

SWOT Analysis for the Project EQUIP-UCC

A DAAD funded project in partnership with the
University of Cape Coast Ghana and the Freie
Universität Berlin

*Author : AnouchK Ibacka Valiente
& Jihad Yagoubi*

Table of contents

Introduction.....	3
1. Gender inequality in higher education institutions (HEIs): A General overview on Ghana's tertiary education	5
1.1 Gender and equal opportunity in the African and Ghanaian contexts.....	5
1.2 The question of institutionalizing equal opportunity in Ghanaian HEIs and at the University of Cape Coast.....	8
2. EQUIP: Introducing Gender Equality Officers (GEOs) as a change objective at the University of Cape Coast (UCC)	10
2.1 Replicating the implementation of GEOs of the Freie University in Berlin? A SWOT analysis for EQUIP	10
2.2 Stakeholders' perception about gender equality.....	13
2.3 Focusing on the change objective: Assessing the acceptability of introducing GEOs.....	16
3. Stakeholder mapping	19
3.1 Of the willingness to support EQUIP	19
3.2 Stakeholders' strength: Looking into their power and legitimacy	22
3.2.1 Internal.....	23
3.2.2 External	26
4. SWOT in detail	27
4.1 Internal: Strengths and Weaknesses.....	27
4.2 External: Opportunities and Threats.....	32
5. Concluding remarks: Respondents' suggestions to overcome Weaknesses and Threats	36
Literature references	39
Annex	41

Introduction

Many authors point out that even though student enrolment numbers in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) have significantly increased, structural inequalities of gender, but also age and socio-economic status still persist in Ghana (Higgins 2009; Mama 2003; Manuh et al. 2007; Morely et al. 2009) as much as in many other countries around the world. Adusah-Karikari explains that *“(t)he majority of respondents cited conflicts in managing their multiple roles as mothers, wives and workers, interrupted careers, impact of family dynamics, lack of mentoring and networks, and the power of the “old boys” network as key issues.”* (Adusah-Karikari, 2008, p. 5). Highlighting these challenges stresses out the importance of looking into the structural, institutional, societal, and individual factors that hinder access to equal opportunity at the university, in order to limit them and formulate adapted policies that can reduce disparities.

Although academic and political debates about the necessity and effectiveness of affirmative action policies are vehement, such strategies have shown results at least partially and if accompanied by complementary measures. According to Mama (2003), in the university context, affirmative action strategies that promote women’s access to HEIs that have been properly designed and implemented have shown positive outcomes. An example of such policies in Ghana is the national education affirmative action programs and the quota system that promote access to university for students of least privileged backgrounds (Adu-Yeboah 2011; Mama 2003). In Uganda, Makerere University allocated an additional 1.5 points to eligible women in order to promote their accession to public institutions. This initiative increased women’s enrolment by 13 percentage points, going from 20% to 33% enrolment rates. However, since this initiative only applied to students and not to staff or faculty members, women’s employment did not increase (Kwesiga, 2002).

When it comes to equity strategies for employment, the results are harder to show for. In Ghana, despite the governmental efforts, policy initiatives towards equity did not contribute to increasing women’s representation in HEIs (Mabokela & Mlambo, 2015). However, implementing gender-blind policy changes remains disadvantageous to women, as it was the case in new promotion policies in Ghanaian universities, where such policies were developed from the top-down, i.e. by male constituencies, and therefore did not take women’s needs into consideration and rather excluded them (Mabokela & Mlambo, 2015).

Finding out the structural and institutional tenets of equal opportunity, through the introduction of Gender equality Officers at UCC, is the main goal of the SWOT analysis for the EQUIP project led by the CEGRAD at the University of Cape Coast (UCC) and in partnership with the Frei University of Berlin (FUB). The end goal of the project is to formulate an Action Plan adapted to the reality of UCC that will work in the direction of promoting equal opportunities within the university structure.

1. Gender inequality in higher education institutions (HEIs): A General overview on Ghana's tertiary education

Gender inequalities exist in all HEIs around the world, and they take different forms and have different specificities in various contexts. It is important to note that the gender gap and the exclusionary institutional workplace culture in Ghanaian HEIs is not an Ghanaian or African issue. It is not even a majority world issue only. The most common impediments to women's inclusion in HEIs identified by Doroba, Muhwezi, and Modungwa (2015: p.3) relate to the following themes: Teaching methods; Sanitation; Security; Sexual harassment; Sexual and reproductive health; Family responsibilities; Translating policies into action/monitoring. The majority of these reasons that hinder women's full inclusion in HEIs are shared by women in other Majority World contexts but also in Western countries. The ways in which it impacts vulnerable groups' access to tertiary education or jobs in HEIs – and also society as a whole – is however different from one context to another. Such differences occur depending on how issues related to gender inequality in HEIs specifically are prioritized in policy-making, and the resources accessible to achieve it.

Since one of the foci of EQUIP is to assess the feasibility of implementing a training program for GEOs at UCC specifically, it is important to put the realities of this HEI in terms of equal opportunities within its national and supranational contexts. Thus, the following section's purpose is to give an overview about access to equal opportunities and its positive evolution as much as its shortcomings in Ghana and UCC, starting with general information available at the African level. Therefore, a comparison with other areas of the world is not relevant within the scope of this report.

1.1 Gender and equal opportunity in the African and Ghanaian contexts

8 percent. It is the number of female professors across all Ghanaian public universities according to a study conducted by Education Sub-Saharan Africa (ESSA) (ESSA, 2021). Across sub-Saharan Africa, the percentage of female academic staff in general goes up to 24% based on the latest statistics of the UNESCO (UNESCO, 2019 – from ESSA, 2021), and while profiling African-led research, the Africa Evidence Research Database accounts for 2510

researchers, 32% of which are female (ESSA, 2021). There is evidently growing research and interest with regards to gender equity in the African tertiary education institutions, nevertheless, the focus has been in majority on guaranteeing gender equity in the primary and secondary education. But already in the limited literature focused on HEIs, the results show a significant gender gap. As a matter of fact, for a global average of 41.66% of women enrolled in universities, only 7.19% of sub-Saharan women are enrolled in HEIs. Nevertheless, this number needs to be put into perspective, where 10.41% of sub-Saharan men are enrolled in HEIs (ESSA, 2021). If the focus is only on parity in enrolment, the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) places women's entrance in HEIs in Africa in 2011 to around 45% (Adu-Oppong, Aikins, and Darko, 2017: p. 11).

The Ghanaian government started to push for policies encouraging equal opportunities in HEIs during the past years. However, the focus has been mainly on increasing women's enrollment as students, where the policy goal is to reach a 50:50 ratio between men and women (AAU, ESSA, and PRB, 2018: p.3) (Doroba, Muhwezi, and Modungwa, 2015: p.2). Increasing women's enrollment has been a relatively successful endeavor so far through Affirmative Action policies, considering that the male to female ratio in public universities in 2016-2017 reached 64 to 36 (AAU, ESSA, and PRB, 2018: p.4). Adu-Oppong, Aikins, and Darko (2017: p.11) also put the success of such policies in perspective, explaining that even though women's enrolment increased from 32.9% in 2003-2004 to 52.9% 10 years later, in top rank administrative positions the increase was marginal going from 2.8% to 5.3% within the same time period.

Doroba, Muhwezi, and Modungwa (2015: p.3) explain that focusing on equity in terms of access only is based on the assumption that HEIs are already egalitarian in their functioning, and the focus needs to be on how to make them more accessible to persons who could be impacted by past or external inequalities. Therefore, there only needs to be more women accounted for in tertiary education in order to reach gender equality. These authors challenge this idea, explaining that HEIs are not neutral spaces, but rather spaces where structural gender inequality and injustice existing in our societies is reproduced:

“Universities have institutional cultures that continue to privilege masculine norms of behavior, academic prowess and status.” (Doroba, Muhwezi, and Modungwa, 2015: p.3). Therefore, it is just as important to focus on women's experience once they are in the university

as it is to invest in their access to it, where they face several hurdles leading them to either “drop-out” or not follow career paths within HEIs.

For instance, when it comes to employment in HEIs, especially among academic staff and higher management, gender disparities are significant and persisting. As a matter of fact, only 10 women – out of a faculty of 120 persons – had a professor rank in public universities during the 2016-2017 academic year (p.3). Based on the 2017 data of the National Council for Tertiary Education (NCTE), in order to reach gender equity among full time teaching staff, 2418 women need to be hired within the academic staff, and to reach the policy norm goals set for 2025, the projections raise this number to 3594 assuming that the number of male faculty would not decrease (AAU, ESSA, and PRB, 2018: p. 5-6).

