

CHUKA



UNIVERSITY

**CHUKA UNIVERSITY
HIV/AIDS POLICY**

1st March, 2013

CHUKA UNIVERSITY HIV/AIDS POLICY

FOREWORD

The Human Immune-deficiency Virus responsible for the Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome pandemic is the greatest threat to human life in the world today. Over 70% of all cases of HIV infection in the world are found in sub-Saharan Africa. In Kenya, more than 1.4 million people are infected with HIV.

Kenya is amongst the countries that committed themselves to meet eight internationally agreed Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) for socio-economic development. Amongst the eight MDGS is to lower the Human Immune-deficiency Virus/Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (HIV/AIDS) and other major disease incidences by the year 2015.

Therefore, all Kenyans including institutions of higher learning have been urged to contribute substantially in the fight against HIV/AIDS prevalence rates. Chuka University is committed to playing an active role in mitigating the impact of HIV/AIDS on students, staff, the neighboring community and the Kenyan society as a whole. In this regard, it has developed this HIV/AIDS Policy to guide its actions and programmes.

This Policy document contains guidelines on which Chuka University, inspired by its Mandate, Philosophy, Vision, Mission and Core Values, will base its HIV/AIDS prevention and care activities and programmes. Implementation of this policy will not only enhance prevention and spread of HIV infection within Chuka University, but it will also enhance provision of appropriate care and support to all its infected and affected persons.

For successful implementation of this Policy, my office will ensure that there is an ongoing process of monitoring, evaluation and review through the Chuka University sub-AIDS Control Unit (sub-ACU). The regular monitoring, evaluation and review will ensure that the Policy and its programmes remain current and effective.

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OVERVIEW OF CHUKA UNIVERSITY

BRIEF HISTORY

In 1956, the Chuka community built a Craft Centre to train school leavers to acquire skills that could be useful in nation building. The Centre was upgraded to a Youth Polytechnic in 1969. In 2003, the community felt that they needed an institution that could provide higher education and training access to the people of eastern Kenya and Kenya at large. At that time no institution in the eastern part of Kenya had the capability of educating and training students at diploma and degree levels and as a result education and training opportunities were limited. During the same time, Egerton University was planning to open a Campus in eastern Kenya. The community then approached Egerton University who found Chuka to be centrally placed and, therefore, suitable for the establishment of a university campus.

In an effort to get land for the Campus, the Chuka community donated the Ndagani Youth Polytechnic and Sports Stadium. In addition, the Presbyterian Church donated more land on institutions forming the Ndagani Education Complex, which included the Secondary and Primary Schools. The Chuka community also added a further 500 acres at Kairini in Meru South District to make the total land area 550 acres.

On 21st August, 2004, when H. E. President Mwai Kibaki visited Chuka and held a meeting at Ndagani (the present location of Chuka University), the community through their leaders informed him of their desire to establish a university in the area. Among the dignitaries who attended the meeting were members of parliament from the Greater Meru and senior Government officials. The President supported the aspirations of the people of Meru and pledged Government's support to establish a university at the site. Due to the goodwill of the Government, Egerton University Council approved the establishment of a Campus, named Egerton University Eastern Campus. The Campus was then launched on 27th September, 2004. The Youth Polytechnic was then relocated to another site.

On 23rd August, 2007, H.E. President Mwai Kibaki elevated the Egerton University Eastern Campus to Chuka University College through Legal Notice Number 161 of 2007. On 10th October, 2007, H.E. President Mwai Kibaki visited and inaugurated the Chuka University College. After about five years, H.E. President Mwai Kibaki visited again and inaugurated the Chuka University on 8th January, 2013, making it the 2nd public university to be chartered and the 9th full-fledged public university in Kenya.

The University is located within the Chuka Municipality in Meru South District, Tharaka-Nithi County. It is situated approximately 186 km from Nairobi along the Nairobi-Meru Highway on the slopes of the snow-capped Mt. Kenya at an altitude of approximately 2,000 m above sea level. The area provides a cool climatic environment, with 16°C to 24°C temperatures and an annual average rainfall of about 1,000 mm, excellent for learning and working.

