (English)	9	6	15
Cert I in Computing (French)	4		4
Cert I in Food and Beverage	7	15	22
Cert I in Customer Service	4	22	26
Cert I in Business and Finance (English)	6	9	15
Cert II in Construction and Civil Engineering (English)	5		5
TOTAL ENROLMENTS	141	119	260

VIT ENROLMENT SEMESTER II, 2020

BRIDGING COURSE	Female	Male	TOTAL	Francophone	Anglophone	TOTAL
	6	11	17	4	13	17
TOTAL			17			17
CERT I MECHANICAL ENGINEERING	1	2	3	0	3	3
CERT I ELECTRICAL ENGINEERING	0	3	3	0	3	3
CERT I CLIMATE CHANGE	2	7	9	4	5	9
TOTAL			17			17
CERT II ACCOMMODATION SERVICES	8	1	9	2	7	9
CERT II CUSTOMER SERVICE	17	1	18	3	15	18
CERT II FOOD PREPARATION	11	15	26	5	21	26
CERT II TOUR OPERATION	3	6	9	0	9	9
CERT II COMPUTING	4	20	24	7	17	24
CERT II BUILDING CONSTRUCTION	0	8	8	1	7	8
CERT II BUSINESS AND ADMINISTRATION SERVICES	36	32	68	30	38	68
TOTAL			162			162

OVERALL TOTAL: 195

Based on data provided by the VIT (see tables), it appears that the VIT is well on its way to developing gender balance in enrollment. For Semester 1, 2020, there were 141 male students and 119 female students. Male students tended to be concentrated in engineering, automotive, electrical and computing courses. Women tended to concentrate in accommodation, catering, cooking, and customer service. For Semester 2, 2020, men outnumbered women in the bridge course almost 2 to 1, and in the level 1 Certificate 4 to 1. However, at the certificate level 3 they are almost equal, 79 women to 83 men, with a majority of women in accommodation services, customer service and business administration.

With regard to staff, the ancillary staff in 2020 consisted of 12 males and 14 females, and in 2021 of 11 males and 13 females. In terms of teaching staff, there is a gender balance in some programs, like climate change, and finance and accounting. Teaching staff in other areas such as mechanics, engineering, IT, and carpentry are predominantly male.

A stakeholder interview with a group of female students was held on May 17th. The group represented 5 different programs: Finance and Accounting, IT, mechanical engineering, climate change, and electrical studies). The students confirmed that in some programs like finance and accounting, there were more female students than male students, while in other programs like electrical and mechanics there were very few female students.

The students reported not having experienced any negative interactions from male students or male teachers. They felt supported and encouraged in the classroom and in their studies.

They also noted that there was a VIT Code of Conduct that prohibits harassment, and that there is student counsellor in place in case there are any issues or problems. They said they would feel comfortable talking to the counsellor if any issues arose.

Gender or gender issues were not part of any of the curriculum. Students felt they might face challenges when it comes to finding internship placements or jobs after graduation, but they felt that having a certificate and proper training would help clear these challenges.

Appendix 2: IAP Monitoring and Evaluation Table

Strategy I: Implement NUV strategic plan inclusion commitments

Area 1: Equality & inclusion policies and systems

Action Steps	Responsibility	Indicator	Timeline	Budget
1. Issue a general NUV university policy, expressing its clear commitment to diversity, equality, and inclusion	Vice Chancellor, in consultation with NUV Council & staff	Overall NUV policy commitment statement on diversity and inclusion issued and publicized	2021	0
2. Institute Equality and Inclusion Committee (EIC), consisting of VC/DVC, Inclusion Focal Point (IFP), HR manager, 2 faculty members and 2 students	VC and DVC Support from technical advisors, if skillset is available	EIC in place and meeting at least monthly EIC has action plan EIC carrying out key functions including GIS and data monitoring	2021	Consultant support to EIC year 1 – 500,000 vatu
3. Appoint IFP, possibly to be combined with Student Counsellor position	VC/DVC, HR Manager	IFP in place and functioning effectively, evidenced by activities and performance evaluation	2021-2022	TBD (PT salary, development support as needed, see 2 above)
4. Fully develop existing staff equality, anti-discrimination and harassment, safeguarding and inclusion policies, and connecting administrative mechanisms	NUV HR manager	Development of all NUV policies completed, including anti-harassment, anti-bullying, code of conduct, safeguarding, safety incident reporting, complaint policies	2021	0
5. Ensure that NUV disaster preparedness and contingency plans are gender and disability inclusive	Operations Manager, in consultation with HR and GFP	NUV disaster preparedness and contingency plans are gender and disability inclusive	2021-2022 and ongoing	0
6. Ensure monthly safety and violence incident reporting/sharing	HR manager	Monthly safety and incidents reports are compiled and shared	2022 and ongoing	0
7. Include diversity competence in administrative and faculty performance evaluation measures and provide incentives for positive and innovative initiatives	NUV HR Manager, in consultation with DVC and IFP	NUV performance management systems NUV awards for inclusion in teaching/student service	2022-2023	100,000 vatu annually
8. Inclusion Study (IS) and institutional data collection systems and processes- study to include assessment of NUV	EIC, IFP, with support from other	IS study carried out, covering all IAP areas and recommendations	2022	Support to EIC and IFP, as needed (see 2 above)

