

# **The Legal Framework for Women in the Police in Uganda – Existing Structures, Options for Improvement to Ensure a More Efficient Role of Women**

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## **Abstract**

*The paper explores the meaning of gender equity and equality in ensuring gender mainstreaming and women's active participation in governance, rule of law and decision making processes. The paper makes an inquiry into the specific legal, policy and strategic framework that provides for gender mainstreaming in the Uganda police specifically focusing on women's role within the Uganda Police Force. Further, the paper provides an insight on the challenges faced by women serving in Uganda's police force. Lastly, the paper provides recommendations that can be put in place to ensure and enable women play a more efficient role while serving in the Uganda police force.*

**Key Words:** Ugandan Police force, Affirmative action, gender equity, gender equality, and gender mainstreaming.

## **A. Introduction**

The concept and practice of gender mainstreaming and women participation in public affairs has of today attracted attention in the general political and intellectual arena. In many public organizations of developing countries like Uganda, women's role in governance and decision making levels is still yet to be realized.<sup>1</sup> This is partly because whereas men are anchored in the top hierarchies of such organizations, the women are still concentrated at the lowest levels.<sup>2</sup> The United Nations has advanced and continues to advocate for women empowerment in all sectors as it fuels thriving economies, and spurs productivity and growth.<sup>3</sup> However, it recognises that gender inequalities still remain deeply entrenched

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1 UN Report, 1992.

2 *Ibid.*

3 *UN Women:* The United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women <https://www.un.org/youthenvoy/2013/07/un-women-the-united-nations-entity-for-gender-equality-and-the-empowerment-of-women/> (accessed 25 June 2022).

in every society as women lack access to decent work and face occupational segregation and gender wage gaps amongst others.<sup>4</sup> This has resulted into the under-representation of women in political and economic decision-making processes.<sup>5</sup> It is against this that the UN Women seeks to make sure that the interests of women are put into consideration but also support the belief that women's participation promotes the way in which management and decision making is practiced and done.

The Uganda Police Force was first established as the Uganda Armed Constabulary in 1899, governed under the Royal Irish Constabulary mode of armed policing procedures, with the aim of suppressing uprisings against the Colonial government.<sup>6</sup> However, the Police later became a fully-fledged institution on 25th May 1906, and since then, the Force has undergone several reforms.<sup>7</sup> The Uganda Police Force (UPF) derives its mandate from the 1995 Uganda Constitution as amended, and the Police Act of 2006.<sup>8</sup> UPF is part of the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MOIA), under the Justice Law and Order Sector (JLOS). The force employs both men and women in its different facets such as traffic, counter terrorism, prison warders among others, while ensuring that each performs his or her role as assigned.<sup>9</sup>

## **B. Understanding gender equity, equality and mainstreaming**

**According to UN Women,**<sup>10</sup> gender refers to the social attributes and opportunities associated with being male and female and the relationships between women and men and girls and boys, as well as the relations between women and those between men. As such these attributes, opportunities and relationships are socially constructed and are learned through socialization processes.<sup>11</sup> Gender determines what is expected, allowed and valued in a women or a man in a given context. In most societies, there are differences and inequalities between women and men in terms of responsibilities assigned, activities undertaken, access to and control over resources, as well as decision-making opportunities.<sup>12</sup> Thus gender is regarded as part of the broader socio-cultural context.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>6</sup> Uganda Police Force Strategic Policing Plan 2015/16 – 2019/20 <https://www.upf.go.ug/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/UPF-Strategic-PLan-2015-2020.doc.pdf?x89335/> (accessed 30 June 2022).

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>10</sup> *UN Women*. United Nations Entity For Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women <https://www.un.org/womenwatch/osagi/conceptsanddefinitions.htm/> (accessed 12 July 2022).

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*

**Gender equality** refers to the equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities of women and men; and girls and boys.<sup>14</sup> Equality does not mean that women and men will become the same but that women's and men's rights, responsibilities and opportunities will not depend on whether they are born male or female.<sup>15</sup> It simply implies that the interests, needs and priorities of both women and men are taken into consideration, recognizing the diversity of different groups of women and men.<sup>16</sup> Gender equality is not a women's issue but should concern and fully engage men as well as women. It is not only a fundamental human right, but a necessary foundation for a peaceful, prosperous and sustainable world between women and men.<sup>17</sup> Therefore, it involves the respect of all people without discrimination regardless of their gender, and the state in which access to rights and opportunities is unaffected by gender.

