



# UNIVERSITY OF UYO GENDER POLICY

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(ABRIDGED VERSION)

MARCH, 2013

## FOREWORD

It is a well known fact that in different communities, men and women play different roles as determined by their society. These gendered roles and expectations are determinants of life decisions and outcomes. The trend is currently evident in the University of Uyo, being a miniature society in a larger one. It is manifest in work relationships and consequently, productivity and quality of life.

The Management of the University of Uyo is desirous of building an academic environment and University Community where equality and equity in access to and control over opportunities and resources for maximised excellence in outputs, do not depend on one's gender.

This Gender Policy will serve as a vehicle for the members of the University of Uyo Community, build global recognition, relevance, excellence in leadership, research, human resource and technological development; an institution where its staff, students and extended community members, will enjoy equity and parity in all spheres, as articulated in the University's vision and mission statement.

Gender balancing and the issue of women's and men's peculiar empowerments entrenched in this Gender Policy, are central to the rapid achievement of these objectives. As a University, we will use global and time-tested standards as instruments in assessing, monitoring and evaluating our progress and achievements as we periodically review our policy for improvement as well as continue to sensitise, re-orientate, train and re-train stakeholders in a continuous improvement process.

The Committee that worked assiduously to put this policy together is greatly appreciated. To the rest of us, congratulations to us all for this important and bold first step in our journey to excellence.

**Prof. Comfort M. Ekpo**

*Vice-Chancellor*

*University of Uyo, Uyo*

March, 2013

## **PREFACE**

Engendering a gender agenda in the University of Uyo is an exercise that has beckoned persistently, ceaselessly demanding attention over the decades, and uncompromising in its stand, that it is the strategic key to the rapid developmental excellence of the fledgling institution. This we know has been hammered upon by development experts at nations, their implementing and supervising organs inclusive, as being indubitably evidenced by a wealth of statistics.

The journey of a million miles is obviously hinged upon the difficult first step, which, once overcome, makes the rest history. We are so delighted that the all important pioneering step has at last been taken by this great citadel of learning, and anchored by none other than the forward thinking Vice Chancellor of the institution, Prof. Comfort M. Ekpo. We acknowledge her boldness in courageously taking the bull by the horns and firmly setting the ball rolling. As is often the case with successful solutions to nagging problems, there will be no turning back. It will be onward and upwards, until the good becomes better and the better becomes best. Congratulations University of Uyo, as your development agenda becomes reality in leaps and bounds!

Our colleagues on the Gender Policy Development Team are very gratefully acknowledged, as are the various stakeholder groups without whose frank inputs, the policy wouldn't have had this depth and wholesomeness. We are particularly grateful to the Shem Zagbayi Nuhu led Governing Council of the University of Uyo for scrutinizing it and finally giving it their treasured stamp of approval.

**Prof. Ekaete U. I. Etuk**

*Chairperson,  
University of Uyo Gender Policy Development Committee*

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

The University of Uyo Gender Policy and Development Committee is grateful to the Governing Council of the University of Uyo, for giving the Committee an impetus to be visionary by approving the establishment of the UNIUYO Centre for Gender and Women Development, as well as appointing the first female Vice-Chancellor of the University. Our appreciation also goes to the Vice-Chancellor, Prof. (Mrs.) Comfort M. Ekpo, for setting up this Committee, thereby giving the members a golden opportunity to serve. Due acknowledgement is also given to the useful excerpts and guidelines/referenced, especially those adapted from the National Gender Policy of Nigeria and the Association of African Universities Working Group on Higher Education (AAWGHE) gender mainstreaming toolkit. Further acknowledged are the contributions of Prof. Nnenna Oti, an internationally recognised gender consultant. We grateful acknowledge all Stakeholders of the UNIUYO Committee, who participated in the various workshops and gave their inputs and endorsements to make the policy a rich, home-grown one.