inclusion effectiveness, along with identification of special needs of women and gender diverse students, PWD, and other diversity factors, such as language and island of origin	operational offices as needed Support from technical advisors, if relevant skillset is available	IS demonstrates NUV's culture, policies and practices reflect valuing diversity and safety for all Regular and systematic assessment of gender and disability mainstreaming in programs, facilities, policies and regulations, demonstrating both awareness of gender mainstreaming and effective policies and practices Track student recruitment, enrollment, retention, graduation, and satisfaction rates, disaggregated by gender and disability Regular assessment of other diversity factors, such as language and island of origin		
Area 2: Gender equality in governance, administration and staffing				
Action Steps	Responsibility	Indicator	Timeline	Budget
1. Ensure that mandated gender representation is implemented at NUV Council and Senate level.	NUV Council NUV Senate	Composition of Council and Senate reflects mandated gender quotas	2021 2022	0
2. Gender balance is considered as an important additional goal in recruitment and selection of staff, faculty, consultants and international support staff	VC/DVC, HR manager	NUV recruitment/selection policies Orientation for selection committees NUV ad includes inclusion statement NUV staff/faculty/support personnel composition at all levels reflects gender balance goals	2021 2022	0
Area 3: Inclusive Student Support				
Action Steps	Responsibility	Indicator	Timeline	Budget
1. Ensure that NUV education is offered without discrimination on gender, disability, origin, language or any other factor.	VC, DVC, IFP, EIC	IS study, student complaints, student satisfaction indicators, faculty/staff engagement surveys	2021 and ongoing	0
2. Provide proper and effective campus access and technological support for students with disabilities – accessible walking pathways and fully accessible buildings	Operations Mgr, Facilities Mgr, support from technical advisors, if skillset is available	All new buildings meet national and international disability access standards Existing buildings and walkways are adjusted to meet national standards PWD resource room in library	2021, 2022, and ongoing	Incorporated in new building design Budget to be developed for new walkways and ramps

3. Provide resource room in future library for people with disabilities (PWD)	IFP, EIC, DVC	Disability resource room in place, with adaptive furniture, computers and software specially targeted for students and other PWD	2022	To be costed and funded through separate grant
4. Review and plan for accommodation of special needs of women and PWD regarding safety, lighting, transportation,	Operations Manager, Facilities Mgr	Effective provisions in place for women, SOGIE diverse people, and PWD regarding safety, lighting and transportation	2021, 2022, ongoing	To be costed, part of building and operational budget
5. Once accommodations are in place, provide targeted recruitment of PWD through existing networks and disability organisations and supported with targeted scholarships	IFP, EIC, DVC	Targeted recruitment efforts documented Number of students with disabilities Special scholarships through scholarship office and/or partner organisations	2022, 2023	0
6. Develop a student handbook, with corresponding policies governing inclusion and gender equality, along with connecting administrative mechanisms	DVC, in consultation with student representatives and NUV staff	Student handbook in place, along with administrative mechanisms Safe and effective student complaint process in place and tracked	2021, 2022	0
Area 4: Diversity and Inclusion				
Action Steps	Responsibility	Indicator	Timeline	Budget
1. Regularly offer awareness and diversity training for students, faculty and staff, based on diversity competence profile/ skill set	IFP, in collaboration with EIC and partners Support from PM if relevant skills set is available	Diversity competence profile/skills set developed and tested Number of regular NUV diversity training sessions for students, faculty and staff preferably with community partners Positive learning assessments and evaluation of NUV diversity training sessions, demonstrating the development of gender and diversity skills and competencies in faculty, staff and students		Minimum of 4 trainings per year Minimum of 3 dedicated trainings for faculty and staff To be funded from NUV operational budget for staff and student development
2. Develop partnerships with relevant government offices, Council of Women, and CSOs promoting G/D inclusion in Vanuatu	EIC, IFP	# of partnerships in place # of shared trainings, forums, research projects, other initiatives resulting from partnerships		No immediate direct costs
3. NUV diversity and inclusion events, including NUV support, sponsorship or	EIC, IFP	Number of NUV diversity and inclusion events, including NUV support, sponsorship or participate in larger Vanuatu diversity and inclusion events		At least 1 public forum annually - 250,000 vatu