Whilst gender equity is guided under two principles which are fairness and impartiality;<sup>18</sup> Fairness which has to do with just treatment without favouritism, while impartiality is the treating of parties equally.<sup>19</sup> Thus, gender equity is defined as the provision of fairness and justice in the distribution of resources, benefits, and responsibilities between men and women, girls and boys in all spheres of life.<sup>20</sup> Though the term gender equity may sometimes be used in a way that perpetuates stereotypes about women's role in society, as suggesting that women should be treated *fairly* in accordance their roles, there risks to be a misunderstanding resulting into the perpetuation of unequal gender relations and solidifying gender stereotypes that are detrimental to women.<sup>21</sup> Thus the term should be used cautiously and speak more to discrimination and inequality.<sup>22</sup>

More so, gender mainstreaming is a conscious approach of an organisation to take into account gender equality concerns in policy, program, administration and financial activities as well as organizational structures and procedures. It is based on a political decision to work towards and finally achieve the goal of gender equality within the organisation thus contributing towards gender equality in the respective society. It involves applying a vast

14 *Ibid.*

15 *Ibid.*

16 *Ibid.*

17 *United Nations Goal 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls. Sustainable Development Goals* <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/gender-equality/> (accessed on 12 July 2022).

18 What is Gender Equity? Definition and Examples. 7 July 2022 <http://www.unitedwaynca.org/> (accessed 05 November 2022).

19 *Ibid.*

20 The Uganda National Gender Policy 2007

<http://www.rodra.co.za/images/countries/uganda/policy/The%20Uganda%20Gender%20Policy%202007.pdf/> (accessed 12 July 2022).

21 Gender Equity <http://www.eige.europa.eu/thesaurus/terms/1175/> (accessed 05 November 2022).

22 *Ibid.*

number of measures, providing resources ranging from financial, human, time, information and ensuring a process of learning and transformation.<sup>23</sup>

### **C. Existing Structures for Women in the Uganda Police**

The Ugandan government has developed different structures for the better recruitment and promotion of women in Uganda police force. These structures take different forms and range from legal, policy and strategic structures to skills enhancement and development for ensuring that women in the police perform an efficient role in service delivery. To that effect, Uganda is a signatory to several international, regional and sub-regional instruments for promoting gender equity and equality for women's empowerment. Further, the 1995 Ugandan Constitution provides for affirmative action to rectify historical imbalances that did not favour women's effective participation in decision-making processes, while even at home.<sup>24</sup>

#### *I. Legal Framework*

##### 1. International level

- a) Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)

The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) is an international legal instrument that requires countries to eliminate discrimination against women and girls in all areas and promotes women's and girls' equal rights.<sup>25</sup> Its often described as the international bill of rights for women, and is one of the key international agreements that guide the work of UN Women in achieving gender equality and empowering all women and girls.<sup>26</sup> Under this instrument, State Parties commit to, amongst others, pursue policies to eliminate discrimination by all appropriate means; take all appropriate measures to change social and cultural patterns of conduct, eliminate prejudices and customary practices based on stereotypes or ideas about the inferiority of women; and take all appropriate measures in all fields to ensure women's full advancement and equal enjoyment of their rights.

Uganda ratified the Convention in 1985 without reservations though it has not yet ratified its Optional Protocol. Uganda as a State Party to the CEDAW has made consid-

23 The Gender Policy of the Uganda Police Force, December 2017.

24 *Security Council Resolution 1325*: Civil Society Monitoring Report, Uganda. A Project of the Global Network of Women Peacebuilders. In-Country Civil Society Monitoring Reports [http://www.peacewomen.org/assets/file/uganda\\_gnwp\\_monitoring.pdf/](http://www.peacewomen.org/assets/file/uganda_gnwp_monitoring.pdf/) (accessed 12 July 2022).

25 *UN Women* <https://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2016/12/cedaw-for-youth-2016> (accessed 15 September 2022).

