**Rationale for Mainstreaming HIV/AIDS in Institutional Core Functions**

First, according to the OUT Charter (2007), two of the functions of the University are to promote gender equity and mainstreaming; and to address HIV and AIDS pandemic, in the course of the acquisition, provision and application of higher education. There is close correlation between gender awareness and HIV and AIDS prevalence rates. Where the level of awareness is high, the prevalence rate is low and vice versa.

Secondly, the HIV and AIDS pandemic is a threat to optimal performance and gains in every sector in the society including the academia. Without controlling and eventually rolling back this threat, our mission of pursuing the truth in teaching, research and public service will be derailed.

Thirdly, the National Multi – Sectoral HIV Prevention Strategy (NMHP) 2009 – 2012, has adopted Pre – testing of HIV and AIDS, Behaviour Change Communication (BCC) and Awareness on Gender Issues as strategies which can mitigate effectively HIV and AIDS infection, while paving the way for the pursuit of the UNAIDS three zeros (Zero New Infection, Zero Deaths and Zero Stigma and Discrimination). This shows that the International as well as the National target is to eliminate HIV and AIDS in the foreseeable future. Meanwhile, this objective can be achieved cost – effectively through knowledge creation, dissemination and sharing.

In the light of the foregoing, The OUT Rolling Strategic Plan 2013/14 – 2017/18 identifies cross – cutting issues to be mainstreamed in academic programmes by June 2015 as poverty reduction, environment, entrepreneurship, gender and HIV/AIDS (OUT,2013, Target 3.8, p. 99) .