participate in larger Vanuatu diversity/inclusion events				NUV participation in 3 annual events
4. Promote, incentivize and track faculty, staff, and student research on gender and disability in Vanuatu	EIC, IFP, DVC	Number of faculty, staff, student research project with gender/disability component		3 annual awards for best gender/ disability inclusion research projects @ 10,000 vatu each
5. Regularly review and revise NUV website and publicity materials on diversity and inclusion	EIC, with support from NUV PR staff or other offices	Website shows inclusion statement Website features diversity Website shows inclusive practices/research		0
II. Gender mainstreaming project for the School of Education				
Action Steps	Responsibility	Indicator	Timeline	Budget
1. Dedicate 1 of the visiting professor positions to gender mainstreaming	SoE, DVC	Visiting professor (VP) selected with outstanding record in gender mainstreaming	2021, 2022	As specified under VP budget
2. Develop a Gender Mainstreaming Taskforce (GMT)	SoE, VP	GMT in place, consisting of School of Education faculty and external members of the community, including people with disabilities and gender diverse people	2021 and ongoing	0
2. Review existing plans, work and resources	GMT, VP	Existing work and resources are reviewed, including BP in gender mainstreaming and local resources, (Family Life baseline carried out in 2019 on behalf of UNFPA, the Family Life booklet developed for ADRA and VPride SOGIE booklet). SoE course plans	2022	0
3. Develop a faculty professional development program in curriculum gender mainstreaming	VP, in collaboration with GMT	Professional faculty development program in place for gender/disability inclusion skills and competencies in course content, teaching methodology, teaching outcomes, research projects, professional evaluation	2022, 2023	Budget for faculty professional development sessions, to be funded from NUV operational staff development budget
4. Pilot and review at least 4 courses with gender/ disability mainstreaming content	VP, in collaboration with GMT	Four courses with gender/ disability mainstreaming content and pedagogy are successfully piloted and reviewed during the 1 st year, at least 1 in each program		May need special library or curriculum content resources budget

5. For year 2, ensure every faculty member has at least one course with effective gender/disability mainstreaming content	VP, in collaboration with GMT	Number of courses offered in SoE with effective gender/disability mainstreaming components	2022, 2023	Suggest to include a follow-up visit or budget for the VP for phase 2
6. Continue to develop, monitor, study, and share the results of the gender /disability mainstreaming and inclusion work with other institutions, professionals, and community organisations	VP, in collaboration with GMT	Monitoring results, including course reviews, student ratings and reviews, faculty research projects, student research projects, participation in inclusion related educational conferences and collaborate relations	2022 and ongoing	Suggest to include a follow-up visit or budget for the VP for phase 2

End Notes

¹ The full feasibility study includes a n overall feasibility assessment for the expansion, along with 3 separate studies: 1) a feasibility study on an additional segment of Project CVU1063, focused on computing practice at NUV funded by a European Union grant assigned to AFD; 2) the current gender baseline study and action plan; and 3) an architectural design brief. The funding for this stage of the project is EUR 10M and covers 2021-2023.

² AFD has granted funding to the New Caledonia Government to the tune of EUR 700,000 to build the facilities required to house the initial bilingual courses, namely a building including a classroom and a large lecture hall that can also host scientific seminars on the ground floor and office accommodation and meeting room on the first floor with a spacious entrance hall and small cafeteria. A contract was signed in February 2021 with a building contractor and construction work will begin in late March 2021 with the aim of starting lectures at the beginning of the 2022 academic year.

