



WOMEN'S ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT HUB (WEE HUB)

University of Nairobi
Womens' Economic Empowerment Hub

INCEPTION REPORT

1st September 2020 to
28th February 2021

TABLE OF CONTENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	ii
LIST OF TABLES.....	iv
INTRODUCTION.....	1
PART ONE: INVESTMENT DOCUMENT, RESULTS FRAMEWORK AND BUDGET.....	3
1.1 Investment document.....	3
1.2. Results framework and results tracker.....	3
1.3 Budget.....	3
1.3.1 Personnel.....	4
1.3.2 Printing and Publication.....	5
1.3.3. Technical Working Sessions (Literature Review).....	5
1.3.4. Publicity and Media Programmes.....	5
1.3.5. Legal Fees.....	5
1.3.6. Presentations on WEE by external experts (Consultancies).....	6
PART TWO: INFRASTRUCTURE FOR IMPLEMENTATION AND ADMINISTRATION.....	7
2.1 Recruitments.....	7
2.2 Developed Guidelines.....	7
2.2.1 Taxation Guidelines.....	7
2.2.2 Financial Guidelines.....	7
2.2.3 Guidelines for Recruitment of Consultants.....	8
2.2.4 Procurement Process Guidelines.....	8
2.2.5 Procurement Plan.....	8
2.3 Office Space.....	8
PART THREE: INFRASTRUCTURE FOR COMMUNICATION AND KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT.....	9
3.1. Introduction.....	9
3.2. Key human resource personnel.....	9
3.3. Generated reports.....	9
3.4. Uploading of videos on the website.....	9
3.5. Policy briefs.....	9
3.6. Quality control software:.....	10
3.7 Website Management:.....	10
PART FOUR: PROGRESS IN RESEARCH AGENDA.....	11
4.1 Evaluation.....	11
4.2 Dissemination.....	14

4.3 Advocacy	15
4.4. Building the Field	17
4.4.1 Capacity Enhancement for Researchers	17
4.4.2 Exploring Research Partnerships and Strengthening Linkages for Collaboration and Partnerships	18
4.4.3 Established Research Partnerships and Collaborations.....	19
PART FIVE: POLICY ADVOCACY	20
5.1 Background	20
5.2 What has worked in policy advocacy	21
PART 6: LESSONS LEARNT DURING THE INCEPTION PERIOD.....	23
6.1 Policy Advocacy	23
6.2 Review of investment document, results framework, results tracker and Budget.	24
6.3 Infrastructure for implementation and administration	24
6.4 Infrastructure for communication and knowledge management	24
PART 7: WAY FORWARD	26
7.1 With regards to policy advocacy.....	26
7.2 With regards to evaluations	26
7.3 With regards to building the field:	27

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Revised UON WEE Hub Projects per cluster.....	12
Table 2: Capacity Training and Enhancement for Researchers.....	17
Table 3: Exploratory Meetings for Research Partners and Collaborators.	19

INTRODUCTION

The University of Nairobi Women's Economic Empowerment Hub is a five-year program established through the support of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. It began its operations on September 1, 2020. The Hub is domiciled at the African Women Studies Centre, College of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Nairobi. The African Women Studies Centre is a multidisciplinary centre, working with scholars from other disciplines, including the College of Health Sciences, College of Architecture and Engineering, College of Agriculture and Veterinary Sciences, College of Physical and Biological Sciences, as well as College of Education. The African Women Studies Center aims to promote intellectual inquiry by and on African women through teaching, research, policy advocacy and outreach, and to engage with policy makers, women's and civil society organizations, in order to bring African women's perspectives into scholarship and development in Kenya, Africa and the world.

In addition, the WEE Hub, which is a partnership with Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, also draws expertise from other units of the University of Nairobi, such as the African Women Studies Centre, the School of Law, School of Economics, School of Business and School of Journalism; the Department of Political Science, the Department of Sociology, Department of Literature, and Communication Department; the Institute of Anthropology, Gender and African Studies, and the Institute of Development Studies, among others.

The vision of the UON WEE Hub is the full realization of Women's Economic Empowerment. The Hub seeks to be a thought-leader in producing cutting-edge, innovative, rigorous, and accessible evidence through research so as to make an impact on policy formulation, implementation and up-scaling for full realization of women's empowerment. It aims at strengthening the generation and use of evidence to advance women's economic empowerment and gender equality in Kenya through the establishment of a multidisciplinary and multi sectoral research Hub. The Hub is expected to generate evidence on what works, disseminate information and knowledge, and build the field through the promotion of collaborations.

This is a five-year program and the inception phase started on 31st August 2020 after the signing of the Grant Agreement between the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and the University of Nairobi. This Report presents the experiences and progress of the research team during the inception phase. During the five-year period, the program will focus on affirmative action funds and women entrepreneurship, women in formal and informal employment, child care and women's work, and women's self-mobilization and policy advocacy for WEE.

The Report covers the inception period starting on September 1, 2020 ending on March 31, 2021. During this period, the UON WEE Hub managed to establish the infrastructure for implementation and administration; review the investment document, the results framework and budget; establish the infrastructure for communication and knowledge management, and review the research agenda. An intensive Literature review on local, regional and global level was carried out, based on which, and in line with the prevailing socio-political situation the projects were re-focused.