In leadership and in academic positions, women are usually relegated to lower-level decision-making jobs, and the higher the positions the less represented women become:

“Representation varies between about ten and twenty percent at middle management level and from 0-10% at senior management level (Reskin, 2002). Representation in the committee system follows a similar pattern with women more likely to be members of departmental and faculty committees than on governing boards or councils.” (Adu-Oppong, Aikins, and Darko, 2017: p. 11).

In Ghana more specifically, only 9.5% of top positions at HEIs are held by women, and most universities have never had female Vice Chancellors (Adu-Oppong, Aikins, and Darko, 2017: p. 12). There are certainly exceptions as for the example of the University of Cape Coast in 2008, or at an African level, Kenyatta University in 2009 who appointed women as Vice Chancellors. But most commonly, boards and committees’ members, where most decisions related to the HEIs’ structure and future are taken, are men in majority. For example, Admissions committee at Buistema University in Uganda has 1 woman out of 8 members, and the Academic Affairs committee has 1 woman out 7 members, both of which are chaired by men. Similarly, between 2006 and 2010 in the University Council of the University of Ghana, the main decision-making body of this institution, women represented less than half the members, and this number reaches its lowest in 2009-2010 where only 2 women were part of a council of 13 members. This also means that even though women can access some leadership positions, as long as gender equity principles are not carefully institutionalized, implemented and mainstreamed within HEIs’ structures, women’s equal and full participation is not guaranteed in the long term (Doroba, Muhwezi, and Modungwa, 2015: p.5).

1.2 The question of institutionalizing equal opportunity in Ghanaian HEIs and at the University of Cape Coast

The University of Cape Coast was the first public university in the Ghana to appoint a woman for Vice Chancellor in 2008. Following this, other universities have appointed women to higher management positions such as the first woman Registrar at the University of Ghana in 2013, or the Vice Chancellor at the University of Energy and Natural Resources in 2012-2016. Putting these events into perspective in the Ghanaian HEIs' context, Adu-Oppong, Aikins, and Darko (2017: p. 12) present the following statistics about women in HIEs' higher management:

“In the other senior management positions women comprise only 13.9% of registrars/secretaries, 1.2% of pro-vicechancellors/pro-rectors/vice-presidents, 8.5% deans of faculties, 15.2% heads of departments, and 7.8% finance directors (Asiedu, 2009).” (Adu-Oppong, Aikins, and Darko, 2017: p. 12)

To begin to understand what these numbers stand for, this paragraph briefly explains how the Ghanaian university structure functions. In short, there are two branches in the university's organizational structure, i.e. the faculty represented by the University Council and the administrative functions. On the one hand, the university's leadership in terms of governance is in the hands of the Vice Chancellor and the Pro-Vice Chancellor, who are appointed by various electoral colleges. They represent the academic and decision-making centre of the university, where they are at the top of a hierarchical system of boards and committees representing all the 18 schools and faculties, and 120 departments. The administrative and bureaucratic functions, that focus on the planning and implementation of the Councils' decisions, are headed by the Registrar. Such functions are accessible through open competition. Therefore, circling back to the statistics quoted above regarding women's representation in Ghanaian HEIs, even within universities' highest management, where women are significantly underrepresented, they are still slightly better represented in executive higher management than in decision-making.

However, other directorates, research centres, and specialized centres operate in parallel, at the borderline between these two main branches of the university (Adu-Oppong, Aikins, and Darko, 2017: p. 13). One of these research centres are the Centre for Gender

Studies and Advocacy (CEGENSA) at the University of Ghana, the first centre to institutionalise gender studies in the country in 2006 (Adusah-Karikari, 2008: p. 131), or the Centre for Gender Research, Advocacy and Documentation (CEGRAD) at UCC, officially created in 2013. Until the creation of CEGRAD, Britwum, Oduro, and Prah (2014: p. 5) explain that efforts towards gender equity and equal opportunity were mostly informal, thus not institutionalized. These initiatives revolved around increasing women's enrolment in undergraduate studies and a sexual harassment policy. The creation of an established centre such as CEGRAD stemmed from the need to institutionalise these efforts and push them further, a project supported by the Vice Chancellor at that time. Britwum, Oduro, and Prah (2014: p. 5) clarifies the expectations from this centre as follows:

“CEGRAD among other things is expected to operate as an interdisciplinary focal point providing a theoretical grounding with a political edge for Gender and Women's Studies at UCC.” (Britwum, Oduro, and Prah, 2014: p.5)

2. EQUIP: Introducing Gender Equality Officers (GEOs) as a change objective at the University of Cape Coast (UCC)

Gender-based discrimination is present within all university structures. This goes as much for the Freie University in Berlin as for the University of Cape Coast in Ghana. The CEGRAD is therefore initiating the EQUIP project, in partnership with the Freie University of Berlin, in order to implement a GEOs' system inside the university inspired from the one implemented at FUB. Having such officers across departments and faculties can in term help gather substantial statistical and qualitative data on gender-related issues that is difficult to get by, but they will also create space and processes to address gender discrimination, in addition to creating the possibility for women, and persons sensitive to gender issues, inside the university to engage with the institution's decision-making. A SWOT analysis will be the next step within this project in order to understand of the university's positioning regarding gender discrimination, and identify the adequate solutions to address them, eventually by assessing if and how a system comprised of Gender Equality Officers can promote gender equity.

2.1 Replicating the implementation of GEOs of the Freie University in Berlin? A SWOT analysis for EQUIP

FUB has implemented a system of Gender Equality Officers (GEOs), where personnel and academic staff from the university can take over the task of pushing for more equity within the university. While running to be elected as a GEO is voluntary, it is a compensated part-time position that existing staff of the university can overtake. A training program has been developed in order to prepare and support GEOs in their future missions following their election through the FUTURA training.

The GEOs' missions include: involvement in hiring processes; counselling and advising in matters related to gender equity from the level of individuals to the department level; participation in shaping conceptual and structural processes for more inclusiveness; development of own individual projects based of each department needs.; etc.

Such an initiative succeeded in being implemented at FUB because an opportunity has been seized regarding the State's support for strengthening gender equality in HEIs. This external legal and institutional opportunity was turned into a strength, where GEOs have been

argued to be necessary to the university structure in order to draw more resources from the State's funding by ensuring increased gender equity within each academic unit and department.

SWOT analysis:

A SWOT analysis is the tool that will allow assessing the feasibility of this initiative. This tool is composed of four components. Two are internal to the structure or the institution scrutinised, i.e. its strengths and weaknesses; and the two that are external to it look into its opportunities and threats it faces and that are outside of the control of the stakeholders. In the case of this analysis, four main focus areas have been identified and need to be explored through the lens of SWOT. The first one focuses on the question of the resources available – or missing – to ensure gender equity and equal opportunity, from funding and budget allocation, to outreach and formal and informal networks. The second main area of interest is about understanding the organizational structure of UCC, and the different institutions within and outside UCC which work impacts access to equal opportunities. The third aspect relates to the legal frameworks and policies that regulate representation in hiring and admission processes, or address various issues in a gender sensitive manner or not. Finally, the fourth focus area looks into UCC's institutional culture, i.e. what constitutes informal rules and awareness – or lack thereof – about gender equity and equal opportunity that should allow the identification of allies and challengers alike.

The purpose is to gather as much detailed information as possible about UCC's structure in order to assess the feasibility of implementing a system of GEOs. Therefore, semi-structured interviews with 17 identified key stakeholders at the university have been conducted by CEGRAD through targeted sampling. The questionnaire form includes questions that should highlight the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats regarding such an initiative, in light of the four focus areas aforementioned.

The results from this research should allow to perform a stakeholder mapping, in order to engage potential allies and circumvent antagonists to the idea of GEOs. This mapping is meant to identify stakeholders into four categories. The most important one is the "Promoters" who are highly interest in the project and have enough power to support it, and those are the ones to engage from very early on and manage closely such as the Vice Chancellor. The second category is one of the "Defenders" who are supportive of the project but are not quite as powerful as the latter; those will need to be kept informed and engaged to the extent of their

capacities, such as the student organisations. The other categories would include stakeholders who do not support the project to different extents, where the “Apathetics” do not hold as much power to challenge it as the “Latents” do. When the first ones only need to be monitored, the second ones will need to be kept satisfied to certain extents. In addition to the stakeholder mapping, these results from these interviews will also help identify all the resources and institutional – formal and informal – tools that can be used in favor of enforcing the Action Plan that comes out of the EQUIP Project, while avoiding being weary of the obstacles against it.

The analysis of the results from the field should start with an overview of the state of gender equality and equity in Ghana’s higher education institutions (HEIs), with a focus on UCC. This overview should also put Ghana’s HE system and its inclusivity in perspective with other African post-colonial HE systems, but also in perspective with FUB’s institutional historicity – or FUB’s own SWOT analysis and process with regards to implementing the system of Gender Equality Officers that needs to be adapted to UCC’s realities and context. This will be followed by a clear identification of all internal strengths and weaknesses in terms of resources, organization and institutions, followed by speculations regarding external threats and opportunities that may impact the project, may they come from within or outside UCC.