³ Specific components specified in the ToR for the Gender Study included:

- Based on a literature review and possibly interviews, assess the issues specific to Vanuatu's education, training and employment systems, particularly tertiary institutions and focusing on NUV.
- Using targeted interviews with the stakeholders and relevant local/national players, such as NGOs and community-based associations, etc.) narrow down the analysis to NUV and the project's potential impact on gender issues.
- Analyse the baseline situation and NUV's strategic and operational needs as well as those of the various stakeholders, whether or not they are directly involved in the project.
- This diagnostic work will assess the situation from several angles, particularly:
 - women and men's roles and positions and the resulting inequalities;
 - women and men's participation in the sector and institution's governance;
 - resource access and control;
 - what causes gender inequalities;
 - how sensitive the stakeholders are to gender-related issues;
 - how the various current practices affect women and men;
 - what the practical needs and strategic needs of women are

⁴ Specifications provided in the ToR for the Gender Study with regard to the Gender Action Plan included:

- Gender equity in higher education cannot be limited to parity. The following questions may help describe the situation when gender-differentiated data are not often collected. The information should then be used to help develop the project's Gender Action Plan.
- *Access and maintenance*
 - What are the factors explaining the gender gap at university?
 - If the gap favours women, does it mask other inequalities, such as a labour market bias against women with hiring discrimination and high unemployment rates among women?
 - What are the representation trends among men and women by institution type (prestigious, public/private), academic level, discipline (including high-value, scientific or technical disciplines) and training mode (distance courses, part time)?
 - What are the international mobility, internship and work-experience opportunities for men and women?
 - Do men and women have access to scholarships and welfare support?
 - What are men and women's sources of subsistence during their university studies, e.g., family support, self-funding, bank loans or jobs?
 - What is the drop-out rate for men and women by discipline, course and academic level?
 - Do courses meet men and women's expectations? Are they relevant to actual job market skills?
- *Success*
 - What are men and women's pass rates by discipline and course?
 - What is the employment rate for qualified men and women in their subject area / other professions? What kind of jobs do they do? What is their entry-level salary?
 - What are the scientific journal trends for men and women (number, frequency, scientific contribution, journal/publisher prestige)?
- *Governance quality*
 - Are curriculums and teaching methods gender-sensitive and stereotype-free?
 - Do men and women contribute equally in class? Do lecturers value their participation equally?

- What differences are there in men and women’s access to laboratory/computer equipment, etc.?
- Are social and psychological support services and career advice gender-sensitive?
- Do girls and boys participate equally in student governance bodies?
- Is there a gender-equity policy in the institution? Is it applied?
- What proportion of teaching and senior administrative positions are held by men and women?
- How prevalent is harassment?
- What mechanisms are there for preventing and responding to harassment?

⁵ CEDAW, Consideration of reports submitted by State parties under Art 18 of the Convention, Vanuatu, 12/11/13, at 31

⁶ Constitution of Vanuatu, Article 5(1)

⁷ CEDAW, Consideration of reports submitted by State parties under Art 18 of the Convention, Vanuatu, 12/11/13, at 7-10

⁸ See report at https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/23336Republic_of_Vanuatu_VNR_2019.pdf

⁹ Above at 6

¹⁰ Above at 7-8

¹¹ Above at 15.

¹² See *National Gender Equality Policy 2015-2019*, at 9

¹³ Vanuatu National Sustainable Development Plan 2016-2030, Policy Objective SOC 2.1

¹⁴ Above, Policy Objective SOC 4.1

¹⁵ Above, Policy Objective SOC 4.2

¹⁶ Above, Policy Objective ECO 4.5

¹⁷ NSDP Policy Objectives linked to the draft NGEPI Implementation Plan, ENV 1.1, 1.4, 1.5, 2.1, 2.3, 2.4, 3.1, 3.3, 3.4 and 3.5; SOC 2.1, 4.1, 4.2, 4.2, 4.5, 4.6, 5.1, 5.3, and 6.9; and ECO 1.7, 1.8, 1.9, 2.2, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 4.5, 4.6, 4.7, 4.8, and 4.9.