The report comprises seven main parts:

- Part one: Investment document, results framework, results tracker, and budget
- Part two: Infrastructure for implementation and administration
- Part three: Infrastructure for communication and knowledge management
- Part four: Progress in research agenda
- Part five: Policy advocacy work
- Part six: Lessons learnt during the inception period
- Part seven: Way Forward

PART ONE: INVESTMENT DOCUMENT, RESULTS FRAMEWORK AND BUDGET

1.1 Investment document

Based on experiences during the six months inception period, the investment document was reviewed and some important improvements made in the following areas:

- i. **Hub Structure:** new offices and office holders were added, including management committee, Research associate and quality control, Oversight chair-implementation and administration and renaming some of the committees. (*See investment document*)
- ii. Primary and intermediate outcomes to reflect the new projects. New projects were added while others have been reviewed
- iii. Criteria for selection of policies and programs to reflect revised and new projects
- iv. Status of evidence in various clusters of work informed by literature review
- v. Strategic approach based on changes made in primary and intermediate outcomes
- vi. Evaluation for building and generating high quality evidence for policies and programs to promote WEE based on literature review carried out.
- vii. Summary of research questions based on new and revised projects
- viii. Evidence dissemination methodology
- ix. The WEE Hub work plan was revised and priority projects identified
- x. Collaborators and partners and new areas of collaboration were established
- xi. **Section E: Progress narrative:** Updates have been provided on impact for the Foundation's beneficiaries under 'Section A' on i) Evaluation, ii) Dissemination, iii) Advocacy, and iv) Building the field (*see investment document*).

1.2. Results framework and results tracker

Given the changes in cluster one on *Affirmative Action Funds and Entrepreneurship*, where the government has consolidated three programs (WEF, YEDF and UWEZO Funds) into Biashara Kenya Fund, the results framework had to change to reflect the changes. Inclusion of Credit Guarantee Scheme and Biashara Kenya Fund has also necessitated the changes in those particular areas. This is one of the major changes made in the results framework. The results tracker has also been amended based on the changes in the results framework.

1.3 Budget

The budget was reviewed (*see Section B of the investment document on budget narrative as well as the Budget*), and adjusted to address the experiences of the inception period as follows:

1.3.1 Personnel

i. Hub Leader

At the design stage of this program, the Vice Chancellor appointed the Hub Leader, Prof. Kabira who was then Director of AWSC. In February 2021, Prof Kabira was appointed Professor Emeritus for Literature and African Women Studies, and the VC has retained her in the position of the Hub Leader. The new AWSC Director, has been incorporated as a member of the WEE Hub Management Committee because she provides administrative connection with the University administration.

ii. Program Manager

Program Manager will be recruited from the 6th month and not from 1st month as envisaged in the initial budget. The salary of the Year is reflected in the Budget.

iii. Communication, Policy Advocacy and Knowledge management

The Communication, Policy Advocacy and Knowledge Manager was recruited from the 6th month and not from 1st month as envisaged in the initial budget. The salary of the Year is reflected in the Budget.

iv. Research Associate and Quality Control

The Budget introduces the position of “Research Associate and Quality Control” that the management of the Hub has found it necessary to have a dedicated person to oversee quality control and coordination of the various committees and panels focusing on quality control.

v. Principal Investigators/Co-Researchers

The initial budget proposal was to have Principal Investigators and Co-researchers attached to each of the 14 proposed projects. At the project set up stage and through experiences from the initial activities (literature review) the management of the Hub has found it necessary to reorganize these approaches as detailed in the Investment Document. In the new approach all the 14 projects will be grouped into 4 clusters based on the program outcomes. Each cluster will be led by a Principal Investigator who will draw a monthly retainer from the program. The Hub will also establish a pool of researchers drawn from the university whose work will complement the work of the PIs. They will be engaged on regular basis when need arises across all projects and at every stage of the evaluation process including, data collection, analysis, publication and policy options and policies developments.

Full time research fellows and research assistants have been retained as designed in the earlier proposal. Other PhD, Masters and undergraduate students will be involved as research assistants on part time basis. The Hub has a total of 25 researchers and 30 research assistants and research fellows.

This approach will ensure maximum utilization of various expertise available across all projects rather than limit a specific person who is not engaged on full time in one specific project.

Impact on the Budget: The budget for Co-researchers has been reallocated from personnel cost to Direct Costs as '*Research Support Services by UON researchers*'.

1.3.2 Printing and Publication

A new budget has been introduced to cover printing and publications. Each of the 14 Projects will result into a publication of which an average of 500 copies will be printed at a cost of \$2500 per publication. This will cover editing, design and printing costs.

1.3.3. Technical Working Sessions (Literature Review)

A new budget has been introduced to cover cost towards the Literature review process which will take the working session model where the Principal Researcher and Research Fellows take the lead in desk review and a panel of researchers' reviews and critiques the reports. This cost will cover the conference packages and allowances for researchers' working sessions as they review the individual reports from the clusters.

1.3.4. Publicity and Media Programmes

The revised budget has factored in the cost of publicity of the work of the Hub through traditional and digital/new media.

1.3.5. Legal Fees

In the budget narrative of the notes indicated the need for a legal counsel to ensure that the lobbying strategy is compliant to the US Law on Lobbying and advocacy. The fee of \$10,000.00 had been omitted in the main budget. This is now corrected under consultancies.

1.3.6. Presentations on WEE by external experts (Consultancies)

The wording of this budget item has been changed to “Professional services by external experts (Non-UON staff) to the Hub” in order to accommodate other professionals who are not university employees who continue to offer various professional inputs to the Hub.

