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External Evaluation Report for the Initiative to Realize a Diverse Research  
Environment (Advanced Type) Project (2018)

Name: Saniye Gülser Corat

This sheet is for reporting the results of the external evaluation related to Items 1 through 6 of the “Achievement of Project Goals” in the Report on the Results of the Initiative to Realize a Diverse Research Environment (Advanced Type) for 2018.

1) Achieve a recruitment rate for women researchers of 30% or more

Remarks: The initiatives put into place by Kobe University to achieve a recruitment rate for women researchers of 30% or more seem practical and realistic. Although the expected result of 30 % has not been achieved in 2018, the actual result achieved (if I am reading Figure 1 correctly) stood at 25.7 % which indicates steady progress in the right direction.

To achieve the expected 2019 results, it may be worthwhile to undertake a quick assessment of the measures put into place and identify the bottlenecks in the previous year with a view to take targeted action to address them.

2) Improve the percentage of women holding higher-ranking positions

Remarks: The initiatives planned and implemented by Kobe University, ie., providing an opportunity to women researchers to establish links with other institutions outside Japan and to conduct research for short (1 week to 1 month) and medium-term (2-12 months), seem to have produced the intended results of promoting women to higher positions. In fact, with a promotion rate of 22% for women, the expected goal of 20% has been surpassed.

These 2018 achievements are very encouraging and point to the effectiveness of the initiatives planned and implemented. It would be important to keep the targets realistic and time-bound to continue with the realization of expected results.

3) Increase the number of next generation early career researchers

Remarks: The dual strategy used by Kobe University to increase the number of young researchers is quite innovative and effective. One aspect of the strategy which involved learning from the experiences of other institutions outside of Japan and providing this learning experience to the entire faculty and student body of Kobe University by inviting 24 researchers from around the world to conduct seminars seems to be a very cost-effective way of sharing of

experiences while at the same time providing role models to the entire constituency of the university.

On the other side, dispatching young researchers from Kobe University to different countries for joint research projects is also a very effective way of learning from others experiences and engaging with partners outside Japan.

Professional networking is important for the relevance of academic research and for establishing global contacts to have a global voice.

#### 4) Enhance the diversity environment and expand it beyond the university

Remarks: The three elements of this objective are very well thought-out. I had the honor of participating in the first Diversity Forum and as I indicated then, I am inspired by the Diversity Statement of Kobe University and I fully support the actions that accompany it.

I believe the private sector has an important role to play in the development and adaptation of scientific research and it is more critical now than ever before that we establish strong links and work in tandem in areas of mutual interest. What better way to ensure that we all engage in programmes for the benefit of humanity in a sustainable manner.

#### 5) Initiatives particular to this project

Remarks: Both of the initiatives under this objective are very pertinent and important. One of the obstacles for overseas assignments for all, but especially for women researchers, is the lack of support systems in new contexts. The efforts of the Gender Equality Office to accompany the researchers sent overseas from Kobe University with a view to make them feel comfortable and supported in the countries and institutions which are not their own is a critical factor for ensuring a beneficial professional time and personal well-being.

Diversity and inclusion have become very important concepts in all professional contexts. The efforts of Kobe University to keep up-to-date with advances and measures in diverse environments, from academia to UN agencies, is commendable and inspiring.

#### 6) Issues to be addressed with respect to with this project

Remarks: Planned operational and action-oriented measures, including self-sustained financing, seem in line with the achievements and lessons learned. I look forward to reading about the implementation of these initiatives.

7) Remarks regarding the overall project

I wish to congratulate Kobe University for its vision for diversity and forward-looking, concrete and impactful actions.

At a time when many institutions are looking to implement D&I policies and actions and in the absence of no blueprint for D&I, the experience and learning of Kobe University's policy and actions in this area will be most welcome. I would be honored to use these as examples of good practice in my presentations around the globe.