¹⁸ Values and Principles, Vanuatu Gender Equity in Education Policy 2018, at 9

¹⁹ Above, at 10

²⁰ Currently, World Vision is engaged in a comprehensive study on people with disabilities. There has also been a good study on the differential impact of disasters on people with disabilities

https://mspgh.unimelb.edu.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0011/2567576/WEB-DIDRR-Report-14112017.pdf

Beginning data collection from VNSO <https://vnso.gov.vu/index.php/special-reports/vanuatu-disabilities-in-vanuatu-what-do-the-data-say>

²¹ Beijing 25+ National Review Report, Government of Vanuatu, at 5-6

²² Andonia Piau-Lync, Vanuatu Country Gender Profile, January 2007 Final Report, at 9; Rapid Gender Analysis COVID-19 Vanuatu <https://www.care.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Vanuatu-Rapid-Gender-Analysis-COVID-FINAL-17.04.20.pdf>

²³ See e.g. Harmful Connections: Examining the relationship between violence against women and violence against children in the South Pacific

https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/Harmful_Connections.pdf Beijing + 25 National Review

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[https://www.asiapacificgender.org/sites/default/files/documents/Vanuatu%20\(English\).pdf](https://www.asiapacificgender.org/sites/default/files/documents/Vanuatu%20(English).pdf) VWC and VNSO (Vanuatu Women’s Centre and Vanuatu National Statistics Office), Vanuatu National Survey on Women’s Lives and Family Relationships (Port Vila, Vanuatu: VWC, 2011; UN Global Data base <https://evaw-global-database.unwomen.org/en/countries/oceania/vanuatu>; Biersack, A. Human Rights Work in Papua New Guinea, Fiji and Vanuatu

<https://pressfiles.anu.edu.au/downloads/press/n2168/html/ch07.xhtml?referer=&page=13>

²⁴ Oxfam Vanuatu, Gender and LGBTIQ+ Policy and Programming in Vanuatu, Opportunities, challenges, capacity and tools for change, July 2020

²⁵ The Westminster system or Westminster model is a type of parliamentary system of government that incorporates a series of procedures for operating a legislature that was first developed in England, key aspects of which include an executive branch made up of members of the legislature, and that is responsible to the legislature; the presence of parliamentary opposition parties; and a ceremonial head of state who is different from the head of government.

²⁶ As above

²⁷ 21 Inter-Parliamentary Union, 2020. Vanuatu: Women in Parliament. Online at:

<https://www.ipu.org/parliament/VU> Willie, 2019. 21 New, 15 Former Directors Appointed. Daily Post. https://dailypost.vu/news/21-new-15-former-directors-appointed/article_59c018fd-9b84-55c5-93a1-5b11a2ed3cd8.html

