Strategic Plan Report – A draft

for

Equality and Sustainability Office – University of Petra

Our Mission:

Engage females in HE gender-related activities and harness resources to promote gender equality and leadership.

Our Vision:

To be a sustainable hub in Jordan and the region to disseminate knowledge about gender equality, diversity, inclusion, and equal opportunities.

Core Values:

We believe in the following core values:

1. Equal opportunities for female inclusions
2. Female participation in decision making
3. Respect commitment and acceptance of the female leadership ideas and freedom
4. Recognition of female personal and professional success and achievement
5. Independent through actions – creativity, inclusion, and participation
6. Harmony, strong relationship with the society and themselves
7. Recognition of females as a source of creativity in research and practice
8. Integration of females' role models in the Higher Education Institution (HEI) through research and practice.

Key actors of our plan:

It is deemed necessary to initiate a dialogue with multiple actors to achieve our mission and offer sustainable resources to promote gender equality and equal opportunities. The actors who would interact with the office are categorized into *Academic and administrative staff, top management, middle management, students and coincident groups, government, and other associations*. However, females would be considered the core focus of this office and targeted through its initiatives and activities. Table1 is added to summarize each category's

knowledge level about equality and sustainability as well as the expected level of influence on the office activities.

1. *Academic and administrative staff:*

   Female empowerment among this category members is important. Academic staff includes instructors and lecturers who deliver lectures while administrative staff includes employees who support the HEI. Academic and administrative staff have direct contact with students and they are considered role models for them. Thus, they would transfer empowerment and perceptions about equity, diversity, and inclusion to them. However, although academic and administrative staff might obtain higher education degrees, multiple researchers stated that they might lack knowledge about female empowerment due to factors related to family and culture (Al-Qahtani, Elgzar, Ibrahim, El-Houfy, & El Sayed, 2021). Thus, we consider that this category would have a high to medium level of knowledge about equality and sustainability and a high level of influence on changing the community's cultural perspective.

2. *Top management:*

   This category includes senior management, executives, decision-makers, and policymakers. We realize that there is unconscious bias in institutions and management should handle this issue as systemic. They could get sponsors for the females who would offer guidance and support, allow a flexible work environment, conduct seminars to spread awareness of gender equality issues, and try to involve females in every possible institutional activity to avoid unobserved inequity. Thus, we believe that this category would have medium knowledge about equality and sustainability and a high level of Influence.

3. Middle management including Deans, Head of Departments:

   This category includes deans, heads of departments, and other offices/units' managers. This group members would have a considerable level of females' empowerment since it is noticed that they demonstrated commitment to progressing gender equality in their agencies and departments. They have a practical opportunity to implement gender equality, diversity, and equal opportunities in their working environment, which would be obtained from the top management.

Additionally, they commit to offering the opportunity based on qualifications which consolidate the conceptions of how merit should be the first evaluation criteria and how this could intersect with gender at a low level. Thus, we believe that this category would have high knowledge on equality and sustainability and a high level of Influence.

4. Students:

This category includes all graduate and undergraduate students in the HEI. We believe that inculcating gender equality, diversity, inclusion, and equal opportunities among students is a vital milestone of females' empowerment because this would enable them to respond to the emerging challenges and shift the community perspectives. This group might not have a direct influence on the office decision-making process although it would steer some of our objectives. Thus, we believe that this category would have low knowledge about equality and sustainability and a low level of Influence.

5. Government:

This category includes any government agency that may have an interaction with the office and/or the HEI. We believe that cooperation with the government agencies is a must to stimulate a fruitful dialogue and raise awareness about gender equality issues through all available means. Although the government agencies might not have a considerable level of knowledge about gender equality issues, we realize that they would have a vital role in building a constructive milieu for exchanging ideas and achieve convergence of points of view. Thus, we believe that this category would have a medium knowledge about equality and sustainability and a high level of Influence.

6. Other associations:

Associations and NGOs' collaboration with HEIs is necessary to motivate its staff and students to achieve the designated mission and vision. It also might bring in modification to its culture and facilitate its advancement and innovation. Through capacity building, associations and NGOs would develop the HEI's knowledge and skills of planning and evaluating community and launch initiatives that promote equal opportunities and female empowerment. Thus, we assume that these associations

would have medium knowledge on equality and sustainability and a medium-low level of Influence.