The University is designated as a centre of excellence in Environmental and Renewable Energy Studies and offers university education, training and research at certificate, diploma, bachelor's, master's and doctorate degree levels in Education & Resources Development, Business Studies, Agriculture, Environmental Studies, Arts, Humanities, Science, Engineering & Technology.

Mandate

The Mandates of Chuka University are enshrined in its **objects** and **functions**.

The **objects** of the University are to–

- (a) Provide directly, or in collaboration with other institutions of higher learning, facilities for quality university education, including technological, scientific and professional education, and the integration of teaching, research, outreach and effective application of knowledge and skills to the life, work and welfare of the citizens of Kenya;
- (b) Provide and advance university education and training to appropriately qualified candidates, leading to the conferment of degrees and award of diplomas and certificates and such other qualifications as the Council and the Senate shall from time-to-time determine and in so doing, contribute to realisation of sustainable national economic and social development;
- (c) Provide programmes, products, and services in ways that reflect the principles of equity and social justice.

The **functions** of the University are to–

- (a) Participate in technological innovation as well as discovery, transmission, preservation and enhancement of knowledge, and stimulate the intellectual participation of students in the economic, social, cultural, scientific and technological development of Kenya;
- (b) Inculcate a culture of lifelong learning, responsible citizenry and innovation in technology, engineering and mathematics within the institution and society;
- (c) Engage in teaching, training, scholarship, entrepreneurship, research, consultancy, community service, among other educational services and products, with emphasis on technology and its development, impact and application to society;
- (d) Conduct examinations for and grant such academic awards as may be provided for in the Statutes, and syndicate examinations for award at other institutions as may be approved by Senate; and
- (e) Facilitate the development and provision of appropriate academic programmes, and community services.

Philosophy

Chuka University believes that sustainable national and global development can be achieved through nurturing an intellectual culture that integrates theory with practice to produce graduates with relevant knowledge, skills and responsible citizenry. The Institution also believes that education and training leads to social cohesion, human and economic development. This can be realized through passion for excellence, devotion to duty, accountability, prudent utilisation of resources, corporate citizenship, and teamwork. To actualise these beliefs, the University is committed to generation, preservation and sharing of knowledge for effective leadership in education, training, research and extension. The ultimate goal of Chuka University is to be a Premier University for the provision of quality education, training, research and extension in both basic and applied environmental and related studies.

Vision

The Vision of Chuka University is: “Quality education, training and research for national and global development”.

Mission

The Mission of Chuka University is: “To work with other stakeholders to provide, promote and co-ordinate life-long education, training and research for sustainable development and responsible citizenry”. Consequently, Chuka University will be able to generate, preserve and disseminate knowledge and offer exemplary education to contribute to and innovatively influence national and global development.

Core Values

The management and operations of Chuka University are guided by the following Core Values–

- (1) Passion for excellence and devotion to duty
- (2) Integrity, transparency and accountability
- (3) Social fairness
- (4) Professionalism
- (5) Timeliness
- (6) Prudent use of resources
- (7) Corporate citizenship
- (8) Customer focus
- (9) Teamwork
- (10) Confidentiality

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DEFINITION OF TERMS

Counseling: The process of exchanging opinions and ideas after consultation.

Mortality: This is a measure of number of deaths in a population.

Opportunistic infection: This is an infection caused by pathogens, but usually does not cause disease in a healthy host, but does so when the immune system is depressed.

Pandemic: Affecting or tending to affect a large number of individuals within a population or community at the same time.

Testing: Refers to a medical check to determine the presence of a casual agent.

Workplace: It refers to a place of work such as an office, a work room, a work station, a laboratory, the kitchen, library, a hostel, university farm etc.