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- ²⁸ Andonia Piau-Lync, Vanuatu: Country Gender Profile, January 2007 Final Report, at 13
- ²⁹ Oxfam Vanuatu, Gender and LGBTIQI+ Policy and Programming in Vanuatu, Opportunities, challenges, capacity and tools for change, July 2020
- ³⁰ Bowman C et al, Women in Vanuatu Analyzing Challenges to Economic Participation, The World Bank, 2009, at 39
- ³¹ Wallace, H. (2000) *Gender and the reform process in Vanuatu and Solomon Islands*. Development Bulletin, 51, pp. 23-25. https://crawford.anu.edu.au/rmap/devnet/devnet/gen/gen_gov.pdf
- ³² Oxfam Vanuatu, *Gender and LGBTIQI+ Policy and Programming in Vanuatu, Opportunities, challenges, capacity and tools for change*, July 2020, at 17-18
- ³³ Oxfam in Vanuatu, Context Analysis: Gender & Inclusion Design
- ³⁴ Brislane J. (2017) Care International in Vanuatu, *Key Lessons for the Development of Young Women's Leadership for Gender Equality and Elimination of Violence against Women and Girls in Vanuatu*, p. 6
- ³⁵ AusAID, Viran Molisa-Trief and Heidi Tyedmers (2016) *Conflict Management and Access to Justice in Rural Vanuatu*, 2016, at 116
- ³⁶ As above
- ³⁷ Bowman et al, Women in Vanuatu, *Analyzing Challenges to Economic Participation*, World Bank (2009) at 26
- ³⁸ Bowman et al, Women in Vanuatu, *Analyzing Challenges to Economic Participation*, World Bank (2009), p. 38
- ³⁹ UN Women's Asia and the Pacific, at 2
- ⁴⁰ Oxfam Vanuatu, Gender and LGBTIQI+ Policy and Programming in Vanuatu, Opportunities, challenges, capacity and tools for change, July 2020, at 17-18
- ⁴¹ VWC and VNSO (2011). Vanuatu National Survey on Women's Lives and Family Relationships.
- ⁴² UN Women's Asia and the Pacific, at 2; Regional Overview Prepared by the Pacific Community for the 13th Triennial Conference of Pacific Women and 6th Meeting of Ministers of Women (2017) at 10
- ⁴³ https://www.unicef.org/Vanuatu_FACTSHEETS_FINAL.pdf
- ⁴⁴ https://www.unicef.org/Vanuatu_FACTSHEETS_FINAL.pdf
- ⁴⁵ VPride (2021) *SOGIE Diversity in Vanuatu: A Preliminary Study*.
- ⁴⁶ Vanuatu Skills Partnership, Better Balance Report, July-Dec 2020, at 7
- ⁴⁷ Ministry of Education and Training, National Gender Equity in Education Policy, 2018
- ⁴⁸ (Vanuatu National Statistics Office 2011 <https://vnso.gov.vu/index.php/en/special-reports/education-statistical-diges>
- ⁴⁹ Vanuatu National Statistics Office 2011 <https://vnso.gov.vu/index.php/en/special-reports/education-statistical-diges>
- ⁵⁰ UN Women. Asia and the Pacific: Vanuatu <https://asiapacific.unwomen.org/en/countries/fiji/co/vanuatu>
- ⁵¹ UN Women. Asia and the Pacific: Vanuatu <https://asiapaific.unwomen.org/en/countries/fiji/co/vanuatu> J
- ⁵² Vanuatu Skills Partnership, Better Balance Report, July-Dec 2020, at 7
- ⁵³ Jarvis, Caleb One-third of Pacific businesses doubt they will survive COVID19, Apr 1, 2021 https://dailypost.vu/news/one-third-of-pacific-businesses-doubt-they-will-survive-covid-19/article_eeba9a16-9276-11eb-8877-afc9175f046b.html
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- ⁵⁵ Above; Regional Overview Prepared by the Pacific Community for the 13th Triennial Conference of Pacific Women and 6th Meeting of Ministers of Women (2017) at 13-15
- ⁵⁶ Bowman et al, Women in Vanuatu, Analyzing Challenges to Economic Participation, World Bank (2009) at 85
- ⁵⁷ Bowman et al, Women in Vanuatu, Analyzing Challenges to Economic Participation, World Bank (2009) at 38
- ⁵⁷ UN Women's Asia and the Pacific, at 26
- ⁵⁸ Andonia Liau-Lync, Vanuatu, Country Gender Profile 2007 Final Report 2007, at 14
- ⁵⁹ Discussion with Director of DWA, April 2021
- ⁶⁰ See www.vcci.vu
- ⁶¹ Vanuatu Education and Training Sector Strategic Plan 2020 - 2030 <https://www.globalpartnership.org/sites/default/files/document/file/2020-08-education-training-sector-strategic-plan-2020-2030-vanuatu.pdf>
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<https://www.usp.ac.fj/index.php?id=22533>
- ⁶³ <https://www.ratuafoundation.com/school-in-vanuatu>
- ⁶⁴ Vanuatu Ministry of Education and Training (2018). Reviewed Gender Equity in Education Policy (GEEP) https://moet.gov.vu/docs/policies/Reviewed%20Gender%20Equity%20in%20Education%20Policy_2018.pdf
- ⁶⁵ Vanuatu Government Scholarships – Priority Framework <http://scholarships.gov.vu/website/priority>