26 *Ibid.*

erable progress through enacting legislation to address de jure discrimination of women in all forms. For example the Ugandan Employment Act;<sup>27</sup> which seeks to address discrimination against women in the field of employment; and the Equal Opportunities Commission, a constitutional body which is established by the enactment of the Equal Opportunities Commission Act- No. 2 of 2007 and the National Equal Opportunities Policy 2006 which Act derives its mandate from the 1995 Constitution of the Republic of Uganda (as amended), whose main purpose is to eliminate discrimination and inequalities against any individual or group persons on the grounds of sex, age, race, colour, ethnic origin, tribe, birth or religion amongst others.

b) UN Sustainable Development Goals 2030

The 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) were adopted by the United Nations in 2015 and designed to end poverty, hunger, AIDS and discrimination against women and girls.<sup>28</sup> SDG 5 relates to achieving gender equality and empower women and girls; and SDG16 relates to promoting peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels. These specific SDGs provide a benchmark for achieving gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls. In Uganda, these are emphasised in Uganda's Vision 2040 and the National Development Plan III (2020/21 – 2024/25) which require all government Ministries, Departments and Agencies to be gender inclusive with no exception to the Uganda police.

2. Regional Level

a) African Charter on Human and people's Rights (1981)

On June 22, 2010, Uganda ratified the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa, 2003 commonly known as the Maputo Protocol. The Protocol reinforces the principle of gender equality throughout its provisions by obligating governments to integrate a gender perspective into their policy decisions, legislation, development plans and activities, and to ensure the overall well-being of women. It clearly highlights under Article 9 that women have a right to partake in political and decision making processes. Thus, Article 9(2) obligates State Parties to ensure increased and effective representation and participation of women at all levels of decision making.

27 Act No. 6 of 2006, Laws of Uganda.

28 UNDP, What are the Sustainable Development Goals? <http://www.undp.org/sustainable-development-goals/> (accessed 15 September 2022).

### 3. Sub regional Level

#### a) The Treaty Establishing the East African Community 1999 (as amended 2006 and 2007)

The Treaty Establishing the East African Community (EAC Treaty) is the legal instrument of the East African Community (EAC), a regional intergovernmental organisation whose overarching goal is to widen and deepen social, economic, political and cultural integration in order to improve the standard of life of the East African people.<sup>29</sup> At Community level, the EAC Partner States as provided under Article 5(3e)<sup>30</sup> commit to ensure the mainstreaming of gender in all their endeavors and enhance the role of women in cultural, social, political, economic and technological development.

#### b) Common Standards for Policing in the East African Community (EAC)

The Common Standards for Policing in East Africa ('Common Standards') were developed in 2010 through a collaborative process between the East African Community and the East African Police Chiefs Cooperation Organisation (EAPCCO).<sup>31</sup> Their adoption represents an innovative approach to encouraging harmonization of human rights-based policing standards across the region as it moves towards greater political and economic integration.<sup>32</sup> The Common Standards therefore represent a crucial regional commitment to promoting democratic and rights-based policing across the East African region.<sup>33</sup>

One aspect of this support has been the adoption of the Common Standards for Policing in East Africa which provide for, among others, 30 % of operational policing positions to be filled by women officers. A recent study conducted by African Policing Civilian Oversight Forum, 2021 showed that by 2020, the number of women applying to join the Uganda Police Force (UPF), and those participating in operational policing, fell below this minimum requirement of 30 %. The police numbers are currently at 44,776 of which only 8,128 are females which makes it approximately 21 % as indicated by the Acting Commissioner for Police Women Affairs, Rose Nahyuha.<sup>34</sup>

29 *A Possi* 'Striking a balance between community norms and human rights: The continuing struggle of the East African Court of Justice' (2015) 15 African Human Rights Law Journal 192–213, Pg.193. <https://www.saflii.org/za/journals/AHRLJ/2015/9.pdf/> (accessed 12 August 2022).

30 Article 5: Objectives of the Community, The East African Community Treaty 1999 as amended.

31 *African Policing Civilian Oversight Forum*. Indicators and Measures: Common Standards for Policing in East Africa, 2019 <https://apcof.org/wp-content/uploads/common-standard-for-policing-in-east-africa-indicators-and-measures.pdf/> (accessed 30 June 2022).

32 *Ibid.*

33 *Ibid.*

34 *The Independent*: Police audit reveals slow implementation of gender policy. April 9, 2021 <https://www.independent.co.ug/police-audit-reveals-slow-implementation-of-gender-policy/#:~:text=Kampala%2C%20Uganda%20%7C%20THE%20INDEPENDENT%20%7C,which%20only%208%2C12%20are%20females/> (accessed 09 July 2022).