2.2 Stakeholders' perception about gender equality

FIGURE 1: Respondents identification

Respondent's position at UCC	Respondent's code
Director of UCC Hospital	1
Dean of International Education	2
Director of CESED	3
Head of the Legal Section and the General Council	4
PAB	5
Pro-Vice Chancellor	6
Director of Internal Audit	7
Director for Development Section UCC	8
Provost CANS	9
Director of Public Affairs	10
Registrar	11
Sexual Harassment Committee Chairperson	12
Dean of graduate studies	13
Director of Research and Innovation	14
Transport Officer	15
Prof of quality assurance unit	16
Dean of Students	17

The first step in this analysis is an overview of the ways in which the interviewees perceive the state of gender equality at the university level at UCC, and also in each interviewee's respective department or section. After having looked into a general and structural overview, the next section begins to analyse the outcomes of the field interviews conducted at UCC in 2021, focusing first on highlighting the priorities of the respondents.

First of all, the question of semantics has been brought up by several respondents (3; 4; 6; 8; 13; 14), some of which stressed out the need to clarify what the focus of EQUIP will be on, but also raised the question of what will be strategically relevant to choose. The debate is mainly about choosing between "gender equality", "gender equity", and "equal opportunity" as a main goal or objective. Within the scope of this report, the terminology "equal opportunity"

will be favoured from this point on. This choice is based on the fact that UCC's mission statement asserts that:

"The University of Cape Coast is an equal opportunity University uniquely placed to provide quality education through the provision of comprehensive, liberal and professional programmes that challenge learners to be creative, innovative and responsible citizens." (UCC Strategic Plan, 2013 Or 2018?: p. 5).

"Equal opportunities" also comes back as the third core value of the university:

"Equal Opportunities: UCC strives to provide equal opportunity and access to quality education and services to all categories of persons regardless of colour, creed, ethnicity, gender, social status and physical ability." (UCC, 2012: p. 5).

Such definition is rather inclusive in a global context where gender has been mainstreamed to equate cis-women's parity with men in formal institutions. Even though "gender" is supposed to refer to more than women versus men, the reality is, even in these interviews, the focus of most respondents has been focused on women as a homogeneous category. Two respondents only (8; 13) clearly stated that they understand gender equality beyond this dichotomy, and only the Director for Development Section at UCC has been focusing on issues of accessibility in his answers, considering it relevant for a conversation around gender. Therefore, choosing the term "equal opportunity" aims to resonate with a wider range of stakeholders within the university, and aims to fit in the university's institutional culture. However, the final choice of terminology for EQUIP needs to be discussed and agreed upon by CEGRAD and the supporters of the project the centre sees fit.

Another central issue brought up by more than half of the respondents (1; 2; 3; 4; 5; 7; 11; 13; 14) is related to the structural (societal and institutional) gender-based inequality and discrimination existing outside and within the university and/or their respective departments. It is to point out that all respondents did not unanimously agree on the existence of gender-based violence and discrimination, referring either to the Affirmative Action policies implemented by UCC for gender parity in student enrollment as in the case of the Director of Internal Audit, or to their own immediate offices where they do not notice any specific issues. It is interesting to note that some respondents (11; 13), who seem to be very aware and sensitized to such issues, make a clear distinction between students and staff in their perception of gender-based violence and discrimination. Issues of sexual harassment for example – understood in all their complexity –, are the main focus in this debate, and they are a concern when it comes to female students but not for the staff. Some authors have already brought up this issue of discrimination

denial as part of the problem itself, where Adu-Oppong, Aikins, and Darko (2017: p. 15-16), through their interviews at the University of Education, Winneba (UEW) explain that the majority of respondents don't believe there is discrimination based on salary or access to higher management positions or perception of women in leadership, even though the rest believes that women are only given responsibility positions when it is strictly necessary.

Admitting to the existence of structural inequalities and discrimination led some of the respondents (2; 4; 9; 14) to stress in their discourse the importance of strengthening and clarifying UCC's institutional and legal frameworks in terms of equal opportunities. Some respondents such as the Director of CESED mentioned that the creation and the very existence of the CEGRAD is a first step towards institutionalizing equal opportunities. One of the first steps towards this endeavor is guaranteeing funding towards such policies as the head of the legal section pointed out. Others, like the Director of Research and Innovation or the representative of the Quality Assurance Unit strongly highlighted the need for gendered internal research and statistics in order to have a better idea about how gender inequality operate within the specific context of UCC. As a matter of fact, many respondents (3; 4; 6; 9; 16) agree that there is a stronger focus on equal opportunity among students than for university staff, may it be in management or academic positions. As explained in the previous section, this is true for HEIs in Ghana in general, where Affirmative Action policies have pushed for gender parity in enrolment were relatively successful, but since no initiative has been taken in the same extents to institutionalise equal opportunity among staff and in terms of access to positions within HEIs, accessing jobs at the university is still limited for women, especially in higher management.

One of the main reasons that hinder women's career development is the lack of support when it comes to balancing their work duties and family responsibilities. When sometimes women don't access certain positions because of prejudice around their capacity to focus on their work responsibilities and where they are perceived as 'risky hires', it is also true that due to societal pressures, women are also expected to live up to their responsibilities as care-takers in the household regardless of their workload. Instead, making the university a space for equal opportunity would entail thinking of ways to tailor the workload to the reality of their responsibilities. Issues around pregnancy and childcare have been brought up by a few respondents. For instance, when the Director of public affairs sees women's pregnancy as an efficiency problem, others such as the Director of CESED or the Director of Internal Audit see the importance of offering childcare solutions and facilities as an issue of importance to support

parents during the exercise of their functions, rather than a ‘women’s problem’. This been said, the Director of Research and Innovation stresses out the impact that reproductive workloads have on women’s careers specifically. Adu-Oppong, Aikins, and Darko’s (2017: p. 15) survey confirms the latter point, where most of the respondent admitted that they had to sacrifice some areas of their lives in order to succeed their careers. 71% sacrifice leisure and relaxation times first.

A lot of respondents agree that gender inequality is a structural issue, a consequence of societal injunctions at a wider level, and UCC needs to focus on institutionalizing measures that either prevent or correct such inequalities for the university to become the space of equal opportunity it aspires to be. However, it becomes more challenging to find out the best way to achieve this project, considering that different stakeholders understand and perceive gender inequality differently. It even sometimes seems harder for certain stakeholders to notice these inequalities when they are the closest to them, within their departments and offices, or directed towards them. Even with the best intentions at heart, it is mostly men who overlook such issues (e.g. Director of Internal Audit), but it is important to note that not noticing certain dynamics as being the result of structural and institutional inequalities is not men’s exclusivity. For instance, the Dean of Graduate Studies considers that inequalities are less preminent among university staff, while acknowledging the challenges women face when they aspire to access a voted position, or how women face harsher consequences when they make mistakes. As Britwum, Oduro, and Prah (2014: p. 10) put it:

“If UCC is to retain its position as a centre of excellence, such standards they explain should not be compromised. Few admit to the fact that the university environment could be gendered, posing constraints to women’s career progression generally and even more so within the academic profession.” (Britwum, Oduro, and Prah, 2014: p. 10)

2.3 Focusing on the change objective: Assessing the acceptability of introducing GEOs through the EQUIP project

Following this general overview on the perceptions about gender equality, this next step looks specifically on the respondents’ perception of EQUIP. The respondents’ answers address both the benefits and reservations they have with regards to EQUIP and the introduction of GEOs. Their answers can be summarized around the following themes.

Several respondents believe that training GEOs at UCC will be a successful project to guarantee further equity in opportunities within the university, considering that change is already happening at a national and university levels and it needs to be pushed forward. The majority of these respondents are motivated by the idea that guaranteeing equal opportunities is good for productivity and UCC's public image nationally and internationally (2;4;10; 11). As a matter of fact, both the Dean of International Education and the Sexual Harassment Committee Chairperson mentioned the fact that improving gender equity programs and initiatives at UCC can make the university a favoured sub-Saharan partner to Western universities, considering that 70% of UCC's partnerships are with Western universities. This will in turn improve the university's access to more funding opportunities, either directly related to equal opportunity programs, or because the university will be the most egalitarian in the region as the Registrar highlighted. The Head of the legal section and the General Council sees it more in terms of access to grants related to gender focused research, consultancies, and training programs. However, all of these reasons seem to be motivated by financial and productivity gains, whereas it is important to note that outside of a strictly liberal feminist perspective, working towards everybody's access to equal opportunities is a fundamental right and a societal goal in itself. The Pro-Vice Chancellor points that out herself during the interview, explaining that the university is the birthplace of the future workforce; therefore, it needs to be forward-thinking about what it teaches and how it trains future generations. So if some will be more accepting of this change than others (such as gender and human rights students and lecturers), others might not be. Yet an educational institution's role is to challenge the status quo and take up this task (Interview 6, 2021). In this respect, Adu-Oppong, Aikins, and Darko (2017: p. 11) note that it is ironic that the university is the space that is supposed to be proactive about reflecting on and insuring equality of opportunity at a societal level, but it faces and reproduces the same issues of misrepresentation of women (and other marginalized groups) existing in the society within its own structures.