ACRONYMS

ACU	=	Aids Control Unit
AIDS	=	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
ANC	=	Ante-Natal Clinic
ARV	=	Anti-Retro-Virus
BCC	=	Behaviour Change Communication
CHE	=	Commission for Higher Education
COTU	=	Central Organization of Trade Unions
CU	=	Chuka University
FKE	=	Federation of Kenya Employers
HBC	=	Home Based Care
HIV	=	Human Immuno-deficiency Virus
IEC	=	Information, Education and Communication
KAIS	=	Kenya AIDS Indiciary Survey
KEMRI	=	Kenya Medical Research Institute
KNASP	=	Kenya National Aids Strategic Plan
MDGs	=	Millennium Development Goals
MOH	=	Ministry of Health
NACC	=	National AIDS Control Council
NASCOP	=	National AIDS and STD Control Programme
PLHIV	=	People Living with HIV
PLWHA	=	People Living with HIV and AIDS
PMCT	=	Prevention of Mother to Child Transmission
STD	=	Sexually Transmitted Diseases
STIs	=	Sexually Transmitted Infections
UNAIDS	=	United Nations Programme on HIV and AIDS
VCT	=	Voluntary Counseling and Testing

1.0. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background

The HIV/AIDS is without doubt one of the greatest threats to human health and economic survival that the world has ever known to date. Africa certainly carries the heaviest burden with respect to HIV/AIDS. Over 70% of all cases of HIV infection in the world are found in sub-Saharan Africa. For this reason, Africa has to take serious steps to stop this pandemic.

About 80% to 90% of infections are in the age bracket of 15 to 49 years. They are in the prime period of their working years. Most deaths attributed to AIDS occur in people aged 25 to 35 years for men and 20 to 30 years for women. This has resulted in serious negative economic impact, particularly in the Education, Health and Employment sectors.

Since HIV/AIDS was declared a national disaster in 1999 and the declaration of total war on HIV/AIDS by President Mwai Kibaki in March 2003, all Kenyans have been urged to contribute in the fight against HIV/AIDS prevalence rates. This requires a concerted effort from all stakeholders, including Chuka University (CU).

Chuka University is cosmopolitan institution that is growing rapidly with increasing student population and employs a large number of staff from all corners of Kenya. It is therefore likely that whatever the case there could be at least some students and members of staff who are affected by HIV/AIDS. The University is located within a densely populated Chuka Municipality which has a high prevalence rate of HIV/AIDS. The University Management has already established a sub-Aids Control Unit (ACU) which is affiliated to the main Aids Control Unit at Commission for Higher Education (CHE). Sub-ACU coordinates HIV/AIDS-related activities within the University. The University is therefore committed to creating a safe environment for students and staff, and hence the need for developing this HIV/AIDS policy.

The goal of this policy is to promote effective prevention and care for those infected and affected, respectively.

1.2. Facts about HIV/AIDS

HIV stands for Human Immunodeficiency Virus. It is a virus that causes the Acquired Immune Deficiency syndrome (AIDS). The HIV is a member of a group of viruses called retroviruses. The virus infects human cells and uses the energy and nutrients provided by those cells to grow and reproduce. The HIV can be transmitted from an infected to uninfected person in various ways, including sexual contact, mother to child, blood transfusion, intravenous drug use and blood-to-blood contact through unsterilized equipments used in any practice that cuts a skin. The HIV is capable of resembling the host cell through mutation and this factor makes it difficult to develop a cure for HIV.

The AIDS is a condition that weakens the immune systems of an infected person, making it unable to fight off certain infections known as opportunistic infections and other illnesses that take advantage of a weakened immune system. The HIV does not kill a person directly. What

kills a patient with AIDS is the opportunistic infections that attack the body after the body's defense mechanisms have fallen.

The HIV/AIDS has no cure. Therefore, the focus must be on prevention through information, education and behavioral change efforts. Chuka University is committed to inform and educate all students, staff and the community about HIV/AIDS repercussions and care for those already infected.

1.3. Prevalence of HIV/AIDS

By the end of 2007, approximately 33 million people were living with HIV globally (UNAIDS, 2008). During the year 2011, a total of 2.7 million people were newly infected with HIV and the AIDS pandemic had killed 2.1 million people. Over two-thirds of people living with HIV (PLHIV) are from the sub-Saharan Africa. The region accounts for almost three-quarters of all AIDS-related deaths globally. In sub-Saharan Africa the pandemic is characterized by marked gender inequalities with 59% of PLHIV being female.

