

A Joint Communique from Participants of the Ethics in Higher Education Training Workshop for Teaching and Administrative Professionals in Rwanda on 11th to 13th February 2025

1. This is a Joint Communique put together by 34 participants drawn from 25 Institutions of Higher Education in Rwanda meeting at the Hotel Villa Portofino in Kigali, Rwanda. We are grateful first to Almighty God for having been with us during our deliberations on Ethics in Higher Education for Teaching and Administrative Professionals of Higher Education Institutions in Rwanda from February 11th to 13th, 2025.
2. We are also grateful to Globethics Head Office in Geneva-Switzerland and Globethics Eastern Africa Regional Centre Nairobi-Kenya, Transparency International Rwanda (TI-R) and Adventist University of Central Africa (AUCA) for planning this training workshop on ethics in higher education for teaching and administrative professionals in Rwanda as a way of facilitating the integration of ethics in higher education.
3. We acknowledge that Ethics in Higher Education plays a crucial role for both teaching and administrative professionals in the world today. As a matter of fact, more and more attention is given to the critical role of higher education institutions in fostering students to not only be well educated but also to be values-driven, as citizens and as leaders. As such, the responsibility lies on all academic institutions to ensure that they abide by the highest ethical standards and that they build an ethos on their campuses, among teachers, students and administrators that inspires trust, credibility and hard work.
4. We do appreciate that ethics serves as the backbone of educational institutions, shaping the behaviour and decisions of individuals involved in the academic sphere. In the context of Rwanda's higher education landscape, adherence to ethical standards is paramount in ensuring the integrity and quality of education is provided to students. We are also cognisant of the fact that in Rwanda, where higher education is instrumental in driving socio-economic development, the cultivation of ethical values among teaching and administrative professionals is essential for upholding academic standards,

fostering trust in the education system, and contributing to the overall well-being of society.

5. Teaching professionals play a pivotal role in shaping the minds and values of the future generation. By upholding ethical principles such as honesty, fairness, and respect, educators not only facilitate knowledge acquisition but also serve as role models for their students. Likewise, administrative staff/professionals who operate behind the scenes play a crucial role in creating an environment conducive for learning. Hence, upholding ethics in administrative practices promotes transparency, accountability, and efficiency in the management of educational resources.
6. The overall goal of this training workshop on ethics in higher education was designed to empower teaching and administrative professionals with the knowledge and skills needed to uphold ethical standards and promote a culture of integrity within their respective institutions. The specific objectives of the workshop were to:
 - i. Enhance understanding of ethical principles,
 - ii. Foster a culture of integrity and transparency,
 - iii. Encourage dialogue and reflection,
 - iv. Provide practical strategies for ethical decision-making, and
 - v. Document the proceedings of the workshop
7. During the two-and-a-half-day interactive workshop the following topics were discussed:
 - i. Why Ethics Matters in Higher Education: Addressing Dilemmas and Co-creating Solutions
 - ii. Ethical Challenges and Responsibilities in Higher Education with special emphasis on corruption, examination cheating, fraud, research plagiarism, grading bias, procurement and recruitment misconduct
 - iii. Principles and Tools for Implementing Ethics across the Higher Education Institutions with special emphasis on integrity, accountability, transparency, honesty, quality, equity, and sustainability
 - iv. Principles of Professional Integrity in the Higher Education Practice

- v. Ethics, Leadership, Governance and Higher Education with special emphasis on ethical leadership qualities in addressing abuse of authority and misconduct in the higher education stakeholder community
- vi. Power Dynamics and Conflicts of Interest in Higher Education
- vii. Fighting corruption and promoting integrity/ethics in Rwanda: Transparency International-Rwanda's experience
- viii. Ethics: How Should it be taught in Higher Institutions of Learning?
- ix. Promoting an Ethical Culture in Higher Education Institutions

Resolutions and Recommendations

1. All stakeholders in institutions of Higher Education shall commit to ethical leadership and develop and promote a clear ethical framework that aligns with the core values of integrity, accountability, transparency, quality, equity, and sustainability in all institutions; Leading by example through ethical decision-making and open communication; as well as Establishing regular training and development programmes focused on ethical leadership for current and aspiring leaders.
2. Higher Education Institutions commit to strengthening ethical frameworks where each higher education institution shall conduct a comprehensive review of existing ethical policies and frameworks to ensure they address current challenges, such as corruption, academic dishonesty, and conflicts of interest; and all stakeholders, including faculty, students, and administrative staff, shall be engaged in the development and revision of these policies to ensure inclusivity and transparency.
3. Higher Education Institutions commit to enhancing ethical education by integrating ethics into the curriculum across all disciplines by developing and implementing mandatory courses on ethics for students, tailored to their fields of study; as well as creating interdisciplinary workshops and seminars that encourage discussion and critical thinking about ethical dilemmas relevant to various fields and training faculty to effectively teach ethics and incorporate ethical discussions into their courses.
4. Higher Education Institutions resolve to create systems that encourage self-regulation and accountability among faculty, staff, and students; and Establish peer review processes that facilitate constructive feedback and uphold ethical standards as well as create anonymous reporting mechanisms for unethical behaviour.

5. Higher Education Institutions to cultivate a supportive ethical culture by organising regular workshops, fora/forums, and discussions that engage the entire campus community in conversations about ethics and integrity; and recognising and rewarding individuals and teams that demonstrate exemplary ethical conduct and behaviour, thereby setting a standard for all members of the institution.
6. Higher Education Institutions implement comprehensive anti-corruption strategies by establishing anti-corruption committees as per the guidelines of the office of the ombudsman and collaborating with anti-corruption organisations, such as Transparency International-Rwanda, to share best practices and resources; as well as designing and executing awareness campaigns that inform the community about the detrimental effects of corruption and misconduct.
7. Higher Education Institutions establish mechanisms for ongoing evaluation of ethical practices by creating an ethics committee responsible for monitoring, evaluating, and recommending improvements to ethical practices within their institutions; and conducting periodic/annual surveys to gauge the ethical climate of the institution and identify areas for improvement.
8. Higher Education Institutions resolve that all educators, administrators, and stakeholders commit to upholding the principles of professional integrity in all aspects of their work; Implement regular training sessions on integrity and ethical practices for all faculty, staff and students; and develop a clear code of conduct/code of ethics that outlines expected behaviour and consequences for violations.
9. Resolve that institutions of higher education prioritise the development of ethical leaders at all levels by introducing leadership training programmes focused on ethical decision-making, conflict resolution and community welfare.