This leads to looking closely at the obstacles to equity of opportunities in UCC in how they are perceived by the respondents, and the ways in which they expect EQUIP to overcome them. In general, women's under-representation in HEIs is the consequence of several factors, such as informal barriers in the appointment processes, lack of access to mentoring and informal networks that are crucial for career development, a competition between household and work duties, internalized prejudices about traditional women's roles and field of interest within the academic functions that hinder their access to higher management roles or certain scientific

specialties (Adu-Oppong, Aikins, and Darko, 2017: p.18). All of these reasons relate to what could constitute a glass ceiling, and a few respondents (4; 8; 11; 12; 17) focused on the necessity to counteract these barriers by strengthening the legal and institutional frameworks of UCC through EQUIP. Such policies would need to focus on institutionalizing affirmative action for students and extend that for staff and the appointment of boards and committees' members as a first step, but also produce internal quantitative and qualitative reports about equal opportunities and the effectiveness of equity policies. In addition to that, other respondents (2; 3; 6; 10; 17) prioritize finding solutions to accommodate women's and parents' responsibilities and expect that EQUIP could contribute to policies that support the careers of parents and mothers specifically. Some of them highlighted the need to improve daycare options, others thought of offering the possibility of teaching breaks for parents/mothers in order for them to focus on research and publishing, which are crucial for academics to access promotions and higher positions (Interview 3, 2021). The Pro-Vice Chancellor added that her goal is that UCC becomes a healthy supportive workplace (Interview 6, 2021).

In order to overcome these barriers, few respondents also expected from CEGRAD to increase awareness raising about the importance of equal opportunity and how to materialize it. Britwum, Oduro, and Prah's (2014: p.14) research confirms these expectations from within UCC, where they explain that *"For the academic community the expectation was expressed that CEGRAD will work at making the faculty gender aware. Such an exercise was important for removing the erroneous impression that ...gender was about women. (...) The general expectation therefore was for CEGRAD to create a heightened awareness of gender on the UCC campus and in addition bring to the fore gender issues that beset the university."* (Britwum, Oduro, and Prah, 2014: p. 14). Awareness raising has been qualified as of importance because, among other reasons, it will help minimize opposition to equal opportunity initiatives (Interview 3, 2021; Interview 10, 2021), including EQUIP. The Dean of International Education and the Director of Public Affairs also suggested ways to achieve this objective by focusing on institutionalizing gender sensitization, while using existing resources available for education such as the university's radio and newspaper (Interview 2, 2021; Interview 10, 2021). Finally, one of the respondents has however warned against the risks of tokenization, i.e. that CEGRAD and its arguments for equal opportunity and gender equity would be instrumentalised by some university bodies as a way to access funds and improving UCC's image, but without substantiating the discourse with real support for CEGRAD and their initiatives to improve equity (Interview 12, 2021).

3. Stakeholder mapping

3.1 Of the willingness to support EQUIP

The stakeholders interviewed are not meant to be a representative sample of the university's staff in terms of the power they hold and their gender. They were rather purposively identified by CEGRAD using a selective sampling method, based on the extent to which they can inform this analysis and also their potential to support EQUIP. Consequently, when analysing the respondents answers, no clear correlation could be made between their gender, the power and legitimacy they hold, and their willingness to support the project. As one may assume, all the female respondents did not systematically strongly supported the project while holding limited power positions. For instance, the Pro-Vice Chancellor who is a woman is one of the respondents with the highest power positions among the respondents – which is not representative within the university structure as seen in the first section – is also one of the strongest supporters of EQUIP; at the same time, even though in terms of decision-making power he is not as strong, the Sexual Harassment Committee chairperson is one the most willing to support the project.

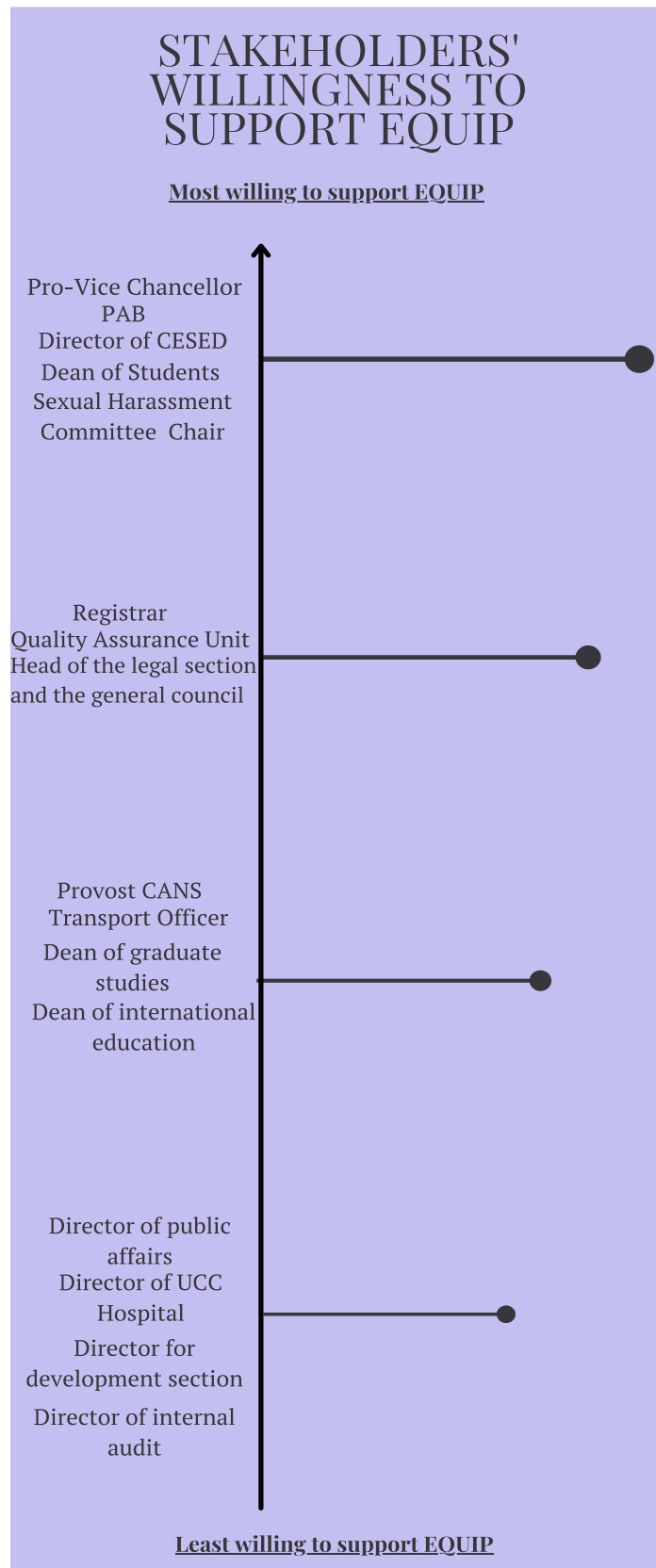
The majority of the chosen respondents, a little less than half of which are women, seem to be rather supportive of EQUIP as a project, with the idea of introducing Gender Equality Officers into the university's structure, may they have been aware of the project before or got to know it throughout these interviews. At worst, some respondents' answers seem somewhat vague, and a clear "Yes" to support EQUIP could not be identified in the transcriptions. However, their answers do not necessarily suggest that they are against the project either.

Therefore, the respondents' answers in terms of willingness to support EQUIP are organized in a spectrum. This spectrum starts with the most enthusiastic stakeholders, whose expectations go beyond the scope of their department or UCC, and see this as step towards structural and institutional gender equality. The second stepping stone in the spectrum are stakeholders that see the project as an opportunity for UCC to be a better workplace, or to draw more funding and have a better image internationally, or for the workforce to be more productive if the conditions are better. In the third quarter of this spectrum are the stakeholders' whose positions are not clear with regards to their willingness to support EQUIP, and who might see some bothersome aspects of gender inequality but for whom it is not a pressing issue in their immediate professional environment. In the last end of this spectrum are stakeholders

that either deny the existence of gender-based inequalities at UCC, even without expressing any opposition towards EQUIP.