PART TWO: INFRASTRUCTURE FOR IMPLEMENTATION AND ADMINISTRATION

2.1 Recruitments

The UON WEE Hub advertised externally for the positions of Program Manager and Communications, Policy Advocacy and Knowledge Management Manager. Interviews were conducted and a Communications, Policy Advocacy and Knowledge Management Manager was recruited. However, the panel conducting the interviews did not find a suitable person for the position of Program Manager among those who had applied and shortlisted. The committee then recommended that the position be re-advertised.

2.2 Developed Guidelines

Various guidelines were developed namely:

2.2.1 Taxation Guidelines

Taxation guidelines and regulations to deal with the management of the UON WEE Hub tax matters were developed, guided by the financial regulation and guidelines of the University of Nairobi and the Income Tax Act, Kenya. The regulations have been summarized but not limited to: taxation of project consultants; taxation on students involved in the project; and; taxation on implementation and Administrative Secretariat. Moreover, the guidelines classified consultants into two categories:

- a) University of Nairobi Employees. This category will consist of any university of Nairobi employee engaged by the Hub to offer consultancy services at any given time.
- b) Non-University of Nairobi Employees. This category consists of any other consultant engaged by the WEE Hub who is not an employee of University of Nairobi at the time of the engagement.

2.2.2 Financial Guidelines

Financial guidelines and regulations to deal with the management of the UON WEE Hub finances and resources were developed, guided by the financial regulation and guidelines of the University of Nairobi. The regulations have been summarized but not limited to the following:

- (i) rates of payments for different cadres of staff (day trip and DSA);
- (ii) Transport reimbursement;
- (iii) Audit system;
- (iv) Flow chart for request for payments (processes and functionaries of various committees up to AIE holder);
- (v) Guidelines on petty cash; and;
- (v) Guidelines on request for advance payments.

2.2.3 Guidelines for Recruitment of Consultants

The Guidelines stipulate that on a needs basis a consultant to perform specified tasks may be engaged through the Hub leader or the technical committee as appropriate. All requests for consultancy services shall be tabled before the Management Committee where members will avoid conflict of interest.

2.2.4 Procurement Process Guidelines

The WEE Hub Implementation Committee follows the procurement process as practiced by the University of Nairobi.

2.2.5 Procurement Plan

The WEE Hub Implementation Committee has submitted a procurement plan and the procurement items have been requisitioned. All necessary approvals have been granted. The committee identified the immediate items for requisition but the items are yet to be sourced by the Procurement Office.

2.3 Office Space

The WEE Hub office in Kenya Science campus is functional except minor repairs which have to be carried out through the Maintenance office.

PART THREE: INFRASTRUCTURE FOR COMMUNICATION AND KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT

3.1. Introduction

The Knowledge Management and Communication (KMC) main aim is to capture, collect, produce, manage, brand and share information that is generated throughout the Hub's lifecycle thereby building the knowledge base. Therefore, the unit is charged with the responsibility of building the knowledge base; access to, use and re-use of existing knowledge; and knowledge-sharing. It also coordinates the Hub, her collaborators and partners to facilitate efficient communication therefore enabling the achievement of the Hub's outcomes of high-quality research and evaluation of legislative frameworks, policies and programs.

3.2. Key human resource personnel

These include: Knowledge Management Coordinator, Communication Policy Advocacy and Knowledge Management Manager, Assistant to Communication Policy Advocacy and Knowledge Management Manager, Communication Assistant, Website Champion, ICT Assistant, Technical Editors (three), Research Assistants (two), and Graphic Designer.

3.3. Generated reports

- i. Proceedings of the Women Empowerment Indicators held via zoom on Friday 26th March 2021, from 10:00–11: 30 AM (22 Pages).
- ii. Consultation meeting: on Credit Guarantee Scheme (CGS) Implementation held on 23/3/2021 via zoom from 10:00 AM-12:35 PM (6 Pages).
- iii. Research Assistants Forum, held on Friday 26th Feb. 2021.

3.4. Uploading of videos on the website

- i. Inclusion of Women in Economic Development: 24th February 2021
- ii. Uptake of CGS and WEE: 23rd March 2021.
- iii. WEE-Hub Launch -16th Dec 2020.
- iv. Food Security-A study by AWSC.
- v. Ushanga Marketing Initiative-Maasai Women in Business.

3.5. Policy briefs

- i. AGPO
- ii. Planning and Budgeting for WEE inclusion
- iii. National Treasury on the uptake of CGS
- iv. Voices from Women organizations on uptake of CGS

3.6. Quality control software:

- i. Use of Turn it in for all reports produced by the clusters.

3.7 Website Management:

www.weeHub.org with links to programs, advocacy, policy, publications of the WEE Hub, and links to the partners and collaborators. So far, journal articles anchored under the four clusters Research reports, WEE related photos and newspaper clippings related to WEE issues have been uploaded on the WEE-Hub website. The WEE Hub has linked up with the University of Nairobi open access repository where dedicated issues of the AWSC Journal *Pathways to African Feminism and Development* are being uploaded biannually.

PART FOUR: PROGRESS IN RESEARCH AGENDA

4.1 Evaluation

One major activity of the WEE Hub during the period 1st Sept. 2020 – 31st March 2021 was the rigorous literature reviews from local to regional and global levels of scholarly books, scientific papers, relevant articles from renowned scientific journals; latest studies, established practices, and many more in relation to the area of concern of the four clusters of the Hub.

The information gathered was synthesized, appraised and critically evaluated. Findings from different sources were correlated, compared, contrasted and conclusions and recommendations were drawn. The literature review was of great importance as it enabled the researchers to identify what has been already established, discredited or accepted in the relevant field of the Cluster; the areas of controversy and conflicts; unsolved problems and issues; as well as emerging trends and approaches. Thus, the research teams were able to build and improve on previous experiences and confirm that the Hub has a great potential to undertake research, influence policy and build the field (increased collaboration) with other researchers, the Government, private sector and civil society partners.

