



GENDER EQUALITY AND EQUITY PLAN OF TRAINING CENTRE IN COMMUNICATION

INTRODUCTION

The Training Centre in Communication (TCC Africa), is the first African-based training centre to teach effective communication skills to scientists. TCC Africa is an award winning Trust, established as a non-profit entity in 2006 and is registered in Kenya. TCC Africa provides capacity support in improving researchers output and visibility training, scholarly and science communication.

Gender equality is a crucial element advocating for an environment where women have equal access to opportunities and resources as men. This involves not only ensuring equality but also fostering a safe atmosphere that prevents sexual harassment, establishing conditions that facilitate the balance between work and parenthood, and integrating a gender perspective into education

and course materials. Attaining gender equality demands ongoing and proactive efforts.

FOCAL AREAS OF OUR GENDER EQUALITY PLAN

1 . Equal Opportunities:

Recruitment, career progression and retention

Objective: Promoting processes to favour and support gender-sensitive recruitment, career and appointments

Approach: The Training Centre in Communication will work towards equal gender roles within all employment categories in the organizational structure. In addition to striving for equal gender representation in employing staff and setting wages, the organization shall aim for equality concerning each individual's work processes. We are taking strategic steps to eliminate biases and create an inclusive environment where individuals are recognised for their merits rather than their gender. In recruitment, we will adopt gender-neutral language and diverse hiring panels while providing training to mitigate biases. To facilitate career progression, we will conduct regular gender pay gap audits, implement mentorship programs, and offer leadership training. For retention, we are prioritizing a supportive work environment, sharing good career practices, flexible arrangements, and active employee engagement. This includes, for example, how the newly employed are introduced to the organization's administrative structures, which is important for work efficiency and the possibilities of career progression.

2. Foster Inclusive Work Culture:

Zero-Tolerance Policy:

Objective: Cultivate a workplace of inclusivity and respect by implementing a zero-tolerance policy against discrimination, harassment, and bias, ensuring a secure environment for all employees.

Approach: The organization's approach involves implementing a comprehensive zero-tolerance policy against discrimination, harassment, and bias to create a secure and inclusive workplace. This approach includes clear communication of the policy, outlining consequences for violations, establishing accessible reporting channels, implementing a prompt response mechanism, integrating awareness into training programs, and fostering continuous improvement. By emphasizing accountability, transparency, and a commitment to gender equality, the organization aims to cultivate a culture of respect and safety for all employees.

Diversity and Inclusion Training:

Objective: Promote workplace inclusivity and raise awareness on Gender equality. through comprehensive training on diversity, addressing unconscious bias, microaggressions, and fostering inclusive communication.

Approach: The Training Centre in Communication will execute this thorough and engaging training programs for the employees to heighten awareness of diversity and inclusion. These sessions will specifically address crucial topics like unconscious bias, microaggressions, and inclusive communication, aiming to cultivate a workplace culture that embraces acceptance and diversity.

3. Work-Life Balance:

Objective: Promoting integration of work with family and personal life

Approach:

- a) **Flexible work arrangements:** TCC Africa recognizes that achieving work-life balance is crucial for the well-being and productivity of all employees.

We acknowledge the diverse needs and responsibilities that individuals carry beyond the workplace, and are committed to developing approaches that facilitate a supportive environment.

In response to the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, TCC Africa implemented a progressive initiative within the framework of our work-life balance objective. This initiative introduced a blended work-week model, striking a balance between in-person and remote work. Acknowledging the importance of adaptability and flexibility, this model allows employees to engage in on-site work for three days, while dedicating two days to remote work. Additionally, we have incorporated the implementation of ICT-based systems to enhance flexibility and improve staff mobility. These technological solutions not only streamline communication and collaboration but also provide our team members with the tools necessary for seamless remote work integration. These approaches are designed to cater to the diverse needs of our workforce, fostering an environment that supports the integration of professional responsibilities with family and personal life.

b) Parental Leave Policies:

TCC Africa also supports the compatibility of work and studies with family and other obligations through numerous measures such as offering both maternity and paternity leave to ensure equitable opportunities for all caregivers as well as support for caring responsibilities, including childcare and care for other dependants.

4. Leadership Development:

Mentorship and Sponsorship Programs:

Implement mentorship and sponsorship programs that specifically support the career growth of underrepresented genders. This provides guidance, visibility, and opportunities for advancement, addressing the challenges faced in reaching leadership positions.

Diverse Representation in Leadership Roles:

Actively recruit and promote individuals from diverse backgrounds to leadership roles. This ensures that decision-making bodies reflect the diversity of the workforce, fostering an inclusive and innovative organizational culture.

Implementation Steps:

1. Assessment:

Gender Audit:

Conduct a thorough gender audit, examining current workforce demographics, policies, and practices. Identify areas of improvement and gather insights from employees to understand their experiences within the organization.

Feedback Mechanisms:

Establish anonymous reporting mechanisms and regularly solicit feedback from employees through surveys and focus groups. This provides valuable insights into the effectiveness of current initiatives and areas that may require further attention.

2. Policy Development:

Clear and Comprehensive Policy:

Develop a gender equality policy that clearly articulates the organization's commitment to fostering an inclusive environment. Ensure that the policy is easily accessible to all employees and aligns with legal requirements and industry standards.

3. Training Initiatives:

Targeted Training Programs:

Tailor training programs to address specific needs at different organizational levels. Provide specialized training for leadership and management to equip them with the skills needed to champion gender equality initiatives within their teams.

Unconscious Bias Resources:

Offer resources and tools to help employees recognize and challenge unconscious biases. This can include workshops, online modules, and regular communication to reinforce a culture of awareness and sensitivity.

4. Communication:

Employee Engagement:

Encourage employee engagement by creating forums for open discussions on gender equality. This could include employee resource groups, diversity councils, or regular town hall meetings where employees can share their experiences and suggestions.

5. Monitoring and Evaluation:

Regular Review Meetings:

Conduct regular review meetings to assess the effectiveness of implemented initiatives. Use feedback from employees, key performance indicators, and evolving best practices to make informed adjustments to the Gender Equality Equity and Inclusion Plan.

Review and Continuous Improvement:

Periodic Reassessment:

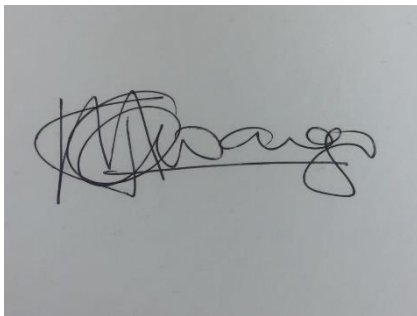
Periodically reassess the Gender Equality Equity and Inclusion Plan to ensure its relevance in the evolving organizational landscape. Consider changes in the workforce, societal expectations, and legal requirements in the review process.

Adaptation to Changes:

Be adaptable and responsive to changes within the organization and external factors. Continuously seek feedback from employees and stakeholders to identify emerging challenges and opportunities for improvement.

By taking these comprehensive steps, the Training Centre in Communication aims to create an environment where gender equality and equity is not only a stated commitment but a lived reality for all employees. This plan is designed to foster an inclusive workplace culture that benefits individuals, the organization, and the broader community.

Joy Owango



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