The stakeholders interviewed would be positioned on this spectrum in the following manner:

FIGURE 2: Respondents' willingness to support EQUIP



3.2 Stakeholders' strength: Looking into their power and legitimacy

Before getting into assessing the interviewed stakeholders' strength, it is important to clarify what is meant by stakeholders' strength and how it will be defined in this section.

Stakeholders draw their strength from their power and their legitimacy, and those, combined with their willingness to support EQUIP's change objective, will determine different stakeholders' capacity to support the project through.

Power and legitimacy are observed separately. A stakeholder who has power is very likely to have legitimacy in this institutional context; however, stakeholders with less power and a strong legitimacy will be looked into as well. In terms of power, and for the sake of this project, the stakeholders are differentiated by type of power more than hierarchically:

1. Decision-making power
2. Executive power
3. Mobilizing power

Even though having decision-making power gives a stakeholder a great deal of strength in terms of access to information, resources, and networks, it is assumed that having mobilizing power can have its own strength in terms of rallying important numbers of people and having an influence in the university's opinion making (e.g. Unions).

To assess stakeholders' legitimacy, all individuals and institutions within and outside UCC who have been mentioned by the respondents – even the ones not interviewed – are brought to attention. The extent of their legitimacy is observed through the occurrence of them being mentioned by the respondents. Considering that the respondents' sample is not representative of the whole university, the number of occurrences is not supposed to be used as a statistical tool in the scope of this analysis, but rather a useful way to look into which stakeholders the respondents point us toward in order to make an initial stakeholder mapping. Crossing stakeholders' strengths with their willingness to support will allow to separate respondents into different categories. Each one of these stakeholder categories will need to be addressed through different strategies in order for EQUIP to be successful, and for the team to optimize its resources.

3.2.1 Internal

FIGURE 3: Stakeholders' power and legitimacy

<i>Type of power and legitimacy</i>	Power	Legitimacy	
		<i>Respondents</i>	<i>Mentioned by respondents¹</i>
Decision-making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Pro-Vice Chancellor -Head of the legal section and the general council -Provost CANS -Dean of graduate studies -Dean of international education -Director of research and innovation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Pro-Vice Chancellor -Registrar -Head of the legal section and the general council -Provost CANS -Dean of graduate studies -Dean of international education -Director of research and innovation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Academic board -Vice Chancellor -University council -Provost -Deans of colleges and heads of departments -Faculty higher management
Executive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Registrar -Dean of Students -Director of Internal Audit - Prof of quality assurance -Transport Officer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Dean of Students -Director of Internal Audit - Prof of quality assurance -Transport Officer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Director of Finance -Human resources
Hybrid between decision-making and executive²	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Director of CESED -Director of UCC Hospital -PAB -Director for Development Section - Director of Public Affairs 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -CEGRAD -DAPCCA -SRC
Mobilization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sexual Harassment Committee Chairperson 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sexual Harassment Committee Chairperson 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Students -Campus media

¹ Not interviewed

² E.g. centres and directorates mentioned in section 1.2

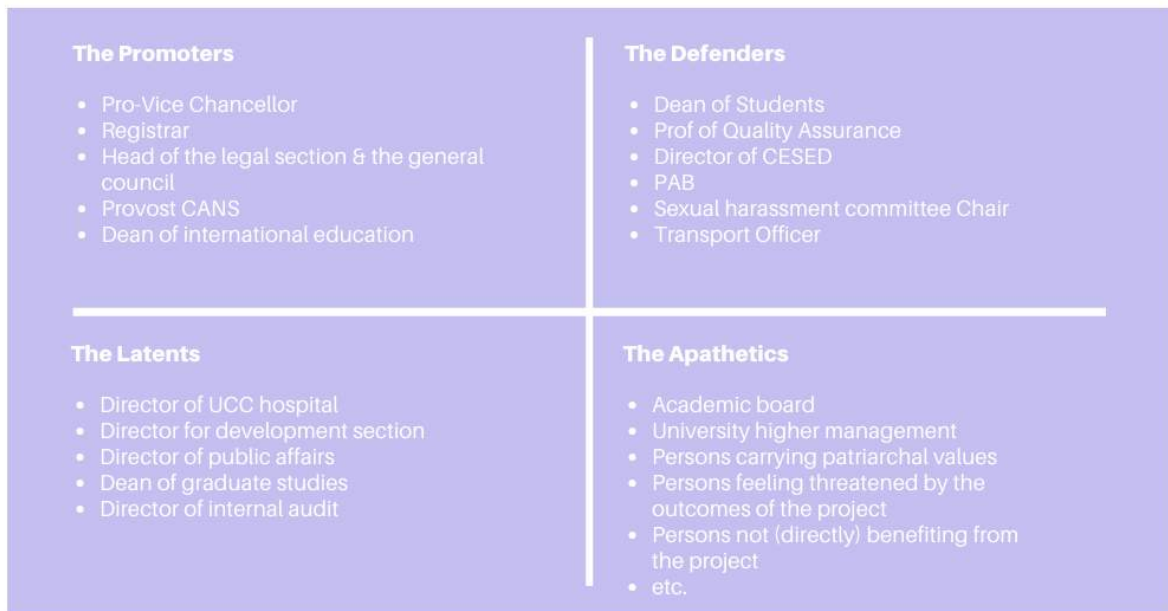
Considering that some of the stakeholders with a somewhat high legitimacy are not part of the respondents in this study, it is assumed that their willingness to support EQUIP's change objective is average. However, considering that some have been mentioned several times, it is highly recommended to engage with them to better assess their strength and willingness to support. This will allow to understand which strategy to adopt with them.

Four different strategies can be adopted with regards to different stakeholders depending on the combination between their strength or capacities, and their willingness to support EQUIP. These strategies are 1) to fully involve the strongest stakeholders who are the most supportive of the project (the "Promoters"), 2) to empower the strong project supporters who have relatively less access to decision-making power, resources and control over information and networks ("Defenders"), 3) to inform stakeholders who are somewhat powerful but whose willingness to support can be relatively weak or inconsistent (the "Latents"), and finally 4) to keep at a distance stakeholders who are less powerful and/or who are not willing to support or are against EQUIP's change objective (the "Apathetics"). From the respondents' answers, the following stakeholders would fit in these categories as follows:

FIGURE 4: Respondents' categories based on their legitimacy crossed with their willingness to support

Respondents' categorisation based on legitimacy and willingness to support

Respondents' categories



❖ The Apathetics

Potential hindering stakeholders to add to the last category:

Nobody so far presented themselves as being against EQUIP, or whose discourse suggests that they may hinder it. At worst, the interviewees did not clearly or enthusiastically express their willingness to actively support. However, some of them suggested that there might be some institutions and profiles within the university that EQUIP needs to watch out for or carefully engage with. These would be the following:

- The academic board
- Higher management of the university
- Men, but also some women who carry the values of the patriarchal system
- Persons who are sensitized to issues of gender inequality
- Persons who might feel threatened by the outcomes of the project
- Persons who might not see how the project might benefit them

3.2.2 External

- University of Ghana
- Civil society organisations: FIDA; NAWL; The graduate university women association of Ghana; The women caucus; Netright, Abantu
- Institutions financing UCC
- Ministers and women MPs
- etc.

4. SWOT in detail

4.1 Internal: Strengths and Weaknesses

4.1.1 Strengths

❖ Resources:

One of the main strengths EQUIP has is the fact that the Vice Chancellor is a feminist woman, which has been pointed out by several respondents. Having the Vice Chancellor's support can facilitate CEGRAD's operations in general, and can for instance limit bureaucratic barriers or offer access to funding opportunities; it only becomes then a matter of prioritizing gender in the university's agenda.

In terms of financial support, some respondents suggested that funds can be raised internally, first of all because UCC is a public university and has the capacity to draw funding on a project if it is prioritized in the agenda, but also through the CODE money that is rarely used up, or by appealing to the better funded colleges or the head of the university (Interview 4, 2021; Interview 5, 2021; Interview 7, 2021; Interview 5, 2021). In addition to that, the Registrar has expressed the willingness to budget for EQUIP himself (Interview 11, 2021).

Another resource available to the project are the Campus Broadcasting Cooperation and other media that can serve as platforms to educate the public about EQUIP, considering that "*a fair number of people patronize these channels of communication*" (Interview 12, 2021).

❖ Institutions and legal frameworks:

In terms of institutional and legal frameworks, CEGRAD itself is the strongest resource EQUIP has, not only for its expertise and as a source of knowledge (Interview 3, 2021) but also for its capacity to draw funding (Interview 4, 2021; Interview 6, 2021). The Sexual Harassment Committee chairperson added that CEGRAD can capitalize on its strengths by pooling resources with their existing organizational structure that organizes training for its members and officers regularly. He also suggested to involve university bodies like the SRC "*which has a Women's Commissioner. She has one basic role of representing and advocating for the female students in the University. This is something that can be tapped into because the structure already exists.*" (Interview 12, 2021).

