

Universities have been challenged to incorporate various strategies and policies to ensure equal gender representation in all circles of operation and management. This was echoed by various speakers at the opening ceremony of the Association of Commonwealth Universities (ACU) conference and gender training of Trainers workshop at the University of Nairobi (UoN). Speaking on behalf of the Vice-Chancellor, Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Academic Affairs, Prof. Henry Mutoro noted that there is need for institutions of higher learning should be committed to achieving gender parity in education which is one of the goals of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Prof. Mutoro said that the University of Nairobi for instance has realized a lot in gender mainstreaming as many positions in management are almost gender balanced and the student population is almost half-half, with some courses realizing more female enrolments than males.

In her key note presentation, Prof. Leah Marangu, Vice-Chancellor, African Nazarene University noted that gender awareness in leadership and management is being realized in many universities and colleges. She said that quite a good number have started to mainstream gender programs and even gender studies departments. Prof. Marangu challenged stakeholders to integrate mainstreaming strategies and policies in the daily activities at higher institutions of learning to achieve gender equality.

The conference and training is important for higher institutions as it enables them to realize the participation and involvement of both gender in institutional affairs and management. UoN is hosting the Association of Commonwealth Universities (ACU) conference and gender training for the second year running after successfully hosting ACU's Centenary celebrations in 2013. This year's theme is "Beyond 2015 Gender Milestones in Education in Developing Countries".