

UNIVERSITY OF SAINT JOSEPH MBARARA



Community Engagement Policy 2022

1. Introduction

The Archdiocese of Mbarara (AoM) started a university as part of its mission and mandate to establish educational institutions of different levels to share in the salvific ministry of Christ by being the salt and light to the world. The founders coined the name: University of Saint Joseph Mbarara (USJM), for the university from St. Joseph, foster father to Jesus and the patron Saint of the pioneer St. Joseph Technical School, whose tradition of hard workmanship and community responsive education, USJM is to uphold.

The personal qualities and values of St. Joseph, the worker, such as integrity, hardworking, commitment, are behind this tradition, and the University will uphold them. USJM aims at total orientation and focus on tertiary education that meets community needs and engineers socioeconomic transformation. It delivers relevant, affordable, high quality, inclusive and community-responsive university education. The University of Saint Joseph Mbarara derives its vision and mission from the Christian understanding of the integral growth of a person.

- i. **Vision:** A leading center for integrated community responsive university education.
- ii. **Mission:** To provide holistic education for sustainable development.
- iii. **Motto:** Foster Excellence and Integrity (*Praestantia et Integritate Foveat*)
- iv. **Slogan:** For and With the Community
- v. **Philosophy:** Community-Responsive and Engaged university education
- vi. **Core Values**
 - a. God fearing,
 - b. Integrity,
 - c. Excellence,
 - d. Accountability,
 - e. Community responsiveness
- vii. **Objectives:**
 - a. To provide relevant university education.
 - b. To promote research and innovation among the students.

- c. To nurture citizens of integrity and sense of common good.
- d. To nurture students with demand-oriented skills.
- e. To promote best practices in institutional governance.
- f. To promote pastoral mission of the church

It is USJM commitment to encourage the development of each individual through education at all levels, stressing in particular the creation/promotion of an environment where intellectual and moral values are priorities. Since the person is at the centre of all growth and development, both at individual and societal levels, all members of the community respect each other in an attempt to create an environment of openness and trust. The University is committed to promoting justice, respect, solidarity, human rights, equality, and environmental protection, both in its own community and society in general

The University of Saint Joseph Mbarara (USJM) is committed to fostering strong connections with the community through outreach programs, partnerships, and collaborative initiatives. This policy outlines the framework for enhancing community engagement and ensuring the university's activities address pressing social, economic, and environmental issues.

2. Policy Objectives

- i. Strengthen ties between USJM and the local community.
- ii. Address community needs through collaborative projects and initiatives.
- iii. Promote knowledge sharing and empower community members with practical skills.
- iv. Enhance the university's visibility and reputation as a community-oriented institution.

3. Governance Structure

- i. **Community Engagement Committee (CEC):** A committee responsible for overseeing all community engagement activities.

- ii. **Director of Community Engagement (DCE):** Leads the community engagement initiatives and coordinates with various stakeholders.
- iii. **Community Liaison Officers (CLO):** Representatives from each college to support and manage community outreach activities within their disciplines.

4. Community Outreach Programs

- i. **Partnerships:** Collaborate with local NGOs, government agencies, and community-based organizations to co-create content, organize events, and facilitate knowledge-sharing activities.
- ii. **Workshops and Seminars:** Organize regular workshops, seminars, and training programs to share knowledge and expertise with community members.
- iii. **Advisory Board:** Establish a community advisory board to ensure ongoing dialogue and collaboration between the university and its surrounding communities.

5. Strategic Activities

5.1. Expanding Community Outreach Programs

- i. **Identify Needs:** Conduct community needs assessments to identify pressing social, economic, and environmental issues.
- ii. **Develop Programs:** Design and implement programs that address identified needs in collaboration with community partners.
- iii. **Monitoring and Evaluation:** Regularly assess the impact of outreach programs and make necessary adjustments.

5.2. Organizing Workshops, Seminars, and Training Programs

- i. **Skill Development:** Offer practical skills training in areas such as agriculture, health, technology, and law.
- ii. **Knowledge Sharing:** Facilitate knowledge transfer through seminars on topics relevant to community well-being.
- iii. **Community Empowerment:** Empower community members with the tools and knowledge to address local challenges.

5.3. Establishing a Community Advisory Board

- i. **Membership:** Include representatives from local NGOs, government agencies, community organizations, faculty and staff of Secondary schools and Colleges, and university staff and students.
- ii. **Role:** Provide guidance on community engagement initiatives and ensure alignment with community needs.
- iii. **Meetings:** Hold regular meetings to discuss ongoing and future projects.

6. Marketing and Communication

- i. **Awareness Campaigns:** Launch community engagement and outreach campaigns to raise awareness about USJM's initiatives.
- ii. **Media Utilization:** Leverage social media platforms, community radio stations, and public events to amplify the university's voice and engage diverse audiences.
- iii. **Content Creation:** Develop multimedia content, such as videos, infographics, and case studies, to highlight the impact of community engagement initiatives.

7. Capacity Building

- i. **Training:** Provide training for faculty and staff on effective community engagement practices.
- ii. **Mentorship:** Establish mentorship programs to support staff and students in their community outreach efforts.
- iii. **Resources:** Allocate resources for community engagement activities, including funding, facilities, and logistical support.

8. Quality Assurance and Evaluation

- i. **Standards:** Ensure all community engagement activities adhere to high standards of quality and ethics.
- ii. **Assessment:** Implement robust assessment and evaluation mechanisms to monitor the effectiveness and impact of community engagement initiatives.
- iii. **Feedback:** Regularly seek feedback from community members and partners to inform and improve future activities.

9. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed every five years to ensure it remains relevant and effective in promoting community engagement at USJM.

10. Implementation Timeline

- i. **Year 1:** Establish the Community Engagement Committee and appoint the Director of Community Engagement. Conduct community needs assessments.
- ii. **Year 2:** Launch initial community outreach programs, organize the first series of workshops and seminars, and establish the community advisory board.
- iii. **Year 3:** Expand partnerships, increase the frequency and diversity of community engagement activities, and enhance marketing efforts.

- iv. **Year 4:** Review and refine community engagement strategies, increase capacity-building programs, and strengthen evaluation mechanisms.
- v. **Year 5:** Evaluate policy effectiveness, celebrate community engagement milestones, and set new strategic goals for the next planning period.

11. Amendment of The Manual

The Manual is subject to amendment from time to time by relevant authority. The Manual was approved by University of Saint Joseph Mbarara Governing Council on the 18th day of July 2022

Rev Fr Gervase Nsekanimanya Diido
CHAIRMAN

Rev Fr Dr Deus M Karemire (PhD)
VICE CHANCELLOR