#### 4. National Level

##### a) The Constitution of the Republic of Uganda 1995 as amended

At national level, the Ugandan Constitution recognises gender equity and equality through emphasising affirmative action under the National Objectives and Directive Principles of State Policy and Articles 33, 32 and 21. All these broadly endeavour to incorporate equity and equality of both men and women in all spheres of life. Affirmative action as explained above was and is meant to address the historical imbalances where women were never placed in governance and decision making processes.

Specifically **National Objectives and Directive Principles of State Policy, VI** that provides that the State shall ensure gender balance and fair representation of marginalized groups on all constitutional and other bodies.

**Article 21** relates to equality and freedom from discrimination. It states that all persons are equal before and under the law in all spheres of political, economic, social and cultural life and in every other respect and shall enjoy equal protection of the law. The article further provides that nothing shall prevent the Parliament from enacting laws that are necessary for implementing policies and programmes aimed at redressing social, economic, educational or other imbalance in society.

**Article 32** relates to affirmative action in favour of marginalized groups. Read verbatim, it states that notwithstanding anything in this Constitution, the State shall take affirmative action in favour of groups marginalized on the basis of gender, age, disability or any other reason created by history, tradition or custom, for the purpose of redressing imbalances which exist against them. More so, laws, cultures, customs and traditions which are against the dignity, welfare or interest of women or any other marginalized group to which clause (1) relates or which undermine their status, are prohibited by this Constitution; and more so, Parliament shall make laws for the purpose of giving full effect to this article.

**Article 33** relates to rights of women. That women shall be accorded full and equal dignity of the person with men. That women shall have the right to equal treatment with men and that right shall include equal opportunities in political, economic and social activities. Further, without prejudice to article 32, women have the right to affirmative action for the purpose of redressing the balances created by history, tradition or custom.

##### b) The Police Act 2006

The Act specifically incorporates a gender perspective in respect to the handling of female suspects by stating under section 23(2) that a female person shall only be searched by an authorized woman.

## *II. Policy Framework*

### 1. The Uganda Gender Policy 2007

Uganda developed its first National Gender Policy in 1997 where after it was revised in 2007 to run for a period of 10 years till 2017. The policy was designed to guide and direct at all levels of planning, resource allocation and implementation of development programmes with a gender perspective. The priority areas of focus included improved livelihoods, promotion and protection of rights, participation in decision-making and governance, recognition and promotion of gender in macro-economic management.

### 2. The Gender Policy of the Uganda Police Force 2017

This policy is aligned to other national and institutional policies such as the Uganda Gender Policy, Labour laws and the Justice, Law and Sector Gender Strategy. It is accompanied by the UPF Gender Strategy and Action Plan which is meant to guide the implementation of the UPF Gender Policy during the period of 2019 to 2023 so that the police force is more gender-responsive and effective. The goal of this policy is to establish an inclusive and gender responsive UPF that respects and upholds the rights and dignity of women, men, boys and girls.

The objectives of this policy is to provide a framework for gender mainstreaming in UPF systems, policies, structures and practices; to enhance the visibility and role of female police officers at all levels in UPF; to promote gender responsiveness, non – discrimination, and just and fair treatment in the provision of general policing services; and to promote gender responsiveness and survivor friendly services in the management of gender based violence cases.

The policy takes cognizant of the conduct of policing in Uganda and seeks to address internal gender inequalities, as well as those resulting from systems and procedures that exacerbate and expose beneficiaries of police services to gender bias and / or injustice. This policy thus draws also upon good practices from the region and internationally.

The content of the Policy is excellent, progressive and, when fully implemented, it will address almost all internal barriers to participation by women. As illustrated, the Policy, among other things, addresses obstacles for women relating to recruitment, deployment, promotion, leadership and decision-making, interactions within the Uganda Police Force, sexual harassment, and a family-friendly work environment.<sup>35</sup>

<sup>35</sup> *African Policing Civilian Oversight Forum*, Women in the Uganda Police Force: Barriers to women in operational policing, 2021, Pg. 28 <https://apcof.org/wp-content/uploads/women-in-the-uganda-police-force-barriers-to-women-in-operational-policing-pdf.pdf/> (accessed 04 July 2022).

### 3. The Uganda Police Force Strategic Policing Plan 2015/16 – 2019/20

This Strategic Policing Plan laid out strategies for pursuing the vision during the five years 2015/16 -2019/20. The development of the strategic plan had been guided by the priorities set out in the National Vision 2040, National Development Plan (NDP II), the Justice Law and Order Sector Investment Plan (SIP III) and the Eastern African and International protocols. The strategic plan took cognizance of the fact that there are gender concerns that required attention within the Uganda police force. That in terms of the UPF's strengths, there was a serious gender imbalance during recruitment, promotions and deployments which the current establishment does not meet the policy requirement of at least one third of positions to be occupied by women.