The most important output of the literature review was revision of the initially proposed projects. Based on the literature review, research questions were more focused. In addition, some new projects were designed as a response to the new priorities of government and the needs of entrepreneurs and business people due to the covid-19 pandemic. Among the new programs is the credit guarantee scheme which has given birth to a close collaboration between the Hub, national treasury, banks and private sector including women in business. In terms of other AAF the government took the step of consolidating them into one program titled the BKF which the Hub has picked as one of the major programs that we need to work with to ensure it promotes WEE. The changes are shown in Table 1:

Table 1: Revised UON WEE Hub Projects per cluster

<p align="center">Initially proposed project Cluster One: Affirmative action funds and entrepreneurship</p>	<p align="center">Revised project Cluster One: Affirmative action funds and entrepreneurship</p>
<p>i. What Works to get women entrepreneurship in to public procurement opportunities?</p>	<p>i. Evaluating AGPO’s legislation, policy, regulation, and implementation frameworks and drawing best practices for upscaling women’s access to the program</p>
<p>ii. Assessing the performance of Women Enterprise Fund and Youth Enterprise Development Fund, National Government Affirmative Action Fund (NGAAF) in strengthening the economic outcomes for women enterprises and evaluating the Safaricom’s Women Business program for up-scaling.</p>	<p>ii. Evaluating the impact of affirmative action funds (WEF, YED, UWEZO, NGAAF & MSEA Development Fund) on WEE, and identify best practices to inform BKF and CGS.</p>
<p>iii. Analysis of the Micro and Small Enterprises Act 2012 and Its Implications for Women’s Enterprises in Kenya.</p>	<p>iii. Assessing policy advocacy strategies that work for implementation of WEE policies and programs: Case Studies of Biashara K Funds & Credit Guarantee Scheme.</p>
<p>iv. Evaluate the Business Incubators for African Women Entrepreneurs (BIAWE) pilot program with view to establishing the challenges related to implementation of women business incubation program.</p>	<p>iv. Evaluate KIRDI (Biawe/FEMCOM) and Technoserve’s capacity to incubate women’s enterprises and test best practices for upscaling.</p>
<p align="center">Initially proposed project Cluster Two: Women in formal and informal employment</p>	<p align="center">Revised project Cluster Two: Women in formal and informal employment</p>
<p>i. Evaluation of the implementation of Employment Act 2019 in promoting decent, dignified and flexible employment in the Services, Agriculture and Manufacturing Sectors.</p>	<p>i. Evaluating the Implementation of the Employment Act 2007 and the sessional paper No. 4 of 2013 on employment in promoting WEE in formal and informal employment.</p>
<p>ii. An assessment of the Employment Act, Law of contracts, social security and the operational environment and their impacts on women’s participation and inclusion in the gig economy: Developing a database to be used to create digital solutions and technological pathways for women in gig economy.</p>	<p>ii. Evaluating the Legal and Operational Environment for social security and contracts on women’s participation in the gig economy and developing a database as a technological pathway for women in the gig economy.</p>
<p>iii. Evaluation of the gender impacts of the responses taken in the Kenyan context, and the extent to which contemporary and traditional African approaches to governance be used to promote WEE during and after the Covid -19 pandemic.</p>	<p>iii. Evaluating the Government of Kenya’s Economic Stimulus Packages and Social Protection safety nets during the Covid -19 pandemic and their implications for WEE.</p>

Initially proposed project Cluster three: Child care and women's work	Revised project Cluster three: Child care and women's work
i. Assess the influence of Safaricom's Day-Care Centre Program in enhancing women's work and changing of gender norms.	i. Enhancing participation of women in cross border trade through access to child care facility. ii. Collaborating institutions CCGD & Uthabiti.
ii. Assess the effect of Simplified Trade Regime (STR) and minimum standards on treatment of small-scale traders and testing whether a child care model can contribute to increased participation of women in cross border trade.	iii. Evaluate best practices in child care models and policies for up scaling and replication.
iii. Implementation of the Maternity leave and Breast-Feeding Policies as provided for in the Employment Act 2007/2019.	iv. Evaluation of the annual national budget policy statement and its implications on allocation of resources to sectors that support child care & women's work.
	v. Evaluate the impact of maternity leave and breastfeeding policies and programs on child care and women's work.
Initially proposed project Cluster Four: Women's movement and self - mobilization for WEE	Revised project Cluster Four: Women's movement and self - mobilization for WEE
i. Women economic empowerment (WEE) through self-mobilization in Kenya: A historical perspective.	i. Examining strategies that women's movement used to realize the gains in the Kenya constitution 2010.
ii. Evaluate strategies used by women's movement in the making of 2010 Kenyan constitution (1991-2010) and upscale these strategies to promote WEE.	ii. Evaluating the effectiveness of women's self-mobilization for WEE.
	iii. Up-scaling best practices for women's self-mobilization for review and implementation of policies, regulations and programs for WEE.

In preparation for the research the following guidelines were developed:

- i. Literature review guidelines. These guided the literature review by different clusters;
- ii. Guidelines on legal/social economic analysis. These formed the basis for the legal social economic digest analysis;
- iii. Guidelines on presentation of the consolidated literature review. This provided the structure of the content of the consolidated literature review by different clusters;
- iv. Guidelines on proposal writing;
- v. Draft Collaboration Agreements were developed for UON WEE Collaboration with the Community Advocacy and Awareness (CRAWN) Trust/ the National Women Steering Committee (NWSC) as well as with the Collaborative Centre for Gender and Development (CCGD) /Uthabiti Africa: Quality, Affordable child care for all in Africa.