Table1: Actors knowledge about equality and sustainability and level of Influence

Actor	Knowledge level	Influence
Academic and administrative staff	High-medium	High
Top management	Medium	High
Middle management	High	High
Students and coincident groups	Low	Low
Government	Medium	High
Other associations	Medium	Medium-low

Main problems:

The status of females in the middle east and north Africa (MENA) region has acquired several researchers' attention. It was found that MENA females' concerns exceed those in other parts of the world based on economic, social, and political measures. This was found related to gender roles, perspectives, and the challenges facing the region (Sharkey, Nashat, & Tucker, 2020). As part of this region, we realize that the following problems need to be addressed:

1. Social and cultural perceptions – gender equity issues and resistance to change – stereotyping, prejudicial attitude against female leadership
2. Organizational resistance to change – female representation
3. Lack of female-based opportunities (without written evidence)
4. Employment inequality
5. Lack of gender-based studies and research
6. Finding advocates/support

The office responsibilities

Our office would promote gender equality and females empowerment through the HEI community, manages a portfolio of ongoing agenda of training sessions, and leads the development of a program to disseminate knowledge about gender equality in Jordan. Therefore, our responsibilities would be:

1. Organizational and society culture: make sessions, success stories.
2. Fair and transparent procedure for selecting institutional leaders and decision-makers.
3. Fair and transparent procedure for recruitment.
4. Integration of the gender dimension into research and teaching content.
5. Link females in the university community with successful female leaders at the national and international levels.

Our main objective:

- To achieve gender equality and empower female role-model and leadership in the HEI and society

Specific objectives:

1. Become a Jordanian leading initiative to educate and empower women and support engagement for gender equality
2. Identify females with leadership qualifications and utilize them to spread experience and knowledge among peers
3. Consolidate female respect and gender equity notions among society
4. Develop programs and establish an alliance with advocates to enrich females' mental capacity, financial potency, and emotional stability; and broaden their comfort zones.
5. Enhance female awareness of their constitutional rights and duties
6. Establish a database on UOP equality studies and progression
7. Encourage and support female entrepreneurial and innovative attributes across the HEI and the society.

Expected Results:

May be this section is the one we need to go over quickly and to see if our methods of measurement is ok

For each specific objective, multiple actions and measurements tools are proposed respectively as specified below:

1. The first specific objective can be accomplished by establishing an office to educate and empower women and support engagement for gender equality. This would embody multiple actions including training workshops, seminars, and inviting speakers. Measured through counting the number of attendees, participants, guests, as well as speakers.

2. The second specific objective can be achieved through multiple actions such as observing, monitoring, and documenting female leaders/decision-makers in the HEI and community and inviting them for talks. It can be measured by exploring the selected female achievements, number of individuals who benefit from their experience, number of female leaders/decision-makers who support our office, the sessions attendees' assessment/feedback, and quality measures.

3. Our third specific objective can be achieved through multiple actions such as supporting females in the HEI and society by offering training, focus groups, and seminars. It can be measured by providing reports about the number of attendees, trainers/Orators, starting initiatives, number of job vacancies opening for females, female contribution to the national/HEI income, and number of female innovator/entrepreneurs.

4. The fourth specific objective can be achieved through multiple actions including conducting training sessions/inviting Orators to talk about vital topics, such as:
   a. Latest trends, building a strong and stable relationship with people, supporting innovation, and adapting quickly to change.
   b. Job offering and business partnership and their importance in establishing an independent financial entity and support women startups
   c. Broaden female comfort zones.

   These actions can be measured by:

a. Provide statistics about related sessions/training, the number of female-based innovations, female performance evaluation through interviews.

b. Statistics about the number of job openings for females, number of female startups.

c. Interviews/surveys.

5. The fifth specific objective would be accomplished through info sessions, workshops, and promotional materials. These actions can be measured via surveys and interviews.

6. The sixth specific objective would be accomplished by preparing empirical reports and statistics obtained through our office. This can be measured by surveys, interviews, and observations obtained through focus groups (students and staff members).

7. Our last specific objective would be accopmlished through collaborating with existing units in the UOP (i.e. Innovation and entrepreneurship center and Business Incubator) to provide opportunities specifically drawn to support female entrepreneurial activities. This can be measured by counting the number of trainees, the number of collaborated initiatives with these units, and the number of startups lead by a female.

Key strategies:

1. Attract skilled and knowledgeable trainers and benefit from resources of the HEI's units, centers, and/or offices.

2. Strengthen women through training and education, and enhance their capabilities to act outside their comfort zones.

3. Seek industrial support through training, leadership, and industrial community.

4. The office quality assurance plan

5. The annual budget for the office, maintain resources from the HEI, funded joint projects, and activity-based sponsors.