For example, some of the Police Standing Orders do not promote gender equity. When it comes to marriage, female police officers have to seek consent of the Inspector General Police to marry civilian men. However, the same is not applicable to the male police officers when marrying civilian women. This imbalance needs to be addressed so that both genders are subjected to the same rules. Though as of today, it is still applicable though ideally they don't abide by it.

Additionally, the Force is mindful of the unique reproductive health and biological needs of women when making deployments. Field Force patrols and night deployments do not favor such unique needs of women police officers. The garment industry of UPF, which employs 97 % women, does not have facilities that promote breast feeding and early child hood development.

Sexual harassment of female officers has also been brought to the attention of top management. There are undocumented reports of women police officers who have been denied promotions for not being responsive to the sexual demands of their superiors.<sup>36</sup>

## D. Challenges faced by women in Police

In promoting gender equity within the Uganda Police Service, many women have been employed within the service at different levels. Women now service within the administrative police, traffic, prisons and counter-terrorism departments amongst others. However, there are social, cultural and institutional barriers these women face within the police service or those who intend to join it. Therefore, these challenges include;

Norm and belief. The norm and belief that policing is a “*man's job*” thus leading to more men than women joining the UPF. That policing is a masculine pursuit and that women are feminine “*fragile*” and are not met to serve in such a male dominated field.

Social and cultural expectations of women in terms of family and community life. In Ugandan society, patriarchy still defines social relationships between men and women, girls and boys. Norms are driven by patriarchy and thus determine appropriate behaviour or the

<sup>36</sup> *The Independent*: Female Police Officers Decry Sexual Harassment, December 6, 2018 <https://www.independent.co.ug/female-police-officers-decrys-sexual-harassment/> (accessed on 15 July 2022).

roles of men in relation to women. For example girls are expected to take “feminine” jobs that allow them to effectively fulfil their reproductive and nurturing roles; they are also not expected to use force or coerce action from others amongst others.

Community perception of the UPF as an unfriendly workplace for women due to poor payment; corruption; and the reputation of the police amongst others as highlighted in a study conducted by African Policing Civilian Oversight Forum 2021.

Institutional Uganda Police Force barriers. From the time of its inception, the police force has been predominantly been a ‘male’ institution. All operational systems and approaches bear the ‘*stamp of the male gender*’. The UPF recruitment and deployment systems are ‘*developed with a man in mind*’. Transformation towards an all-gender and responsive institution is in its formative stages.<sup>37</sup> These institutional barriers are further seen in the recruitment and operational policing processes.

Recruitment process and practice. When making recruitment, a recruitment team is drawn from the higher ranks of the UPF and is supported by selected functional specialists. Teams submit reports to Human Resources after each recruitment exercise. These reports are submitted to the Police Advisory Committee (PAC), which decides when to invite the successful candidates for training. However, the PAC comprises 24 members of which 23 are male and one (1) female.<sup>38</sup> One female against 23 males ideally may not be gender sensitive.

Barriers to application. UPF has made it possible to use different forum to communicate to the public regarding the recruitment process. However, there is limited information regarding the calls made in terms of admission criteria, training requirements, entitlements in the course of the training, benefits associated with joining and the different levels to which all these apply. Further, there are many misconceptions regarding police training and its effects on women as such most trainees do not know the need to perform drills or shave their hair amongst others.<sup>39</sup>

Pregnancy. Pregnancy and the way it is dealt with by the UPF places a burden on women. It often increases the dropout rates on entry, in the course of training and during deployment, as they are screened at every stage in the Force. Furthermore, it often constrains women from attending promotional courses. Actually, during service, a female police officer is supposed to report her pregnancy though some do not make it known as required.<sup>40</sup>

The training environment also affects the number of women who join the police. First, the public and police officers perception that the training is very tough, intense and strenuous particularly the first three months military drills and training. Secondly, the training environment is predominantly male and women have limited opportunities to

37 *African Policing Civilian Oversight Forum* (n 35) Pg. 18.

38 *Ibid*, Pgs. 18 – 19.

39 *Ibid*, Pg. 19.