4.2 Dissemination

Two programs were aired by the WEE Hub on KBC TV. The first one, on Inclusion of Women in Economic Development, was aired on 23rd February, 2021, while the second one, on WEE and the Credit Guarantee Scheme (CGS) was on 23rd March 2021.

In addition, the UON-WEE Hub formed a Communication and Knowledge Management team which has already created a WEE-Hub Website: www.weeHub.org with links to programs, advocacy, policy, publications of the WEE Hub, and links to the partners and collaborators. So far, journal articles anchored under the four clusters Research reports, WEE related photos and newspaper clippings related to WEE issues have been uploaded on the WEE-Hub website.

The UON WEE Hub twitter handle (twitter- wee_Hub) has been getting constant upward gains in terms of followers and retweets from relevant people and organizations. A few of our daily tweets appear on pages such as @KEWOPA @WomenEmpow @women_agenda @Afidep @crawntrustkenya @CREAWKenya @CAREinKenya.

A Facebook account UON WEE HUB has recently been established which is gaining interest and popularity. During the period 18 March – 14 April 2021 861 people were reached with 135 post engagements.

A Communication and Information Strategy was also developed which aims to enable the WEE-Hub, collaborators and partners communicate more efficiently, thereby enabling the achievement of the Hub's cutting-edge evidence-based knowledge on what works for the advancement and full realization of WEE in Kenya.

The WEE Hub has linked up with the University of Nairobi open access repository where dedicated issues of the AWSC Journal *Pathways to African Feminism and Development* are being uploaded biannually.

4.3 Advocacy

A series of consultative meetings, policy dialogues, webinars, workshops, conferences, participatory training, learning and networking events, both nationally and internationally, were held with policy makers and implementers, women organizations and entrepreneurs, women parliamentarians and Senators and other private and public stakeholders for the purpose of disseminating information generated from policy analyses, data bases, research findings and reports. As a result, valuable contacts, partnerships and collaborations were established.

During the reporting period, the following key policies were targeted:

- i. Establishing Act and operationalizing regulations of the Credit Guarantee Scheme, 2020.
- ii. Biashara Kenya Fund Regulations, 2020.
- iii. Regulations and policies on Access to Government Procurement Opportunities (AGPO).
- iv. The budget making process, with a focus on both National and County government budgets.

The following policy briefs were prepared:

- i. Policy Brief No. 1 of 2020: Policy Brief on Credit Guarantee Schemes under the Public Finance Management (Amendment) (No.2) Bill, 2020 (National Assembly Bill No.23 of 2020).
- ii. Policy Brief No. 2 of 2020: Recommendations on the Proposed Public Finance Management (Credit Guarantee Scheme) Regulations 2020.
- iii. UON WEE Hub Policy Brief No. 3 of 2020: The Public Finance Management (Biashara Kenya Fund) Regulations, 2020.
- iv. UON WEE HUB Policy Brief No. 4 of 2020: Policy Brief on Transition Instruments and Representation for the Biashara Kenya Fund Regulations, 2020.
- v. UON WEE HUB Policy Brief No. 5 of 2020: Further recommendations on the Public Finance Management (Biashara Kenya Fund) Regulations Recommendations.
- vi. UON WEE HUB Policy Brief No. 6 of 2020: Policy Brief on Government of Kenya COVID-19 protocols.
- vii. UON WEE HUB Policy Brief No. 7 of 2020: Policy Brief on the Poverty Eradication Poverty Authority Bill, 2020.

- viii. UON WEE HUB Policy Brief No. 8 of 2020: Policy Brief on Budget Processes and Gender Responsive Budgeting.

The approach used by the WEE Hub in carrying out policy advocacy involved:

- i. Responding to calls for public participation;
- ii. Responding to written requests from stakeholders to provide expertise on WEE issues;
- iii. Rapid response;
- iv. Preparation and sharing of policy briefs with policy makers;
- v. Sharing findings with stakeholders, partners, researchers and academics by holding webinars where presentations of analyzed legislation, policies, regulations were made;
- vi. Consultative meetings and engagements between the WEE Hub and its partners with government officials.

The Rapid Response Team in collaboration with AWSC Research Division Team, monitors the Parliamentary calendar for advertisements for Public Participation on the amendments of various Parliamentary Bills and responds to written requests by policy makers,. MoUs were submitted and oral presentations were made on:

- i. The Mental Health (Amendment) Bill (Senate Bills No. 28 of 2020).
- ii. The Persons with Disabilities (Amendment) Bill (Senate Bill No. 29 of 2020).
- iii. The Salaries and Remuneration Commission (Amendment) Bill (Senate Bills No. 31 of 2020).
- iv. The Community Health Services Bill (Senate Bills No. 34 of 2020).
- v. The Political Parties Primaries Bill (Senate Bills No. 35 of 2020).
- vi. The Constitution of Kenya (Amendment) Bill, 2020.
- vii. The National Cooperative Policy, September, 2020.
- viii. Following submissions on The Public Finance Management (Credit Guarantee Scheme) Regulations, 2020) the Treasury sought further clarification which was prepared and submitted.
- ix. The Public Finance Management (Credit Guarantee Scheme) Regulations, 2020).
- x. Share a brief on Biashara Kenya Fund Regulations Recommendations to KEWOPA Chairperson.
- xi. The Current Protocols of Covid-19.
- xii. Public Finance Management (Amendment) Bill, 2020 to cushion micro, medium and small enterprises against the economic effects of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Through the process of policy advocacy, the visibility of the WEE Hub has been enhanced and within the six months of its inception, the vision of the Hub to be a leader in WEE by providing cutting edge and innovate research is already being met, and there is evidence from the written requests that the Hub continues to receive to provide expertise on policy formulation and implementation on areas that are specific to WEE.

