



Gender & Inclusivity

A PROJECT OF THE SCIENCE GRANTING COUNCILS INITIATIVE



NATIONAL RESEARCH FUND, KENYA

Kioko Nzuki Mwanja, Jacob Kamwaria Njagih, Elsie Mwikali, Margaret Itotia.

The Gender & Inclusivity Project, a component of the Science Granting Councils Initiative (SGCI), is led by the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) of South Africa in partnership with Gender at Work (G@W), Jive Media Africa and the Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa (CODESRIA). G@W's unique methodology, Gender Action Learning (GAL), together with the Targeted Technical Assistance (TTA) process designed by the HSRC, supports a unique participatory process that responds to councils' needs, builds partnerships and encourages ownership of the change process.

The Gender Champion approach: Advancing equality through gender mainstreaming

Many men who have grown up in patriarchal systems are now expressing a desire to promote women's empowerment. This change in perception at the National Research Fund (NRF) is greatly attributed to the Gender Champion strategy.



Kioko Nzuki Mwanja



Jacob Kamwaria Njagih



Elsie Mwikali



Margaret Itotia



The NRF in Kenya encourages all research grant calls to incorporate gender inclusivity as a determinant for awards to ensure that Fund activities are aligned to the constitutional requirements of gender equity and parity.

The NRF Kenya adopted a Gender Champions approach to ensure the mainstreaming of gender inclusive practices at the Fund. The broad mandate of a NRF Gender Champion is to promote an understanding of the social and cultural constructions of gender that shape the experiences of women and men in the workplace and society. Overall, the gender champions aim to make NRF staff more gender-sensitive, creating positive social norms that value and respect the female gender and their rights.

Training has been a critical component of the gender champions approach.

After being nominated to the gender committee, prospective gender champions were

invited to participate in training with National Gender and Equality Commission (NGEC) staff. The training addressed gender-related issues such as gender bias, unequal gender representation, gender stereotyping, female staff roles and gender inclusivity in decision-making, as well as topics related to workplace gender empowerment, such as maternity and childcare programmes.

Achievements

- NRF has provided overall guidance in integrating/mainstreaming gender in all activities of the Fund.
- We have engaged a variety of stakeholders to promote the NRF's gender mainstreaming activities.
- We reconstituted the gender mainstreaming committee and identified gaps in the NRF's activities vis-à-vis gender issues, and made recommendations on addressing the gaps.