40 *Ibid*, Pg. 21.

voice out their concerns. Additionally, the atmosphere is characterised by women having inadequate access to sanitation and medical facilities; the use gender – insensitive language to undermine the dignity of a woman by the male trainers; and sexual harassment of trainees by trainers.<sup>41</sup>

More so, the poor living and working conditions are a hinderance to women in the force. Its saddening that both the existing administrative and accommodation facilities are in a dire state. Majority occupy structures that were built in the 1950s; while others have to occupy makeshift buildings that have been erected to house police officers together with their families. Its no doubt that over 69 % of the women regarded working conditions in police as the worst considering the poor housing and accommodation, poor sanitation, as well as discrimination in promotions.<sup>42</sup>

#### **E. Improvement of Women's role in Police for better service delivery**

A study under taken by African Policing Civilian Oversight Forum in 2021 on Women in the Uganda Police Force: Barriers to women in operational policing provided ways in which women's role in Uganda police can be improved for better and efficient service delivery. These recommendations were categorized in terms of internal and external context. That is all stakeholders either within the state or non-state actors, both play a vital role in ensuring that women's role in police has to be made better and efficient for proper service delivery. Thus these recommendations include(d);

Engage the public in order to effect a change in social norms. This should be done through appreciating the role of police officers, their gender and contribution towards the betterment of the society leading to proper service delivery.

Reconceptualise the contribution of women and consistently communicate the value of women in policing, and particularly operational policing. For example, continuous community policing through the department of the Community Liaisons Officer (CLO), a department within the police.

Ensure effective implementation of the Uganda Police Force (UPF) Gender Policy, Strategy and Action Plan. The translation of the UPF Gender Policy, Strategy and Action Plan into practice is critical, as is the need to integrate the strategy into the UPF Strategic Development Plan for the financial years 2020/21 to 2024/2025.

Address institutional recruitment and deployment in respect of operational-policing processes and practices. The UPF is already making improvements to its recruitment practices in order to attract more women. It is recommended that aggressive, short-term measures be taken together with a long-term/medium-term approach such as developing a clear job description for officers wishing to join the police force; placing job advertisements

41 *Ibid*, Pgs. 22 – 23.

42 *Ibid*, Pg. 26.

where they are more likely to be seen by girls and women; providing targeted pretesting information sessions (preferably conducted by women) amongst others.

The UPF should also address issues relating to deployment in operational policing (OP). There is a need to re-examine existing practices with a view to adopting practices that do not undermine participation by women. The role of the UPF in deliberately supporting women to participate in OP ought to be clear and unwavering. Women should not give up basic rights to a family or family life amongst others in order to excel. Family and gender needs are part of a women's reality.

The recruitment process ought to be treated as a continuous and an ongoing process. Recruitment should involve a much more assertive and dynamic campaign for recruiting women that will enable women to join as equal and valuable colleagues. For example, the UPF needs to develop and implement a Women Recruitment Strategy that includes collaboration with universities and colleges.

It is also recommended that the UPF should conduct further research to determine what attracts women to policing and integrate the findings within the community through community messaging, during public meetings and outreaches, community dialogues, career days at schools amongst others.

Develop gender leadership and technical capacity in the police force through collaboration other stakeholders such as the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development, the Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC), the Justice, Law and Order Sector (JLOS), universities, think tanks, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women), the African Policing Civilian Oversight Forum (APCOF), and specialist organizations for women so as to quickly build and sustain subject matter expertise and behavioral change capacity within the UPF.

Equip UPF personnel with the necessary skills, competencies and tools. Such tools should include '**how-to**' guidelines in order to translate mandates on gender equality into practice. There is a need to build the capacity of police officers to undertake activities that promote gender-sensitive policing practices. This can be done through continuous trainings and workshops for all police officers including those of the lowest rank and should be gender inclusive.

## F. Conclusion

The Uganda Police Force has expressed its commitment to promoting gender equality and women's rights. The Police Force has over the years recognized and attempted to address some specific gender issues in policing in Uganda, as well as internal concerns regarding discrimination and lack of opportunity and equality for women and men who serve in police. Such concerns have been addressed through providing guiding frameworks in ensuring that the Police Force in its responsibility fulfills the principle of non-discrimination, fair and equal treatment of all in the exercise of its institutional mandate and contribute to gender responsive policing in Uganda. Thus in the medium to long term, a more gender

responsive Uganda Police Force will contribute to greater access to justice for women and girls, and a society in which there is greater respect for human rights and rule of law in Uganda.

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