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- 1) Evidence-based research using sex-disaggregated and other data has in recent times emphasised and corroborated the critical and requisite need for gender parity in global, national, institutional and other social development, in order to optimise full potentials for rapid technological and other human advancements.
- 2) Gender equity has been shown to not only be desirable but beyond this has been evidentially proven to critically, catalyse and sustain development; it first identifies the societal and other differences between men and women that challenge parity and then sets out to delineate compensatory mechanisms for the disadvantaged gender, such as affirmative action, that will eventually bring parity or equal term basis with the advantaged gender.
- 3) The desirability becomes more obvious when both gender are likened to the left and right halves of the human brain, which not only need to function in equal tandem to bring about the maximum potentials of the human concerned but which indeed, need to elicit their peculiar characteristics in order to bring this functionality to bear in a balanced manner. Likewise, a

race horse cannot attain the coveted prize without exercising its maximum potential by using only its two front legs in disadvantaged as opposed using the two hind legs as well.

- 4) The realization of the critical role of gender equality in human development and advancement has resulted in global charters and declarations by the United (league of) Nations (UN) seeking to incorporate this concept into individual nations' constitutions and government policies. The Federal Government of Nigeria led by President Goodluck Jonathan recently directed that all federal institutions, ministries, parastatals and agencies should integrate and implement the National Gender Policy in order to boost rapid and sustainable development in their sectoral spheres of influence.
- 5) The University of Uyo Governing Council has initiated the first step of compliance for the University by approving the establishment of a Centre for Gender Studies and Development, which has since been inaugurated. This will undoubtedly not only influence the immediate and host communities of the University but the larger, global one as well, as it ultimately churns out gender balanced and competent manpower annually.
- 6) Furthermore the University began a formal participation in the globally recognised annual International Women's Day Celebration, as well as set up a Gender Policy Development Committee to initiate and help drive the policy articulation process. These series of events led the Committee to follow laid down due process procedures for the institution of a home-grown gender policy. Briefly,
  - Stakeholder fora were organised for individual inputs from various UNIUYO sectors viz, the Governing Council, Management, Senate, Faculties, directorates, departments and units, to inculcate home grown aspects into the policy and factor in specialised gender issues, including generating a preliminary gender audit and budget.
  - The final policy has been formally authenticated by all and now awaits implementation and periodic evaluation for improved functionality.
  - The Gender Committee was to be expanded by integrating stakeholders into a UniUyo Gender Policy Technical Committee to work with the Gender Centre. This format has since been dropped in favour of statutory University system methods. Capacity building of Stakeholders will be driven by the Gender Centre while copies of the policy will be circulated to all.

The ultimate goal is to facilitate the UNIUYO Vision and Mission Statement which is as follows:

**“Vision:** To be a centre of academic excellence by utilizing the available human and technological resources for teaching, research, community service and sustainable development;

**Mission:** To diligently pursue scholarship and deploy its output for human capacity development and economic growth in the society, with active participation in Information and Communication Technology, sensitivity to Nigeria’s rich cultural heritage and responsiveness to global environmental changes.”

Proper implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the policy should catapult UNIUYO, which already has attained some measure of international ranking as a pace setting institution of excellence, into a rapidly advancing institution known for excellence in research and technology development and sustained by equitably balanced, gender sensitive leadership.