Kenya has been grappling with the HIV/AIDS pandemic for the last three decades. The country is among the highest bearers of the HIV/AIDS burden, with prevalence standing above 5% since 1990. For instance, the prevalence of HIV among adults aged 15-49 years has risen from 5.3% in 1990 to 7.4% in 2007, translating to more than 1.4 million PLHIV (NASCO MOH, 2008).

The pandemic is characterised by considerable gender and geographic disparities. Five females are infected with HIV for every three males infected in the 15 to 64-years-old age bracket. This feminization of HIV is an established pattern since the 1990's and has been attributed to the interplay of physiological susceptibility and power relations (Longfield et al., 2002).

1.4. Impact of HIV/AIDS in Kenya

The AIDS crisis in Kenya is of monumental proportion. In 1999, former president, Honourable Daniel Moi, stated that "AIDS is not just a serious threat to our socio-economic development, but it is a real threat to our very existence. The AIDS pandemic has reduced many families to the status of beggars. No family in Kenya remains unaffected by the suffering and death caused by the AIDS pandemic.

The AIDS-related illnesses are the highest cause of mortality within the country and it is estimated that 700 Kenyans die daily from the disease. The AIDS pandemic has a large effect both socially and economically in the country. According to the Ministry of Health, HIV/AIDS has a strong negative impact on the production sectors of the economy, because infection rates are highest among young productive members of the society. Staff illnesses, absenteeism and deaths negatively affect productivity. In 2003, approximately 1.4 million people were living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHA) in Kenya (KAIS, 2009). The estimated annual number of new HIV infections ranged from 60,000 to 140,000 incidences. An estimated 130,000 of 260,000 eligible persons receive anti-retroviral drugs therapy. The Government of Kenya continues to spend a lot of money buying these drugs.

1.5. HIV/AIDS and the Workplace

The HIV/AIDS pandemic is a threat to workers, employers, organizations and the economy of Kenya. This fact is known and understood by the Government of Kenya, FKE and COTU, who have taken initiatives to deal with HIV/AIDS through workplace policies and programmes that are evidence-based and grounded in good intervention practices that respect human rights and the laws of the land. It is the joint duty of the tri-partite partners, namely: the Ministry of Labour, FKE and COTU to ensure that all those involved in the world of work, whether employers or employees, public or private, corporate or informal, understand this threat and take necessary responses to HIV/AIDS.

The just promulgated Kenyan Constitution, which is the supreme law of Kenya, provides every person with the right to equality and non-discrimination. The employment Act, Cap 226, stipulates that the employer should not discriminate against any employee on the grounds of his/her HIV/AIDS status.

1.6. Kenya's Response to HIV/AIDS

The Sessional Paper No. 4 of 1997 of the Government of Kenya provides a policy framework to guide all partners in response to the challenges posed by HIV/AIDS. The Government has since then put in place structures and programmes to combat the HIV/AIDS pandemic through the sectoral approach. Other supportive policies include: a policy on condom use, national guidelines on voluntary counselling and testing (VCT), guidelines on national home-based care, and services/guidelines on blood safety.

The Government of Kenya established the National AIDS Control Council (NACC) in 1999. The mission of the Council is: To mobilize and coordinate resources for prevention of HIV transmission and provision of care and support to the infected and affected in Kenya.

The National AIDS Control Council has developed the Kenya National HIV/AIDS Strategic Plan (KNASP, 2009–2013). The overriding theme of the Plan is: Social change to reduce HIV/AIDS and poverty. The Plan also aims at ensuring that long-term programmes address both the root causes and effects of HIV and are mainstreamed into key sectors of the economy. Other institutions collaborating to support care and treatment include: the National AIDS and STD Control Programme (NAS COP) and the Kenyan Medical Research Institute (KEMRI). The National Bureau of Statistics and other partners conduct AIDS Indicator Surveys to provide national estimates of HIV prevalence, incidence and other HIV/AIDS-related statistics. The government has launched a series of programmes to help prevent new infections.