In terms of efforts towards instating a legal framework towards equal opportunities, the Dean of International Education, who also happens to be a member of the drafting committee of the university's Corporate Strategic Plan, he asserts that equality is already part of it. He, and other respondents, also suggests that clauses around equal opportunity that already exist in the Statutes can be further strengthened and enforced (6; 7; 9; 10; 15; 17), because so far, "*the only gender related issue that is captured in the University's statute is sexual harassment.*" (Interview 9, 2021). In addition, the Quality Assurance Unit representative adds that the directorate of the legal office and the administrative committee will support the project; they just need to be solicited (Interview 16, 2021)

4.1.2 Weaknesses

❖ Resources:

Even though some respondents have pointed out some possibilities to draw funding, many of them consider the lack of financial resources as the main potential obstacle to the project (2; 3; 4; 6; 7; 8). For instance, the Director for Development Section shared that they could not draw funds for accessibility last year (Interview 8, 2021), and the Sexual Harassment Committee chairperson explained that the attempt to institutionalize equal opportunity at UCC has failed as a result of inappropriate financial allocation that allows its effective implementation (Interview 12, 2021).

Others added the lack of access to infrastructure and logistics as potential obstacles (4; 7; 9; 12), such as the lack of office space for existing staff which can be an issue in case the GEOs would be new hires (Interview 9, 2021).

❖ Institutions and legal frameworks:

First of all, a respondent has mentioned that UCC's law is outdated (1992) compared to the University of Ghana (2010). Gender equality initiatives need to be backed by policies to be effective. The Director of Internal Audit for instance pointed out that the equal opportunity initiative in admissions is still not backed up by policy yet (Interview 7, 2021). As a matter of fact, Britwum, Oduro, and Prah (2014: p. 7-8) looks into the increase of female enrollment within the two decades period following the affirmative action practice at UCC, and find out that the increase has been substantial until it reached 30% in 2002-2003, then drastically slowed down the 10 years after. The authors explain that because this practice is still a norm rather than

a written policy, its effectiveness has not been steady, and it even been completely abandoned in some faculties.

In addition to that, one of the respondents warns that if such initiatives are not institutionalized, CEGRAD's work in general might be used as a token or a marketing stunt to draw funding for the university, without it being substantiated and institutionalized at the university level for continuity in the long run (Interview 12, 2021). In this respect, the Head of the Legal Section and the General Council explains that at the moment gender issues are not a priority in the university's agenda, adding that UCC missed an opportunity to gender sensitive clauses when the statutes were updated (Interview 4, 2021).

Despite the existence of CEGRAD and the growing research it is conducting, sufficient quantitative and qualitative data about gender inequalities are still lacking. For instance, even though women are overrepresented in excellence as students, they still apply and access faculty positions less than men, and further investigation about it is needed (3; 5). One of the interviewees therefore raises the following: "*So it is important to find out what keeps the women away. If it is marriage, then how can marriage be supportive of the career within the university?*" (Interview 5, 2021).

Finally, bureaucratic obstacles can also be a weakness with regards to introducing GEOs, especially if they need to be hired by the university. For instance, the Registrar and the Pro-Vice Chancellor explain that they may need clearance in the case they are not already part of the staff or a faculty member (Interview 6, 2021; Interview 11, 2021). The Dean of Graduate Studies also warned that in general, bureaucratic processes tend to be lengthy when one starts a project or an initiative in the university (Interview 11, 2021).

❖ Institutional culture:

Some of the barriers to EQUIP can also be related to the university's institutional culture. As a matter of fact, awareness raising is the main respondents' expectation from CEGRAD because there still is a lack of sensitization about various gender issues at the university level (3; 5). For example, typical gender roles are not challenged when it comes to choosing subjects. Like it is the case in most countries to different extents, women are well represented in the Arts, 49% in 2012-2013 at UCC, their share in the biological, physical and agricultural sciences is a mere 37%, 17%, and 14% respectively during the same year. In

addition to that, the higher female enrolment at the undergraduate level has not systematically led to a higher enrolment in further academic pursuits (Britwum, Oduro, and Prah, 2014: p. 8-9). It is interesting to note that the Medical School is an exception in this sense, where the enrolment in 2012 was at 44%, in a faculty where students do not benefit from State subventions as it is a full fee paying program (Britwum, Oduro, and Prah, 2014: p. 8-9). Hence, one may conclude from this that the institutional culture in this HEI tends to not be welcoming to women in certain scientific fields; however, this does not apply in the same way to all women regardless of their socioeconomic background. Further investigation to explain this trend can be useful for future gender sensitive research internal to UCC.

Few respondents also mentioned the challenge of facing some general attitudes towards gender equity. For instance, they explain that for certain university actors, gender equity may be perceived as a foreign Western construct that is corrupting the university's and societal values. Two respondents mentioned that if such a gender equity agenda ends up being inclusive of the rights of transgender persons, it may present an issue in the current university context (Interview 2, 2021; Interview 10, 2021). As a result of patriarchal norms, some men may feel threatened by the inclusion of other genders as this may represent competition, and some respondents warn that EQUIP needs to be careful not to shake these norms too hard (4; 6; 8; 13). When the Director for Development Section thinks that already using the term "equality" might not sound very welcoming to certain actors, the Pro-Vice Chancellor wants to be careful not to tap into some men's fragility: *"we should find a friendly way of advocating without necessarily pointing out accusing fingers. Our campaign voice should be accommodating and friendly and still be able to get people to be able to accept our course."* (Interview 6, 2021). Finally, the Dean of Graduate Studies reminds us of the fact that the guardians of patriarchal norms are not only men, therefore, EQUIP should not dismiss the fact that this resistance might come from women as well and women should not be essentialized as given supporters (Interview 13, 2021).

Concluding remarks about Strengths and Weaknesses:

The main ideas to keep from the first part of the SWOT analysis, focused on the internal strengths and weaknesses of UCC in its capacity to accept EQUIP and the introduction of GEOs in the university, are the following. First of all, being thought and implemented by CEGRAD is the biggest strength of EQUIP. For example, engaging the adequate supporters for the project since the beginning is one of the strengths of this initial study, considering that the interview

process is not only a way to get relevant information about the feasibility of EQUIP, but also a way to involve and inform desired stakeholders.

The financial question is one that came back very often, as a strength (substantiated with ideas on where to draw funds from) as much as a weakness (failed attempt to get budgets accepted). The lack of financial means is mostly presented as a *de facto* challenge for any new activity or project in the making, and this has been backed up by factual elements from a couple of respondents. However, it is also important to distinguish the extent to which it is a real barrier compared to a perceived one, especially when it comes to a project promoting equal opportunity. As the Dean of International Education explained, sometimes the financial challenges are something to hide behind, and they may become a real barrier if they are not taken into consideration early on and prepared for (Interview 2, 2021). Nevertheless, financing CEGRAD's work has been challenging since its creation according to Britwum, Oduro, and Prah (2014: p. 16), in the sense that both the Vice Chancellor and the Pro-Vice Chancellor believed that the centre should have access to funding from the university even though it was not the case the year of its creation. According to the authors, which was also backed by few of the respondents in this study, CEGRAD has often been warned not to pursue teaching programs and rather focus on consultancies, advocacy, and drawing funds from external donors. At the same time, while these activities are time consuming and require a steady source of income, only teaching programs can draw such a reliable source of income. Alternative suggestions based on the authors' research and also a couple of respondents, is to allocate a budget for CEGRAD from the student fees (Interview 7, 2021) or draw a percentage from the each department's budget (Interview 9, 2021).

The second main idea brought up with regards to internal strengths and weakness relates to the necessity to substantiate EQUIP's work, and CEGRAD's work in general, with the institutionalization of initiatives, especially when they are successful such as the increase of undergraduate female students' enrolment with the affirmative action initiative. On the one hand, this is to prevent CEGRAD to be tokenized and used by the university to get more funds for its equal opportunity programs and initiatives, without the institutional (financial, bureaucratic, infrastructural) support to effectively undertake its work. One of the risks of this tokenization is that it is "*inviting female academic activists to validate their self-exploitation.*" (Mulugeta, 2007; from Britwum, Oduro, and Prah, 2014: p. 17). In parallel, there also needs to be a careful attention to effectively enforcing existing and future policies: the existence of a

policy does not guarantee its effectiveness in terms of equal opportunity, which requires constant sensitization about gender issues.