*University of Uyo Gender Policy*

*Development Committee*

March 2013

## **PART ONE**

### **CONTEXT AND RATIONALE**

#### **1.1 Introduction**

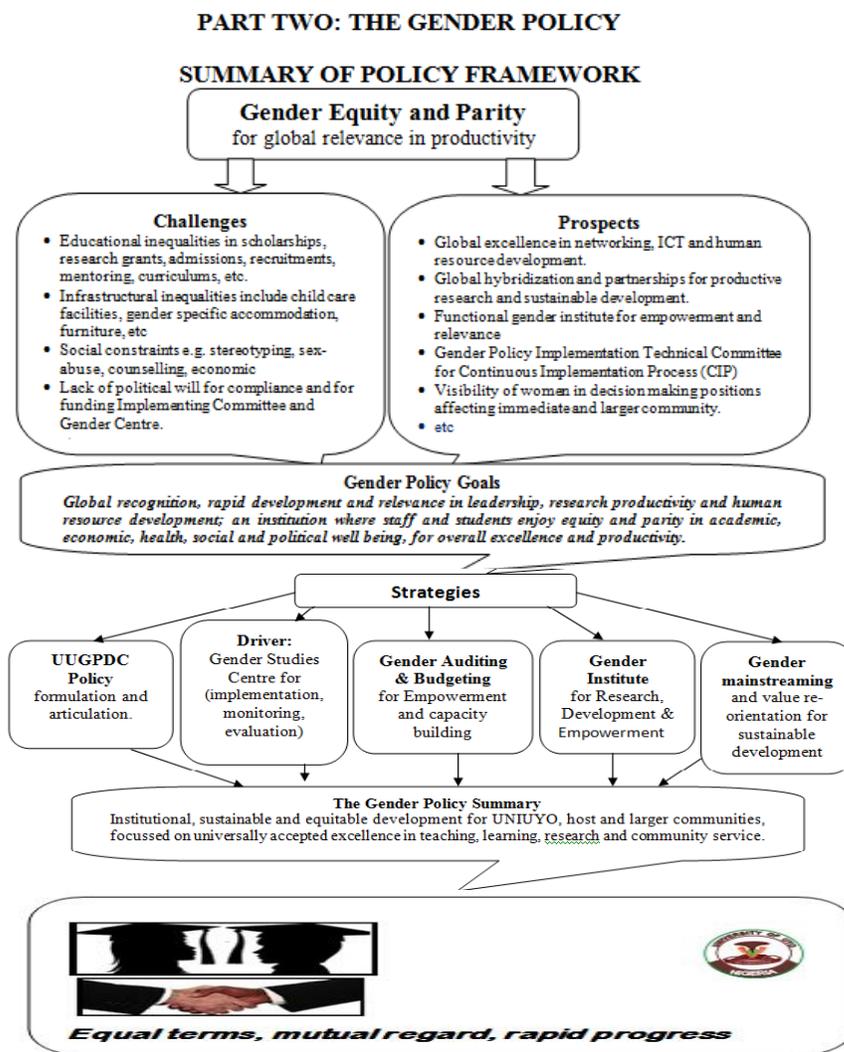
Promoting gender equity between men and women is now globally accepted as a rapid development strategy for global, impact and relevance through improving health and living standards as well as enhancing the efficiency of democratic governance and public investments.

The attainment of gender equality (through equity strategies) is not seen as an end in itself, but as a prerequisite for the achievement of sustainable development.

The history of development policies in Nigeria have been unfortunately, that of a general neglect of the gender variable. Gender gaps and disparities continue to exist despite the partnership efforts of the United Nations and the Nigerian government to bridge these gaps. One of the key development indicators of the UN Millennium Development Goals, which Nigeria has also adopted, is the achievement of gender equality through the establishment of a culture of gender sensitive and equity principles in all institutions and structures of government, the private sector and communities.

The Nigerian constitution clearly makes provision for gender, balanced equal rights and opportunities for all citizens, irrespective of sex and gender. The Nigerian government has furthermore instituted and adopted the National Gender Policy which clearly advocates gender balancing and mainstreaming in all spheres of national life.

The Universities, as institutions of higher learning should play crucial roles in addressing the function of gender inequality and inequity as developmental setbacks at all levels of education in general. This therefore highlights the need for a strategic policy document developed to guide the domestication of the National Gender Policy in the University of Uyo and also monitor its implementation and periodic evaluation of mainstreaming a gender-perspective into all facets, projects, programmes and levels of activity in the UNIUYO community.



**Fig. 2.1: Conceptual framework of University of Uyo Gender Policy.**  
**2.1 The Gender Policy**

The UniUyo Gender Policy is summarized in the Policy framework in Fig. 2.1. It states that, the Policy is established for the institutional and sustainable development of the immediate, host and larger University Community, to facilitate and optimize its vision and mission targets, as well as its global recognition for excellence and rapid development. Equal terms and mutual regard of both gender in every perspective and dimension must be upheld by all stakeholders, while affirmative actions will be used *inter alia*, as compensatory mechanisms for disadvantaged gender.