1.6.1. Behaviour Change Communication

The KNASP (2009-2013) aims to reduce the number of 15-year-old or younger girls and boys having sex. It aims at promoting abstinence and/or consistent practice of safer sex among the most vulnerable population of adults. The initial KNASP 2005-2010 supported the development of a national behaviour change communication (BCC) strategy and coordination mechanism to provide overall guidance to all partners implementing BCC programmes.

1.6.2. Voluntary Counselling and Testing

Voluntary counselling and testing is a key sexual behaviour change strategy for both HIV positive and negative people. It advocates behaviour change among those at risk, as well as testing to ascertain an individual's HIV status with a view of choosing the next course of action. The VCT programme is available both pre- and post-ascertaining HIV status.

1.6.3. Condom Promotion

Condom use for the sexually active populace remains a key methodology for prevention of HIV and other STIs.

1.6.4. Prevention of Mother-to-Child Transmission

The PMCT services are currently provided in about 400 ante-natal clinics (ANC) in Kenya. The KNASP (2009-2013) is expanding PMCT services countrywide to increase access to ARV by HIV positive pregnant mothers from the present 10% to at least 50% and to reduce the proportion of HIV positive babies born to HIV positive mothers from 33% to below 23%.

1.6.5. Home-Based Care

This programme entails training of community members in basic counseling, care and provision of other basic support services to AIDS-sick persons at home. The programme aims at reducing costs and challenges encountered during hospital care.

1.6.6. Community Empowerment

The KNASP (2009-2013) advocates increasing of information available at community level on socio-economic impact of HIV/AIDS and the attendant appropriate response measures.

1.7. Chuka University's Response to HIV/AIDS

In reference to these programmes, a Chuka University HIV/AIDS policy document was developed by a committee constituted by the Vice-Chancellor/CEO on 6th October, 2010. The Policy document is essentially a framework to be used by Chuka University Management to contribute to the fight against HIV/AIDS prevalence.

2.0. OBJECTIVES

2.1. General Objective

To contribute to the prevention of HIV transmission and mitigate against its impact for the betterment of humanity.

2.2. Specific Objectives

- 2.2.1. To prevent transmission of HIV/AIDS through the provision of education and information.
- 2.2.2. To raise the level of understanding of HIV/AIDS by all members of the University.
- 2.2.3. To identify and disseminate available resources to be used in the fight against HIV/AIDS.
- 2.2.4. To empower both men and women to make responsible sexual decisions.
- 2.2.5. To help those people who are uninfected to remain free from infection
- 2.2.6. To provide HIV/AIDS Voluntary Counseling and Testing (VCT) services.
- 2.2.7. To create an environment where people living with HIV/AIDS are safe to voluntarily reveal their status and seek appropriate support and counseling services.

- 2.2.8. To equip the University community with skills that will enable them to live and work harmoniously with people living with AIDS.
- 2.2.9. To provide care and support to those infected and affected by HIV/AIDS, respectively.
- 2.2.10. To create awareness and sensitize staff, students and the people in the neighbouring community to reduce HIV/AIDS-related stigma.

3.0. TENETS OF THE HIV/AIDS POLICY

The policy is based on the following general principles:

- 3.1. People living with HIV/AIDS, their partners, families and friends shall not suffer from any form of discrimination.
- 3.2. Staff and students living with HIV/AIDS will have the same human rights and obligations as other staff and students.
- 3.3. People living with HIV/AIDS will be accorded the same respect as those suffering from other life-threatening conditions.
- 3.4. Members of the University Community, including those living with HIV/AIDS, shall be involved in the development of prevention interventions and care strategies.
- 3.5. All sectors of the University shall be involved in the fight against HIV/AIDS education, prevention and care viewed in a broad social context.
- 3.6. The principle of confidentiality shall be strictly observed *vis-à-vis* the HIV/AIDS status of any staff or student member.