Further, the WEE Hub has strengthened its already existing partnerships with the Ministry of Public Service, Gender and Youth Affairs, while also establishing new partnerships with the National Treasury.

The WEE Hub is now strategically positioned to conduct policy advocacy to influence the process of implementation, so the Hub’s work is not limited to policy formulation only. Some recommendations made by the WEE Hub, such as the inclusion of persons with disabilities in the CGS regulations, have been included in the final policy and legislative documents.

4.4. Building the Field

4.4.1 Capacity Enhancement for Researchers

Researchers were trained on feminist/women friendly methodologies, evaluation tools and strategies that will move research output beyond academics to policy influence and also to give WEE prominence. They were paired in teams where the senior researchers guided and mentored the junior researchers. The training sessions are shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Capacity Training and Enhancement for Researchers

Title of Training sessions	Date held
Sharing on Micro and Small Enterprises Act and Development Fund	9 th September, 2020
UON WEE Hub Researchers Consultative Virtual Meeting	16 th September, 2020
Sharing on Recommendations on Transition and Representation of the Proposed Public Finance Management	17 th September, 2020
Sharing of the Revised Public Finance Management	21 st September, 2020

(Amendment) Bill, 2020	
Sharing on gender budgeting and Credit Guarantee scheme proposals	23 rd September, 2020
Webinar on Feminist Perspectives on Economic Development	6 th November, 2020
Webinar on the origin of the grounded theory and its implication on research on women in Africa	20 th November, 2020
First UON WEE Hub's Research Assistants meeting	26 th Feb 2021
Webinar on Women Empowerment Indicators	26 th March, 2021

ii. IWW Kenya and India Cross-Learning Sessions

Three cross learning sessions were held by UON WEE Hub, KU WEE Hub, IWWAGE - India and Diva Dar with the objective of enhancing relationships between the IWWs, exchanging information and learning from each other. The following three learning sessions were held and the respective discussions were:

- a) November 10, 2020: Institutional set-up and organizational effectiveness – Governance, Administration, Staffing, Project management and oversight; Finances
- b) December 10, 2020: research agenda and partnerships– setting research priorities; overseeing and managing research; ensuring timely and effective research products; building partnerships for research; building researcher exposure and capacity.
- c) January 21, 2021: Policy and advocacy.

iii. Meeting of BMGF East African Region Grantees

This meeting brought together institutions working on gender equality, women's empowerment and policy advocacy in Eastern Africa which are funded by the Bill and Melinda Gate's foundation. The aim of the meeting was to share innovative thinking on objectives of each grantees work, identify areas of collaboration and inspire future collective learning on WEE policy research and evidence, for East Africa Policy, covid-19, and the Generation Equality Forum. The meeting was attended by over 22 institutions.

4.4.2 Exploring Research Partnerships and Strengthening Linkages for Collaboration and Partnerships

This is critical for ensuring successful delivery of dissemination and advocacy, uptake of interventions and innovations and sustainability of the Hub activities. The WEE Hub held a number of exploratory meetings with public and private entities in search of such partnerships and collaboration as shown in Table 3:

Table 3: Exploratory Meetings for Research Partners and Collaborators.

Name of Institution	Date of Meeting
UON WEE Hub and Busara Center for Behavioral Economics	13 th October, 2020
UON WEE Hub and the International Development Research Centre (IDRC)	19 th January, 2021
UON WEE Hub and Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab (J-Pal)	12th February, 2021
UON WEE Hub and the International Labor Organization (ILO)	1 March 2021
WEE Hub, The Collaborative Centre for Gender and Development (CCGD) and Uthabiti Africa	10 March 2021
WEE Hub with The Community Advocacy and Awareness (CRAWN) Trust	10 March 2021

4.4.3 Established Research Partnerships and Collaborations

- i. **The National Treasury and the Credit Guarantee Scheme (CGS):** A successful ongoing collaboration between the AWSC, the WEE Hub and the National Treasury to promote the uptake of CGS by women in small and medium enterprises. Worked jointly on developing strategies to upscale access of the CGS to women entrepreneurs and women’s organizations on the basis of activities, networks and linkages with AWSC with a focus on Women Economic Empowerment.
- ii. **Establishment of a tripartite relationship between the UoN WEEHUB, banks (ABSA, Kenya) and The National Treasury:** A number of consultative meetings with ABSA Bank, Kenya and the National Treasury to disseminate information about the CGS, including its benefits to Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs); familiarize participants with the experiences of Commercial Banks and Participating Financial Institutions (PFIs) that are working with The National Treasury and women entrepreneurs to implement the CGS; identify challenges and opportunities that the implementation of the CGS poses for women in business, and; discuss women’s needs, aspirations, and suggestions for increasing CGS adoption by women entrepreneurs.
- iii. **Techno Serve:** collaboration in incubation between Techno Serve and Cluster one, as well as trainings, work plans, marketing, product development and access to finance.