## **2.2. Guiding Principles**

The University of Uyo will adopt the following policy principles to facilitate gender balance and equity in the community:

- The Gender Policy is central and critical to the achievement of optimum development and realisation of institutional goals in the University of Uyo. All other policies will therefore be reviewed to mainstream gender strategies for implementation as specified in the Policy Framework;
- All stakeholders (including the National Universities Commission (NUC), the University of Uyo Governing Council, Management, Senate, Trade Unions, staff, students, religious and other organizations within the University community, parents, guardians, alumni and the immediate, larger, stakeholder community,) will be engaged for effective, results-focused policy implementation.
- Appropriate strategies and mechanisms, including financial accountability systems, for the delivery of gender equality as a cross-cutting issue, will be adopted and reviewed periodically to enhance achievement of explicit results and measurable progress towards policy targets.
- Equitable gender empowerment focus is central to achieving gender balancing and equality. It requires the recognition that every policy, programme and project affect men and women differently and that promoting the equal participation of women and men is essential to achieving gender equality and sustained development.

## **2.3. Policy Goal**

The Gender Policy builds an equitable University environment devoid of discrimination and harnesses the full potentials of all staff and students, regardless of sex or circumstance; it furthermore promotes the enjoyment of fundamental human rights by all and protects the health, social, economic and political well being of all members of the University community, in order to achieve rapid economic growth, maximize and optimize its full potentials for the institutional development of the University. The policy also evolves an evidence-based planning and governance system where human, social, financial and technological resources are efficiently and effectively deployed for sustained development.

### 2.3.1 Policy Objectives

In achieving the above stated policy goals, the following policy objectives served as guide:

- Accelerate sustainable development of excellence in the UNIUYO, Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria and globally through equitable balanced manpower generation as well as top of the range capacity building.
- Establish a framework for gender-responsiveness in all spheres of the University community and strengthen capacities of all stakeholders to deliver their component mandate of the gender policy and University gender strategic framework.
- Develop and apply gender mainstreaming approaches, tools and instruments that are compatible with the macro-policy framework of the University at any point in time, towards optimum development; also adopt gender mainstreaming as a core value and practice in social transformation, organisational cultures and in the general polity of the University community.
- Incorporate the principles of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), the National Gender Policy and other global and regional frameworks that support gender equality and empowerment in the University laws, legislative processes and administrative systems.
- Achieve a minimum threshold of representation for women in order to promote equal opportunity in all areas of University life for women, as well as for men.
- Undertake women and men-specific projects as a means of developing the capabilities of both women and men, to enable them take advantage of economic and political opportunities.
- Educate and sensitise all stakeholders on the centrality of gender equality and empowerment to the attainment of overall optimum institutional development, using the Gender Institute and Committee as anchor.

## PART THREE

### POLICY STRATEGIES FOR IMPLEMENTATION

The strategies for achieving the policy goal and objectives were premised on the ‘dual agenda’ principle, which perceives gender equity and equality as beneficial not only to individuals (women and men), but also essential for producing an effective and efficient system, both at the macro (national) and micro (organisational) levels. Recognising the cross-cutting nature of gender issues, the delivery of the gender policy was channelled through the following strategies:

- 3.1 establishment of UNIUYO Gender Advisory Board comprising senior staff appointees by the Vice Chancellor including the Hon. Commissioner for Women Affairs to represent Stakeholders. They advise the Vice Chancellor on the Gender Centre matters.
- 3.2 Establishment of the Gender Studies and Development Centre and the **Gender Executive Management Committee** to advise the Vice-Chancellor through the Centre Director on matters of gender equality and equity as well as drive the process in matters of implementation, monitoring and evaluation of gender mainstreaming in UNIUYO
- 3.3 **Equitable Gender Empowerment** strategies factored into the Policy. This equitably builds of the capacities of both women and men in the community. Specific ways of empowerment have included:

- ***Gender Studies Institute Establishment within the Gender Centre***

- In furtherance of the goals of gender development, equity and mainstreaming in the University, a Gender Studies Institute will be established as the academic arm of the Centre. The University of Uyo Gender Institute is proposed to be a teaching; learning and research institute with focus(es) on issues of women, gender and development on the African continent and in Nigeria in general and the University and Akwa Ibom state in particular.
- The institute offers programmes of teaching and research on gender in the contexts of, *inter alia*, sexuality, development, land reform, law, conflict, politics, economics and culture. The institute will enrol students from short certificate courses through to the doctoral level each year, although the academic programme will start with the short certificate and diploma courses.

- ***Organizational Structure and framework of the Institute***

Programmes of the Institute include the following:

- Short certificate courses (2 weeks – 3 months duration), ordinary diploma (12 months), higher diploma (18 – 24 months) and later on, BSc, MSc and PhD programmes and activities in gender, will be offered for sensitizations and empowerment.