4.0. PROGRAMMES OF THE POLICY

Chuka University will strive to create a safe environment for students and staff. The University will therefore recognize and address the risk of HIV/AIDS transmission as well as create a safe and supportive environment for students and staff already living with HIV/AIDS. Achievement of these targets will be realized through implementation of the aspirations given in the following six programmes.

4.1. Student Admission

A student shall not be required to reveal his/her HIV/AIDS status prior to admission or during his/her course of study at Chuka University. This stipulation will apply to students admitted into the joint admissions board (JAB) programmes, the school-based programmes (SBP), and the self-sponsored (SSP) programmes.

4.2. Staff Employment

There will be no restrictions placed on the employment of a person living with HIV/AIDS, as long as that person's health status enables him/her to perform the duties designated in his/her employment contract. Furthermore, no staff member shall be required to undergo an HIV/AIDS test as a condition of employment, promotion, or provision of further training by Chuka University. A staff member shall not be dismissed, retrenched or refused employment on the basis of his/her HIV/AIDS status.

4.3. Counseling, Testing, Confidentiality and Care Support

- 4.3.1. Counseling services on HIV/AIDS and related issues will be available to all at University students and staff.
- 4.3.2. Counseling will be provided by professionally trained personnel only.

- 4.3.3. Male and female condoms shall be dispensed at accessible locations within the University.
- 4.3.4. The University and Community will endeavour to provide a conducive environment in which students and staff members may reveal their status to an appropriate and professionally trained person in the support services.
- 4.3.5. The University will establish a VCT centre or arrange for Mobile VCT centre at least twice every year.
- 4.3.6. All students and staff living with HIV/AIDS will have the legal right to confidentiality about their status, except where legally otherwise indicated.

4.4. Drug Use and Abuse

The University shall organize seminars and conferences on a regular basis to sensitize students and staff against drug abuse and its relationship with HIV/AIDS. Everything done in this section will be in accordance with the workplace policy on alcohol and drug abuse.

4.5. Mainstreaming the Provision of HIV/AIDS Education and Training

The University shall ensure that HIV/AIDS education is mainstreamed into the curricula for all students. All staff members shall have access to education and to information about HIV/AIDS and related issues through organized HIV/AIDS workshops and seminars.

4.6. Caring for Students and Staff Living with HIV/AIDS

Any student or staff living with HIV/AIDS will be treated in a just, humane and life-affirming manner. Any unfair discrimination or prejudices will be dealt with and disciplinary measures taken in accordance with established laws of the Government of Kenya.

5.0. EVALUATION, MONITORING AND REVIEW

To ensure optimal success of the HIV/AIDS policy, the University shall ensure that there is a regular process of monitoring, evaluation and review. New understanding of the medical, epidemiological, legal, economic and other pertinent aspects of HIV/AIDS will be regularly taken into consideration to help refine and improve this policy. The regular evaluation, monitoring and review will ensure that the policy and its programmes remain current, effective and in tune with new developments.

6.0. POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

The ultimate goal of this policy is to ensure that the University is able to sustain the provision of quality education, training and research despite the challenges posed by HIV/AIDS. The success of this policy will depend on effective implementation strategies, namely:

- 6.1. Commitment by the University Management and the Council in terms of allocation of adequate resources for implementation.
- 6.2. Commitment by the AIDS Control Unit in coordinating, planning, management and implementation of this policy through the activities outlined below.
 - 6.2.1. Ensuring that HIV/AIDS programme is mainstreamed into the curricula of the University ,
 - 6.2.2. Provision of information necessary for planning and budgeting for HIV/AIDS-related programmes.
 - 6.2.3. Making proposals for enhancing the HIV/AIDS policy enactment.

- 6.2.4. Drafting proposals in response to calls made by the National AIDS Control Council for financial support.
- 6.2.5. Development of a customized plan of action for the fight against HIV/AIDS in the University.
- 6.2.6. Liaising with the Medical Department and other organizations for enactment of best practices in the workplace.

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