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- ⁶⁶ Government of the Republic of Vanuatu BUDGET 2020 VOLUME 1 FISCAL STRATEGY REPORT INCO https://doft.gov.vu/images/2020/Budget/2020_Volume_1_2_Budget_Book_English.pdf
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- ⁷⁰ . *National Disability Policy Plan of Action* [https://mjcs.gov.vu/images/disability_desk/National Disability Policy Plan of Action.pdf](https://mjcs.gov.vu/images/disability_desk/National_Disability_Policy_Plan_of_Action.pdf)
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- ⁷³ ⁷³ https://moet.gov.vu/docs/statistics/2020%20MoET%20Education%20Statistics%20Report_2020.pdf
- ⁷⁴ Ministry of Education and Training, Annual Statistical Digest 2019
- ⁷⁵ USP Emalus Campus, 2018.
- ⁷⁶ https://moet.gov.vu/docs/statistics/2020%20MoET%20Education%20Statistics%20Report_2020.pdf p. 35
- ⁷⁷ https://moet.gov.vu/docs/statistics/2020%20MoET%20Education%20Statistics%20Report_2020.pdf
- ⁷⁸ https://moet.gov.vu/docs/statistics/2020%20MoET%20Education%20Statistics%20Report_2020.pdf, pp. 35-36
- ⁷⁹ NUV data indicate there were actually 2 female doctoral students in 2020.
- ⁸⁰ Source: Donor Agencies
- ⁸¹ UN Women. *Concepts and Definitions*. <https://www.un.org/womenwatch/osagi/conceptsanddefinitions.htm>
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- ⁸³ United Nations University. *Sustainable Development Goal 5*. <https://unu.edu/explore/sustainable-development-goal-5>
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- ⁸⁶ A particularly useful publication talking about the role of higher education in development is the *Higher Education in the World 6 Towards a Socially Responsible University: Balancing the Global with the Local* (2017) available at http://www.guninetwork.org/files/download_full_report.pdf The Global University Network for Innovation (GUNI) encourages higher education institutions to redefine their role, embrace this process of transformation and strengthen their critical stance within society.
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- ⁹⁵ *The Horizon 2020 Regulation: Science with and for Society*, https://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/data/ref/h2020/wp/2018-2020/main/h2020-wp1820-swfs_en.pdf, p. 24
- ⁹⁶ A project of particular interest to Vanuatu may be: *SwafS-12-2019: The gender perspective of science, technology and innovation (STI) in dialogue with third countries . The Horizon 2020 Regulation: Science with and for Society*, https://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/data/ref/h2020/wp/2018-2020/main/h2020-wp1820-swfs_en.pdf, pp. 29-30.
- ⁹⁷ Higher Education for Development: An Evaluation of the World Bank Group's Support <https://ieg.worldbankgroup.org/evaluations/higher-education-for-development> p. 10
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- ¹⁰³ Ibid p, 14. See also *The Horizon 2020 Regulation: Science with and for Society*, https://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/data/ref/h2020/wp/2018-2020/main/h2020-wp1820-swfs_en.pdf especially Strategic Orientation 2 Stepping up support to Gender Equality in Research & Innovation policy, and *Gender Equality Academy and dissemination of gender knowledge across Europe* (2018) https://cordis.europa.eu/programme/id/H2020_SwafS-13-2018
- ¹⁰⁴ The AQU document provides useful and detailed examples in this area on pp. 25-54 https://www.aqu.cat/doc/doc_21331700_1.pdf
- ¹⁰⁵ Ibid, pp. 22-24
- ¹⁰⁶ Morley, L. (2006) *Gender Equity in Commonwealth Higher Education: An Examination of Sustainable Interventions in Selected Commonwealth Universities* https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/57a08c1ce5274a31e0000fda/Educationalpaper_65.pdf
- ¹⁰⁷ International Association of Universities (2021) *Higher Education and SDG 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls. (Higher Education and Research in Sustainable Development (HESD))* https://www.iau-aiu.net/IMG/pdf/iau_sdg5_universitiesforequality2021_hq.pdf
- ¹⁰⁸ Ibid, p. 10
- ¹⁰⁹ Ibid, pp. 48-52.
- ¹¹⁰ United Nations Academic Impact About UNAI <https://www.un.org/en/academic-impact/page/about-unai>
- ¹¹¹ United Nations Academic Impact SDG5 <https://www.un.org/en/academic-impact/sdgsinacademia-goal-5#>
- ¹¹² UNAI provides an SDG guide, entitled *Getting started with the SDGs in Universities* (Australia, New Zealand & Pacific edition) available at http://ap-unsdsn.org/wp-content/uploads/University-SDG-Guide_web.pdf
- ¹¹³ Sciences Po. 10 measures to advance gender equality at university. <https://www.sciencespo.fr/students/en/news/10-measures-advance-gender-equality-university.html>
- ¹¹⁴ See Science PO *Creating meaningful gender equality* <https://www.sciencespo.fr/enseignants/sites/sciencespo.fr.enseignants/files/recommandations-egalitefh-en.pdf>
- ¹¹⁵ See *Antwerp Charter on gender-sensitive communication in and by academic institutions*. https://www.egera.eu/fileadmin/user_upload/Deliverables/EGERA_s_Antwerp_Charter_on_Gender-sensitive_Communication_in_and_by_Academic_Institutions_-_dissemination.pdf
- ¹¹⁶ Taiwo, M. (2014) *Best Practices in Gender Mainstreaming in the Academia: Lessons from African Higher Education Institutions*. *International Journal of Humanities Social Sciences and Education*, 1, 10, Volume 1, Issue 10, pp. 81-87
- ¹¹⁷ DAAD/DIES/HRK (2017) *Female Leadership and Higher Education Management in Developing Countries* https://static.daad.de/media/daad_de/pdfs_nicht_barrierefrei/infos-services-fuer-hochschulen/projektsteckbriefe/daad_gender_conference_proceedings_2017.pdf
- ¹¹⁸ European Commission *Communication on 'A Reinforced European Research Area Partnership for Excellence and Growth'* (COM(2012) 392 final), as referenced in European Institute for Gender Equality (2016). *Promoting gender equality in academia and research institutions: Main Findings*. Downloaded from