### **3.4 Gender Mainstreaming Tranches**

- **First Tranche: Human Resources development and management:**  
Mainstreaming gender into human resources development and management (recruitment, deployment and development of women and men), highlighting the importance of affirmative actions and interventions at the levels of recruitment, retention, promotion and staff development.
- **Second Tranche: Information, Communication Technology and Value Re-orientation** (including e-learning, video conferencing/telemedicine, e-network, webinars, etc.)
- **Third Tranche: Capacity Building, Leadership and other Skills Development** (e.g. gender balancing entrepreneurial and leadership skills through targeted workshops).

The Policy embeds all of the above. The organogram of the Gender Centre is summarised:

### **3.5 Research Data and technical skills acquisition**

The critical roles of the research and the management of sex-disaggregated data for development and planning are indisputable.

Gender sensitive research and management of sex-disaggregated data provide a deeper insight and greater understanding of gender dimensions to development issues and also opens the space for engagement with institutions.

### **3.6 Sensitisation Programmes Against Gender Violence and Sexual Harassment**

Sexual harassment according to the UN- Convention on the elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) is defined as:

*“...any act that is likely to or results in physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats or acts of ....coercion, arbitrary deprivations of liberty ... private or public ... in the family, community.”*

- Staff and students will be sensitized about gender violence and sexual harassment
- The University will be motivated to conduct research, teaching and training on gender violence and sexual harassment
- Campaigns will be funded and efficiently run
- Management for staff and students will be better equipped to deal with such challenges
- Staff and students will be empowered to report and resist cases of sexual harassment.

### **3.7 Implementation, Monitoring and Evaluation**

Monitoring and evaluation shall be an essential strategy for the delivery of the University of Uyo Gender Policy. Appropriate tools, templates and modalities shall be developed to facilitate annual gender policy performance review.

## **4.0 UNIVERSITY OF UYO GENDER STUDIES AND DEVELOPMENT CENTRE**

### **4.1 RATIONALE FOR THE GENDER CENTRE**

The University of Uyo Gender Studies and Development Centre when operational will ultimately position the University as a powerful, stabilizing factor and balanced leader in Nigeria and the global community for sustainable human resource and technology development.

The Centre will focus on gender biased capacity building leading to increased knowledge and skills for staff and students with accelerated, balanced and sustained development of UNIUYO for International integration and recognition. The University will gain healthy, mutual respect of both genders for productivity in addressing all issues (academic, non-academic and otherwise) of efficient advancement, with tangible, visible and palpable benefits.