- iv. **Oxfam:** Collaboration between UON, Oxfam and CCGD is also under way. The focus of this collaboration is on Childcare and women's work, the importance of advocating for national budget to allocate budgets to the sectors that influence child care and women's work.
- v. The Community Advocacy and Awareness (CRAWN) Trust and the National Women Steering Committee (NWSC) who are direct collaborators with the UON WEE Hub on women's self - mobilization for WEE policies.
- vi. The Collaborative Centre for Gender and Development (CCGD) as well as Uthabiti Africa are collaborating on child care and women's work project.
- vii. State Department of Gender, the Ministry of Public Service and Gender affairs and the Hub are collaborating in Affirmative Action Funds including AGPO and Biashara Kenya Fund.
- viii. The Kenya Women Parliamentary Association (KEWOPA).
- ix. Parliament: The National Assembly and the Senate.

PART FIVE: POLICY ADVOCACY

5.1 Background

During the inception period, the AWSC/UON WEE Hub has reviewed and analyzed legislation, policies and regulations in line with its policy advocacy strategy. The Government of Kenya, during the Covid-19 pandemic, has taken measures to address the political, economic and social changes that have arisen as a result of the pandemic, and this has necessitated formulation and implementation of many policies that have economic, political and social implications for women. The Hub has adopted a policy advocacy strategy aimed at responding to the dynamic

policy formulation and implementation environment. The policy formulation landscape in the country has further necessitated adoption of a rapid response mechanism that allows for quick response by the Hub within a short time period.

The policy advocacy strategy has also been innovative and flexible, allowing for contexts where policy advocacy informs the process of research and vice-versa, which is different from the traditional way in which policy advocacy is done after the completion of the research process. This is particularly important in Kenya's current context, where policy formulation is happening very quickly in order to respond to the changes brought about by the Covid-19 pandemic. In order for policy advocacy to be relevant and timely, it must be adapted so that it is not constrained to the linear process of first conducting research to inform policy advocacy. The process has revealed that policy advocacy can also inform the research, and key issues for research can be highlighted through policy advocacy.

5.2 What has worked in policy advocacy

- i) Responding to the dynamic environment in which policy formulation is currently happening in a flexible, non-linear and innovative manner has worked to position the UoN WEE Hub as a thought leader that provides cutting edge research on topical issues that impact women's economic empowerment. Policy advocacy work on the Credit Guarantee Scheme, which was done before collection of data and writing of a technical report was an important strategy in ensuring that the UoN WEE Hub influenced the process of policy formulation and policy implementation following the introduction of the CGS as a response to the covid-19 pandemic. Below are some of the gains made through this policy advocacy work:
 - Several of the recommendations that the UON WEE Hub made to ensure the inclusion of gender in the policy and establishing of the CGS regulations were included in the final policy documents and regulations. The recommendation to include persons with disabilities as a target category under the Public Finance Management (Amendment) Act, 2020 was taken on board.
 - The policy advocacy work provided further opportunities for the UON WEE Hub to continue influencing the CGS policy implementation process and to establish and strengthen key partnerships with the National Treasury, implementing financial institutions and women's organizations. This has resulted in the establishment of a quadripartite collaboration National Government; Private Sector; Women's Organizations and the UON WEE Hub.

- Through policy advocacy on the CGS, the UON WEE Hub has brought about synergy between the executive, legislature, women’s leadership and the academy. This has created an environment where different stakeholders and key actors are engaged in dialogue about gender issues impacting the CGS.
 - The policy advocacy strategy has informed the UoN WEE Hub’s initiatives around women’s self-mobilization and has also informed the establishment of partnerships between the UoN WEE Hub and women’s organizations. Consequently, the UoN WEE Hub has entered into and MoU with CRAWN Trust that is aimed at promoting women’s self-mobilization for WEE. A project on women’s self-mobilization informed by the work done under the CGS has been adopted.
 - The policy advocacy work around CGS has also informed the creation of a research project under cluster one, which is aimed at monitoring the implementation of the policy and to identify best practices in policy implementation that allow women to access affirmative action funds. The overall objective of this project is to upscale identified best practices in other affirmative action funds which the UoN WEE Hub is also conducting research on.
- ii) The UoN WEE Hub has put in place a rapid response mechanism and put in place a core team to rapidly respond to calls for public participation. So far, the UoN WEE Hub has been able to provide recommendations for policies and proposed legislation (see section 4.3 of this report).*

Some of the key achievements relating to rapid response include: (i) Increased recognition of the UON WEE Hub as a thought leader in women’s economic empowerment.; (ii) Increased visibility of the UON WEE Hub through making of oral presentations in Parliament. Thus, for example, oral presentations were made with regard to the Building Bridges Initiative Bill, which seeks to amend the Constitution of Kenya; and; (iii) Providing greater awareness of the gender issues arising in a broad range of policies and proposed legislation.

PART 6: LESSONS LEARNT DURING THE INCEPTION PERIOD

6.1 Policy Advocacy

The Hub has identified the following lessons learnt following implementation of its policy advocacy strategy through specific activities:

- i. The importance of the rapid response mechanism in enabling quick response to Government requests for public participation. This follows the quick turn-around time that is normally allowed for public participation in the process of making laws, policies and regulations. Accordingly, the Hub has developed a rapid response committee and strategy to ensure that it is able to make effective recommendations within short spaces of time.
- ii. Beyond influencing the process of decision-making and policy formulation, the Hub has learnt that it is also important to monitor and study the implementation of policies. This will help in identifying best practices that promote WEE during the implementation of specific policies, and this can then be upscaled and applied in the context of other WEE related policies.
- iii. Working collaboratively with key partners and other stakeholders during the process of policy advocacy can open up the space for further dialogue and increase opportunities for influencing policy and decision-making. Some of the requests to provide recommendations on key policies were made to the Hub following on from other recommendations which the Hub had made in the same area. For example, so far, the Hub has made two sets of recommendations with regard to the Credit Guarantee Scheme and three sets with regard to the Biashara Kenya Fund. Opportunities to make additional recommendations in these specific areas arose due to the Hub's collaboration and partnership with key stakeholders, who also served to make the Hub's work more visible.
- iv. Policy advocacy can influence the process of research, and in this regard, the cluster one project on "Assessing what Works for WEE in Policy Advocacy and the Implementation Process of Affirmative Action Policies: Case Studies of Kenya's Biashara Kenya Fund and Credit Guarantee Scheme" was informed by policy advocacy on the policies and establishing regulations of the credit Guarantee Scheme and the Biashara Kenya Fund.

6.2 Review of investment document, results framework, results tracker and Budget

The inception period made us reflect on social political and economic changes in the context of experiences of Covid- 19 and its impact on both women’s entrepreneurship as well as the status of women in formal and in informal sectors. This awareness led to revision of some of the projects that we had identified before in order to take the opportunity of government stimulus packages to address the impact of Covid – 19 pandemics on the economy. Such new programs include CGS.

Close discussion with partners has also improved and made our research questions more focused which has led to revision of sections of the investment document. As a result, revision of the: investment document, results framework, results tracker and budget had to be revised. We therefore realized that the investment document is a growing document and will finally tell the story of the 5 – year WEE Hub programme at the University of Nairobi. Given that 2022 is an election, year, we may have to remain aware of the social political and economic situation of the country. This will be the same as we move to the next government in the beginning of 2023, because the new government may come up with policies and programs which may impact on the Hub’s research agenda.

6.3 Infrastructure for implementation and administration

During the inception period, we have learnt many lessons related to the need for clear guidelines related to the management of the research, management of resources, developing the whole infrastructure for the implementation of the program including the tedious process of procurement and coming up with guidelines for managing parttime researchers as well as capacity building for both researchers, research fellows and research assistants. In addition, the hub appreciates the management of the UON, the related programs related to the WEE Hub and the University as a whole. We also appreciate the opportunities the University can accord the Hub in building the field through the University website, the ICT infrastructure in general, library resources and African Women Studies Centre networks, among other opportunities.

These lessons have also made us think about having a close working relationship with finance as well as with the audit office of the University Nairobi in order to ensure we refine the manner in which we manage and account for the grant resources.

6.4 Infrastructure for communication and knowledge management

Through close collaboration with UON Library, in particularly with Department of Information Science and Knowledge Management, the Hub has been exposed to different resources such as

repositories which are visited by global academic community, other facilities such as those of Turnitin, online journals, ICT facilities which the Hub utilizes in terms of knowledge management and communication. Infrastructure for knowledge management and communication has been made available for the Hub. We have also received immense support from the UON Vice Chancellor and his management team including DVC Research, DVC Human resource as well as the Principal college of Humanities and Social Science (CHSS), the Faculty where the AWSC and the Hub are located.

PART 7: WAY FORWARD

7.1 With regards to policy advocacy

Carry out policy advocacy initiatives across all the clusters and implement lessons learnt from policy advocacy which has so far been carried out, and which primarily was carried out under clusters one and four.

- i. Continuous development and improvement of the WEE Hub policy advocacy strategy, based on lessons learnt and challenges and opportunities identified.
- ii. Up-scaling of best practices identified in policy formulation and policy implementation that promote WEE.
- iii. Based on lessons learnt on the ongoing rapid response work, develop policy analysis tools to guide policy analysis process.

7.2 With regards to evaluations

For the period April 1 to December 31, 2021), Hub has prioritized six (6) of the fourteen (14) Hub's projects and will embark on implementation of these projects. These projects include:

- i. Evaluating the Impact of Affirmative Action Funds (WEF, YEDF, UWEZO, NGAAF & MSEA Development Fund) on WEE, and Identify Best Practices to Inform BKF and CGS (Cluster 1)
- ii. Evaluating the Government of Kenya's Economic Stimulus Packages and Social Protection Safety Nets during the Covid 19 Pandemic and their Implications for WEE (Cluster 2)
- iii. Enhancing Participation of Women in Cross Border Trade through Access to Child Care Facility (Cluster 3)
- iv. National Budget Policy Statement and its Implication on Sectors that Support Child Care and Women's Work (Cluster 3)
- v. Assessing What Works for WEE in Policy Advocacy and Strengthening Women's Self-Mobilization for WEE: Case Studies of Kenya's Biashara Kenya Fund and Credit Guarantee Scheme (Cluster 1 & 4)
- vi. Analysis of Strategies that Women's Movement Used to Realize the Gains in the Kenya Constitution 2010 for Strengthening Self - Mobilization for Policy Advocacy for WEE (cluster 4).

Key activities with all these projects include: development and testing of data gathering tools; field work/ data collection; data analysis and report preparation; validation and dissemination workshops, policy briefs preparations and journal article publications.

7.3 With regards to building the field:

- i. Explore other partnerships with both the private and public entities on areas of interest, as we strengthen the existing partnerships.
- ii. Finalize with collaboration agreements and signing of the same.
- iii. Hold capacity building workshops for all the researchers and research assistants on research methodologies in preparation for field work.
- iv. Based on the literature review findings, begin publication in line with the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation policy on publication.
- v. Continuous engagement with the University's administration to tap into resources that can be helpful to the Hub.