This leads to the last point regarding the university's institutional culture and the importance of its impact on achieving the objective of equal opportunity. Some respondents have expressed concerns about the potential for resistance towards the project, as the ones listed in the weaknesses, several of which are about perceptions regarding gender equity. It is interesting to note that a few of these respondents have also only expressed that there will be challenges to the project, without necessarily specifying in which ways (e.g. 10;13), even when they're encouraging the project. Working on communication, advocacy and sensitization is important in this respect, not only to avoid resistance towards EQUIP, but also so that an increasing amount of university actors embody the importance of offering equal opportunity in their everyday practices, eventually transforming UCC's institutional culture to move beyond a definition of gender equity focused on a dichotomy between men and women only, and where women would not be the sole spokespeople for the inclusion of women and other marginalized groups in HEIs.

4.2 External: Opportunities and Threats

Several opportunities suggested are about resources, especially financial ones. It makes sense considering that one of the main and most cited challenges was access to financial resources as well. The threats on the other hand focus a great deal on the challenge of facing patriarchal societal structures and institutions, and the ways in which it might impact EQUIP within the university structure.

4.2.1 Opportunities

❖ Resources:

Some of the potential external resources that could be available to EQUIP cited by the respondents are mostly financial. For example, the PAB suggested that the university could draw further support from the State for its focus on equal opportunity programs, fund that will naturally be allocated to CEGRAD (Interview 5, 2021). Even if such State support is insufficient, the Pro-Vice Chancellor encourages to find initial funds, even if it is limited, in order to draw more of it. She explains that it is easier to get money from external funders when there is existing internal funding, no matter how small the internal contribution is (Interview 6,

2021). And when some respondents suggest a simple increase in student fees that would cover CEGRAD projects' financial needs (Interview 7, 2021), others suggest to independently focus on external institutions' funding opportunities, through funds like the IGF (Interview 7, 2021; Interview 9, 2021), or even the financial institutions and non-governmental funders that support the university itself such as Prudential or Commercial Bank (Interview 10, 2021).

❖ Institutions and legal frameworks:

In terms of legal frameworks that could support, the Head of the Legal Section has referred to the ILO's acts against sexual harassment, international conventions such as CEDAW (Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women) and the Ghanaian Constitution (Art. 17) that provide legal frameworks against gender based discrimination. He also mentioned an affirmative action bill that did not pass as a law yet in Parliament. In this respect, he explains that the university act "*gives our Councils very broad powers in relation to making even public legislation for the university, so we could develop a lot of policies that will be inclusive for women even within the context of our own university act*" (Interview 4, 2021).

When it comes to externally supporting its efforts in terms of institutionalization, several respondents encouraged collaborations with external institutions that prioritize gender issues and that are willing to engage in a knowledge exchange around the topic, just like what has been done with the University of Ghana or the Freie University of Berlin within the scope or EQUIP.

In addition to that, the Director of Research and Innovation explained that to get into a consortium of research intensive universities, there is a need to have established gendered equal opportunity policies. So far, UCC has partnered with Legon in order to circumvent this requirement. However, such a requirement can be used as a leverage to institutionalize policies towards equal opportunity (Interview 14, 2021).

Finally, some respondents have suggested to involve feminist and women's groups in CEGRAD's projects, especially ones focused on HEIs. For instance, the Dean of Graduate Studies cited the graduate university women's association of Ghana or the women caucus as examples (Interview 13, 2021).

❖ Institutional culture:

The Sexual Harassment Committee chairperson pointed out the importance of challenging patriarchal norms through awareness raising even outside the university walls. He explains that this not only takes CEGRAD's work to another level, but it also advertises its work and objectives to potential donors and partners outside the university. He added that "*Flyers and posters can be designed to aid in the education process.*" (Interview 12, 2021).

4.2.2 Threats

❖ Resources:

Again, also when it comes to external factors, the main threat when it comes access to resources is financial. For example, the Director of Internal Audit pointed out that within the scope of EQUIP's project, CEGRAD is very unlikely to get governmental support if GEOs need to be paid salaries. Indeed, such support only covers university staff salaries (Interview 7, 2021).

❖ Institutions and legal frameworks:

The necessity of institutionalizing equal opportunity initiatives is not only an issue at the level of UCC, but also at a national level, which makes this endeavor a little more challenging. One of the respondents explains that even though there are strong, successful, influential, feminist women in high positions in the country, they are also self-made women, more the exception than the rule. He stipulates that their success cannot be linked to structural or institutional changes that facilitated their access to brilliant careers. Therefore, there might not be continuity nor reproducibility of the processes that led them to these positions of power, and by extension, to the support of equal opportunity policies in HEIs (Interview 12, 2021).

The same respondent also warns about the potential dependence of universities on the approval of politicians or the government for the implementation of some decisions. This may lead to some uncertainty and inconsistencies in equal opportunity policies' implementation (Interview 12, 2021). In addition to that, another respondent considers that accreditation related issues could be a consequence, if politicians or governmental bodies oppose such a feminist agenda (Interview 16, 2021).

❖ Institutional culture:

Finally, the threats to EQUIP from a broader societal perspective is that, just like the risk of resistance from within UCC towards gender equity being a Western construct, there

might be a risk that also from the perspective of external institutions (including potential donors or governmental bodies), EQUIP or CEGRAD's agenda may be perceived a foreign imposition rather than emanating from UCC's feminist activists and academics themselves.

In addition to that, some of the feminist ideals carried by CEGRAD, that will necessarily influence how the GEOs will operate, might simply not be welcomed by certain patriarchal institutions in the country (e.g. Gender Ministry – Interview 12, 2021).

5. Concluding remarks: Respondents' suggestions to overcome Weaknesses and Threats

Two competing strategies are suggested by different types of stakeholders, holding different levels of power:

- Top-down snowball effect: mostly suggested by stakeholders with decision-making power or in higher management positions;
- Bottom-up snowball effect: rather suggested by mid-level management, who either hold executive or mobilizing power, and who count on the power of awareness and mobilization towards gender equality in numbers for the objective of EQUIP to be achieved.

It is important to note that several respondents also offered suggestions that tend towards both strategies simultaneously, and encouraged a mixed method to put all chances in the side of EQUIP. Some of the suggested ideas to overcome the weaknesses and threats that EQUIP may confront are:

Which university actors should be involved in EQUIP ?

As the stakeholder mapping shows, the idea is to fully engage the Promoters (Vice Chancellors, Pro-Vice Chancellor, Registrar, etc.) in the project, empower and engage the Defenders, keep the Latents informed, and carefully observe the Apathetics. Most respondents advise to appeal to the highest levels of management to guarantee financial and bureaucratic support, and gracefully circumvent the Apathetics' resistance.

Centering CEGRAD for EQUIP's success

One of the most mentioned strengths to capitalize on for this project has been the existence, legally and institutionally, of CEGRAD. Therefore, several respondents have advised to strengthen the centre and clearly put EQUIP's work in the continuity of CEGRAD's to increase its credibility and legitimacy. It only needs to be well packaged and presented.

In addition to that, CEGRAD is also at advantage because of this pilot study:

“You can increase your chances to get support for the project by getting the university's management on board (for top down implementation of EQUIP) first; but doing the interviews means you're getting everybody's opinions and suggestions which also makes it bottom-up. This

mixed method is a strength in the sense that it is easier to get important actors on board if you have a whole well thought package that takes all views, possibilities, SWOTs into consideration” (Interview 3, 2021).

How to introduce GEOs in UCC’s structure?

First and foremost, even though not all respondents had the necessary knowledge to suggest ideas about how the GEOs can be introduced in the most effective way within UCC’s structure, none of them opposed the idea. At the contrary, many believed that the idea would fit into the university culture, depending on how it is implemented.

Even though the Dean of students suggested that the GEO position could be on a voluntary basis and *pro bono* (Interview 17, 2021), a few respondents strongly believed that the position should be introduced as a full-time paid administrative role, and preferably at the highest levels, from the level of colleges (Interview 6, 2021) to the Registrar’s office: “*But if we want it to work, the person should be at a Deputy Registrar level or it comes from Institute where we have the person reporting to the counselling. (...) if you want to be very serious about it, then you can’t hide it under a faculty.*” (Interview 8, 2021). Nevertheless, the Provost CANS also suggested that GEOs can be introduced in the disciplinary committee, that is currently the only structure that looks into gender related issues and sexual harassment. This structure only exists at the university level, thus he explains that the GEOs could be placed at the college level, and create an apex body that will deal with cases beyond the college (Interview 9, 2020). Beyond the university bodies GEOs will be assigned to, several respondents assumed that CEGRAD will in parallel also be the structure that manages their work.

Finally, and as the Director of Public Affairs puts it, EQUIP and CEGRAD should not focus on figuring out the bureaucratic details of hiring and implementing a system of GEOs, as much as they should focus on getting the most powerful and supportive stakeholders on board. For instance, he encourages to get the incoming Registrar on board; the bureaucratic and logistic details will organically follow. His case is made in point through the interview with the Pro-vice Chancellor, who already suggested to push for hiring GEOs paid as university staff by the government, and started thinking about alternative funding options to support with in case the committees end up not supporting the initiative.