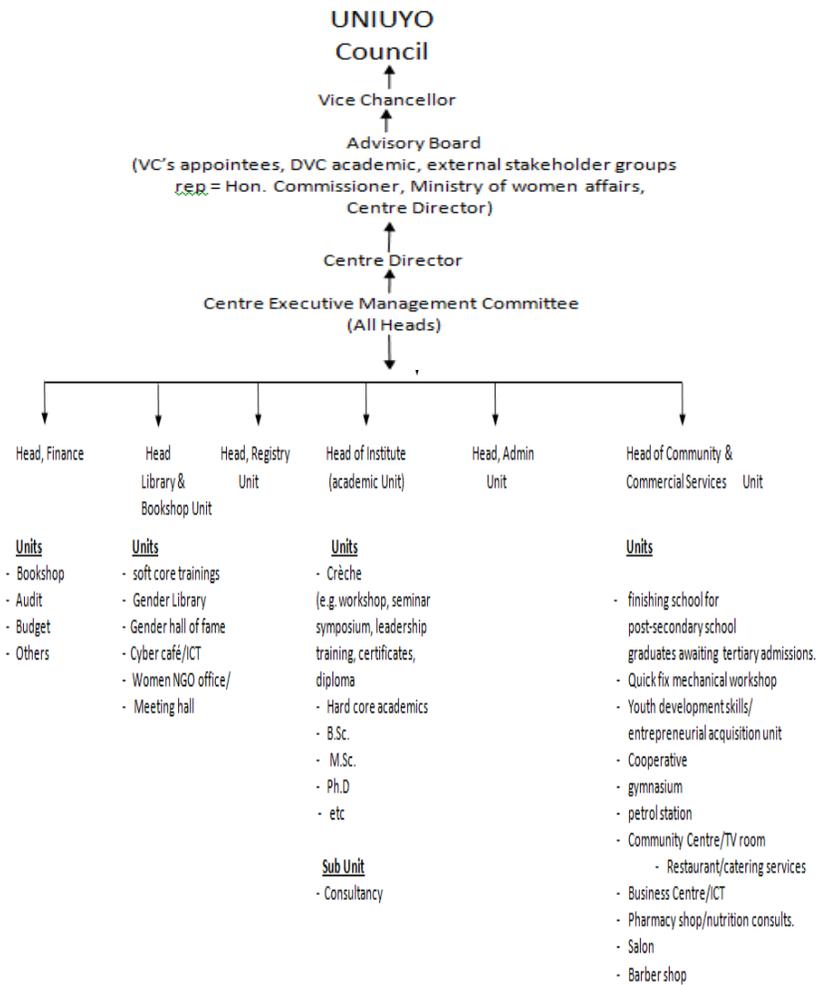


Fig 2. Gender Centre Organogram (responsible for driving UniUyo Gender Equity)

## 4.2 GENDER INSTITUTE PROGRAMME AND STRUCTURE

**Preamble:** Following the immediate conception of building of the Gender Studies Centre by the Vice Chancellor of the University of Uyo, Prof. (Mrs.) Comfort Ekpo, the need to develop a programme and administrative structure for the University of Uyo Gender Institute became mandatory. The Gender Policy Development Committee was given the responsibility of generating and overseeing the development of a detailed programme and structural framework for the running of the Institute. This task was to be executed in consultation with relevant experts and information resource banks for input in building a vibrant Institute.

The information resource and data banks will include those of successful Gender Institutes, selected organizations, universities and government agencies in Nigeria and abroad.

The programme structures shall reflect the peculiar characteristics of the African cultural values as well as address specific Gender situations and gaps within the Nigeria society in general and University of Uyo in particular.

The Institute shall run its programmes within the University of Uyo academic framework and calendar and thus the programmes will be presented to the University of Uyo Senate for approval and takeoff.

## **5.0 CONCLUSION**

The efficacy of the policy strategies is dependent on several elements highlighted as follows:

### **5.1 The Road Map for Policy design and ownership**

- Constitution of the committee for gender policy and development to draft policy document
- Presentation of the draft gender policy to the Vice-Chancellor
- Gender Sensitization and preliminary gender analysis
- Presentation of the draft policy to the University of Uyo women
- Stakeholders' sensitization workshops and inputs by all stakeholders
- Adoption of the UniUyo Gender Policy
- Dissemination of the Policy Document
- Sensitization, mainstreaming, Implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the UniUyo Gender Policy Committee.

### **5.2 Political Will**

Creating a gender responsive and equitable University requires support from the highest level of governance at all tiers, particularly the University Governing Council, Management, Senate and all stakeholders which must embrace and demonstrate gender parity principles and practice for any meaningful change to occur in the wider community.

### **5.3 Gender as a Core Value for Transforming the University Community**

The UNIUYO Gender Policy Framework is anchored on gender equality principles, and a process in which women and men's roles in reproduction and productivity are valued and seen as contributory factors to the growth and development of the University and its adjoining communities. A major challenge for the UNIUYO Gender Policy Framework therefore, will be confronting structures and systems that impede men and women's maximum and equal participation in all spheres of the University life and reinforce systemic inequalities.

### **5.4 Coordination and Networking**

The mandate for gender equality and empowerment cuts across all campuses, sections/units in the University, with numerous and diverse stakeholders who may all have their different vested interests. How to coordinate, network and monitor the implementation of the policy by these diverse units and stakeholders presents a major challenge.

### **5.5 Committee Membership**

- Prof. Ekaete Etuk                      Chairperson
- Dr. Uduakobong A. Okon              Vice Chairperson
- Dr. Imaobong I. Udosoro              member
- Dr. Glory E. Edet                      member
- Dr. Valerie A. Solomon                Secretary 1
- Dr. Jessie I. Ndem                      Secretary 2
- Prof. Eno Urua                          Internal Consultant 1
- Prof. Felicia E. Etim                  Internal Consultant 2