<https://eige.europa.eu/publications/promoting-gender-equality-academia-and-research-institutions-main-findings> p. 8

¹¹⁹ European Institute for Gender Equality (2016) *Promoting gender equality in academia and research institutions: Main Findings*. <https://eige.europa.eu/sites/default/files/documents/mh0116928enn.pdf>, p. 10

¹²⁰ Ibid, p. 11.

¹²¹ European Institute for Gender Equality. *Gender Equality in Academic and Research: GEAR tool*.

<https://eige.europa.eu/publications/gender-equality-academia-and-research-gear-tool> and <https://eige.europa.eu/gender-mainstreaming/toolkits/gear>

¹²² For Vanuatu, this will go beyond COVID 19. Since Vanuatu ranks #1 on the World Disaster Risk Index, considering gender, gender diversity, and disability inclusion in all its disaster response preparation and response will be essential.

¹²³ National University of Vanuatu Bilingual Bachelor's Degree in Tourism & Hospitality

<https://www.univ.edu.vu/en/trainings/bachelor-in-tourism>

¹²⁴ National University of Vanuatu. Bachelor's Degree in Social and Economic Administration

<https://www.univ.edu.vu/en/trainings/bachelor-esa>

¹²⁵ National University of Vanuatu. Bachelor's Degree in Environmental Science.

<https://www.univ.edu.vu/en/news/bachelor-degree-environmental-science>

¹²⁶ National University of Vanuatu. Master of Economics and Social Sciences

<https://www.univ.edu.vu/en/trainings/master-degree-in-ess>

¹²⁷ National University of Vanuatu. Master's Degree in Land Management and Local Development (LMLD)/Planning and development of the Pacific Island territories of Vanuatu (ADTO-Van)

<https://www.univ.edu.vu/en/trainings/master-degree-adto>

¹²⁸ 2019 Bill for the National University of Vanuatu Act No. 34 of 2019

<http://eparliamentresource.gov.vu/jspui/handle/1/957>

¹²⁹ National University of Vanuatu. *Human Resource Management Manual*, pp. 5-7

¹³⁰ *National University of Vanuatu Strategic Plan 2021-2020*, pp. 7-8

¹³¹, Ibid p. 8.

¹³² Ibid, p. 22

¹³³ Ibid, p. 27

¹³⁴ National University of Vanuatu. *Human Resource Management Manual*, p. 11

¹³⁵ National University of Vanuatu. *Human Resource Management Manual*, p. 22.

¹³⁶ Ibid, p. 35

¹³⁷ University of Toulouse – Capitole. <https://www.ut-capitole.fr/universite/> University Toulouse Jean Jaures - <https://www.univ-tlse2.fr/#m24834414263051608>

¹³⁸ Taylor's University. *Tackling gender discrimination*. <https://university.taylors.edu.my/en/campus-life/news-and-events/news/tackling-gender-discrimination.html>

¹³⁹ University of New Caledonia *Objectives of the Equal Opportunity Mandate*.

<https://unc.nc/en/university/equal-opportunity-mandate/>

¹⁴⁰ James Cook University (2020) *Work towards gender equity recognised*.

<https://www.jcu.edu.au/news/releases/2020/december/work-towards-gender-equity-recognised>

¹⁴¹ For a sample university policy statement, see <https://www.yamanashi.ac.jp/en/about/133>

¹⁴² Ibid, p. 27

¹⁴³ Comprehensive stakeholder meetings were held with NUV staff and students as part of the earlier ESMF study. For the purpose of this gender study, gender-related components are summarised from that document.