

INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION
FOR HOME ECONOMICS

Appointment was a welcome milestone Olive MUGENDA Vice Chancellor of Kenyatta University

The appointment of Prof Olive Mugenda as Vice Chancellor of Kenyatta University is an honour to the women of Kenya.

Women in the academic community, in particular, have more than one reason to be proud of Mugenda.

Besides being the first woman in Kenya to head a public university, it is gratifying that her appointment came after rigorous and competitive interview procedures where only the best could come out victorious.

Her elevation to the challenging position marks the climax of a distinguished academic career. Mugenda took her undergraduate studies at the University of Nairobi from where she attained a first class honours degree, after which she won a scholarship to Iowa State University in the US, where she studied for her masters and PhD.

She joined Kenyatta University in the Department of Family and Consumer Sciences, where she taught and supervised many students up to PhD level. She has published in several renowned journals and authored several books. Her contribution in the social science research field has been outstanding.

She rose through the academic ranks to become chairman of the department and later became the Dean Institute of Applied Human Sciences and Technology. She was later to become the Director of the International Students Summer Programme (ISSP). During her tenure as head of ISSP many foreign students, especially from the USA enrolled in the programme. She has been Deputy Vice Chancellor, finance, planning and development until this appointment.

Her involvement with girls' education in both KU and in schools underscores her commitment to the welfare of women, especially the disadvantaged. In the past five years, she has been spearheading very successful programmes involved in support of girls' education in Kenya.

Some of the programmes involve encouraging girl's participation in maths, science and information technology at primary school level supported by Rockefeller Foundation, and at the university level, by Ford Foundation.

We support her vision to delink admission to bed capacity to make regular university programmes accessible to more qualified candidates, particularly girls.

To girls and young women, Mugenda is clear demonstration of what an ambitious, hard working and focussed woman can achieve. To us professional and academic women, Mugenda has done us proud. We congratulate her.

Submitted by: Prof Mary GETUI (On behalf of Kenyatta University women fraternity).