How to increase chances for funding?

It is important to keep in mind that the university will never be enthusiastic about giving money away, and this is a fact few respondents warned to be prepared for, without necessarily giving up the endeavor. Therefore, in order to put all the chances on their side, CEGRAD needs to first, bring information and statistics about the benefits of the affirmative action initiative, and show how much investing in equal opportunity may outweigh its costs. CEGRAD can also cooperate with the Quality Assurance Unit that also gathers gender sensitive data at different levels and for various reasons (e.g. representation in the boards – Interview 16, 2021). For example, the rebranding and the promotion of UCC as an actual equal opportunity structure, and a leader in gender related research in the country or the region can make for a strong argument. In addition to that, a respondent has also advised that it is always easier to get funding, especially from external and private donors, when an applicant body already has access to a financial resource, regardless of how limited it can be.

Lobbying to reshape the university's institutional culture

The importance of awareness raising and sensitization were points that could not be stressed enough by the respondents. In the reality of a patriarchal university structure, as HEIs can be everywhere, advocating against gender based discrimination and preconceived ideas can be challenging. However, investing in this work preemptively can save some trouble, considering that sometimes communication can ease the resistance of the most Apathetic of stakeholders. For instance, it is important to clarify the idea that equal opportunity does not necessarily mean that certain people will take over others' positions in a non-structured and unfair manner, and for no valid reason.

Literature references

Adu-Oppong, A.A., Aikins, E., & Darko, G.M. (2017). THE PLACE OF WOMEN IN HIGHER EDUCATION MANAGEMENT: A GHANAIAAN PERSPECTIVE.

Adu-Yeboahn C. (2011). Constructing higher education experiences through narratives: Selected cases of mature undergraduate women students in Ghana. University of Sussex.

Adusah-Karikari, A. (2008). Experiences of Women in Higher Education: A Study of Women Faculty and Administrators in Selected Public Universities in Ghana.

Britwum, A.O., Oduro, G.Y., & Prah, M. (2014). Institutionalising Gender and Women's Studies at the University of Cape Coast in Ghana.

Doroba, H., Muhwezi, M., and Modungwa B., (2015). Tackling gender inequality in Higher Education Institutions in Africa: From a • rnative action to Holistic approaches. African Higher Education Summit (Dakar, Senegal, March 10-12).

AAU, ESSA, and PRB (2018). Demographics of African Faculty : A Pioneering Pilot in Ghana. Association of African Universities (AAU), Education Sub Saharan Africa (ESSA), and Population Reference Bureau (PRB).

<https://essa-africa.org/sites/default/files/inline-files/Demographics%20of%20African%20Faculty%20Ghana%20Pilot%20Study.pdf> Last accessed : 05.10.2021

ESSA (2021). Gender gaps in universities and colleges have been widespread globally, raising conversations on how we can address the higher education gender gap. Education Sub Saharan Africa - April, 13th 2021.

<https://essa-africa.org/node/1421>. Last accessed : 05.10.2021

Mabokela, Reitumetse & Mlambo, Yeukai. (2014). "The older women are men:" navigating the academic terrain, perspectives from Ghana. Higher Education. 69.

Mama, Amina. (2003). Restore, Reform but do not Transform: The Gender Politics of Higher Education. *Journal of Higher Education in Africa*. 1.

Manuh, T., Gariba, S., & Budu, J. (2007). Change and transformation in Ghana's publicly funded universities. *Partnership for Higher Education in Africa*. Oxford, UK: James Currey and Accra, Ghana: Woeli Publishing Services.

Morley, L., Leach, F., & Lugg, R. (2009). Democratising higher education in Ghana and Tanzania: Opportunity structures and social inequalities. *International Journal of Educational Development*, 29(1), 56-64.

Kwesiga, C.J. (2002). Women's access to higher education in Africa: Uganda's experience. Kampala: Fountain publishers Ltd.

UCC (2012). University of Cape Coast Corporate Strategic Plan 2018-2022. <https://www.ucc.edu.gh/sites/default/files/corporate-strategic-plan.pdf>

Annex

SWOT INSTRUMENT

CENTRE FOR GENDER ESEARCH ADVOCACY AND DOCUMENTATION (CEGRAD)
UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR EQUIP SWOT ANALYSIS

Interviewer: Start time: End time:.....
Date:

DEMOGRAPHICS

1. Gender.....
2. Position
- Duration at the position

POSITION AND ROLE

3. What are some of the requirements of your role/position?
4. What are some of the gender issues you see on UCC campus and your opinion on these issues?
5. What are some of the gender issues faced in your office/duties?

KNOWLEDGE OF THE EQUIP PROJECT

6. CEGRAD in collaboration with FUB is undertaking a project on EQUIP. Have you heard about this and what's your opinion and understanding about this project?
7. How relevant do you think this will be to the university, management and the community in general- students, staff etc.

EXPECTATIONS

8. What will be some of your expectations for this project? - gains, activities etc. to the university and individuals
9. What do you think will be some of the benefits the university will gain from institutionalizing EQUIP?

STRENGTH- EVIDENCE OF THE UNIVERSITY'S INTERNAL RESOURCES AND COMMITMENT TO UNDERTAKE AND SUSTAIN THE EQUIP PROJECT

A. Resources

10. What is the university's capacity to take on the resource commitment that comes with EQUIP?- *financial, physical and human resources*?

11. The creation of an equality officer(s) come with certain physical infrastructure requirements [such as office space for the equality officer(s), meeting rooms, a means of transport to enhance their activities
 - a. How does the current university financial structure and resources offer the space to cater for equip funding and budgeting allocation?
12. What is the strength of the university to cater for allowances and other financial commitments for the equality officers and their activities?
13. If nonexistence, what financial measures [budgetary allocations etc.] do you think the university can make to cater for this?
14. What are some of the perceived implications these changes may have for the university?
15. Who are the decision makers of the university? – *who takes what decisions, where are they located, how can they be of help to EQUIP*
16. What guides their work?

B. Organizational Structure

17. What structures exist in the university to support EQUIP?– *Legal/steering instruments that make a case for equip, accords, departments with EQUIP focus*, etc.
18. Where do you think the structure of equality officers fit in the existing university structure?– board, committees
19. Are there any existing structures that the project can already fall on?
20. Where (not) currently available, what can UCC do to get this project going/sustained?

C. Legal Frameworks

21. How does the university statute make room for a project of this nature?
22. What laws and regulations exist at UCC to support this project?– *recruitment process, strategies, gender and diversity, internal boards and committees, research institutions for gender and equal opportunities, cooperation with other institutions*
23. Which of these are on paper (or otherwise) and how do they work?

D. Institutional Culture

24. What is the climate around issues of equal opportunities at UCC?– *Attitude towards issues of gender and equal opportunities*
25. How receptive do is the university going to be towards equip?
26. In which ways do you think these can impact equip at UCC?
27. What can the university do to sustain EQUIP beyond this project?

WEAKNESS- EXISTING INTERNAL CHALLENGES/SITUATIONS THAT MAY WEAKEN UCC ABILITY TO UNDERTAKE EQUIP

28. What attempts have been made towards institutionalizing equal opportunities practices in UCC?
29. What are some of the challenges faced in this regard?– *finance, institutional culture, legal, infrastructural, personnel, political development*
30. How were these addressed?
31. How prepared is the university's structures to take on EQUIP?
32. Where do you see weaknesses to the project?

33. How do you think we can overcome these?
34. What possible challenges do you perceive the university may encounter in introducing EQUIP?
35. How has the university addressed some of these challenges in previous projects and what do you think will be some of the take-home for us?

OPPORTUNITIES- OPPORTUNITIES [EXISTING AND YET TO BE TAPPED INTO] THAT THE UNIVERSITY CAN TAP INTO

36. What opportunities exist for the project to tap into – internal and external
37. How can CEGRAD/ equality office tap into some of these resources for this project?
38. Who do you think can (currently) offer the needed support to make this project a success? - where are these persons located in the university?
39. Who could be our future supporters?
40. What kind of opportunities can we tap into in undertaking this project and also sustaining it?
41. Are there any opportunities beyond UCC that you think we can tap into? - where and how?

THREATS- POTENTIAL THREATS THAT EQUIP COULD FACE AND WHERE THEY ARE GOING TO COME FROM

42. What potential threats do you for see can jeopardize this project? – *current and future strategies*
43. Where do you see these emanating from and why? Internal or external e.g. resources, organisational structure, legal frameworks and institutional culture, political development
44. What kind of external and internal developments can jeopardize your mission?
45. How do you perceive the concept of equip will be welcomed by the country?
46. What are political developments that can negatively affect your cause?
47. Universities in Ghana laws, VCs Ghana, accreditation board etc.
48. Where do you see opponents to your mission and why?
49. What are some of the suggested ways you think this project can avoid these threats?